

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM

Written reports can be viewed on the Agendas

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani (Deputy Mayor), J Browne (Mayor), T Butt Philip, S Cursley, D Denis, S Eden, G Folkard, D Orrett, S Powell, T Pullin, G Robbins, T Robbins, H Siggs, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: C Woodland
Mace Bearer: C Price
2 members of the public

25/23/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllrs: N Kennedy
SC Cllr and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt

25/24/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None were declared.

25/25/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 30TH JANUARY 2025
Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

25/26/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
C Simons posed various questions:
What were the projected end of year figures?
Were there at least 3 months of reserves?
Regarding the imminent devolution of markets: what impact would the change in fees have on projected income?
What was the VAT implication?

The Town Clerk agreed that C Simons would receive a written response to these questions.

25/27/C NOMINATION OF MAYOR-ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR-ELECT
To make nominations in preparation for the next Mayoral year.
Cllr D Orrett nominated Cllr L Agabani as Mayor elect for the next Mayoral year.
No other nominations were received.
Cllr S Eden seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous.
Cllr P Welch nominated Cllr D Denis as Deputy Mayor elect for the next Mayoral year.
No other nominations were received.
Cllr Von Mensenkampff seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous.

25/28/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 5th March, 7pm in Wells Town Hall
- Legal Service, Wells Cathedral, Sunday 23rd March 3pm
- Civic Service, St Cuthbert's Church, Sunday 6th April, 3pm

Mayor's Diary

- i. 2nd Mar Axbridge Civic Service, Axbridge
- ii. 10th Mar Twinning AGM, Wells Town Hall
- iii. 13th Mar St Cuthbert's Junior School assembly with Town Crier and Mace Bearer
- iv. 15th Mar Mayor's Charity Quiz, 7pm in Wells Town Hall
- v. 18th Mar Abbeyfield AGM, Abbeyfield House

- vi. 20th Mar The Mayor's Concert, Cedars Hall
- vii. 22nd Mar Cathedral High Parts Tour, Wells Cathedral

The Mayor specifically asked for the support of Cllrs at the Annual Parish Meeting and the Civic Service.

25/29/C OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE

Cllr D Orrett presented the minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2025
No questions received.

25/30/C STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllr T Robbins presented the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2025
No questions received.

25/31/C FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Cllr T Robbins presented the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2025
No questions received.

25/32/C PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr D Denis presented the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2025
No questions received

25/33/C PENSIONS POLICY

The Town Clerk presented the Pensions Discretions Policy that had previously been approved at the Staffing Committee.
No comments were made.

25/34/C DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES UPDATE

The Town Clerk confirmed the formal agreement had now been reached with Somerset Council, with the devolution of the markets taking place on 1st April 2025 and other services from 31st May 2025.

There had been consultation with traders

Any kit taken on in the transfer must be fit for purpose

Importance is placed on both the market charter and market rights

The market would continue to operate under the Food Act 1983 Part 4

The change in market fees will not affect projected income

The Town Clerk also confirmed street cleaning will remain the responsibility of Somerset Council, and St Cuthbert's churchyard is included in the Green Spaces to be taken on.

25/35/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- i. St Cuthbert Out Parish Council Mutual Interest Working Group

No comments made on the report, but Cllr D Denis informed members the next meeting is on the 19th March and any input would be welcomed.

25/36/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

Cllr T Butt Philip presented the February report and answered questions:

Cllr S Cursley enquired about Somerset Council's use of reserves

Cllr H Siggs enquired if income lost from the sale of assets would mean increased borrowing

Cllr D Denis enquired about the upcoming Government funding for highways, and if Wells would receive an allocation of funds.

Cllr S Powell and D Orrett asked various questions around parking in Wells, charges and restrictions.

Cllr H Siggs expressed concern of the number of street lights currently not functioning and asked that this be addressed.

25/37/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Introduction to Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between Accessible Wells, Somerset Council and Wells City Council

Cllr S Eden presented the MOU and asked for comments. All agreed that the MOU be signed by the Mayor on behalf of the City Council to move forward with the campaign.

The Mayor thanked Cllr D Orrett for coordinating the latest litter pick. Thoughts were expressed for Kevin Westwood and his family.

25/38/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be Thursday 27th March 2025, 7pm

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Chairman that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public, in order that confidential items can be discussed.

Minutes signed by The Mayor: **Date:**