

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2021 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: L Agabani (Chair), A Bayley, D Denis, A l'Anson, T Leach, S Powell, T Pullin

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk/RFO, S Luck  
Facility & Administration Officer, K Westwood  
Outside Spaces Officer, M Culliford  
Town Clerk Assistant, C Woodland  
WCC Staff, S Glendinning, A Westwood  
Wells Voice, Andy Vallis  
2 members of the public

#### **21/01OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Cllr: R Humphreys

#### **21/02OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

#### **21/03OSE MINUTES OF THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021:**

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved for signing by the Chair.

#### **21/04OSE MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC**

Nobody wished to speak

#### **21/05OSE OUTSIDE SPACES**

i. Skateboard park update

Bev Smith gave an outline of the project. The group have charity status. A consultation process on need & location has been carried out and following their findings agreement has been sought from MDC and WCC to proceed with the upgrade in the current location between Waitrose and The Blue School.

Current project position:

- Construction company are ready to carry out consultation on the drawings
- They have applied to Mendip Communities Fund for £30k
- An architect is helping the charity
- Land has been secured for 20 year lease. Currently trying to increase the length of lease.

Cllrs Agabani, Powell and M Culliford (Outside Spaces Officer) will support the project and refer back to this Committee and Full Council. Bev will introduce Cllr Agabani and M Culliford to the preferred developers (Maverick) and arrange a site visit.

Town Clerk is awaiting confirmation from MDC that the 106 fund is available along with relevant legal documents. He will follow this up and write to them. The Town Clerk will also put the Skateboard park on the suggested transfer list for the Unitary proposal.

Cllr l'Anson suggested contacting Shepton Mallet skateboard park project team who have a new park in place. They may have learnings to share particularly on liability issues.

Cllr Agabani suggested a proposed maintenance cost of £15k be taken to the Finance & Council Matters Committee. It was proposed, seconded and was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

ii. To receive a report from the Outside Spaces Officer, to include:

a. Wells Cemetery Tree Survey 2021

M Culliford referred to the survey circulated prior to the meeting. Ash die back has been dealt with. For every tree taken down, a new one is planted. An annual survey will continue at approx. £450 per year.

b. WIB

Since the start of COVID, when volunteers were not permitted, WIB has been carried out by the WCC open spaces staff. This has shown to be a great success from the many positive comments received. Summer plants have been cleared and the winter plant-out will commence 1<sup>st</sup> Nov.

c. Christmas Lights

Mon 15<sup>th</sup> and Tues 16<sup>th</sup> Nov the lights will go up in the City with help from WCC staff and a contractor. As usual, the road will be closed at the top of Sadler St from 6 – 10pm each evening.

iii. To receive an update on the Market Place Bollards

Bollards will hopefully be installed week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> Nov, new signage for the entrance to the market place has been ordered. Planters will follow. This will all need to be moveable to allow for the Charter Fair.

Cllr Agabani asked whether bins were being updated. M Culliford explained this was not currently under our control.

Cllr l'Anson asked whether MDC were offering grant funding for signage. M Culliford was not aware, but would look into.

He also asked if the sustainability project and new planting at the cemetery was taking place as agreed at an earlier site visit. M Culliford confirmed contractors would be starting to implement this in the coming months.

Cllr Denis asked if volunteers/schools could be involved with WIB again and advised she would be willing to coordinate this. M Culliford hopes this will be possible next year and agreed to liaise with Cllr Denis. The Town Clerk has been advised all volunteers must be Chapter 8 (Highways) trained if working on the roads, otherwise they are not insured. This would also be relevant for 'Litter Picking'. The Town Clerk will advise further.

iv. Budget requirements 2022-23

a. New WIB truck

A new 3.5 ton, flat-bed truck is required, cost to replace £20k. Leasing has been considered but this would prove more expensive over a 3-year period. A suitable electric vehicle is not currently available but this will be considered at the next purchase (after 3 years).

b. Increase in maintenance budget

Current budget is £8,500, due to a rise in the cost of fuel, a request to increase to £10k was made.

c. Increase in new equipment budget

New mowers are required, current budget is £7k. A request to increase this to £8k was put forward.

In total £22,500 is requested. Cllr Agabani proposed to take this request to Finance & Council Matters Committee. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed.

#### **21/0605E PORTWAY ANNEXE**

i. To receive a report from Lead Cllr A l'Anson

Cllr l'Anson drew the committees attention to an article on page 14 in the Nov Wells Voice Issue 53. The consultation report is now available on the WCC website.

Positive feedback has been received on gaining a response rate of 2.3% for a survey of this nature. Interest has been shown on providing a café in the building, this is being considered. There is a lot of interest in the car parking available for rent, which is also being looked at.

The Town Clerk confirmed WCC Solicitors have confirmed completion of the purchase would be within the next two weeks and the full public works loan money of £620k has been received. WCC Solicitor has been advised.

The working group has now been replaced with a management group. Cllrs: l'Anson, Agabani and Humphreys, who are now taking the project forward and will report back to this Committee and Full Council.

ii. To receive the budget plan

This had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Agabani stressed that this is very much a working document, updates will be made going forward.

iii. To consider 2022-23 budget implications

The Town Clerk advised the public works loan of £620k and maintenance of £30k is already in the budget. An estimate on income needs to be put into the budget. No further budget increases were felt necessary currently.

K Westwood advised many groups are interested in using the building. A noise survey has been carried out with a positive result, they are awaiting costs on sound proofing a music area, but the cost of this should not be prohibitive. He is currently reviewing the sewerage and asbestos survey. A fire assessment will be carried out when the building is operational but we have received an indication that after remedial work it should pass inspection.

#### **21/0705E BISHOP'S BARN**

i. To receive a report from the Town Clerk on the progress of acquiring the WRG Trust and expected completion date

The Town Clerk provided an update. WCC require more information on the car parking in South St, and the lease on the Balls Club and Sub-Station from MDC. No completion date known.

ii. To confirm budget implications for 2022-23

No increase was felt necessary for the next year.

Cllr Agabani reminded the Committee that The Rotary Club who are working on a 'Garden of Reflection' and Wells Mosaic have both looked at placing their projects in the Recreation Ground. WCC await further information from these two groups.

#### **21/0805E PROPERTIES**

i. To receive a report from the Lead Cllr S Powell

Cllr Powell stated that she had attended a meeting with The Town Clerk, K Westwood and Cllr Bayley. The report is attached.

ii. To consider any budget implications for 2022-23

£6k has been requested for an electrical survey on the Town Hall, this takes place every 5 years. The Sustainability Officer, Emma Jakins, is looking into government

grants for replacement windows.

The Town Clerk advised:

- Two tenants are in arrears and this matter is with our Solicitors.
- The Old Post Office is opening as a Christmas Shop on 1<sup>st</sup> Nov.
- The Town Hall has been issued a 'B' rating for energy efficiency, this is a great achievement for a building of its age.

**21/090SE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT**

Cllr l'Anson raised the issue of the bus station map sign being in a poor state of repair. This is owned by MDC. The Town Clerk will look into.  
Cllr Bayley advised the map machine situated by the Gatehouse, near Cathedral Green, has been vandalised. M Culliford will look into.

**21/100SE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm**

**EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Note:** It is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence, it was proposed by the Chair that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended to allow a private property report.

**Minutes signed by The Chair:** ..... **Date:** .....

**OUTSIDE SPACES AND ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING 28/10/2021  
PROPERTIES REPORT**

**SARAH POWELL  
AMANDA BAILEY**

List of properties owned by WCC

- Town Hall
- The Crown (on lease)
- The Market Hall (ASK)
- Old post office (market place)
- 1 Priory Road (Roderick Thomas)
- Cemetery Lodge (part owned with St Cuthbert's out)
- Two Chapels
- WC (bus station and market place)

There a couple of points of interest regarding properties:

**Town Hall**

- £6000 has been set aside from the budget for an electrical survey on the Town Hall
- The town hall has recently been awarded a B rating for energy efficiency
- Emma (sustainability officer) is looking into grants to funding for replacement windows on listed buildings for the town hall