

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 6th JUNE 2024 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Butt Philip, D Denis, S Eden, S Powell, G Robbins, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: S Luck
Devolution Officer: H Wilkins
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
1 member of the public

24/42/OSE APPOINT CHAIR FOR:

- i Outside Spaces & Estates - Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground
- ii Outside Spaces & Estates - Outside Spaces, Wells in Bloom, Portway Annexe

Cllr D Denis proposed Cllr P Welch as Chair of the Bishop's Barn and Recreation Ground Committee, seconded by Cllr S Powell. No other nominations were received. Cllrs voted unanimously for the proposal.

Cllr P Welch (Chair) asked for nominations for Chair of Outside Spaces, Wells in Bloom, Portway Annexe Committee. Cllr D Denis proposed Cllr D Orrett, seconded by Cllr S Eden. No other nominations were received. Cllrs voted unanimously for the proposal.

24/43/OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: N Kennedy, D Orrett

24/44/OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022
None received.

24/45/OSE MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th April 2024 (Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground)

Cllr D Denis requested feedback regarding the Valentine's Coffee vending unit in the Recreation Ground.

After a brief discussion, the Town Clerk informed the meeting that the vendors have been there for a month and they'll submit figures in six weeks. Decisions can then be made about opening hours and charges.

Cllr S Powell requested information about the purchase of benches in the park and asked that a discussion take place with the committee, prior to purchase.

The Town Clerk reported that the railings in the Recreation Ground will be removed in order to be repaired and painted.

Cllr S Powell requested information regarding the location of any new equipment. H Wilkins (Devolution Officer) informed the meeting that the equipment will be within the boundary of the park.

24/46/OSE MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Chris Winter of Wells Civic Society was asked to contribute to discussions regarding the Bishops Barn agenda item 8. The Chair agreed.

24/47/OSE NEW PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The Town Clerk reported that three of the pieces of equipment have been surveyed and condemned, one item being the Fort. The Playgrounds Association carried out the survey. Three pieces of equipment have been removed for safety reasons. The

lack of visibility and accessibility at high levels of the fort are the problematic areas. Improvements to the design is being looked at following a finalised report. The safety surface below the play area has been surveyed as having damage from grass growing through, which a solution will need to be found for. A maintenance contract will be researched as potentially being a cost-effective way of managing repairs to play equipment, should Wells City Council gain more play areas in the future.

There are two ramp sections of the skateboard park which have been highlighted and have been removed. Further details will be reported at the next meeting.

Quotes for new equipment are as follows. Table-Tennis table quotes are £2850, £2650, £3975 for similar products. The Company quoting £2650 can include a customised colour to the concrete surface. The Chess Board table quotes are £5400, £3100, £2100. Quotes do not include the chess pieces.

A brief discussion took place about the suitability of the placement of these pieces of equipment in the Recreation Ground. The meeting questioned the merit of the chess table but were more in favour of the table tennis table.

The company providing the Table Tennis table will be invited to carry out a survey on potential sites within the Recreation Ground.

24/48/OSE TREE SURVEY AND PLANNED WORKS

The OS Officer M Johnson will resubmit the application for the tree work. The second survey has taken place. Somerset Council are aware.

The dead work on the trees adjacent to the flats has taken place but the overhang work is still required.

Cllr D Denis asked if native trees would be put in to replace any tree that might be removed. The Town Clerk assured her that it is the policy of Wells City Council to do so and that any replacement tree does not need to be in the same location.

24/49/OSE BISHOP'S BARN

i The Town Clerk reported that there had been successful bookings at the Bishop's Barn such as the Stonemason's event and Theatre Festival and that there were events booked for the summer such as Wells Pride Festival and Tanys Transformation cat-walk event. Late night events are not being booked due to potential noise nuisance and issues with alcohol use. Feedback has been given, that parking and gaining access to the Barn is difficult.

Cllr D Denis reported that the levelling up funding application had not been successful. The Town Clerk advised that decisions need to be made about how the Barn will be used before any finances can be used or funding can be investigated.

Cllr T Butt Philip clarified that the levelling up fund application had not been successful as the application had not met the criteria of complying with timelines required in the application.

ii Cllr P Welch stressed that a vision for the Bishop's Barn needs to be investigated and invited Chris Winter, member of the public and Chair of Wells Civic Society, to join the meeting for her input. Before Chris Winter spoke, H Wilkins (Devolution Officer) stressed that as Wells continues through the devolution process and potential acquisition of assets, that a vision for the Bishop's Barn is essential.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding finances that has been allocated to the Bishop's Barn. Chris Winter suggested that a plan be drawn up to envisage how the Bishop's Barn will be used and that if no firm plan is made, then funding will be difficult to acquire. A suggestion was made that research be undertaken by Cllrs visiting similar Tithe Barns locally.

The Town Clerk suggested that there may be the potential for applying for "Match funding"

Cllr P Welch suggested that any plans be put before public consultation. Chris Winter suggested that a busy event taking place at the Bishop's Barn and Recreation

Ground will assist in gauging interest with Wells' residents. Cllr G Robbins reported that the Wells Pride event planned for August will do that. Cllr D Denis asked that an agenda item be included at a Full Council meeting to ask Cllrs to join the group to create the vision for the Barn, then members of the public will be invited to join. The Town Clerk agreed that it will be included on an agenda. Cllr D Denis reported that the Monarch's Way signs are being presented at 10am on Sunday 10th June and that the Bishop's Barn is pictured on the signs.

24/50/OSE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Cllr Denis reported that May had been the hottest recorded globally. Encouragement for Wells' residents to reduce carbon footprint locally is essential.

24/51/OSE LEAVE IT LONGER CAMPAIGN

Cllr D Denis proposed that Wells City Council promote Somerset Council's "Leave it longer" campaign and include it on the Wells City Council website in order to encourage Wells City Council residents to get involved.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that Wells City Council do not have responsibility for areas near highways. H Wilkins (Devolution Officer) clarified that land management responsibilities are included in devolution discussions and that land adjacent to highways will not be coming under the responsibility of Wells City Council, but that an overall strategy will be needed.

Cllr P Welch clarified that the proposal is to go before the Full Council meeting. Cllr G Robbins seconded the proposal. Cllrs voted unanimously for the proposal.

24/52/OSE BISHOP'S BARN - SENSORY GARDEN

Cllr D Denis had received quotes but planting at the site was problematic due to roots in the border. Cllr D Denis requested that the scheme be continued by planting aromatic plants and perhaps maintained by a volunteer group.

The Town Clerk informed that there had been some planting completed in the border. A discussion took place about the feasibility of volunteers being used as there is a requirement for them to be insured which incurs a cost to Wells City Council.

24/53/OSE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr D Denis spoke of the Wells in Bloom sponsorship and asked that the list be reviewed and a change be made to the amount that larger companies pay as sponsorship.

The Town Clerk reported that some invoices had gone out. Due to GDPR the list requires being managed by Wells City Council Staff. There are locations which require a new sponsor and companies will be contacted.

The Town Clerk mentioned that there is an item that is requiring inclusion on a future agenda regarding a report written regarding the types of plants used in the Wells Bus Station planters.

A lengthy discussion took place about the schedule of the Outside Spaces meeting in July to also include discussions of the Bishop's Barn. The Town Clerk reminded the meeting that this would contradict their recent vote to hold the meetings on alternate months. Cllr P Welch confirmed that it will stay as it is.

24/54/OSE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 4th July 2024 (Outside Spaces, Wells in Bloom, Portway Annexe)

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: