

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

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

PRESENT: Cllrs: D Denis, D Orrett, G Robbins, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: RFO: C Woodland
Outside Spaces Officer: M Johnson
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt
2 Members of the public

24/87/OSE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT AT FULL COUNCIL TO NO LONGER SPLIT INTO TWO MEETINGS, AGREE TO APPOINT:

Cllr P Welch was nominated as Chair of the Outside Spaces & Estates Committee. There were no other nominations.

Cllr P Welch was elected as Chair of the Outside Spaces & Estates Committee.

Cllr D Orrett was nominated as Vice - Chair of the Outside Spaces & Estates Committee. There were no other nominations.

Cllr D Orrett was elected as Vice Chair of Outside Spaces & Estates Committee.

24/88/OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: T Butt Philip, S Eden, N Kennedy, S Powell

24/89/OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.

Cllr D Denis declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 on the agenda.

24/90/OSE MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH SEPTEMBER 2024 (Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground) and 3RD OCTOBER 2024 (Outside Spaces, Wells in Bloom, Portway Annexe)

Minutes of the Outside Spaces & Estates Committee Meeting – 5th Sept 2024

Cllr D Denis asked that item 24/70/OSE be amended to read "when the play tower would be repaired" rather than "when the play tower would be returned".

Cllr D Orrett asked that with regard to item 24/70/OSE that information regarding homeless people be available in the Town Hall Reception and be included on the City Council website and Facebook page. C Woodland (RFO) confirmed that the WCC Communications Staff member would be asked to include the requested information.

M Johnson confirmed that the play-park equipment has been returned, the new table tennis table will be delivered soon. All tree surveys and planned works to trees had taken place and signed off by Bo Walshe (Tree officer).

Cllr D Orrett asked about progress of the "Resolution tracker" discussed in item 24/74/OSE. C Woodland will inform of any progress to the next meeting.

The minutes of 5th September were agreed and signed by Cllr D Orrett.

Minutes of the Outside Spaces & Estates Committee Meeting – 3rd Oct 2024

Cllr D Denis asked that the date in 24/84/OSE be amended to 11th October for accuracy.

Cllr D Orrett reported that she had spoken with the new Idverde member of staff responsible for the cleaning the High Street.

M Johnson mentioned that the bins in the recreation ground are now being emptied by Wells City Council in addition to Idverde's schedule in order to improve the environment. The High Street bins are currently being emptied by Idverde.

Cllr D Denis reported that a meeting is planned with representatives from Wells Golf Course, Cathedral School, Cllr T Butt Philip, T Hathaway (St Cuthbert's Out) T Shockland (Somerset Wildlife Trust) to alleviate flooding on Torr Hill Lane. Negotiations are taking place with landowners upstream whose waterways affect flooding downstream.

Cllr D Denis reported that she and Cllr S Powell had attended a Climate Resilience Conference and were approached by a resident, regarding the Waterway in Silver Street.

A discussion took place with MP T Munt about the locations of the waterways and at which point the Environment Agency might become involved.

The minutes of 3rd October were agreed and signed by Cllr D Orrett.

24/91/OSE MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

S Garner spoke of her wish to see Wells City made tidy. She spoke of her concerns of an area of the Cathedral by the clock and arch. There are weeds growing in the paving slabs and in the walls of a type that should be removed. The wall has started to deteriorate.

M Johnson confirmed that any landowner is responsible for removal of such plants and the boundaries fall under the responsibility of the Church Commissioners.

T Munt (MP for Wells and Mendip Hills) asked S Garner for her contact details.

24/92/OSE OUTSIDE SPACES

M Johnson reported that the team have been working on end of season maintenance including hedges. It's been a good year for Wells in Bloom, and mild weather has seen plants still flowering. M Johnson and is looking at next year's budget and equipment suppliers, anticipating assets that may be acquired from devolution.

Cllr D Denis asked about the grass growing through the matting.

M Johnson confirmed that he is researching a device that electrifies weeds and negates the need for using chemicals.

Cllr D Denis asked about an accessible piece of equipment being added to the play park. M Johnson confirmed that this is being looked at for inclusion in the budget next year. M Johnson also mentioned that there are other play parks within Wells than the recreation ground which may be suitable for receiving addition play elements also suitable for SEN children.

24/93/OSE

PORTWAY ANNEXE

Cllr D Orrett reported that there is a Portway Annexe meeting planned for 21st November 2024. L Wassell (Facilities and Projects Manager) is at the Portway Annexe two days a week and has been reviewing the policies and procedures. Staffing levels are good. The team are looking to open the building up to new Hirers. L Wassell is working closely with N Fraser regarding equipment donations for Wells Rocks.

Cllr P Welch mentioned that ITVX made a visit and made a short film on the Portway Annexe. Cllr P Welch will provide the link for Cllrs to see.

24/94/OSE

WELLS IN BLOOM

M Johnson reported that Wells in Bloom had been successful. The plants are still going strong.

A brief discussion took place about the bus station planting and M Johnson will revisit the planting and remove weeds. M Johnson mentioned that planting strategies and watering schedules will need to be changed to ensure that work is managed within budget and with the staffing levels.

24/95/OSE

RECREATION GROUND

Cllr D Denis asked about signage in the Recreation ground?

M Johnson reported that delay in installation of new signage is due to devolution and that work and decisions regarding corporate design is required.

24/96/OSE

BISHOP'S BARN

Cllr P Welch expressed his hopes that the possible working relationship between WCC and the Bishops Palace would be beneficial for all.

M Johnson mentioned that post devolution there may be a member of Staff whose responsibility could include Events.

24/97/OSE

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Cllr Denis presented her report about the Environment Week. It was a very positive event, and will take place again next year. We need to bring the community together to help biodiversity across the city and reduce our carbon footprints wherever possible.

Cllr D Orrett thanked Cllr D Denis for her hard work organising Environment Week.

24/98/OSE

PROPOSALS FROM CLLR DENIS

- i. Act to Adapt Draft Plan is in consultation with organisations and the public of Wells.

Cllr D Denis proposed that Wells City Council endorses the process of public consultation and will consider the outcomes as part of this Council's actions to mitigate and adapt to Climate Emergency.

Cllr P Welch seconded the proposal.

The proposal was voted on unanimously.

- ii. Cllr D Denis proposed that this committee looks at the value of running the competitions and puts a plan in place to resume the competitions in the future when there is officer support and policy and procedures documents to support volunteers.

Cllr D Denis reported that if decisions were not made soon then it would be too late to have a competition next year. A lengthy discussion followed about budgets for the competition, and whether the subject should be reassessed post devolution due to lack of officer time at present.

Cllr D Denis reported that the School competition does not incur any costs. There are 11 schools, including surrounding parishes. It is hoped the Schools' competition could continue, with involvement from the Bishops Palace as well as the support of a nominated officer.

A conversation is planned with the Bishop's Palace, Cllr D Denis is happy to liaise and report back.

24/99/OSE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

T Munt (MP for Wells and Mendip Hills) spoke of her praise for the Wells Food Festival.

There was a brief discussion about the bins and the process of recycling the rubbish made by the visitors to the food festival. The food festival is responsible for the removal of waste that is generated at the event.

T Munt (MP for Wells and Mendip Hills) referred to pavement licences and pavement delineation and reported that she has a meeting planned with Head of Licencing, F Smith-Roberts to look at the issues.

T Munt (MP for Wells and Mendip Hills) will pass on information that arises from MP Surgeries when appropriate.

Cllr D Denis mentioned that the Men's Shed are looking for new premises. They require a good size storage room and a workspace for woodworking.

Cllrs all agreed to consider options for the Men's shed and discounted options that were unsuitable.

M Johnson suggested that the Men's Shed approach Somerset Council with regard to the Enterprise park being an option.

24/100/OSE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 9th January 2025

Minutes signed by The Chair:

Date: