

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PORTWAY ANNEXE COMMITTEE ON WEDNESDAY 19TH MAY 2021 AT 7.00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, S Briton (Chair), O Hartley (Deputy Mayor),
R Humphreys (Vice-Chair),

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: S Luck
Facility & Administration Officer: K Westwood
WCC staff: S Glendinning, A Westwood
WCC Cllr: T Pullin
SCC Cllr: T Munt
PACG: I Robinson, N Fraser
2 members of the public

21/15PAC APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr J Osman, A. l'Anson

21/16PAC DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 26th July 2012:

Councillors were asked whether they had any declarations of interest.

Item 21/21PAC – Residents Working Group

Cllr Hartley stated his grandmother and brother were residents of Portway Avenue.

21/17PAC MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved for signing. The Chair asked for an update on Matters Arising in connection with the remedial work arranged for the Portway Annexe:

- The drainage report is still awaited.
- A fire assessment has been carried out, written quote is awaited.
- The roof has had a survey and a priority list of work needed and costs are awaited. A written report will be provided.
- A heating engineer has looked at the boiler and concluded it is in good condition.

21/18PAC MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Nobody wished to speak.

21/19PAC COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP PROCESS

The Chair referred to the report circulated before the meeting.

The Chair had been approached by one Cllr who wished to attend a working group as an observer. A vote took place and it was proposed, seconded and agreed not to allow observers.

The Chair asked for clarification on who should be included on the Residents Working Group:

1. Allow any Wells resident to join.
2. Allow only those who live in close proximity to the building.

A vote took place and it was proposed, seconded and agreed for option 2. Cllr Humphreys is to provide a list of roads that qualify as 'close proximity'.

A file sharing system is intended to be used for this project. This is being looked at by Alex Westwood. Although files will be seen by everyone, only certain people will have editing rights.

It was agreed to include representation from MDC and SCC at future meetings so they will need to be held in the Main Hall to allow for appropriate social distancing. It was reminded that working group meetings can still be held via Zoom, committee meetings must now be face to face.

21/20PAC PURCHASE & PUBLIC WORKS LOAN UPDATE

The Town Clerk gave an update. No further progress on the works loan. WCC Solicitor has received documents from SCC to proceed with the purchase as soon as the loan is agreed.

21/21PAC REPORT FROM RESIDENTS WORKING GROUP

Cllr Humphreys referred to her report circulated before the meeting. As agreed in Item 21/19PAC, this group will be made up from representatives living in close proximity to the Portway Annexe.

21/22PAC REPORT FROM COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

Cllr Agabani referred to his report circulated before the meeting. They are setting up a database for Community groups. A meeting has been set up for 8th June, 10:30am via Zoom for the Community Working Group to meet.

21/23PAC REPORT FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP

Following the resignation of a Cllr, additional support is required in this group.

Cllr l'Anson had submitted a report prior to the meeting. It is suggested in the report to open the Portway Annexe to the public on four Saturdays during July and August. It was felt two sessions at the beginning of July would be enough. The Town Clerk stated appropriate Insurance would need to be arranged and the public would need to be escorted at all times as the building is not currently fire safe.

SCC Cllr Munt mentioned there was a lot of local resistance to the current signage on the outside of the building and requested this be considered as part of the project.

Ann Whalley, The People Partnership, felt there could be an overlap with the open day and qualitative research. A clear objective is required before the open day as to who to be invited, aim of the open day, why people are being invited.

The Town Clerk asked whether further public consultation was necessary. The Chair felt it was important to consult the public to understand the breath of activities required in the building and the public support for these.

The Chair suggested a video with the help of Alex Westwood be recorded showing the inside of the building with commentary from Cllrs giving information on the proposed vision. It was also suggested contacting Rob Bevan for drone

footage to be included. This would allow a greater number of public to view.

Ian Robinson referred to his report circulated before the meeting:

Two elements to the public consultation, public survey and focus groups - Qualitative and Quantative research needs to be properly structured. The cost for external public consultation was estimated at £5,000. The Town Clerk stated that this would need to go to the Finance Committee and three independent quotes would be required. The PC Working group will continue to develop proposals.

The Chair is to provide up to date information/links on the project to ensure WCC website is kept up to date with progress.

21/24PAC REPORT FROM BUSINESS PLAN WORKING GROUP

This working group includes Nigel Fraser, Chris Simons, S Briton. They will meet fortnightly with Town Clerk and Cllr Cursley (Chair of Finance). The Chair would welcome another PAC Cllr offering to Chair the Business Plan Working Group.

The Chair referred to the 5 year Business Plan submitted before the meeting and thanked Nigel and Chris for their help. The report is at an early stage, with much of the work based on assumptions that need clarity.

The Chair referred to Chris Simons Stock Condition Survey submitted before the meeting. The Town Clerk and Facility & Administration Officer are in the process of appointing contractors and obtaining repair/maintenance costs to enable the building to be opened and used. £30k was put aside for this. The Chair asked for these costs to be included in the Business Plan once known. The purchase needs to be completed before work improvements can start but quotes are being obtained now in order for work to start immediately.

The Chair asked to liaise with the Town Clerk to produce a timeline from exchange until building opening.

21/25PAC DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITIES

To delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to decide any urgent matters arising before the next meeting. Agreed.

21/26PAC ANY OTHER MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Outside of this meeting the Chair reported that she had been asked why she was spending her time on this project. She had responded with her view that the Portway Annexe is one of the last large buildings in public ownership in Wells and to let it go without trying to retain it for the Wells community was not something she was prepared to do.

21/27PAC DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7:00 pm, Wednesday 9th June 2021

This will be in the Main Hall in Wells Town Hall to allow for a bigger group and social distancing.

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