



Wells Town Council

Wells Community Hospital, Mill Rd,
Wells-next-the-Sea, NR23 1RF

MINUTES

2025/21

Town Council Meeting held at the Clore Room, Wells Maltings on 1st September 2025 at 19:27hrs.

Those Present: Mel Catton (Chairman), Roger Arguile, Pauline Catton, Bob Curtis, Cheryl Curtis, Jessica Curtis, Lindsay Dew, Peter Rainsford, Susan Rainsford and John Troup

Emma Gunhouse (Clerk), Michael Dalby, Peter Fisher and 18 members of the public

1) Public Forum

Members of the Council relayed the following concerns and information as reported to them by members of the general public:

- a) The amount of litter and general state of repair of the benches on Tugboat Yard
- b) The deteriorating condition of the wire fencing running along the south side of the pathway of School Alley

Resolved – Fence to be discussed during onsite meeting with Highways later in the month

- c) Signage from Flo and Joe's in Staithe Street repeatedly encroaching onto the pavement forcing pedestrians with mobility issues, and parents with buggies/pushchairs, into the road

Resolved – Clerk to report to Highways

- d) Mike and Marie Strong, stalwarts and organisers of the Wells-next-the-Sea Flood Wardens, are to retire after over 20 years of coordinating the town's flood defences

Resolved – Item to appear in the Quay, Clerk to write letter to show WTC's gratitude and appreciation

- e) Worries arising from the recent news regarding the sale of the Wells Post Office and the loss of the vital services it provides. In order to assuage these fears RA drew the Council's attention to a letter from the current Post Mistress in the September edition of the Quay magazine, which explains that the Wells Post Office is not closing, but that they were looking for a buyer for the business, so that they could retire and Wells would continue to have its Post Office

2) Reports

- a) Police – None received.

- b) Norfolk County Council, Councillor Michael Dalby

Michael Dalby was present to answer questions. A report was received and is available on the WTC website. He also updated the council concerning the following: NCC's position relating to 'Devolution', an imminent meeting to discuss the Cycling Paramedic Unit based in Wells, as well as explaining that it was his understanding that NCC would bear the cost for installing a pedestrian crossing on Burnt Street should the feasibility study be positive.

- c) North Norfolk District Council, Councillor Peter Fisher

Peter Fisher was present to answer questions. He also informed the Council regarding NNDC's position on 'Devolution', stating that, along with a significant



Emma Gunhouse - Town Clerk
01328 710564
clerk@wellstowncouncil.gov.uk



Striving for
Excellence

MINUTES

number of district council's, it considered that the '3 Unitary' approach would best serve Norfolk's population and would continue to push for said system. Also, that the plans to establish an additional separate weekly food waste collection service, along with the introduction of 'kitchen caddies', continued apace, however no definitive date had been set as to when this would take place.

- 3) **Apologies and consideration of acceptance for absence** – Jen Davies and Joyce Trett.
- 4) **To receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for Dispensations** – JT for items 7 and 8.
- 5) **To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th July 2025**
Approved and signed.
- 6) **To approve and agree to pay the sum requested by the Wells Maltings for the first financial quarter to support the running of the Tourist Information Centre**
Resolved – WTC approved and agreed to pay the sum of £2,500, requested by the Wells Maltings, to support the operation of the Tourist Information Centre in the first financial quarter. Clerk to arrange payment.
- 7) **To receive a report from RA concerning progress made by the WHIG in achieving its objective, and to agree that a Memorandum of Understanding be drawn between the Wells Town Council and the Nominated Registered Provider consenting to the transfer of the parcel of land, designated as a 'Rural Exceptions Site' in the Wells Neighbourhood Plan 2024, from the Wells Town Council to the Nominated Registered Provider**
RA apprised the Council regarding the WHIG's current position in its efforts to realise affordable housing for local residents. Reports of concerns were conveyed by members of the Council; these misgivings arose chiefly from reservations about how reliable the guarantees for affordable housing for 'locals only' were, and how best to ensure the proposed homes met this fundamental requirement. RA took pains to stress the classification of the chosen site; 'Rural Exception Site', and that as such its primary purpose would be to provide affordable homes for local residents and that these homes would remain affordable in perpetuity.
The Council was anxious that this elementary principal be legally secured before proceeding further and so was not prepared to pass the motion cited above. PR suggested the following amendment which received the necessary backing –
'For PR to takes steps before the next scheduled council meeting to identify and liaise with legal establishments with the necessary expertise to advise with the drafting of a legal document that will secure local housing for local people in perpetuity and be necessary to grant a 'secure legal interest' in the Rural Exceptions Site to the Nominated Registered Provider.'
RA requested that the voting be recorded
Resolved – Amended motion carried 7 to 2 - Those for: PC, MC, SR, PR, CC, JC and BC. Those abstaining: RA and LD. JT unable to vote due to declaration of interest.
- 8) **To discuss the East England Ambulance Service's anticipated decision to cancel the Wells Cycling Paramedics schedule over the winter months, starting as of October 2025, due to costs (JD)**

Council members reported on actions already taken in response to this potential threat: that a meeting with the EEAST had been arranged for the 3rd of September, and was to be attended by PC and MD; that the MP Steff Aquarone had been contacted and was taking up the cause on behalf of the town; that the Clerk had been in communication with clerks from the surrounding parishes to ask that they urge their



Emma Gunhouse - Town Clerk
01328 710564
clerk@wellstowncouncil.gov.uk



Striving for
Excellence

MINUTES

councillors to lobby representatives from district and county council to act in this matter.

Resolved – The Wells Town Council concurred that it should fight to retain the service and oppose its cancellation. JC to write a press release and Clerk to write letter of objection to the EEAST

- 9) **To consider including a link/button on the WTC website to access the GOV.UK 'Beach and Bathing Water' page in order to provide information in real time concerning the water quality of Wells Beach for bathers and other water sports enthusiasts (JT)**

Resolved – Clerk to insert said link/button onto the Wells Town Council website. CC to invite relevant bodies in 6 months' time to explain processes employed in measuring the water quality of Wells Beach and the standards used to determine said quality.

- 10) **To discuss the renegotiated charge of £5000, as put forward by NCC, for a feasibility study to establish the need for a pedestrian crossing on Burnt Street, and to agree to apply to the Parish Partnership Scheme for funds to help cover the cost.**

The renegotiated charge of £5000.00 was discussed by the Council in addition to the proposed payment plan put forward by MD and NCC; that WTC should apply to the Parish Partnership Scheme for 50% of the overall cost - £2500.00, Councillor Dalby would provide £1500.00 from the Local Member Fund leaving the Council to cover the outstanding balance of £1000.00.

Resolved – The Council agreed to pay £1000.00 from the Council budget and to apply to the Parish Partnership Scheme for £2500.00 to cover the remaining amount of its share of the costs for the feasibility study. Clerk to inform principal of Alderman Peel High School.

- 11) **To consider the removal of damaged benches on the Buttlands and reallocate the plots to applicants on the Council's waiting list for memorial benches**

Resolved – MC to contact Wells Men's Sheds group to secure their assistance in removing the damaged benches. Clerk to get in touch with applicants on the memorial bench waiting list.

- 12) **To discuss the potential hazard, caused by exposed tree roots, to pedestrians accessing the Buttlands**

The Council considered the following: improving the signage on the Buttlands to inform pedestrians with mobility issues, to discuss making provision for universal access. JC left the meeting during this discussion.

Resolved – Clerk to research options.

- 13) **To consider grant applications from the following body:**

a) **Wells Ladies Lunch Club**

Resolved – Item postponed till next meeting to allow time for more applications.

- 14) **Reports**

a) **Clerk**

A report was submitted by the clerk and is available on the website.

b) **Portfolio Holders/Committees/Working Parties/Councillors**

LD (Market Lane Cemetery) – Raised concerns regarding issues caused by parking on Carnival Day. BC requested that engaging a part time traffic warden be on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting.

Resolved – MC to contact members of the Carnival Committee in connection with obtaining a 'Temporary No Parking Zone' for future Wells Carnival events. Clerk to include engaging a part time traffic warden for discussion at the next meeting.



Emma Gunhouse - Town Clerk
01328 710564
clerk@wellstowncouncil.gov.uk



Striving for
Excellence

MINUTES

BC (Finance) – The accounts tallied.

CC (Climate Change and Environment) – Apprised the Council of developments with the East Marine Management Plan.

SR (Maltings and Affordable Housing) – Invited the Council to a private viewing of a new exhibition at the Maltings. They also updated the Council concerning the Beach Road Play Field and requested that it be an item on the agenda for the next meeting.

Resolved – Clerk to include Beach Road Play Field on the agenda for the meeting scheduled for October.

15) Financial Report & Accounts for Settlement

The financial reports were circulated. These can be viewed on the website.

Resolved – Accounts agreed, accepted and signed.

16) To confirm Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting will be at 7:00 pm Monday 6th of October 2025

Meeting ended 21:42 hrs

Minutes completed by Emma Gunhouse (Clerk)



Emma Gunhouse - Town Clerk
01328 710564
clerk@wellstowncouncil.gov.uk



Striving for
Excellence