

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING WORKING PARTY  
HELD ON ZOOM  
WEDNESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2021**

**Meeting Commenced:** 7.02 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 8.47 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Jan Holloway (Chairman), Dot Agassiz, Ray Armstrong, Gill Bute, Alan Peak and Tim Taylor.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Emma Williams (Committee Officer) and Suzy Birdseye (public)

The Chairman invited the public attendee to address the Working Party; they gratefully declined, wishing only to observe the meeting and its processes.

<b>37.</b>	<b>Election of Working Party Chairman</b>  Nominations were invited for the position of Chairman.  <b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Tim Taylor <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Gill Bute  A vote was taken and <b>carried</b> , and accordingly it was:  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That Councillor Jan Holloway be elected Chairman of the Planning Working Party for the year 2021/22.
<b>38.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes</b>  There were no absences or substitutions received.
<b>39.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  There were no declarations of interest received.
<b>40.</b>	<b>Election of Working Party Vice Chairman</b>  The Chairman invited nominations for the position of Vice Chairman.  <b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Gill Bute <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Tim Taylor  A vote was taken and <b>carried</b> , and accordingly it was:  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That Councillor Alan Peak be elected Vice Chairman of the Planning Working Party for the year 2021/22.

<p>41.</p>	<p><b>To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Gill Bute  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Dot Agassiz</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>, and accordingly it was:</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDED:</b> That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p>
<p>42.</p>	<p><b>Matters for Consideration</b></p> <p><b>42a) Street Trading Applications</b></p> <p>The Working Party noted that there were no street trading applications for consideration.</p> <p><b>42b) Disabled Parking Bay Applications</b></p> <p>The Working Party noted that there were no disabled bay applications for consideration.</p> <p><b>42c) North Somerset Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document Consultation</b></p> <p>Details of the consultation had been previously circulated to all Elected Members prior to the agenda send out.</p> <p>The Chairman enquired as to whether members had received and read the North Somerset Council Parking Standards Consultation document; some had not yet had the opportunity. Debate ensued, some members showed an interest in responding to the document as a Working Party, rather than as individuals.</p> <p><b>42d) To receive suggestions from Councillors Taylor and Aggasiz on Planning Policy changes</b></p> <p>A discussion document suggesting planning policy changes and expansion of committee remit to encompass improving the appeal of the built environment was circulated to members of the committee prior to the meeting by Cllrs Taylor and Aggasiz.</p> <p>The Chairman reminded members of commitments stated in the new Town Council Strategy pertaining to planning; the existing four approved planning policy statements which provided very wide scope to consider local opinion, unsuitable dwellings, opposition to drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres and other inappropriate development. It was also noted that the current Terms of Reference for the committee contained a key remit which was to respond to planning applications as a statutory consultee.</p> <p>Debate ensued, with members referring to the highly regulated planning framework, National Planning Standards, the Local Plan and North Somerset scrutiny which did not necessarily cover newer environmental aspirations. Whilst there was a need to</p>

encourage North Somerset Council to preserve the historic architectural heritage of Weston-super-Mare alongside that of other planning stakeholders e.g. the Civic Society the Town Council were not the decision making authority. The Chairman reminded of NSC's remit as the local authority who held the final decision making capacity and employed a large team of qualified planning officers.

The Assistant Town Clerk confirmed that the remit of our Planning Cttee/Working Party as set out in Terms of Reference was predominantly about responding to large levels of planning applications, which was our duty as a statutory consultee. This took a considerable amount of agenda time making it difficult to introduce increased remit without considerably prolonging meeting times and workloads if the agenda became loaded with broader remit and decision making items e.g. consultations.

It was noted also that environmental remit was discussed at the Climate Change Working Party so there was high potential for cross over especially given that they currently operated without Terms of Reference, ergo could more easily increase its purview. Councillor Taylor agreed to make contact with the Chairman regarding this matter and the planning proposals.

Other suggestions were made to invite Planning Officers from NSC to attend some Planning Working Party meetings to share insight into their decision making processes and discuss specific applications as required which Members were very responsive to.

Councillors Taylor and Agassiz were keen to articulate that their suggestions to alter the Planning Cttee/Working Party's remit were not a reflection on its current or previous operations, but to 'add value by focussing on the promotion of good development and planning, rather than predominately opposing bad planning. Reference was made that Civic Society did not feel Weston's historic environment was protected like it was in neighbouring Clevedon.

Another member stated that the Town Council Strategy had been designed to evolve with the changing needs of the organisation and the electorate over its ten-year life, therefore incremental changes could be enabled if necessary.

**42c) RESOLVED:** That the Chairman would coordinate formulation of a whole Working Party response to the consultation document, with feedback submitted by 21<sup>st</sup> June and members meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June ahead of the document deadline of 29<sup>th</sup> June 21.

**42d) RESOLVED:** That Planning Officers from North Somerset Council be invited to attend future meetings to share insight into planning decisions and current preservation policies.

**42d) RESOLVED** Councillor Taylor would contact the Climate Change Working Party to discuss proposals in the discussion document.

**43. Matters for Noting**

**43a) Town and Parish Workshop – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021** - to receive updates from Members in attendance and presentation notes previously circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Agassiz had attended the Town and Parish Workshop and reported her views as follows:-

It had been of concern that there was no mention of loss if Green Belt land in Weston-super-Mare who would take the largest share of new housing growth for the area. No plans for how to achieve carbon neutral policy. There were insufficient staff to manage enforcement issues. It was also reported that Weston-super-Mare was under-represented as a very large parish, to only be permitted one representative at the workshop.

The Assistant Town Clerk confirmed that further places has been requested for this reason but due to virtual meeting capacity it had not been permitted.

**43b) Enforcement Notices - January 2021-May 2021** (emailed to all Councillors)

**43a) RESOLVED:** That the verbal report was noted

**43b) RESOLVED:** That the notices were noted.

**44. Planning Applications and other Planning Matters submitted to the Town Council for consideration.**

The Committee considered applications in respect of the weekly lists provided by North Somerset Council dated: 19-25 April, 26 April – 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 3-9 May, 10-16 May and 17-23 May.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council’s comments on planning applications be directly uploaded to ‘Uniform’ website as part of the system of work requirement by North Somerset Council. This information would also be reflected on the Town Council’s website with hyperlink back to North Somerset Council’s website for referral purposes.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.47 pm

Signed.....Dated .....

Chairman of the Planning Committee