

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE  
HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Meeting Commenced:** 2.30 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 4.14 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), Ray Armstrong, David Dash, Jan Holloway and Alan Peak.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk-Operational Services), Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager), Matthew Hardy (Services Co-ordinator, Zoe Scott (Grounds Co-ordinator), Cameron Taljaard (Tourism Marketing Assistant) and Rebecca Saunders (Civic & Committee Officer).

**318 Apologies of Absence and Notifications of Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marcia Pepperall, Peter McAleer, Catherine Gibbons, John Crockford-Hawley and David Hitchins with no substitutions.

**319 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**320 To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.

It was noted that Councillor McAleer was officially a committee member to replace Gillian Carpenter.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Ray Armstrong

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly,

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

**321 Budgets 2021 2022 & Overview of 2022 / 2023**

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal report at the meeting.

It was reported that The Blakehay was now open for the first time in almost two years, so would now have an income. The Museum revenue was picking up pace.

**RESOLVED:** That the verbal report be noted.

**322 Parks & Play Areas**

.1 Castle Batch Play Area

A verbal report was given by the Grounds Co-Ordinator.

It was reported that with the refurbishment of the site already agreed for the next financial year, a meeting was to take place the next day regarding the procurement of a SEN park.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that there was an earmarked reserve of £77k for the site but more funding would be required as the amount would not cover all costs. It was advised that match funding options be explored and a design and build consultation undertaken.

A member enquired if Big Worle would be a suitable option for more funds if the intention was to include a SEN park. There were young residents in the Big Worle catchment with additional needs that would use the facilities and therefore, qualify for funds.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that it would be good to engage with Big Worle at the design and build stage.

Councillor Alan Peak advised as noted in the previous minutes, that he would be happy to attend Big Worle meetings but felt it would be more appropriate in the capacity of a resident rather than a councillor, as it wasn't his ward.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

#### .2 Dartmouth Close Update

A verbal report was given by the Grounds Co-ordinator.

**RESOLVED:** That the verbal report be noted.

#### .3 West Wick Update

A verbal report was given by the Grounds Co-ordinator.

It was noted by the Chairman that Persimmon had now agreed to fix the street lights which would allow the adoption to take place once repairs had been made.

**RESLOVED:** That the verbal report be noted.

#### .4 WSMTC Play Areas

The report of the Grounds Coordinator had been circulated prior to the meeting.

A member raised a concern that parks due to be taken over may be deteriorating whilst there had been delays in the handover.

The Assistant Town Clerk reassured members that full inspections would be carried out before the Town Council assumed responsibility.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **Waterpark**

The reports of the Grounds Coordinator/ Services Coordinator had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### .1 Preparation and Maintenance Update

The Grounds Coordinator reported that several areas had undergone an overhaul to ensure the plant room would be in top condition for the opening date on 24<sup>th</sup> March.

The Assistant Town Clerk also advised that 4 members of staff were currently undergoing a qualification to enable them to test and run the plant room which would mitigate the need to call a third party out, which resulted in lengthy closures.

It was noted that this was an extensive training course which involved a practical exam resulting in a 5-year qualification and had demanded a great deal of commitment from the staff taking part.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised members that the site was now over a decade old and there was a need to start looking at procurement to replace in 2023/24.

#### **RESLOVED:**

1. That a letter of thanks be sent to the grounds team who were taking the water treatment qualification.
2. To start exploring procurement and report back at the next meeting.

### .2 Kiosk Update

A verbal update was given by The Services Coordinator

**RESLOVED:** That the verbal report be noted.

### .3 Satellite VIC Update

The Services Coordinator reported that signage had been ordered and there would be good opportunity to advertise assets such as The Museum and The Blakehay. Brean Leisure had expressed an interest in advertising but council sites would have prime advertising position.

A signage flag example was viewed at the meeting which would stand at 2.5M high making it visible from a great distance. Also an advertising notice board had been purchased for advertising Visit Weston and its partners.

A member enquired if there would be an opportunity to link in with The SEE Monster. The Services Coordinator advised that Visit Weston had representation at all the Think Tank meetings to ensure no opportunities were missed.

*3.09 pm Councillor Ray Armstrong left the meeting*

**RESLOVED:** That the report be noted.

## Tourism Function Update

The report of the Tourism Manager had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### .1 Visit Weston Partners

The Tourism Manager advised that the requested tick list of partners was now complete and the team were now talking to businesses not currently signed up to the scheme. The Tourism Manager was very confident that Brean Leisure would be signing up to the platinum package, with the hope that this would encourage other sites in the area such as Brean Country club to also sign up.

### *3.14 pm Councillor Ray Armstrong Re- joined the meeting*

It was advised that although some businesses had failed over the pandemic there were new ones opening in the town and BBC Points West had been in touch for a comment, to run a story on this.

It was reported that a decision on pricing would be useful when talking to partners and a brief explanation of the package grades was given.

A pricing discussion ensued.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Jan Holloway  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Ray Armstrong

A vote was taken and carried, Accordingly

**RESOLVED:** That the pricing be set at price per Square Meter at pre pandemic rate plus 10% for advertising on Waterpark Cabin.

### .2 Payments

The Tourism Manger reported that all partners would be billed from 1<sup>st</sup> April but the ability to give a discount to struggling businesses would be helpful.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Alan Peak  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor David Dash

A vote was taken and carried, Accordingly

**RESOLVED:** That all partners be billed from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 with discretion for struggling businesses of up to 10% at The Tourism Managers discretion and up to 20% at the discretion of The Deputy or Town Clerk.

### .3 Visit to Partners

A verbal report was given by the Tourism Manager who committed to keeping the new tick chart system up to date.

**RESOLVED:** That the Tick chart be kept up to date.

#### .4 Recovery Discount Plan

The Tourism Manager reported that a DMO webinar had been attended where it was advised some sectors such as Food & Beverage and small non-essential retail businesses would really benefit from an introductory offer as they had been most affected by the pandemic.

A discussion ensued regarding a discounted introductory offer for some new businesses.

**PROPOSED-** Councillor Alan Peak  
**SECONDED-** Councillor Jan Holloway

A vote was taken and carried, Accordingly

**RESOLVED:** That an introductory offer for new businesses for the Food & Beverage or Small non-essential business criteria at an agreed £99 excluding VAT for 2022/23.

#### .5 Statistics

The Tourism Manager noted that the report was self-explanatory and numbers were going in the correct direction.

The Services Coordinator reported that he had been using Instagram as a platform which had been very well received with almost 2000 follows already.

**RESOVLED:** That the report be noted.

### **323 Website – Progress Update**

The report of the Services Coordinator had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was noted that progress had been made and a 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the site map was now complete.

A meeting the following day would take place regarding the psychical design.

There would be volunteer involvement with a page on the website about the Hildesheim twinning and would be linked to the Hildesheim VIC.

The Chairman enquired as to the time frame for the new site to be up and running.

The Services Coordinator was hopeful it would be live for Easter 2022 as the team were working hard to fill the gaps in content creation.

The Tourism Manager advised that the old website was being updated and would still be in service until the new one took over.

**RESLOVED:** That the report be noted.

## 324 Visit West Update

The report of the Tourism Manager had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Tourism Manger reported that she would be attending a meeting with the Visit West operational team this month.

Members felt this option would work better as it had 5 websites on the same platform as Visit Weston and there were also opportunities to advertise events outside the area and vis versa, which wasn't the case for Visit Somerset.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## 325 VIC

The report of the Tourism Manager had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### 10.1 Exiting the Tropicana

The Tourism Manager reported that a meeting with North Somerset and Unboxed had taken place and they would shortly advise which items they would like. There would be options to take some objects to the new site but likely some storage would be needed in the interim period.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that storage was actively being explored.

The Tourism Manager reported that the Tropicana would be exited on 31<sup>st</sup> March but there was an agreement in place that the VIC would be manned on 13<sup>th</sup> March for the comic con exhibition and a flash sale would take place on any remaining sock.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

### 10.2 Future Sites

- Cabin at the Waterpark

A verbal report was given by the Services Coordinator where it was noted that some VIC stock would be sold from the site.

- Update on Silica

The Assistant Town Clerk report that NSC were working on lighting repairs which had been damaged by rodents.

- Tuk Tuk Locations:

The Services Coordinator reported that 7 locations had now been secured which would enable a presence across the whole town over 7 days of the week.

Once all staff had been recruited, a rota would be put together.

- Welcome Hosts:

The Services Coordinator provided examples of the uniforms that would be ordered which showed unique colors and branding. An interim order had been placed of hi vis jackets and umbrellas, while recruitment was underway.

Backpacks with advertising flags protruding 1.5meters high would be used by the welcome hosts, which would make them highly visible.

The Assistant Town Clerk reported she would be wearing a branded hi vis jacket when moving between sites to give even more presence.

The Chairman suggested a stand which could be positioned by the Tuk Tuks with the phrase '*Here To Help*' to also ensure visibility and to try to link logo up with Culture Weston.

The Tourism Manager reported NSC's plans which was to have their own Welcomers to fill a similar role, as well as taking car parking payments.

The Services Coordinator reported there were efforts to plan to greet visitors off coaches but this needed to be delicately arranged, to maintain good relations with the coach companies.

- New VIC Location

The Tourism Manager advised of no new updates and perceived that the VIC would be a mobile site until a long term solution had been secured.

**RESOLVED:** That the verbal reports be noted.

Signed: ..... Dated: .....

**Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee**

**Report from Caroline Darlington - Tourism Manager, Matt Hardy - Operational Services Manager and Zoe Scott – Grounds Coordinator to the Tourism & Leisure Committee 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**5. Waterpark**

**5.1 Preparation and Maintenance Update – Zoe Scott, Grounds Coordinator**

The following work has now been carried out and complete:

- The Grandudos dosing system - pump service and pressure sensor replacement.
- The Effects pump, Sump pump – complete overhaul.
- The solenoid bank for the effects - one of each size of solenoid being purchased and kept stock.
- The PH / Chlorine / controller – complete service.
- 2 new manhole covers purchased and installed – installed.

The re commissioning of the water park took place on the Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March to ensure it is fully working and operational. At the time of writing this report we have received back our Bacteria Sample which is clear. We are just waiting for our Legionella results. Providing all results are clear, the first day the water will be turned on is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April, ready for the Easter Bank holiday weekend.

All 4 team members have passed their necessary qualification to be able to test and run the Plant Room.

**5.2 VIC Satellite Update – Verbal**

Members to receive verbal update from Operational Services Manager.

**6. Tuk Tuk Locations**

A rota has been developed alongside the Team Leaders and current locations are:

- The railway station
- Outside the Tropicana and travelling between there and Royal Sands
- At the Grand Pier on the Promenade and travelling between there and the Waterpark
- At the Silica and/or outside Costa Coffee on the High Street
- Tesco Superstore

In addition to being with the tuk tuks, the Welcome hosts will walk or cycle in pairs along the Promenade between the Tropicana and the Pier, and between the Pier and Marine Lake.

In bright yellow and blue jackets and polo shirts, each with the tourism “I” they will be easily identifiable. We have also provided back packs with digital displays, over which we have control and alter to suit circumstances, and with bright yellow umbrellas that also sport the tourism “I”.

Inductions began on 4<sup>th</sup> April for the team of 12 casual staff, our Weston Hosts, and three Team Leaders.

**Report from Caroline Darlington - Tourism Manager, Matt Hardy - Operational Services Manager and Zoe Scott – Grounds Coordinator to the Tourism & Leisure Committee 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**7. TOURISM FUNCTION UPDATE**

**7.1 VISIT WESTON PARTNERS**

<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>		
<b>Albany Lodge</b>	Silver	Closed business, may open 3 rooms by Easter but will sell on Airbnb
<b>The Beaches Guest House</b>	silver	Maybe
<b>Beachside Holiday Park</b>	Gold	yes
<b>Bella Vista Guest House</b>	Silver	unsure
<b>Bridge Hall Apartments</b>	Gold	yes
<b>Bucklegrove Holiday Park</b>	Bronze	Dependent on Wookey Hole re-signing
<b>The Commodore Hotel NOW SOUTH SANDS</b>	Bronze	maybe
<b>Country View Holiday Park</b>	Platinum	Has re-joined at Platinum
<b>Court Farm Country Park</b>	Bronze	Yes
<b>Dulhorn Farm Holiday Park</b>	Gold	Yes
<b>Ellenborough Hall Holiday Apartments</b>	Gold	No
<b>Florence Guest House</b>	Bronze	Maybe, deciding whether to re-open
<b>Go South, The Beach House</b>	Silver	yes
<b>Go South, Kyrenia Apartments</b>	Silver	yes
<b>Go South, Salisbury Court Apartments</b>	Silver	yes
<b>Grove Lodge</b>	Silver	yes
<b>Highlea House</b>	Platinum	yes but will downgrade package
<b>Kenilworth Guest House</b>	Gold	no, sold up
<b>Lakeside Holiday Park</b>	gold	Taken over 01/02 by Royale Resorts

**Report from Caroline Darlington - Tourism Manager, Matt Hardy - Operational Services Manager and Zoe Scott – Grounds Coordinator to the Tourism & Leisure Committee 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>		
<b>Lauriston Hotel</b>	Platinum	
<b>Lewinsdale Lodge</b>	Platinum	Pending a visit, new owners. They have asked to postpone visit until refurb
<b>Martyndale Suites now ROYAL CRESCENT APTS</b>	Bronze	yes
<b>Mendip View Luxury Lodges</b>	Bronze	Dependent on Wookey Hole re-signing
<b>Milton Lodge</b>	Bronze	yes
<b>Oakover Guest House</b>	gold	
<b>Riverside Holiday Park</b>	Platinum	Yes
<b>Roedean Guest House</b>	bronze	Closed
<b>Royal Grosvenor Hotel</b>	gold	yes
<b>Sand Bay Retreat</b>	Bronze	Yes
<b>Sand Farm Caravan &amp; Camping Site</b>	Silver	Yes
<b>Stonebridge Farm Caravan Park</b>	Silver	Yes
<b>Strawberryfield Holiday Park</b>	Silver	
<b>Sunset Bay Hotel</b>	Bronze	Yes
<b>Timbertops</b>	Gold	NEW SIGNING from 1 <sup>st</sup> April
<b>Wall Eden Farm</b>	Plat Plus	Yes
<b>Webbington Farm Holiday Cottages</b>	Platinum	Yes

<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>		
<b>The Bishop's Palace</b>	Bronze	Yes
<b>The Blakehay Theatre</b>	Plat Plus	Yes
<b>Bleadon Hill Golf Course</b>	Plat	Maybe

**Report from Caroline Darlington - Tourism Manager, Matt Hardy - Operational Services Manager and Zoe Scott – Grounds Coordinator to the Tourism & Leisure Committee 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>		
	Plus	
<b>Brean Theme Park</b>	Platinum	In negotiation with all Brean parks
<b>Clevedon Golf Centre</b>	Bronze	
<b>Clevedon Pier &amp; Heritage Trust</b>	Gold	
<b>Clip n Climb</b>	Platinum	Yes
<b>Court Farm Country Park</b>	Bronze	Yes
<b>The Grand Pier</b>	Gold	Yes
<b>Jump n Jackz</b>	bronze	
<b>Mendips Raceway</b>	bronze	
<b>Noah's Ark Zoo Farm</b>	Plat Plus	Yes
<b>Ocean Adventurers</b>	Platinum	Yes
<b>Puxton Park</b>	Plat Plus	Yes
<b>Rich's Cider</b>	Bronze	
<b>Water Adventure Play Park</b>	Platinum	
<b>West Somerset Railway</b>	bronze	
<b>Weston Museum</b>	Plat Plus	
<b>Weston-super-Mare Golf Club</b>	Silver	
<b>Weston-super-Mare AFC</b>	silver	Yes
<b>The Winter Gardens Pavilion</b>	Plat Plus	
<b>Wookey Hole Caves</b>	Plat Plus	Yes

<b>RESTAURANTS</b>		

**Report from Caroline Darlington - Tourism Manager, Matt Hardy - Operational Services Manager and Zoe Scott – Grounds Coordinator to the Tourism & Leisure Committee 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

<b>RESTAURANTS</b>		
<b>Bistrot Pierre</b>	Platinum	Yes at Platinum Plus
<b>The Blitz Tearoom</b>	Bronze	
<b>Hadleys at Number One</b>	Bronze	Closed
<b>Kaspa's Desserts</b>	bronze	
<b>Nando's</b>	Bronze	
<b>Proud Bar</b>	Bronze	Never paid
<b>Tiffin at The Beach</b>	Gold	Dave Peters to follow up
<b>Tiffin at The Pier</b>	Gold	Dave Peters to follow up
<b>Winston's Fish Bar</b>	Bronze	

<b>SHOPPING</b>		
<b>(BID) Dolphin Square</b>	Platinum	No they have given almost all their budget to WPA and have no funds for Visit Weston
<b>Grove Village (BID)</b>	Platinum	Ditto
<b>High Street (BID)</b>	Platinum	Ditto
<b>Orchard Meadows (BID)</b>	Platinum	ditto
<b>Town Centre Gateway (BID)</b>	Platinum	ditto
<b>Sovereign Shopping Centre</b>	Platinum	
<b>First Bus</b>	bronze	

## **7.2 STATISTICS**

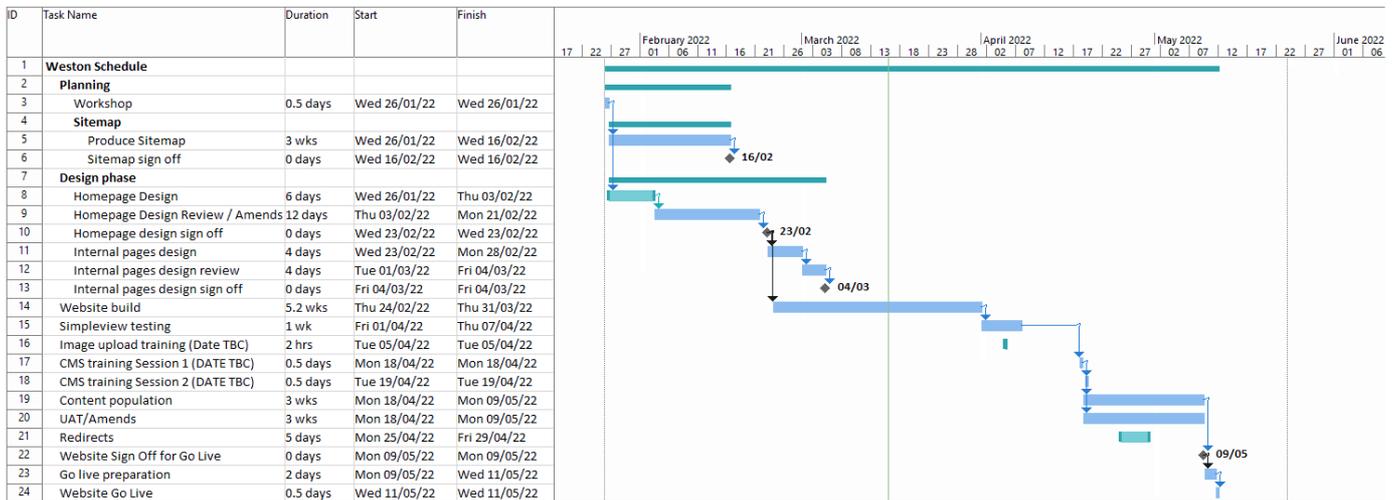
In March, our Facebook posts reached 10.6k people with Instagram reaching 1833.

Website traffic in February and March achieved 118,135 page views. An increase of 29.2% against December and January.

**Report from Caroline Darlington - Tourism Manager, Matt Hardy - Operational Services Manager and Zoe Scott – Grounds Coordinator to the Tourism & Leisure Committee 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**8. WEBSITE PROGRESS UPDATE**

Due to Covid related absences, we are experiencing a slight delay on the delivery of the new Visit Weston website. However, training is taking place throughout April and the new launch date is set for 11<sup>th</sup> May. Please see below for the revised timetable of delivery.



**Members are requested to note the report.**