

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD VIA ZOOM
ON MONDAY 12TH APRIL 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 7.01 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.53 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), David Dash, Catherine Gibbons, Pete McAleer, Alan Peak, Marcia Pepperall, and James Clayton.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk and Grounds Manager), Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager), Emma Williams (Tourism Marketing Officer), Beverley Milner-Simonds and Sarah Milner-Simonds (Eat:Festival).

Beverley and Sarah Milner-Simonds addressed the meeting to thank the Town Council for their continued support of the Eat:Festival events held in Weston-super-Mare. It was reported that the next event planned for 17th April would be the 10th held in Weston and the 50th Eat:Festival over all.

The Chairman invited attendees to join him in a minute of silence in remembrance of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for their address and welcomed them to stay for the meeting.

256	<p>Apologies of Absence and Notifications of Substitutions</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Crockford-Hawley with no substitution.</p> <p>Councillors Marc Aplin, David Hitchins and Ella Sayce were absent from the meeting.</p>
257	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
258	<p>To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 8th February 2021</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Councillor David Dash SECONDED: Councillor Pete McAleer</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.</p>

259

Tourism Function Update

The reports of the Tourism Manager and Tourism Marketing Officer had been circulated prior to the meeting and were shared on screen as a Powerpoint presentation.

259.1 Spring 2021

The Tourism Manager summarised the information on the Powerpoint. Updates were reported within the Tourism department and its collaboration with the Weston Place Agency from North Somerset Council. The Visitor Information Centre telephone had seen a large increase in calls ahead of the prospective reopening of the centre after 21st June 2021 - following the next phase of lockdown easing.

The two 'Tic Tuk' vehicles would be delivered in May (at least one, possibly both). Images of the vehicles with Visit Weston livery were shown on screen to members. Concerns were raised as to whether the vehicles would be driven along the promenade, the Tourism Manager confirmed they would not, as no vehicular access to the promenade was permitted between 10am and 5pm. Training was being organised for staff permitted to drive the Tic Tuks, that would better prepare them for navigating the town in close proximity to pedestrians.

259.2 Reopening the VIC

The Tourism Manager reported on weather damage sustained through water and damp ingress to the VIC, that had been reported to NSC. A deep clean would take place in the centre in the days following the meeting.

Seasonal staff recruitment for the VIC was imminent, with positive news received from the 2019 team, all confirming they would like to work at the centre again this year.

The report went on to outline the recent TV and radio coverage Visit Weston had been invited to participate in, with a video clip of the Tourism Manager's Zoom interview for BBC West Midlands News, which was shown to all via screen share.

259.3 Website & Social Media Update

The Tourism Marketing Officer continued to present the Powerpoint presentation, briefly explaining the decrease in website traffic, coinciding with the announcement of the third national lockdown, but that numbers were beginning to return to more expected levels as the population were able to move around the country and businesses reopened.

A social media campaign had been launched that offered a twelve-month free listing on the Visit Weston website, designed to support struggling local business to bounce back following the closures associated with the pandemic. There had already been an encouraging response to this invitation, with around ten organisations making enquiries.

259.4 Destination Marketing

As per a member's suggestion at the last Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting, a TikTok social media account had been set up by the Tourism

	<p>Marketing Officer with content already being posted. The platform would heavily be involved in the promotional launch of the Tic Tuk vehicles once delivered. Destination Marketing had commenced with the invitation for new website listings and that Pear Communications would supply 'Welcome Packs' to the VIC and Tik Tuks to distribute to visitors requiring information, leaflets and a map etc.</p> <p>A question was posed by a member to the TMO in relation to the sorting order of suggested activities and attractions on the Visit Weston website; with little or no preference given to listings inside the Weston-super-Mare area. It was agreed by the TMO that this could be amended, and could select a priority placement for local businesses instead of an alphabetical or membership level sorting order. The Tourism Manager added that when the website was first launched, it had been important to create as many listings and partner businesses as possible in order to 'flesh-out' the site with more content. However, that as the focus of the 'support local' ethos was now of a higher priority, the very nature of the site was changing to become more Weston-centric.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted</p>
260	<p>Parks and Play Areas</p> <p>260.3 Update on all Parks and Play Areas</p> <p>The Grounds Manager verbally updated the committee with activities from the Grounds team. As the evenings were now lighter, vandalism had become more prevalent across all parks and play areas, as well as dangerous litter including broken glass. A meeting was scheduled with the WTC Community Response Officer, to agree a strategy to deter the type of behaviours through proactive increased presence. The synergy between the Town Council and District Council through the post holder had also recently facilitated the swift moving-on of campers in Ellenborough Park.</p> <p>The Grounds team had received many requests from community groups and residents in relation to the use of Ellenborough Park West as a wellbeing space. A resident had recently required some re-education from the Grounds team, as they had been misinformed by the NSC Contact Team that metal detecting was permitted in the park.</p> <p>This incident had led to the Grounds Coordinator creating a guide to be sent to NSC in relation to the responsibilities of the Town Council and what its policies and strategies permitted, to avoid a reoccurrence of this type of misunderstanding.</p> <p>260.1 Renovations at the Water Park</p> <p>Somerset Wood Recycling had attended the Water Park and made a number of repairs, including a reconditioning of the wooden xylophone toy. The benches had been removed, repaired and painted. Martin D'Arcy was still booked to paint and decorate the Water Park, once the site had received a longer spell of dry weather to better prepare the surfaces for work.</p> <p>The Grounds team had taken a phone call from a nearby resident, reporting a recent increase in disruptive antisocial behaviour in the Water Park on an evening. The low walls on the west side of the park, although planted with holly bushes,</p>

were being scaled to gain access. A suggestion was made by The Chairman to the Town Clerk to consider locating a Town Council mobile CCTV camera at the park to deter gatherings. The Grounds Manager confirmed that this had already been discussed with NSC and the Community Response Officer.

260.2 Water Park VIC Cabin

The Town Clerk reported on that the Property and Asset Management Team at NSC had now confirmed in principle that they would grant Landlord's Consent for the proposed cabin under the lease of the park.

The Town Clerk also reported on the issue of whether, due to the park's location within a conservation area, planning permission was necessary to erect a cabin in the Water Park. In his view, under per part 12 (A) of the General Permitted Development Order, development undertaken by a parish council to provide an information kiosk did not require planning permission. This had since been confirmed by the NSC Planning Department and final confirmation of Landlords' Consent was expected to be given very soon.

The Grounds Manager confirmed that she and the Tourism Manager were conducting a site visit to the Water Park the following day, to discuss the practical details of the plans.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:53 pm.

Signed: Dated:
Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee