

WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON TUESDAY 14th December 2021

Meeting Commenced: 2.30 pm

Meeting Concluded: 4.02 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), John Crockford-Hawley, David Dash, Ray Armstrong, Jan Holloway, Catherine Gibbons, Marc Aplin, Alan Peak and Marcia Pepperall.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Peter McAleer, Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk-Operational Services), Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager), Matthew Hardy (Acting Destination Manager), Zoe Scott (Grounds Co-ordinator), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Cameron Taljaard (Tourism Marketing Assistant), Rebecca Saunders (Civic & Committee Officer) and Aileen Williamson (Member of The Public).

242 Apologies of Absence and Notifications of Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Hitchins who was substituted by Councillor Peter McAleer, Councillor Gillian Carpenter who was substituted by Councillor McAleer and Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly with no substitution.

It was noted Councillor Peter McAleer would be a long term substitution for Councillor Gillian Carpenter as she was unable to attend afternoon meetings and requested to meet on an evening to allow her to attend again.

243 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

244 To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 5th October 2021

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

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway

SECONDED BY: Councillor David Dash

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

245 Budget 2021 2022 & Overview of 2022/2023

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk had been circulated with the agenda.

There were no questions received.

RESOLVED-That the report be noted.

246 Parks & Play Areas

.1 Castle Batch Play Area

A verbal report was given by the Assistant Town Clerk-Operational Services and Grounds Co-ordinator who reported that equipment had to be removed due to vandalism and deterioration.

.2 Dartmouth Close Update

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the Town Clerk had requested an update but was still awaiting a response from Alliance Homes.

A member enquired whether Big Worle could help fund the site and a discussion ensued regarding engaging with Big Worle to help fund to enhance the Council's plans for the site and how they demined funding.

The Assistant Town Clerk advised that Big Worle had National Lottery funding with Alliance homes overseeing the funds but communication with Big Worle had been difficult due to regular changes of officers and of the guidance on how the funds could be used.

14.45pm Councillor Marcia Pepperall joined the meeting.

A member suggested the Council write to Big Worle and members encourage members of the public to do so themselves also.

RESOLVED- That a letter to Big Worle to request support for a SEN play area at this site and request a seat on the panel for Councillor Alan Peak.

.3 West Wick Update

The Assistant Town Clerk – Operational Services reported there was no update on this site.

A member advised that there may be a problem with Persimmon taking responsibility for fixing lights before the council adopt the site and was concerned that damage maybe encountered whilst this was awaited and the site maintained.

RESLOVED -That Assistant Town Clerk contact North Somerset to get confirmation of who was inspecting the site until the Town Council takes over.

.4 WSMTC Play Areas

The Grounds Coordinator presented a 'traffic light' presentation which had also been circulated prior to the meeting.

This was a thorough inspection carried out by GB Sports and even green coded sites would need general maintained tasks carried out.

It is suggested that upgrades be undertaken over the following three sites over the next three years as follows: -

- 22-Castle Batch
- 23-Uphill Jnr
- 24-Broadway Play

GB Sports had also raised concerns about the water park particularly the large

wooden structure which may have rot and so would need some funding which may affect funds available for Castle Batch.

It was also noted that quarterly inspections by GB Sports of all sites would be useful to keep on top of maintenance work needed.

PROPOSED BY-Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

SECONDED BY-Councillor Marc Aplin

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

RESOLVED: That:

1

A- The current full refurbishment schedule of

i-Year 1 (2022) Castle Batch

ii-Year 2(2023) Broadway Play

iii-Year 3(2024) Uphill Junior

B- GB Sports to carry out quarterly inspections of all play areas and recordings put on PSS live accordingly for actions and monitoring.

2- Confirm earmarked reserve should be used for SEN Park at Castle Batch

Waterpark

247

.1 End of Season Update

A verbal report was given by the Acting Destination Manager who advised that lessons had been learnt during the 2021 season, namely the need to streamline & enhance admission to the water park in peak season. Practically a newly purchased handheld payment device would aid this and could be used at other sites. Staffing techniques would also be improved next season.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

.2 Maintenance Review

The Grounds Coordinator gave a verbal report.

The pump room had had a survey audit which showed some items that need servicing or replacing. Some pieces would be kept in stock for next season to speed up repairs and reduce the time the park would need to be closed in the event of breakdowns but it was difficult to pre-empt which parts may break.

The Assistant Town Clerk - Operational Services advised that a bigger refurbishment would be needed in the future as the site was now a decade old and was working with a mixture of old and new parts.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that there were a little over three months left before next season so part quotes and ordering should be pushed otherwise the park would need a revised reopening date.

RESOLVED-That the report be noted and the waterpark be addressed as a priority ahead of the next season.

.3 Kiosk Update

The Acting Destination Manager gave a verbal report and informed that he had explored new marketing for the site and there were opportunities for third party advertising. It could also be used as a point for people to come as an information point.

RESOLVED-That the report be noted.

VIC

248

.1 End of year review

The Tourism Manager gave a verbal report and advised that it had been a very good season, much better than expected and especially due to Covid and the short season. There had been only 2000 fewer footfall than in the last non Covid season.

.2 Vacating VIC

The Tropicana exit had started and stock had been sold to other regions which had made £14k against £16.5k but a new style of stock would be needed in the new VIC location.

.3 Stock Review

A member noted that it had been a good season and the VIC must complete its vacation of the Tropicana by 31st March 2022.

RESLOVED-That the report be noted.

249 Tourism Function Update

.1 Visit Weston Partners

The Tourism Manager gave a PowerPoint presentation.

It was noted that some more visits had been carried out since the report had been produced and Wookey Hole for example had indicated they would renew. Some partners had indicated they would be renewing but at a lower package due to the impact of the pandemic.

A recent visit to the new YMCA hotel had been positive and they had committed to at least a gold package. A newsletter had recently been sent out and open days were planned for January 2022.

A member challenged how many sites would have an in-person visit by the next T&L meeting and how many had committed to renewing.

The Tourism Manager advised that all partners would have an in-person visit by February 2022 and eight had committed to renewing so far; also that new businesses would be engaged too.

The Chairman suggested a tick box chart so members could see who had renewed at a glance.

The Tourism Manager agreed with this idea and suggested they would also target

more restaurants and eateries to get a broad width of partners.

RESOLVED-That the report be noted and the Tourism Manager provide a tick box chart of partners for the next meeting to show which had renewed and indeed had been visited.

.2 Statistics

A PowerPoint presentation was given by the Tourism Manager and Acting Destination Manager which indicated W-S-M was the biggest users of the website.

A member challenged that, if $\frac{3}{4}$ of the users were already in the area, was the website engaging the audience intended.

The Acting Destination Manager advised that the figures need to be refined more. However, it wasn't a negative thing that so many local people accessed the site as a lot were from the outskirts which still encouraged them into town centre.

RESOLVED-That the report be noted.

.3 Future VIC Sites

The Tourism Manager advised if the VIC was situated at the new HQ it would change the demographic of people who accessed it, however the benefit of this was that they could offer a broader service.

A member advised caution as the HQ site was not yet secured.

It was enquired if seasonal staff would still be employed if the VIC was sited at the new HQ and the Tourism Manager confirmed that they would be. The DTC confirmed that the exact staffing structure would be confirmed in due course as there was also revisions for the waterpark and 'hosts' positions that also needed to be considered within this.

A discussion ensued regarding taking over the silica site as a sub- VIC Site.

PROPOSED BY-Councillor Jan Holloway

SECONDED BY-Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

RESOLVED-Subject to confirmation of the lighting replacement and other major works being completed as necessary by NSC on the Silica structure, the Town Council formally write to NSC to explore the possibility of taking over this structure on a zero cost transfer or long lease.

RECOMMENDED- That upon satisfactory confirmation of these requirements a recommendation should then be taken as necessary to Full Town Council in order to acquire this asset to use as an information point in the town centre.

.4 TUK TUK Update

The acting Destination Marketing Officer gave a verbal report and advised that both Tuk Tuks were returned and working. There was a rota for next year as to where/when they will be located and would be in use 7 days a week in peak season subject to staffing. The manager of Tesco has committed to offer an

outside space early next year which was very positive as they had a footfall of 45,000 per week and a place in the Sovereign Centre also been secured.

3.35pm Councillor John Crockford-Hawley left the meeting.

The Acting Destination Manager reported that garaging continued to be a problem but talks were in the process to locate in Stafford road slightly out of town.

The Tourism Manager also advised that a meeting had resulted in a continued presence at the railway station on Fridays.

RESOLVED-That the report be noted.

.5 DVD Destination DVD

The Acting Destination Manager verbally reported that a video had been produced in a format that could be used on coaches, as this type of visitor made up a large proportion of visitors but the film would be used on other platforms such as social media.

A member enquired if the videos could be strung together to save money and was advised that the videos were not all shot in the same way so wouldn't fit together well to give a professional overall effect.

3.44pm The Tourism Manager & Councillor Marc Aplin left the meeting.

PROPOSED BY-Councillor Ray Armstrong

SECONDED BY-Councillor Jan Holloway

RESOLVED-To produce a new Destination DVD.

250 New Logo

The Acting Destination Manager gave a verbal report supported by a slide presentation reporting examples of the purposed new logo. He demonstrated that the logo was recognisable to existing users and pushed the new "Everyone is Welcome" slogan to be more inclusive.

Examples of Weston Super Hosts uniforms were presented including the new logo. A member enquired whether the uniforms would be a vibrant colour and this was confirmed as grey was not appealing as was shown in some of the pictures.

PROPOSED BY-Councillor Alan Peak

SECONDED BY-Councillor Catherine Gibbons

RESLOVED-To approve New Visit Weston Logo

251 Website Procurement

The report had been previously circulated with the agenda.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that 4 companies had tendered and one was very strong but very expensive in comparison to the other three.

Discussion ensued and the bids were given consideration. It was felt that there would

be benefits to continuing to work with Simpleview who had scored the highest at the interview stage, scoring 77, as they were familiar with the background to Visit Weston and could commit to have the new site up and running by 1st April 2022.

PROPOSED BY-Councillor Alan Peak
SECONDED BY-Councillor Peter McAleer

RESLOVED- To award the website contract for the development of a new site for April 2022 to Simpleview for a period of 3 years with option to extend for a further 2 years following.

252 Visit Somerset Membership Renewal

In the absence of The Tourism Manager the Deputy Town Clerk reported that the renewal would cost £1,500.

A concern was raised that Visit Somerset's director structure may be changing and this might adversely affect the service received.

The Acting Destination Manager had requested information and statistics to enable him to review if the service was giving Weston benefits but had been advised that North Somerset would be supplying these.

A member queried whether the service was aimed at overseas tourists which may not be the target audience for Weston.

Another member felt that maybe the council should save the money this year in the hope that it gets offered a better deal to return next year.

PROPOSED BY-Councillor Alan Peak
SECONDED BY- Councillor Peter McAleer

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Town Council that the council do not renew its Visit Somerset membership.

253 Meeting Venues

The Chairman proposed that meetings from February 2022 onwards be held at The Blakehay Theatre.

RESOLVED: To confirm booking of the Blakehay Theatre for the following meetings: 15th February and 12th April 2022.

With there being no further business the meeting concluded at 4.02pm

Signed: Dated:
Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee