

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 6th FEBRUARY 2017**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.45 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), James Davis, David Hitchins, Jocelyn Holder, Michael Lyall, Ian Porter, Clive Webb and Roz Willis.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Rob Thurston (Grounds Manager), Caroline Darlington (Visitor Information Officer), Tricia Brabham (Communications Officer) and Sarah Robinson (Weston Mercury).

260.	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutions Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Crockford-Hawley and James Clayton together with Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk) and Debbie Matthews (Love Weston Consultant). Councillors Len Purnell and Derek Mead were not in attendance.
261.	Declarations of Interest There were no Declarations of Interest received.
262.	To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 5th December 2016. The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda. RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.
263.	Love Weston Progress Report The report of the Love Weston Consultant had been previously circulated with the agenda. The Assistant Town Clerk, in the absence of the Love Weston Consultant, introduced the report which included website statistics and marketing campaigns booked for 2017. The Chairman noted the continued and positive development of Love Weston and wished to take this opportunity to personally thank the Love Weston Consultant, Debbie Matthews, for all her efforts and hard work. The success of Love Weston was due to Debbie Matthews' commitment over the past 3 to 4 years and members were reminded that New Mind/Tell Us continued to rate the Love Weston website as one of the best tourism destination sites in the United Kingdom. The Chairman reminded members of the decision to bring Love Weston in-house and conjoining with the Visitor Information Centre staff. It seemed sensible to make the change in financial terms. Debbie Matthews had expressed that she did not want to become employed and, therefore, the SLA would cease on the 1 st April, 2017. RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.

<p>264.</p>	<p>Tourism Publications 2017 The report of the Visitor Information Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>264.1 Explore Magazine</p> <p>The Visitor Information Officer updated members on the magazine’s progress with a copy of the front cover being made available to view at the meeting. The 4 page section of the Love Weston Membership directory was on target for the print deadline.</p> <p>Members of the committee were advised that some Love Weston memberships had not been renewed. However, Wookey Hole had signed up for Platinum membership, which was significant for the Love Weston brand and really good for website content too.</p> <p>A member, in reference to the Explore magazine, voiced her concerns regarding the mention of theatres in the town with the exclusion of Theatre in the Hut. Following a short debate, the Visitor Information Officer advised that she was open to take direction.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Members decided that the Theatre in the Hut was a community theatre and not appropriate for destination advertising.</p> <p>264.2 In-Resort Tourist Map</p> <p>Members were updated on the progress of the in-resort map and were advised that the map should be ready by Easter. There were a few gaps which the Blakehay/Museum/Waterpark could negotiate.</p>
<p>265.</p>	<p>Visitor Information Centre Update The report of the Visitor Information Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Members were advised that membership was approaching 60 and that with the addition of Wookey Hole the Visitor Information Officer was hopeful that this membership would attract other prestigious organisations to the Love Weston brand.</p> <p>With the re-structuring of tourism operations, recruitment was underway and would include the following new appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Marketing Officer • Visitor Information Centre Supervisor • Two contracted seasonal Visitor Information Assistants • Two casual seasonal Visitor Information Assistants <p>The Visitor Information Officer, Caroline Darlington, would take up the post of Tourism Manager as of 1st April 2017.</p> <p>Members were advised that an intensive training schedule had been arranged for the Tourism Manager and new staffing team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VisitEngland’s Quality Tourism Assessment Scheme (QIT). • New Mind/Tell Us training on DMS and CMS management systems for the Love Weston website. • IOSH – H&S training <p>Training for seasonal VIC staff would include Town Council policy and procedure in</p>

respect of first aid, safeguarding, fire evacuation, equality and diversity and how to handle 'frequently asked questions'.

In response to a question on accreditation, members were advised that even if an establishment was accredited by VisitEngland, accreditation by Love Weston was required for membership.

The Visitor Information Officer in conclusion advised that she would be contacting Weston-super-Mare's Hotel and Restaurants Association for discussions on the town's tourism and future.

265.1 Opening Times

The Chairman informed members that the VIC would be open for the Easter weekend and then from the 1st May until the end of September which corresponds with North Somerset Council's Seafront Team and their commitments to lost children and first aid provision.

In response to a member's question regarding finances and recruitment, the Chairman advised that the posts had been budgeted for and that bringing the role in-house resulted in a saving for the Town Council.

265.2 Advertising

The Chairman confirmed that the agreed spring and summer destination advertising campaigns had been booked and were underway and that discussions were sought with Crosville regarding reciprocal advertising, in-resort advertising on their land trains and possibly on the back panel of their Flyer bus to Cribbs Causeway and Bristol.

266. Parks and Play Areas

The Grounds Manager introduced the reports.

266.1 Water Park

The report of the Town Clerk was tabled.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.

266.2 Skate Park

The report of the Grounds Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.

Members were advised that the process of consultation between the users and the chosen contractor, Canvas Spaces, had been very positive and the contract was now fully drafted and ready to go. Signs had been put up at the Skate Park to inform that the project had now commenced, and the Grounds Manager advised that barriers around the equipment would be erected. Due to the tenuous timescale stipulated by the grant award, the proposal by North Somerset Council for the relocation of the Skate Park to the opposite side of the Leisure Centre was untenable.

Debate ensued on skateboarders and their continued use of the Town Square and Princess Royal Square. It was envisaged that the new skate park would draw skateboarders away from these areas especially as they had ownership in its plan and construction. The Chairman recommended the use of Public Space Protection Orders when they came into force in June, and also informed that the Town Square would be known as the Italian Gardens.

In response to the question of a maintenance plan, the Grounds Manager advised that the new facility was constructed of concrete which usually required little maintenance. However, any issues arising would be identified during regular play area inspections.

Debate ensued on security and policing the area which progressed to debate on the usage and improvement of CCTV which concluded with a referral to the Community Services Committee.

RESOLVED: That the town's CCTV area of coverage and quality be reviewed at a future Community Services Committee meeting.

Although it had been considered under Standing Order 35.1 to exclude the public and press, the Chairman had decided in consultation with the Town Clerk to waive the Standing Order and not exclude the public and press from the following item.

266.3 Park and Play Areas

The report of the Grounds Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.

During the budget setting process for the year 2016/17, consideration had been given to a refurbishment programme for the Town Council's play areas. The budget, to achieve the replacement of a number of items, was set at £40,000 (incorporating an existing repair budget of £16,000) with an existing replacement budget of £5000.

Approval had been given by the Tourism & Leisure Committee on the 3rd October 2016 for the prioritised and phased approach for the delivery of the 2016/17 (Year 1) element of the play area refurbishment programme.

In line with Financial Regulations, 6 companies were contacted and invited to quote for the works with 3 quotes being returned. All quotations supplied were affordable within the existing budget and after reviewing the 3 quotations the company offering best value for money was Wicksteed. The Grounds Manager briefed members on the reasons for recommending Wicksteed as the successful contractor for the first year of the programme. The Grounds Manager also circulated images of play equipment submitted by all 3 companies.

Year 1 (2016/17) of the 5 year programme was aimed at sites where replacement of specific worn out items of equipment were required. Future years were to be assigned for complete refurbishment projects. However, recent consideration had identified that planned costs in year 2 were substantial and that an additional exercise to move some works into year 3 was required to make the work affordable. The Grounds Manager's report outlined the works for years 2 (2017/18) and 3 (2018/19) which related to repair/replacement works rather than to whole site refurbishments. It was noted, however, that subject to successful external funding applications, year 2 also included planned refurbishment to Lynch Farm together with the conclusion of the Hutton Moor Skate Park project.

In response to concern expressed about the costs involved, the member was advised that the replacement of play equipment and full refurbishment had always been planned and was within budget. Members were also advised that it was proposed to earmark any remaining budget from 2016/2017 for 2017/2018 allowing works to the 2016/2017 programme to be completed.

The prioritisation of years 2 and 3 was queried in respect of efficiency. A member felt that procuring for multiple years would be more effective. It was suggested to procure year, 2, 3 and 4 of the 5 year maintenance programme together. The Grounds Manager although not in disagreement, advised that he would need to explore this proposal with the Responsible

	<p>Financial Officer.</p> <p>A member highlighted the disturbances at Ashcombe Park which impacted on local residents in the evenings and during the night. Although the Chairman informed that it was up to North Somerset Council to secure the park, he advised that Public Spaces Protection Orders may be the way forward and recommended that the Community Services committee be advised accordingly.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Wicksteed be approved as the successful Year 1 contractor. 2. That the funds not spent before the end of 31st March 2017 be put in an earmark reserve for the year 2017/2018 be approved, allowing works to the 2016/2017 programme to be completed. 3. That the prioritisation for Years 2 and 3 of the play area improvement project be approved alongside the evaluation as to the viability of including Year 4 in a joint tender.
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45 pm.</p> <p>Signed: Dated:</p> <p>Councillor Peter Crew Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee</p>