

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE  
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON  
MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2018**

**Meeting Commenced:** 7.00 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 7.58pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), Ray Armstrong, James Clayton, James Davis, Alan Peak, Len Purnell, Clive Webb and Peter Fox (S).

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager), Ellie Allen-Somers (Tourism Marketing Officer), Rob Thurston (Grounds Manager), Tricia Brabham (Communications and Committee Officer), Vicky Angear (Weston and Worle Mercury).

<b>394</b>	<p><b>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutions</b></p> <p>Apologies of absence were received from Councillors, Ian Porter, Roz Willis, Richard Nightingale and John Crockford-Hawley.</p> <p>Councillor Fox substituted for Councillor Nightingale.</p> <p>Councillor Martin Williams was not in attendance.</p>
<b>395</b>	<p><b>To receive Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
<b>396</b>	<p><b>To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018.</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.</p>
<b>397</b>	<p><b>Love Weston Membership and Initiatives</b></p> <p>The report of the Tourism Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Tourism Manager informed members that there were currently 75 Love Weston partners, with Funland, Pirate Adventureland and the Sky Wheel having joined.</p> <p>Costs and feasibility of a large interactive TV screen in the window of the VIC were being explored, and a life-size R2D2 from Star Wars was attracting people in to the VIC and proving to be a good photo-shoot opportunity.</p> <p>Tourism staff had recently attended the North Somerset and West County Tourism Conferences where there were opportunities for networking and new ideas for digital marketing.</p> <p>The Tourism Manager had been invited to sit on the BID Steering Group which was a good opportunity to understand other initiatives being progressed for new and existing businesses in the town.</p>

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report of the Tourism Manager be received and noted.</p> <p><i>Councillor Clayton and Vicky Angear joined the meeting.</i></p>
<p>398</p>	<p><b>Visitor Information Centre</b></p> <p>The report of the Tourism Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>Opening for the Season</b>  The Tourism Manager advised that the VIC opened on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018, Easter holiday weather had been poor, this had increased VIC footfall with families coming in for ideas on rainy day activities. School holidays were still on-going for certain regions, after this opening times would be adjusted in the summer period.</p> <p><b>Staffing Plans for 2018</b>  New supervisory staff had been recruited and were settling in well offering a good mix of commercial, retail and journalistic experience to the existing tourism team. Casual recruitment was on-going due to some start time and availability challenges with existing casuals.</p> <p>Three first year Tourism and Travel students from Weston College were proving an excellent asset and working on various projects for Love Weston including putting together information on what to do on rainy days, with teenagers, map distributing and going out to meet seafront business owners to spread the word on what Love Weston could offer.</p> <p>The Chairman was very pleased that Love Weston had been able to support valuable work experience opportunities.</p> <p><b>Shop sales</b>  Sales targets had been met for the previous financial year, staff were exploring the possibility of a debit card machine for the VIC which would encourage increased customer spending e.g. GWR tickets.</p> <p>A credit/debit card machine was being procured for the VIC which it was hoped would assist with ticket sales.</p> <p><b>VIC Signage</b>  Fingerposts were still being progressed as part of town centre improvements by North Somerset Council officers, meanwhile other opportunities were being progressed by the Tourism Manager for 'T' signs above the Tropicana and on the internal pods of the Skywheel.</p> <p><b>Explore Magazine and Pocket Map</b>  The Chairman felt that Archant had done a great job with the 2018 publications and thanked Simon Angear the former editor of the Weston and Worle Mercury, for helping to get Explore magazine off the ground.</p> <p>The Tourism Manager advised that stock for Explore was ready for distribution to UK TIC's and key local area venues e.g. Sovereign Centre, hotels and train station.</p> <p><b>UKTIC Forum</b>  The UK TIC Forum held their regional meeting at the Blakehay Theatre on 15<sup>th</sup> March hosted by Love Weston. The two day event had provided valuable networking opportunity for delegates and our tourism staff with insights into national and international tourism trends, TIC management and a guided tour of Weston-super-Mare by the Tourism</p>

	<p>Manager including a theatre tour, room upgrade courtesy of the Royal Hotel, dining at Lasseters in the Winter Gardens and museum and seafront visits.</p> <p>Funding for Visit England was extremely compromised and the UK TIC Forum were hoping to become a voice for TIC's to Government.</p>
399	<p><b>Destination Marketing</b></p> <p>The report of the Tourism Marketing Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>Website Development and Statistics</b></p> <p>The Tourism Marketing Officer advised that she had been working on the new Love Weston website development over the previous months and showed the Committee the new homepage including new branding and 'Visit Weston-super-Mare' logo, banner ads, and newly designed map. It was anticipated that the site would go live May/June following the new content writing work, training and design implementations by New Mind our provider.</p> <p>The Committee were advised of a slight decrease in stats compared to Feb/Mar 2017 and a new entry (Clevedon) in the top 10 demographics.</p> <p><b>Photography and Video</b></p> <p>Professional services had been acquired for photography and video for the new website, showcasing Weston as the 'Gateway to the South West'.</p> <p><b>Destination Marketing</b></p> <p>Love Weston's spring campaign had been a commercial running on Sedgemoor FM throughout the Easter holidays. Following the success and popularity of last year's campaign the summer marketing campaign had been booked with Clear Channel from 21<sup>st</sup> May to 1st July which would include 12 digital forecourt screens M4/M5, 4 Adshel bus stops and Sainsbury's store advertising in the Bridgwater area, and digital screens at the popular shopping centres of Cribbs Causeway and Gloucester Quays.</p> <p><b>Top Ten pages viewed in February and March</b></p> <p>Weston Air Festival was attracting an increasing number of views, important SEO development was on-going to improve accommodation views.</p> <p><b>Social Media Update</b></p> <p>Love Weston social media activity had improved with following standing at 5857.  Twitter - 4,256 followers  Facebook - 1630 followers  New Instagram account had 203 followers.</p> <p>The Assistant Town Clerk thanked the Tourism Marketing Officer for her hard work and dedication to the critical development work required on the run up to new website launch and dedication to achieving increased social media promotion for events, activities and offers for Love Weston advertisers and partners.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report of the Tourism Marketing Officer be received and noted.</p>
400	<p><b>Waterpark and Play Areas</b></p> <p>The report of the Grounds Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Grounds Manager advised that the Lynch Farm play area work was going ahead and</p>

would be completed by the 20<sup>th</sup> April.

The Canberra Road play area refurbishment was scheduled for this year. Work was being done on developing the specification and evaluation model for the project. Installation was planned for September/October.

The Chairman advised of a North Somerset Council meeting where it had been discussed that the Town Council could take on the adoption of the play area at Hayward Village.

**RESOLVED:** The Chairman would discuss acquisition of Haywood Village play area with North Somerset Council and the Town Clerk.

A member presented images of the surface at Hutton Moor Skate Park, and suggested that the surface was unsafe and should be replaced in one go and not in stages as had been suggested.

The Grounds Manager advised that the value of the Skate Park project had been £150,000 and included a Sport England grant for £75,000. Unfortunately the Big Lottery application had been unsuccessful. The surface had been assessed by ROSPA at the time of hand-over and the surface not deemed dangerous, a further inspection took place in March 2018. It was acknowledged that the recent snow and freezing conditions had not helped and some repair work may be needed, but overall the position was that a new surface was not included in the original specification and there were no large scale grants available.

The Chairman referred to discussions with North Somerset in relation to this site that had included a new surface for the facility.

A member requested a sign at Canberra Road play area publicising that the Town Council were funding the work, and that a noticeboard could be installed on the site as part of the refurbishment work.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Grounds Manager investigate the cost of resurfacing the skate park in one go as opposed to in sections and bring findings back to Committee.
- 2) That the Grounds Manager looks into 'in-year' budget provision for signage and publicity at the Canberra Road play area.
- 3) That the report of the Grounds Manager be received and noted.

**Waterpark**

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

The Grounds Manager advised that the unseasonable weather had delayed fully opening the site, as there was concern that if they recommissioned the water, the pipes could have frozen which would have had significant cost implications. Other pre-opening tests included legionella and water quality testing.

Somerset Wood Recycling were carrying out repairs on some of the fixed equipment.

A member questioned if unsociable behaviour was causing a problem at the Waterpark. The Grounds Manager advised that a meeting had taken place with the Police and Town Council Officers and an action plan was in place to look at the cost of putting railings at the back of the park and prickly plants as a deterrent to people accessing the site at night, smashing glass and causing damage.

A member advised he had been informed that there were people sleeping rough in the play

	<p>fort on site. The Grounds Manager advised that in recent years they had discovered obscene graffiti and evidence of small fires on the site. As it is an unsupervised site during winter and out of hours, it was possible people were sleeping rough in the site. The park was checked daily, but he was not sure if they checked all the play equipment all the time.</p> <p>The Chairman advised of discussions with the Community Response Team and Police and suggested CCTV should be installed on site to deter out of hours anti-social behaviour. The Grounds Manager advised that CCTV had merit but there were safeguarding implications if used in the daytime.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That the Grounds Manager instruct staff that morning play area inspections include all parts of the play equipment and site including the fort in case of broken glass and drug paraphernalia.</li> <li>2) That the Grounds Manager cost up CCTV for the site and bring implications back to Committee for further consideration.</li> </ol>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.58pm.</p> <p>Signed: ..... Dated: .....</p> <p>Councillor Peter Crew  <b>Chairman of the Tourism &amp; Leisure Committee</b></p>