

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 3rd JUNE 2019**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.15 pm

PRESENT: Alan Peak, Marc Aplin, James Clayton, Jan Holloway (S) John Crockford-Hawely, David Dash, Gillian Carpenter (S), David Hitchins, Peter McAleer, Daniel Marcos-Ashworth, Marcia Pepperall, Gill Bute (S) and Ella Sayce.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Zoe Scott (Community and Grounds Administrator) Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager) and Emma Williams (Tourism Marketing Officer).

20.	<p>Election of Chairman</p> <p>The Town Clerk invited nominations for the position of Chairman.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway SECONDED BY: Councillor David Hitchins</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Councillor Peter Crew be elected Chairman of the Tourism and Leisure Committee for the year 2019-20.</p>
21.	<p>Apologies of Absence and Notifications of Substitutions</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter Crew, who was substituted by Councillor Jan Holloway. Councillor Catherine Gibbons who was substituted by Councillor Gillian Carpenter and Councillor Sonia Russe who was substituted by Gill Bute.</p>
22.	<p>Election of Vice Chairman</p> <p>The Chairman invited nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor James Clayton SECONDED BY: Councillor David Dash</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Councillor Alan Peak be elected Vice-Chairman of the Tourism and Leisure Committee for the year 2019-20.</p> <p>The Vice Chairman chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman and welcomed newly elected and returning members to the committee.</p>
23.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>

<p>24.</p>	<p>To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 1st April 2019</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor James Clayton</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman</p> <p>A member requested consideration of a change of venue for committee meetings, suggesting the Museum or as the meeting room struggled to accommodate large committee meetings where there was also a requirement for several officers, projectors and screens. Members added that there would likely be resource and logistical considerations.</p>
<p>25.</p>	<p>To note the Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Tourism and Leisure Committee Terms of Reference were previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>RESOLVED: - That the Terms of Reference be noted.</p> <p>The Town Clerk provided an overview of the Terms of Reference for the T & L Committee for the benefit of new members which included the marketing of the town as a destination via the Visit Weston initiative and the management of sport and leisure facilities including the Waterpark.</p> <p>A member wanted to clarify if anything which could affect or influence tourism in the town could be discussed, for example parking and public toilets. The Town Clerk saw no reason why they couldn't adding that our Standing Orders enabled motions to Full Council that related to our community, lobbying capacity for matters that we do not directly control and the limited scope of powers that the Town Council has.</p> <p>A member asked the committee be mindful of discussing only relevant topics, for example, issues about resident parking would not be related to tourism.</p>
<p>26.</p>	<p>Partnership Working</p> <p>The Chairman invited introductions from members and officers present.</p> <p>The report of the Tourism Manager was previously circulated with the agenda and was presented as written, covering the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and a brief synopsis of what the Tourism Team delivered. • Investment and enhancements to the Visit Weston-super-Mare destination website, re-launched in June 2018 to enhance the pictorial content due to the importance of image-led web pages. • Opening periods and remit of staff at the seasonal Visitor Information Centre, VIC. • Updates on new partner expansions to new areas, including a number in the Clevedon and Portishead area and on-going discussions with The Grange, previously the Battleborough Grange. • Good working relations with BID Steering Group and North Somerset

	<p>Council's Seafront and Events Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK TIC Forum, a recently formed group for the South West area would be meeting next on 7th June <p>A member asked for clarity on the package options provided by Visit Weston. The Tourism Manager explained the tiers starting at Bronze for £150 per year and ending at Platinum Plus for £700 per year. A member enquired if there were any options lower than £150 for those smaller businesses in the town but who could still benefit from Visit Weston. Unfortunately, £150 was the lowest tier. Currently Visit Weston had 86 members, 30 of which were Bronze, 30 Platinum or Platinum Plus and the remaining rest in the middle few tiers.</p>
27.	<p>Visitor Information Centre</p> <p>The report of the Tourism Manager was presented as written. Covering the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new cohort of seasonal staff had been engaged in new initiatives to raise awareness levels of the VIC to both visitors and businesses alike. Installation of a Ticket Master system was being trialled at the Museum prior to being installed at the VIC. It was hoped it would assist with increasing revenue over the season. This would facilitate the efforts to procure ticket sales for local attractions, encourage them to sell their tickets in the VIC. The average sale remained at under £5. As of the 20th May 2019 a total footfall number of 5103 visitors to the VIC was recorded. The BID have installed a new footfall counting system using pings from mobile phones. It had been confirmed that all attempts to save the land train had failed and it had ceased operation entirely. In combination with the lack of signage to the VIC this would potentially adversely affect visitor numbers coming along the Promenade both to the VIC and to the Water Park. Members may wish to consider whether alternatives should be considered. <p>A member asked what the reason was behind the land train shutting down. The Tourism Manager explained it was deemed unviable after one train broke down and the other still required 2 members of staff at all times. The Town Clerk agreed that signage had been a long standing issue for both the VIC, Museum and The Blakehay Theatre. It was North Somerset Council who gave permission.</p> <p>Members felt the issue needed to be re visited and asked for a letter to be written to North Somerset Council.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor David Hitchins SECONDED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk writes to North Somerset Council highlighting the lack of signage to key Town Council facilities and the need for further discussions on a resolution.</p> <p>Debate ensued on the impact on seafront footfall given the closure of the Seaquarium. It was explained that the purchasing of the site was part of a larger</p>

	<p>transaction and this site was not wanted by the new owners. New tenants for the site where a long lease existed were being sought.</p>
<p>28.</p>	<p>Destination Website and Marketing Campaigns – Visit Weston-super-Mare</p> <p>The report of the Tourism Marketing Officer was presented as written. Covering the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and overview from the Tourism Marketing Officer. • Website Statistics - the Visit Weston website received almost 56,000 visitors in March and April of this year. • Work was being carried out to increase the word and image count on as many pages of the Visit Weston website as possible, to eliminate the risk of our website being penalised by SEO (Search Engine Optimisation). • New Mind Tell Us have recently announced a merger with Simpleview Inc., an American provider of integrated digital marketing solutions for destination marketing and destination management. It was hoped that the merger represented a unique opportunity for all Destination Marketing Operations supported by New Mind, to benefit from a truly global perspective of destination marketing and destination management. • Top 10 page views. • Social media content posted across the three main sites – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram has achieved a reach of almost 209,436 throughout March and April. • The spring destination campaign with Global Media targeting a 30 mile radius of the Severn Bridge. • The summer destination campaign with ‘Clear Channel’, an outdoor advertising agency, which included thirteen digital screen advertisements in July and August across key locations in the Midlands, Bristol and Somerset areas that would provide the greatest impact and conversions to visitors to Weston-super-Mare. • Emerging markets and advertising opportunities - Expanding the top locations of visiting IP addresses to the website to 25 rather than 10, shows that residents of Leeds were researching Weston. This was also reflected in the data mined from requests made for copies of the ‘Explore’ 2019 guide to be posted out to potential new visitors to the town. These two sets of data also showed that interest from the Leeds area was also more significant than areas already advertised in, namely Worcester and Newport. <p>Members noted that as road travel from West Yorkshire to Weston was fairly direct: M62 westbound, M6, M5, albeit expected to take around five hours, visitors from Leeds and the surrounding areas are more likely to be visiting for longer stays, rather than day trips, making this emerging market an ideal candidate to target. Visit Leeds has been contacted and sent a box of Explore guides to offer customers in their Visitor Information Centre. Feedback would be sought from Visit Leeds as to the popularity of these guides.</p> <p>A member questioned why people would stop off at Weston instead of carrying down to nicer coastlines in Cornwall and Devon if they were travelling all that way. It was thought perhaps due to Weston being around 4.5hrs into the journey and a good place to break journeys, hopefully they may choose to stay the night and consider Weston for longer stays in future.</p>

29.

Parks and Play Areas

The Community and Grounds Administrator presented the report as written and circulated at the meeting. For the benefit of new councillors, she explained about the Essential Maintenance, Repair & Replacement Programme (EMRRP) programme for 2019.

SJ Surveyors had worked with The Town Council to prepare a Play Area EMRRP for the play areas on behalf of Weston-super-Mare Town Council. The proposed programme was intended for use by Councillors and Officers as a tool to aid the setting of budgets.

The Town Council currently had 21 play areas within its portfolio; these were a mixture of play areas where the Town Council had installed the equipment and areas that the Town Council had leased from North Somerset Council.

In 2010 Weston-super-Mare Town Council entered into a license agreement with North Somerset Council to occupy several play areas. The licence places legal obligations on the Town Council with regards to maintenance and possession of the various play areas.

This meant that the levels of maintenance and operational requirements for these sites was not only paramount to maintaining operations but were also a legal obligation of the Town Council under its license with North Somerset Council.

The EMRRP was based on a five-year timescale and considered the works required to maintain the play areas in a safe and operational condition. Should members want to discuss the plan in more detail this could be arranged with the Deputy Town Clerk. A list of the play areas WSMTC looked after was tabled.

A member queried how complaints were handed which the Community and Grounds Administrator confirmed depended on whether the matter was dangerous e.g. broken glass in which case swift responses. Other matters were programmed e.g. maintenance and graffiti. Members enquired as Ato debated why there wasn't a residents pass or fee waived at the Waterpark for those who lived in the town. The Community and Grounds Administrator explained this had been previously explored however there was no straight forward way of having someone prove they were a resident of Weston-super-Mare. The minimal charge was put in place to ensure those who use the facility from out of town, helped contribute to running and upkeep of the well-loved facility. A loyalty card was in place.

A member also expressed a keen interest in exploring the option of "quiet hours" and more inclusive play across all play area sites. For example, not one of the play areas offered a wheelchair friendly piece of play equipment, although was pleased to see a wheelchair friendly picnic bench had been installed at Canberra Road. The Community and Grounds Administrator reassured that the procurement process did highlight the need for inclusive play and that this demonstrated through not just physical disabilities but mental disabilities as well such as having sensory panels and quieter play equipment. The Community and Grounds Administrator was happy to explore the options of inclusive play further.

	<p>Discussion ensued and it was felt with the part refurbishment of Conniston Green taking place imminently, this would be a particularly good opportunity to explore inclusive play.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ella Sayce SECONDED BY: Councillor James Clayton</p> <p>RESOLVED: That inclusive play, in particular wheelchair friendly equipment, be explored when carrying out the refurbishment of Conniston Green and further developments.</p> <p>A member queried what the budget allowance was for the programme of works. The Town Clerk confirmed this was £200,000 as listed in the budget previously circulated to members.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15 pm.</p> <p>Signed: Dated:</p> <p>Councillor Peter Crew Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee</p>