

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIA ZOOM ON
MONDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: pm

PRESENT: Councillors James Clayton (Town Mayor), Dot Agassiz, Mark Aplin, Ray Armstrong, Mike Bell, Gill Bute, Gillian Carpenter, Mark Canniford, Sarah Codling, Peter Crew, John Crockford-Hawley, David Dash, Peter Fox, Catherine Gibbons, Pete McAleer, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Marcia Pepperall, Lisa Pilgrim, Sonia Russe, Tim Taylor and Richard Tucker.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer), Rebecca Saunders (Mayors Civic Officer/Committee Officer), Becky Walsh (Communications Officer), Reverend Peter Ashman (Town Mayors Chaplin), Mr John Simmons (Twenty's Plenty) and Mr John Cadwallader.

The Town Mayor invited his Chaplain to say prayers.

The Town Mayor invited members of the public to address the meeting.

Mr John Cadwallader addressed the meeting with a plea to erect a blue plaque for Ritchie Blackmore a born Westonian and well renowned guitarist and band member of Deep Purple. He felt that this would put Weston on the music map had a signed petition with 275 signatures. He had also agreed a place for where the plaque could be erected.

The Town Mayor thanked Mr Cadwallader for his address and advised him that his request would be referred to the meeting of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee and welcomed him to stay for the rest meeting.

Before the commencement of the meeting, the Town Mayor advised that item 11 on the agenda was not a confidential item and would be brought forward and discussed as item 10.

147 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Roger Bailey, Ciaran Cronnelly, Jan Holloway, Ian Porter, Helen Thornton and Roz Willis.

It was noted that Councillors Mike Bell and John Crockford-Hawley would be late to the meeting.

It was noted that Councillors Ella Sayce and David Hitchins was absent from the meeting.

148 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations on interest received.

<p>149</p>	<p>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on the 5th May 2021</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor Sarah Codling</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.</p>
<p>150</p>	<p>To approve all Minutes of Meetings as listed: The Working party minutes had previously been circulated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd & 30th June, 28th July - Planning Working Party • 8th June - Tourism & Leisure Working Party • 21st June - Policy & Finance Committee • 13th May - Heritage Arts and Culture Working Party • 5th July - Community Services Working Party <p>The Tourism & Leisure Working Party minutes 50.1 & 50.2 were queried by a member and it was clarified that a peddlers' license for the Tic Tuk vehicles was no longer required and that the town council were coordinating with the Weston Place Agency on the Visit Weston Website.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be ratified and approved.</p>
<p>151</p>	<p>To receive announcements and communications from the Town Mayor</p> <p>The Mayor's announcements and communications were circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>There had been two versions of the report circulated but the Mayor clarified that here had been 67 engagements attended by the Mayor and 5 by the Deputy Mayor, which was a total of 72 to date.</p> <p>Significant upcoming events reported were the Remembrance Service of 14th November and the October Fest taking place on 30th September – 2nd October.</p> <p>The Town Mayor was also engaging through a social media presence and encouraged members to like and share his Facebook page.</p>
<p>152</p>	<p>To receive the Notes of the Youth Council Meetings held in July 2021</p> <p>The notes of the Youth Council meetings had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was noted that meetings were resuming to face to face as of the following day.</p> <p>The Town Mayor welcomed any members of the Youth Council wanting to attend Council meetings. It was advised that this offer had already been extended many times and would be continued to do so my members.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the notes of the Youth Council meetings for July 2021 be received.</p>

153 Twenty's Plenty Campaign – Presentation by Dr John Simmons

The Town Mayor invited Dr John Simmons to present to the meeting.

Mr Simmons presented the North Somerset Twenty's Plenty Campaign informing of the social/environmental and engineering cost factors for introducing 20mph speed limits in residential areas.

Members would be sent a handout electronically.

Depending on the size of the town/city the scheme would cost £3-5 per head to introduce and most of London and towns in Scotland and Wales were already operating this.

It was envisaged that in 15/20 years' time, driving at 20mph in residential and high pedestrianised areas such as schools/hospitals would be accepted as importantly as wearing a seat belt of drinking driving.

Weston was a flat town and was ideal for the promotion of cycling and reduction of driving. It was compared to Penzance in many ways such as being a coastal town, with a struggling town centre with pockets of deprivation and they had recently introduced the campaign.

Members thanked Mr Simmons for his presentation and a question answer session then ensued.

Debate ensued. The concept of the campaign was well received by members however concerns were raised that if a blanket approach was introduced, specific areas where there were already speed limits in place may be diluted and disregarded. The degree of enforcement of speed limits by Avon & Somerset Police was questioned.

Councillor John Crockford-Hawley joined the meeting at 7.53 pm.

It was felt that the residential roads would needed to be considered on an individual need basis and that driving at 20mph may not be conducive to newer and hybrid vehicles and that car manufacturers needed to be aware of this. In support of the council's climate change pledge, members would like to encourage more cycling and walking.

The evidence of success in Bristol was requested and it was suggested that it would be useful to know the campaign's degree of support from the CCG and NHS.

It was requested that North Somerset Council's highways engineers' views be sought.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Gill Bute

SECONDED BY: Councillor Marc Aplin

A vote was taken and **carried**.

RESOLVED: To seek further information of the success of the campaign in other areas and to engage in discussion with North Somerset Council's highways engineers to seek their views on the campaign.

154 Grove Park Toilets Feasibility Study

The Feasibility Study and recommendation from the Community Services Committee meeting held on 13th September had been previously circulated.

Debate ensued and members were in general welcoming of the report's conclusions but concerns were raised in respect of costs.

It was agreed that discussions with North Somerset Council were paramount in moving forward with the long-term solutions, however a multi-agency approach including the Police was required to tackle the short term problems.

The council had done everything in its power to manage and keep the toilets open but the levels of anti-social behaviour and vandalism at Grove Park were extreme.

The wider brief of toilet provision in Weston needed to be discussed with North Somerset Council and other local facilities opening their toilet provisions. There were grant funding opportunities for Grove Park as part of the NSC bid and this needed to be considered within NSC discussions.

A short term solution to the problem was needed and it was suggested that the Police patrol times needed to be adjusted. The community toilet scheme should be revived and reaching out to other towns who ran the schemes was suggested.

Members felt that Grove Park toilets were not fit for purpose in location or design and that other towns/cities such as Wells should be contacted on how their schemes operated.

Councillor Mike Bell joined the meeting at 8.19 pm.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

A vote was taken and **carried**.

RESOLVED:

1. To endorse and welcome the relocation of the Grove Park toilets and café and that discussions with North Somerset Council be commenced to find ways of funding this.
2. That other towns/cities to include Wells City Council, be contacted to explore design and operation of their toilet facilities.

It was raised that at a previous Community Services Committee meeting, it had been resolved that the Police Chief Inspector be invited to the next Town Council meeting. It was now felt that a lower level representative from the Police was required.

The Town Clerk advised that the invitation to the Police Chief Inspector had been made and that he would chase the invitation asking for the most appropriate representative to attend.

155 To formally approve and adopt the Councils Risk Register for the year 2021 / 2022

The Risk Register Action Plan recommended by the Expenditure & Governance Working Party held on 9th September 2021 had been previously circulated.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak

SECONDED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

A vote was taken and **carried**.

RESOLVED: To approve risk actions and to formally approve and adopt the Councils Risk Register for the year 2021 / 2022.

156 Review of Town Council Remote Meetings

The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated outlining the decisions for members' consideration. The Town Clerk apologised for the confusion of the red paper and clarified that the content was not of a confidential nature.

Members were reminded of their decision at the Annual Council meeting in May, to agree to resume normal committee decision making 'at the first opportunity' and that the decision be reviewed at the latest after 6 months (IE at the latest before the end of November 2021). Therefore, the Town Clerk advised that this was the council's first opportunity to review and he requested welcomed members' direction on how to proceed.

Debate ensued and members agreed that remote working had its place but was not the best way of conducting all meetings.

It was proposed that committee meetings should resume face to face and that working parties could still operate remotely.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

A vote was taken and **carried**.

RESOLVED:

1. That committee meetings of the council resume to face to face meetings with immediate effect and that working parties continue to operate remotely.
2. To re-state the March 2020 resolution to approve the absences of councillors from council meetings by reason of the Covid pandemic until May 2022.

It was queried if members would be required to undertake lateral flow tests before attending meetings.

The Town Clerk advised that members and officers would be requested to take reasonable precautions in the form of tests, social distancing, provide ventilation and sanitiser. He added that the Museum had been booked for meetings of the council and committees.

157	<p><i>It was resolved under the Public Bodies (Admissions of Meeting) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for the following item by reasons of the confidential nature of the business.</i></p>
158	<p>To approve exploration into office relocation</p> <p>The Town Clerk gave the background on the decision to explore into an office relocation for its office based staff. Its current premises at both Grove House and Grove Lodge had been outgrown and were not fit for purpose. The previous decision to extend Grove House had been revoked by the Policy & Finance Working Party meeting held on 23rd August due to a 54% inflation in costs and building ownership. The Working Party had then recommended a review to look for alternative and better council office space and that the current proposals for Grove House dropped.</p> <p>The Town Clerk had been advised of two possible properties available at the present time which could be suitable for town council offices, namely Roselawn on Walliscote Grove Road and 32 Waterloo Street. These were discussed by the Expenditure & Governance Working Party held on the 9th September 2021, of which the draft minute had been previously circulated and was available at the meeting.</p> <p>As recommended, site visits to both of the buildings had been organized with the council's surveyor, leading members and officers attending.</p> <p>After assessment it had been agreed that of the two buildings Roselawn would not be suitable, it was in a very poor condition with poor disabled and vehicle access and only small rooms. A report of the Deputy Town Clerk outlining financial options, if members wanted to pursue the purchase of, along with estate agent's information had been previously circulated to members and was available at the meeting.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the relocation of WSMTC offices would mean that both Grove House and Grove Lodge could be dispensed of in discussion with North Somerset Council. The building at 32 Waterloo Street, while not absolutely perfect, was large enough to accommodate meeting rooms and all town council departments, including the VIC, which would enable staffing efficiencies and improvement in internal communications. He recommended members to set up a small working party to take the exploration of premises forward and if appropriate make an offer.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and all members who spoke in the debate were in agreement that the town council had outgrown the current premises and they were no longer fit for purpose.</p> <p>It was noted that time was a factor when purchasing commercial buildings and that the council would need to act quickly. It was also agreed that the council must be situated in an iconic building, in a suitable location.</p> <p>It was advised that the council must consider some refurbishment costs in addition to the purchase price and also the possibility of any dilapidation costs associated with Grove House.</p> <p>Members requested that if an offer is accepted, the layout of the proposed building be considered by a member working party.</p>

It was questioned whether the building would be solely used by the town council or available for community use. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that this was subject to the financial plan the council approved and the option to sublet was awaiting clarification. Once clarification was obtained, it was hoped that there would be opportunities to sublet and for community use. It was noted that the building was still partly occupied by the previous tenants.

In response to a concern, the Town Clerk confirmed that once a 'subject to contract' offer on the building had been accepted, a full building survey would be undertaken.

Members were in favour of option 3 of the financial report but wanted to increase the figure to include refurbishment costs.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the council had a healthy revenue budget and asked members to note that a resolution by town council was needed to approve the use on a PWLB borrowing and an additional meeting of council would need to be called to approve final amounts.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

A vote was taken and **carried**.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of Council, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Conservative Group (or their nominated substitutes), be authorised to negotiate and finalise an agreement to purchase the freehold premises at 32 Waterloo Street.
2. That Option 3 – Part Loan part funded by WSMTC reserves and Capital in Revenue provisions as follows; be approved.

Funds from capital and revenue allocations £290,000

Funds from General Reserves £150,000

PWLB Funding £200,000

Total £640,000

3. That If the offer is accepted, a working group be formed to discuss the future layout.
4. To note that if there was a requirement for PWLB borrowing an additional meeting of council would need to be called to approve final amounts.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

Signed:

Dated:

Town Mayor



REPORT TO WESTON-SUPER-MARE

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

22th November 2021

MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

20th September – 22th November 2021

Town Mayor

Councillor James Clayton

ENGAGEMENTS SUMMARY

Council Representative	Number of Engagements
TOWN MAYOR Cllr James Clayton	42
DEPUTY MAYOR Cllr Roger Bailey	1
TOWN COUNCIL LEADER Name	1

TOTALS TO DATE

Council Representative	Number of Engagements
TOWN MAYOR Cllr James Clayton	109
DEPUTY MAYOR Cllr Roger Bailey	6
TOWN COUNCIL LEADER Cllr Alan Peak	1
TOTAL	116

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

29th September-ROC Celebration

1st October-BME Black History Month and Chat Room Launch

6th October- South West in Bloom Civic Reception

7th October-South West in Bloom Awards

11th October-Hutton School Visit to Present Fair Trade Award

15th October-Hospice Week Launch

18th October-Queens Award to BME

22nd October- Princess Royal Visit to Weston College

2nd November-High Sheriff Visit

11th November-Armistice Day Service

14th November-Grove Park Remembrance Day Parade

Weston-super-Mare Youth Council Meeting Notes

- A. **Date of meeting:** 21/09/21 (meeting deferred from 14-09-21)
- B. **Meeting Start Time:** 6 02pm
- C. **Where is the meeting:** YMCA Youth Café, 2 Bristol Road Lower
- D. **Attendance –**
Faith **(FH)** Ryan **(RP)** Tanisha **(TR)** Charlie **(CM)**
Alli Waller **(AW)**
- F. **Welcome –** New Member Charlie to the youth Council.
- 1. **Apologies for Absence –** Councillor Sarah Codling **(CSC)** Councillor Ciaran Connelly **(CC)** Olivia **(OF)** Lauren Easterbrook **(LE)**
- 2. **Meeting notes accurate Yes**
Proposed -RP
Second - TR
- 4. **Grant Application-**) As no agreement was met because three amounts were offered at the last meeting – **TR**, £500 – **RP**, £750 & **FH**, £1000. **AW** asked the members again who were present at this meeting. The YC members discussed the amount that had been offered again and their reasons. **TR** reminded the members that now restrictions were lifting the club would be able to start fundraising so by offering £500 now seemed a reasonable amount. **CM** said what about going halfway between £500 & £750. **FH** & **RP** agreed that £500 was a good amount to offer. **CM** then agreed with the majority.
AW to notify the Town Council.
- 5. **Our Strategy for coming year-** **AW** asked the Youth council members to put forward some ideas that they would like to explore and use for forthcoming projects.
TR would like more for young people to do in Weston. There are no events like music festivals days out etc. She said it would be good to create a list of what is going on for young people in Weston. **CM** explained there were a few things like scouts, but some young people do not know how to find them. By creating a list, it would help other young people to get involved within their town.
FH agreed that young people do not have much, and an event would be a great idea.
AW asked the members to think about what they would like to change or feel

passionate about in and around the town so we can add it to our list in the next meeting for the coming year.

5. **Recruitment -**

AW asked the youth council what attracted them to become youth council members and how they could encourage more members to join.

CM said as he was studying Politics at College, he thought it would be good experience and he is sure some of his friends would like to join too.

TR said she wanted to make a difference but some of her friends would need a bit more encouragement. What about offering an incentive to the meetings, like food as some young people come straight from school/college.

FH said young people may not know what the youth council does and asked if we could attend school opening evenings. **AW** to enquire at the schools.

CM suggested that we could we ask some of the colleges media students to put together a short video about joining the Youth council. We could then add that to our Social media platforms. **AW** explained that to encourage more young people to join our social media platforms members would need to post more often, **RP** said they could take it in turns to post relevant subjects to boost traffic.

AW suggested they look at Frome Town and Glastonbury youth council's social media to see what they have been up to and get ideas of posting content.

AW informed the Youth council that as the Youth council begins to grow some of the main job roles will need to be filled including the role of Chair. If anyone is interested to email **AW** directly. **RP** said he would like to apply however he had just started an apprenticeship so would need to check with his employers to see if he was able to attend all our meetings before applying.

CM said it would be a good idea to buddy up with younger members that were starting to join, and they could learn the roles so when the older members were leaving, the younger members would be confident enough to take over.

6. **Comms Update-**

FH told the youth council there had been no new progress with making the recruitment poster as she wasn't sure what to add to it. **AW** suggested that she took up **CSC** and **CC's offer** of a brainstorming session to give her support.

AW to contact **CSC** & **CC** to organise a meeting.

7. **AOB- YMCA** and the **VRU** are putting together a Forces Day in October and would like the Youth Council to attend. This would be another great opportunity for recruiting new members. More details to follow at next meeting.

AW explained that members of the Youth Council had been invited to a Town council meeting if anyone would like to attend. **CM & RP** both said they would like to attend one. **AW** will organise a night that suited everyone that wanted to attend.

Hoodies & Portfolio- All the members that had joined through Lockdown received their Youth Council hoodies and Portfolios.

Youth Parliament- **FH** asked if she could have more information on becoming a member of the youth Parliament **AW** said she would investigate what was involved.

AW also explained that it would be a great opportunity to go to London and visit the house of commons during Parliament week. More information to follow.

8. **Meeting ended – 7.02pm**

Date of Next Meeting Weston Youth Café 6pm – 7pm – 12th October 2021

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL – AV0125**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2021; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2020/21

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The smaller authority has not provided:

- an adequate explanation for the variance between the prior and current year values in Boxes 2 and 6 of Section 2
- an adequate explanation for the difference between Section 2, Boxes 7 and 8

3 External auditor certificate 2020/21

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2021.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

Date

26/09/2021

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

TOWN COUNCIL – 22nd NOVEMBER 2021

ITEM 6. TOWN COUNCIL VACANCY AND COMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

Cllr Ella Sayce submitted her resignation from the council in the summer and following publication of Notice of Vacancy a by-election has been called in Central Ward.

The by-election date has been arranged by North Somerset Council electoral services for Thursday 16th September. There will be polling stations at the Tropicana and at the Boulevard United Reform Church.

The last time a town council by-election took place in Worle North Ward poll cards were not issued. While this kept costs down there was some criticism that some members of the public, despite leafleting by political parties, were not aware or did not trust that there was a by election. Therefore, and also taking into account given the winter timing of the by-election, after consultation with group leaders I have asked for polling cards to be printed and issued.

North Somerset Council has a policy of recharging the whole cost of parish by-elections to the relevant parish or town council. We are advised that the cost of the by-election is likely to be £10-12,000 and the cost of printing and delivering poll cards is around £500.

As a result of Cllr Sayce's resignation there are vacancies on the Community Services Committee and the Youth Council which the town council could fill temporarily.

However it has been normal practice over recent years for the town council not to review its political balance until a by-election has taken place, given that it would have to be recalculated again after only one cycle and could involve newly appointed members being removed after only two months. If there is a member who would like to go on the Community Services Committee or on the Youth Council for probably one meeting this is an opportunity to put your name forward - otherwise it is suggested that no new committee appointments be made until January when the outcome of the by election is known.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Malcolm L Nicholson LL.B (Hons), DMS, PSLCC
Town Clerk
12th November 2021

Town Council Meeting 22nd November 202

ITEM 9. New Visit Weston Website

Report of the Deputy Town Clerk / RFO

Members will be aware that the current provider for the Visit Weston website is Simple view (formally New Mind). The council has been in contract with them since 1st April 2016. The contract was for an initial period of 3 years so up to 31.03.2019. After this date it was extended to the allowed 5 years' maximum and then due to the COVID pandemic and need for consistency was extended again without going back out to the market (so a total of 6 years in contract). This exceeds the recommended years without formal procurement. Notice has been given on this contract following reports to the Tourism and Leisure committee (T & L) on 04.08.21 where a procurement programme to replace the current site was approved so the contract will now end formally on 31st March 2022.

A full Design and Build procurement process started on the 10th August 2021 and concluded with interviews held at Grove House 15th November 2021 as per the approved procurement programme agreed by T & L.

In order that there is no break in the current website hosting and visibility and there is no disruption to customers on the site the contract for the new website will be considered by T & L on 7th December 2021 where by a full tender report will be considered and subject to member's approval the new contract will be issued.

With this in mind and taking into account the lead time to design and implement a new website for 1st April 2022 there is need to approve the costs of the build in advance of them being included in the revenue budget for 2022 2023. An estimation for this costs is assumed at around £30k. There is need to allow the purchase order to be raised and contract signed. T & L are not currently able to award this contract without approval of estimated funds from Full Council / Policy & Finance committee (Financial Regulation 3.2)

Members are requested to:

1. To approve the necessary funds (£30k) to allow the procurement of the Visit Weston Website from the 2022 / 2023 budget provision to allow the design and build of the new website development ahead of the 1st April 2022 to ensure no disruption to the site.

TOWN COUNCIL – 22nd NOVEMBER 2021

ITEM 10. ACQUISITION OF NEW TOWN COUNCIL HQ

REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK

Background

At its September meeting the Town Council received a report on the issue of unsuitability of its current premises spread between several locations and considered two alternatives, Roselawn on Walliscote Road and 32 Waterloo Street. Following debate the Council resolved as follows:

1. That the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of Council, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Conservative Group (or their nominated substitutes), be authorised to negotiate and finalise an agreement to purchase the freehold premises at 32 Waterloo Street.
2. That Option 3 – Part Loan part funded by WSMTC reserves and Capital in Revenue provisions as follows; be approved.

Funds from capital and revenue allocations £290,000

Funds from General Reserves £150,000

PWLB Funding £200,000

Total £640,000

3. That If the offer is accepted, a working group be formed to discuss the future layout of the premises.
4. To note that if there was a requirement for PWLB borrowing an additional meeting of council would need to be called to approve final amounts.

Progress since September Meeting

Since then the following progress has been made:

Negotiations led by the Group Leader's Group as above were undertaken with the current owner as per paragraph 1 of the Council decision. These were concluded with an agreement (subject to contract) to purchase the premises freehold for the sum of £450,000. This represented a reduction of £115,000 on the advertised price and reflects the current state of the market with commercial property prices depressed post pandemic.

A commercial property valuation was carried out by Steven and Co, Chartered Surveyors which confirmed that the negotiated price for the property was value for money in the current commercial property market.

Wards Solicitors of Boulevard, Weston-super-Mare have been instructed to commence the conveyancing process with the objective, subject to surveys, of

exchanging contracts by early December.

A full Structural Survey report has been commissioned. I have however had a meeting with the Surveyor and broadly speaking he considers that while there are a number of issues that can be expected with an old building that has not been maintained in recent years, the building appears to have no major structural issues that would advise not going ahead with the purchase. Further necessary work will be needed to include an assessment of the top 'tower' which the Surveyor was unable to access, a fire risk assessment and an asbestos survey and, while the premises are broadly good enough to move into quite quickly, a programme of energy efficiency and other improvements will be required over the coming years.

At the time of writing the Structural Survey report it has not yet been received and will be circulated to members. Due to its length circulation will be electronic only, but on request from members who so require a paper copy will be sent. Councillors are advised to read the report carefully prior to the council meeting on 22nd November.

A mechanical and electrical (M&E) survey has been commissioned. This is being circulated electronically to members and any member who so requests will be sent a paper copy. Members are commended to read this ahead of the Council meeting.

A Working Group of councillors has been set up as per paragraph 23 of the September Council decision to discuss and agree on the future internal layout of the premises. An initial meeting is (at the time of writing) due on Tuesday 16th November.

The Deputy Town Clerk has written a separate report on paragraphs 2 and 4 of the September decision relating to a PWLB application. Further reports will be brought to Policy and Finance as required on conclusion of the acquisition and occupation of the premises.

Recommendation

That the report, including the Survey and M&E reports, be noted and approved and Policy and Finance Committee be authorised to make all further necessary decisions following exchange of contracts to conclude the acquisition.

Malcolm L Nicholson LL.B (Hons) DMS PSLCC
Town Clerk
13th November 2021

Town Council Meeting 22nd November 2021

ITEM 10. Council HQ Premises Progress and PWLB Application for Loan

Report of the Deputy Town Clerk / RFO

Following on from the Town Clerks report within this agenda item this report will confirm the financial implications of the purchase with some information in regard to how aspects of any works and indeed the initial purchase can be funded (subject to member's approval).

1.0 Funding of the purchase of the Building – level of PWLB loan required?

At the 31st March 2021 the council's general reserves stood at £651,000 (this represents reserves not allocated for business needs and are in addition to the earmarked reserves). Since this time approval to utilise £133,290 from this sum was approved for the refurbishment works at the Blakehay theatre. It is not recommended that the full purchase should come from General reserves ultimately. A minimum level for General reserves should be around £600k for the size of the council's business transactions, however in terms of cash flow it could be used to enable the transaction purchase with a defined replacement strategy in place.

- **Unrestricted General reserves - £517,080**

The agreed purchase price is £450,000

Members at the meeting held in September indicated that they would wish to fund the project using a combination of funding amounts from both PWLB loan, general reserves and allocation from revenue budgets (2021 / 2022 & provisions made within 2022 / 2023) but were also minded to ensure that there was some monies for any immediate renovation works required, as such the amount the council wishes to borrow will now need to be confirmed to allow a PWLB application to be made by the DTC/RFO.

The figures previously assumed where:

Funds from capital and revenue allocations £290,000

Funds from General Reserves £150,000

PWLB Funding £200,000

Total £640,000

We are not in a position to have a full cost for immediate works for members to consider (at time of writing this report) but as the Town Clerk has indicated, conversations with our Surveyor do lead us to believe any works needed could be programmed into the councils PPM programme amounts for 2022/2023 and future years with a need for a relatively small immediate works allocation. With this in mind there is opportunity to allocate monies in the budget setting process (P&F in December) when we will have more detail readily available and long term planning for building use has been decided via the working group set up. The below assumes some provision for immediate works at this at this stage as a contingency estimate only.

1.1 **Revised figures following confirmation of purchase price £450,000**

Funds from 2021 / 2022 Revenue Funds (GH restoration)	£55,000
Funds to be allocated from 2022/ 2023 Revenue budgets	£145,000
Funds from General Reserves (replaced over 3 years)	£150,000
PWLB Loan requirement	£200,000
TOTAL Funding	<u>£550,000</u>
<u>Purchase price</u>	<u>-£450,000</u>
Balance (EMR) for immediate works on purchase	£100,000

1.2 **PWLB Illustrative repayment costs at 17.11.2021**

The council has ability to apply to the PWLB to enable this acquisition. The interest rates for borrowing remain low and are financed using either a EIP (Equal instalments Principle where each payment consists of a constant instalment of principle plus a diminishing amount of interest on the loan balance) or by the annuity scheme (for fixed rate loans where each payment is a constant amount inclusive of principle and interest). The below demonstration is based on the EIP principle which is the same as the previous loan taken out by the council (details of which were provide in the September report) but members will need to decide which loan type they wish to apply for.

Amount of Loan (EIP)	Interest Rate	Period of repayment	½ yearly instalment	Cost per year
£200,000	2.02%	20 years	£6,898.05	£13,791.10
£200,000	1.75%	10 years	£11,273.81	£22,547.62
£200,000	1.60%	5 years	£19,791.82	£39,583.64

Existing loans

The existing loans are for 1) Blakehay Theatre purchase 2) Water Adventure park installation

For noting; the Total current outstanding loan liability (31.03.21) £310,180

Approval of application for loan will commit the council to the repayments over the duration of the loan and these will be added to the revenue budgets accordingly.

2.0 Other considerations / and existing funding provisions for works required.

The following table shows what surveys have been undertaken to date, to provide members with a full understanding of what we have done to date and what at this stage will still need to be done following purchase

Survey Type	Detail	Completion Status
Commercial Property Valuation	To ascertain market value prior to purchase	Completed
M & E Electrical Survey	To ascertain heating and lighting condition to meet regulation standards prior to purchase	Completed
Energy Efficiency Survey	As per the councils Road Map to Carbon Neutral Aspirations. We have commissioned this to allow any works required to be commissioned to reduce carbon footprints	Completed – waiting for written report
Building Condition Survey	To ascertain general building condition and identify works to be included in PPM schedules or for immediate attention following purchase	Completed – waiting for written report
Building Structural Survey	To ascertain structural integrity of the building prior to purchase	Order placed for survey – Surveyor waiting for building drawings to determine what level of survey is required (Costs will vary hugely depending on this information)
IT & Security Report	Following purchase a full review of existing IT data links and security provision will need to be undertaken by our existing support providers	Orders to be placed following exchange and completion of contracts.

Further reports will be submitted to the working group set up to oversee the HQ move. However, for member's reference there are some provisions already in place to fund some of the works needed through existing revenue streams / EMR which members should be mindful of.

Environmental Budgets

A provision of £100k per year has been set aside to allow the council to meet its obligations to become carbon neutral. It must be remembered that the Road Map we have commissioned already had identified the need to upgrade the heating, lighting and indeed insulation needs of both Grove House and Grove Lodge which will now not be needed and in addition it also acknowledged the ability to explore

options such as solar on existing buildings. At the end of this year this EMR will have grown to approximately £150k, so electrical and heating upgrades could be utilised from part of this allocation.

PPM Budgets

The council currently sets aside £110,000 per year to maintain all its building assets, for both a planned maintenance schedule and also for reactive works in year. Grove house and lodge are included in this schedule which will be removed so there are monies already planned which can now be transferred to the new HQ with no additional costs. A revised breakdown of this schedule will be done for the new financial year and submitted to P & F in the normal way for approval and recognition of works needed.

Grant opportunities

The building in Waterloo Street is Grade II listed and sits in a conservation area as well as within the Heritage action zone. I have spoken to the Heritage Action Officers at NSC, whilst there are no monies left in the HAZ fund currently there could be opportunities from Historic England and so this will be explored.

Members are requested to:

1. Determine the exact amount required and give approval that an application should be submitted to the PWLB accordingly (Section 1.2 above, suggested amount £200,000)
2. Choose the terms of the PWLB loan ie EIP or Annuity to be included in the application and the amount of years the loan is to be taken over.
3. Consider the use of General reserves as follows
 - i) Approve use of general reserves (cash flow) to allow the completion of the purchase (short term use) in the event the PWLB loan is not released in time or,
 - ii) Wait for the PWLB loan to be approved prior to completion of purchase of Waterloo street property.
 - iii) Approve use of General reserves to support purchase price to a value (Section 1.1 above suggested amount of £150,000) to be replaced over a 3-year period via revenue budgets.

Alternatively, members will need to provide direction on any alternative amounts for both PWLB application and use of General Reserves and Revenue provisions passing formal resolution to do so to enable the purchase of the property to proceed.

TOWN COUNCIL – 22nd NOVEMBER 2021

ITEM 11. WESTON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWAL BALLOT

REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK

Weston BID

Weston BID has been operating successfully for ten years now, in return for a tiny extra levy on business rates delivering projects and services in the centre of Weston to support businesses in our great seaside town. These include practical services such as the street wardens to provide an immediate security presence and response supplementing scarce police resources, a radio service, street cleaning, marketing of the town centre to increase footfall and support many events including the Christmas Lights switch on.

Weston BID's second term finishes on 31st March 2022 but can be renewed subject to a ballot where every levy paying business has a vote. The town council has voting rights through its ownership of the Weston Museum and Blakehay Theatre. It also has membership of the closely related Town Centre Partnership board and executive and therefore a strong influence on the BID.

Understandably, there is concern about the future of the town, its businesses and jobs following the pandemic. By working together with the BID and other partners, we can pool resources and expertise to address issues of concern and grasp new opportunities to improve and promote Weston not just to visitors but also to local residents, keeping our town safe and secure, driving footfall and new investment.

The first ten years of the BID have demonstrated what can be achieved by business and public sector partners working together towards a common aim. The BID has helped secure millions of pounds worth of investment for the town and it's more important than ever that the work continues to support the town centre economy.

Recommendation

That the Town Clerk be instructed to cast the town council's votes in favour of renewal of the Weston BID.

Malcolm L Nicholson LL.B (Hons) DMS PSLCC
Town Clerk
12th November 2021

TOWN COUNCIL – 22nd NOVEMBER 2021

ITEM 12. TWENTY'S PLENTY – CORRESPONDENCE WITH NORTH SOMERSET

REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK

At its last meeting in September, the Town Council received a presentation from the Twenty's Plenty campaign group and instructed me to write to North Somerset Council for their views on the topic.

I have received the following reply from Gemma Dando, Assistant Director of Place:

From: Gemma Dando
Sent: 12 November 2021 14:51
To: Malcolm Nicholson
Cc: Rob Thomson ; Bella Fortune
Subject: RE: 20mph schemes in North Somerset

Hi Malcolm,

Sorry for leaving this right to the last minute for the response, I have only recently taken on this area of work so it has taken me longer than usual to find out everything that is going on in this area.

Your letter, in summary, requests that the council look differently at 20 mph to enable more areas / wider areas to be considered and implemented as 20 mph zones. This is a piece of work that is currently underway with a proposed new process for 20mph being developed as we speak (it is near completion) and being tested in December. The intention of this work is to enable more collaborative work with local councils and a deeper understanding of the local issues that need mitigating and through this introduce some of the flexibility that you request where appropriate.

There is still a strong desire to ensure that measures that are implemented are meaningful and do achieve the desired outcomes (i.e. a reduction in speed in high risk areas) – and I can see that there are differences in opinion about what the various data sources and evidence tells us about 20mph.

The new 20mph process is not quite complete and I haven't yet seen it, I wonder whether for your agenda on the 22nd it would be possible to say that we have acknowledged your request in your letter and that we will set up a conversation in December to introduce the new process to you for feedback in the testing phase? As this is clearly something that Weston Town Council is interested in your input would be very much valued.

I am happy to have a call this afternoon or on Monday if that would help, and apologies again for the response being right on the last day.

Thanks
Gemma

Members' views are requested.

Recommendation

That the Town Clerk be instructed to arrange a meeting with North Somerset Council, and three town councillors be invited to attend the meeting.

Malcolm L Nicholson LL.B (Hons) DMS PSLCC
Town Clerk
12th November 2021