

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT
THE TOWN HALL ON
MONDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.47 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Roz Willis (Town Mayor and Chairman), Peter Crew (Leader of the Town Council) Raymond Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Mark Canniford, James Clayton, John Crockford-Hawley, Clive Darke, Peter Fox, David Hitchins, Jan Holloway, Cyril King, Michal Kus, Mike Lyall, Derek Mead, Frederick Parsons, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Lisa Pilgrim, Len Purnell, Sonia Russe, Tim Taylor, Richard Tucker and Clive Webb.

IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer), Chris Millard (Civic Officer), Jocelyn Holder (Town Mayoress), Mike Jackson (CEO, North Somerset Council)(part attendance), Rachael Lewis (North Somerset Council)(part attendance), Bethan Evans (Weston Mercury) and Reverend Richard Taylor (Mayors Deputy Chaplin)(part attendance).

The Town Mayor invited Reverend Richard Taylor to say prayers and to pray for the family of young Josie Leigh Herniman a pupil of Broadoak Community School who had sadly passed away.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Town Mayor invited questions from parishioners.

253.	<p>To receive Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ian Porter, Rose Warwick, Holly Young, Keith Morris, Simon Stokes, Mike Bell and Claire Kingsbury-Bell.</p>
254.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
255.	<p>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 15th September 2014.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Michal Kus</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be signed and approved.</p> <p>The Town Clerk gave an update on the Uphill Beach de-designation and informed that he had been advised by David Turner that the de-designation of the beach had been shelved. Mr Turner also advised that the short consultation period had been imposed by DEFRA and was outside of their control!!</p>
256.	<p>To receive announcements and communications from the Town Mayor</p> <p>The Town Mayor informed that in total, to-date, there had been 187 engagements, 166 of which the Town Mayor had attended, 20 of which the Deputy Mayor had attended and 1 of which the Leader had attended. <i>(A list of all events attended between the 16th September and 15th November 2014 can be obtained from the Town Mayor's Civic Officer).</i></p> <p>The Town Mayor highlighted that there had been a keen uptake in shadowing her for the day. She had taken two pupils, one pupil from Milton School and the other from Bournville</p>

	<p>School, to the High Sherriff's Garden Party which the pupils thoroughly enjoyed. A further shadowing day had been scheduled for 1st December with pupils from Locking School.</p> <p>The Town Mayor had attended a Railway Exhibition at the Winter Gardens the previous Saturday where she was presented with a gift of a cast metal Weston-super-Mare railway sign, paid for by Dr Richard Furness (well known in the both the engineering and railway worlds), which would be displayed somewhere in the new Museum. The Town Mayor was also gifted with a Weston-super-Mare Tourist leaflet from 1983 for the Town Council's retention which at the time was worth the value of 10p.</p> <p>The Town Mayor informed that unfortunately due to ill health, Joan Thompson had stepped down from her role as Town Mayoress and that former Mayoress , Jocelyn Holder, had kindly agreed to take on the role and would be supporting the Mayor for the remainder of the Town Mayor's term of office as Mayoress. In recognition and thanks to the former Town Mayoress, Joan Thompson, her time served as Town Mayoress would be officially recorded.</p> <p>Finally, a request from a town in Japan to twin with Weston-super-Mare had been received. The Town Mayor informed that as their interests were primarily working with Social Services, she would pass the request onto North Somerset Council for designation.</p>
<p>257.</p>	<p>To consider the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy</p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer for North Somerset Council, Mike Jackson, was in attendance to provide a presentation on the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy.</p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda. The report recommended that Members consider what representations, if any, the Town Council may wish to make to North Somerset Council in response to their proposals for the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy.</p> <p>The Town Mayor invited Mike Jackson to make his presentation to the Council and then partake in any questions raised by Members of the Council.</p> <p>The presentation was entitled 'Living. Learning. Lifestyle' and began with the changing face of town centres, highlighting the fact that towns all over the country were struggling to keep viable town centres.</p> <p>The new vision for Weston Town Centre was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An expanded Weston College providing more further and higher education opportunities • 2,000 additional homes for urban living • Improved leisure offer for a larger town centre population • Jobs growth as part of the new mix • Bringing a better retail offer of improved quality, concentrated in a smaller area <p>The strategy was supported by industry experts, research and Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre Cities: Beyond the High Street • LGA/Universities UK: collaborating for growth • DCLG: improving high streets and town centres • DTZ, a global leader commercial real estate management supports our strategy

Weston College was negotiating the conversion of the Winter Gardens into a Law and Professional Services Academy which addressed the new town centre vision of expanding Weston College for the provision of further and higher education opportunities. The deadline for Weston College's funding application for this project was 31st October, and North Somerset Council did not want to miss the opportunity to support the College on this.

The redevelopment of the Winter Gardens site would be phased in three stages. The rear Pavilion entrance would be modernised (diagram shown) with an additional entrance to the Italian Gardens; the front entrance onto the seafront would revert back to its iconic and historic look (diagram shown) and a third phase would be a new four story University block (diagram shown). The reason for choosing the Winter Gardens was because the building celebrates Weston's past, it secures the Winter Gardens' future, provides better access to the original building for the community, was well located to breathe life into the town centre and enhance connectivity to the seafront, helps 'frame' the town square, making the most of a much loved but under-used public space and was close to Weston College's Knightsone Campus.

To develop the vision, informal discussions with stakeholders would take place followed by a formal public consultation in January/February 2015.

A supplementary Planning Document which would cover education, leisure, retail, housing and employment, needs to address parking issues, needs to support principle and delivery of appropriate development and positive promotion – working with all parties to implement.

The wider programme was:

- Residential
- Employment
- Leisure/culture
- Public realm/access
- Retail

The next steps would be to support Weston College in securing funding for expansion; to manage Winter Gardens' bookings; confirm the site for higher education in the town centre; consult and develop the wider strategy and bring forward exemplar housing sites.

The Town Mayor thanked Mike Jackson for his presentation and asked that if dual hatted Members did not object she requested that Town Councillors be able to ask their questions in the first instance as this was their first sight of the proposals. The following questions were raised by Members and answered by Mr. Jackson:

Mike Jackson was asked whether the strategy would help encourage debate in North Somerset Council regarding the targeting of evaporation and deprivation of the town centre. Mike Jackson advised that North Somerset believed that the strategy would help with the town centre deprivation challenge and that Weston College have an excellent track record of providing training to support people outside of the labour market into work. Raising the qualifications/training of local people would help attract employers.

It was queried whether there were any other sites for college expansion and Mike Jackson informed that other buildings such as the old Magistrates Court and Police Station were considered but it was felt that the Winter Gardens would be the favourable building for reasons that it had potential for expansion and that the redevelopment of the site could be delivered relatively quickly. However, this was all still subject to funding and planning policies and so the other sites may still be revisited.

The question was raised as to whether student living accommodation had been considered

and if so where? Mike Jackson explained that in consultation with the College, work was being undertaken in identifying town centre sites as this would best capture the regeneration benefits.

The town was facing ‘an onslaught of crime’ according to the television programme Crimewatch, and it was raised whether bringing in more people to the town would make this worse. Mike Jackson advised that North Somerset Council did not believe so. The Police had already added more PCs and PCSOs to the Weston beat. North Somerset also believed that the more diverse communities, attracted by new residential, education and leisure facilities would have a ‘civilising influence’ on the night-time economy.

With extra students coming into the town it was asked whether there were any plans for additional parking. Mike Jackson explained that car parking and how it should be addressed was being looked at as part of the strategy.

Although there was support by Members for the College’s expansion, the proposed use of the Winter Gardens was not generally supported, preferring a development at Locking Road or other car parks (with parking underneath). Building on the Town Square was a step too far and doubts were raised regarding development on this site as there had already been historic battles over its development. Mike Jackson informed that it was North Somerset Council’s view that the Winter Gardens was the best site for the College. However they were also looking at opportunities for the development of Locking Road and other opportunity sites. Town Square was an important public space but could be enhanced, and potentially improved by development around the margin to bring more activity.

It was queried how many of the proposed 2,000 new homes would be for students and what mix of use and plans were there to include affordable starter homes for local young people? Mike Jackson explained that he was not yet able to give precise figures and would want to encourage quality accommodation that would improve the image and attractiveness of Weston. It was requested that North Somerset Council put extensive thought into the mix of use for the 2,000 proposed homes.

The academic year was only 30 weeks and it was questioned what would happen for the rest of the 22 weeks of the year. Mike Jackson advised that Universities today occupied their buildings all year round and let the accommodation to visitors and run learning and conferencing activities all year.

In response to a question whether the college was expanding or moving from existing sites, Mike Jackson confirmed that it was expanding, including 2500 new Higher Education students in the next few years.

It was queried, if the funding bid failed what was plan B. Mike Jackson informed that expansion of Weston College was still expected in the future and North Somerset Council would look to help secure funding through other means.

Further concerns regarding the proposals for the Winter Gardens were raised but having heard the presentation, members had been persuaded on the principle and it was questioned whether the old part of the building would be retained for community use. Mike Jackson explained that the College proposed to restore the layout of the building to return it more closely to its original state and that Community use would be protected and retained.

The College had improved greatly in recent years and it was requested to know if the DTZ report was publicly available and Mike Jackson advised that it was not, as it contained commercially sensitive information.

It was requested to know what was the value of the current funding bid. Mike Jackson informed that funding of approximately £18m had been requested, but if not all was granted

the project could be phased.

Concerns regarding delivery, given the track record of Dolphin Square, were raised and how would North Somerset Council ensure the project was successful? Mike Jackson advised that as the Winter Gardens project was publically funded there were not the same commercial risks as faced by Dolphin Square.

There was support for the College's aims and Members were impressed with the aims of the town centre regeneration but it was questioned again whether the Winter Gardens was the correct location. Would it be sold or leased and would the Jan/Feb public consultation be too late? How could future community use be secured? Mike Jackson advised that North Somerset Council were in discussion and taking legal advice regarding the best way to transfer the site for College use whilst ensuring continued community use. The proposed consultation in the New Year would be about the wider strategy/vision, not the Winter Gardens. The planning application for redeveloping the Winter Gardens would be consulted on, in the normal way.

Feedback and residents' understanding was that the Winter Gardens was given to the town and this raised the question of how would the Winter Gardens be transferred to the College? Mike Jackson informed that there would be a legally binding agreement to protect community access. Bournemouth was a good example of where this had worked before. In response to the question on whether the HE campus would contribute to the progression of Dolphin Square? ... Mike Jackson advised "yes", and any proposal to bring in more people into the town would help local businesses and improve the viability of projects like Dolphin Square.

Five issues were raised which would need to be addressed to ensure success:

1. Securing the expansion of the College.
2. Regeneration of the town centre.
3. Overall appearance and design of the developments (the 'back' of the Winter Gardens needs to be treated as well as the front).
4. The Winter Gardens was currently an expensive luxury for the town. It needs a new role.
5. New residential – we need to change perceptions. We need to look at what was currently wrong and then address this.

Mike Jackson agreed that it was the time to be bold, to deliver the regeneration the town deserves and to change perceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

SECONDED BY: Councillor Len Purnell

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

RESOLVED: To support the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy as outlined in Mike Jackson's presentation, subject to addressing the concerns regarding the detail in protecting community use of the Winter Gardens and the adjacent open space.

19 in favour

1 against

3 abstentions

Councillor Mark Canniford asked to be recorded as 'not voting'

	<p><i>The Town Mayor thanked both Mike Jackson and Racheal Lewis for their presentation and they left the meeting 8.20 pm.</i></p>
<p>258.</p>	<p>Urgent Repairs to the Boundary Wall, Milton Road Cemetery The referral from the Community Services Committee held on 10th November 2014 had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council informed that bad weather had damaged the wall further and that the work needed to be done in addition to the planned maintenance schedule and moved approval of the use of general reserves.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To agree that work to reduce the height of the wall and to remove or reduce the trees behind the wall be undertaken as soon as practicable. 2. To undertake a full tender process to that effect. 3. In the event of extreme urgency to approve the use of general reserves to provide the necessary funding for the works, estimated at £35,000 to £40,000.
<p>259.</p>	<p>CCTV Review – Formula for the Town Council Contributions The report of the Town Clerk and proposed formula for cost-sharing between Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare Town Councils had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed that the report requests that all four Town Councils select their chosen formulas and recommended option 2 of the proposed formulas as this would work better for future control.</p> <p>The Leader had been involved with the North Somerset Council Working Party which had proposed the formulas and informed that he had received an update from Chris Harrison, CCTV, that there were 43 cameras in Weston and not 46 as stated in the proposed formula cost-sharing report. He then moved the recommendation to approve Option 2.</p> <p>Debate ensued. Views were expressed regarding the fact that it was the statutory responsibility of the district authority to provide CCTV and not the Town Councils.</p> <p>Clarity was sought on the wording ‘the businesses ‘should be’ required to contribute to their costs’ on page 2 of the 2nd paragraph of the Town Clerk’s report and it was clarified that businesses would not need to pay for CCTV which was intended to protect public places.</p> <p>Some members felt that, regardless of the principles, the Town Council will be forced to raise its budget next year to contribute towards the provision of CCTV which did not seem a very good deal and it was requested that a list of all CCTV cameras around the town be obtained.</p>

	<p>The Leader reported that a map and list of all CCTV cameras in the town existed, which could be used to review the need for each camera individually.</p> <p>It was noted that there had been a change in legislation which enabled the turning off of any camera where no activity had been reported over a certain length of time.</p> <p>The Leader clarified that the Town Council had always contributed towards CCTV provision via ‘Special Expenses’ but now the Town Council can take control over the need and siting of the cameras.</p> <p>The view was expressed that North Somerset Council were effectively passing on their budget cuts down to town and parish councils and that although in favour of town and parish councils taking on more local services from the district authority, it cannot be done without extra funding.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Sonia Russe</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the preferred formula for cost sharing was Option 2. 2. To note that the number of CCTV cameras had decreased from 46 to 43 3. To formally request a map and list of all CCTV cameras in the town be requested.
<p>260.</p>	<p>Openness Regulations – Level for Recording of Decisions</p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk outlining recommendations for consideration had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that for the purpose of the Openness Regulations the Council needed to set a level at which it considers that expenditure could “significantly affect the position of the Town Council” and that the report reflected the figure of £7,500 recommended by the Responsible Financial Officer.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Michal Kus</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Town Council notes and adopts the advice from DCLG that decisions to allocate individual burial and allotment plots, hire out rooms and facilities etc do not require to be recorded. 2. That the Town Council sets the level at which it considers that expenditure could “significantly affect the position of the Town Council” at £7,500.

<p>261.</p>	<p>Openness Regulations – recording of Council Meetings The report of the Town Clerk and the recommended Policy on filming, recording and reporting of meetings had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the policy would feed into the review of Standing Orders which would be reported to the next meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee in December but needed to be addressed at this point in time and therefore, recommended the approval of the attached policy with the intention to review in 12 months’ time.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>That the Policy on Filming and Reporting of Council and Committee Meetings be approved and reviewed in 12 months’ time.</p> <p>An amendment to the proposal was requested</p> <p>That the wording of ‘It has no objection to’ in line 2 of the Policy be changed to reflect the wording ‘The Town Council actively encourages’ to quiet and inconspicuous filming.</p> <p>The amendment to the proposal was accepted by the proposer and seconder and a vote was taken and carried. Accordingly it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED: That subject to the above amendment, the Policy on Filming and Reporting of Council and Committee Meetings be approved and reviewed in 12 months’ time.</p>
<p>262.</p>	<p>Museum HLF Bid and Project Group The report of the Responsible Financial Officer and Final Museum Project costs had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Mayor invited the Chairman of the Museum Working Party to address the meeting. The Chairman recommended his approval of the report and wanted to record thanks to all concerned Officers of the Town Council, in particular the Development Officer for the hard work, time and commitment to the project.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report of the Responsible Financial Officer and final museum project costs be received.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council took the opportunity to thank the Town Mayor for her level of commitment to the role as Town Mayor considering her very difficult personal circumstances.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.47 pm</p> <p>Signed: Dated: Town Mayor</p>