

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT  
THE TOWN HALL ON  
MONDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

**Meeting Commenced:** 7.00 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 9.06 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Jocelyn Holder (Town Mayor), Clive Webb (Leader of the Town Council), Raymond Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Mark Canniford, James Clayton, Robert Cleland, John Crockford-Hawley, Clive Darke, Peter Fox, Catherine Gibbons, David Hitchins, Denise Hunt, Michal Kus, Michael Lyall, Richard Nightingale, Frederick Parsons, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Lisa Pilgrim, Ian Porter, Len Purnell, Anita Spencer-Johns, Richard Tucker, Martin Williams and Roz Willis.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer), Tricia Brabham (Communications Officer), Chris Millard (Mayors Civic Officer), Alison Ashford (Administrator/Secretary), Ellie Allen-Somers (Tourism and Marketing Officer), Reverend Andrew Alden (Town Mayor's Chaplain), Fiona Cope (Chief Officer Citizens Advice North Somerset) Sarah Ford (Weston & Somerset Mercury), , Peter Mc Aler, Marian Mc Aler , Steve Ashford (Parishioners) and a Guest of Councillor Richard Nightingale.

The Town Mayor welcomed Councillor Denise Hunt to the Town Council and the meeting and then invited Reverend Andrew Alden to say prayers.

The Town Mayor invited questions and observations from parishioners present.

Peter McAleer addressed the council by expressing his concerns over the provision of the public conveniences provided by the Town Council. In particular Grove Park toilets which had been closed due to vandalism for an unacceptable amount of time, the future of the Worle High Street toilet which is at threat of being closed and sold and the closure of the toilets at Milton Road Cemetery. He felt that the Town Council had been negligent with the provision of toilets and wanted assurance that there was not an ulterior motive to close them.

Marian McAleer then addressed the council by reiterating Peter's concerns and added that the council needed to be considering the ageing population and remain non discriminatory. Particularly against elderly women and young children who have to plan the time they are out revolving around gaining access to a toilet. To be able to go to the toilet was a basic human right of which the council must provide a suitable service.

A member found this to be very disappointing to hear and requested that some data be provided to members on why and when the toilets had been closed and that the subject of toilets be referred to the next Community Services Committee for discussion.

A member asked that the McAleers be notified of the result of any discussion at committee to which the Town Clerk informed they would.

A member requested to know how much the council had spent on replacing and repairing the toilets. The Town Clerk advised members that under Standing Order 7.1 the matter could not be debated at the meeting as it was not listed as an agenda item. However, he informed the member that each toilet coin mechanism costed over £1,000.

<b>157</b>	<b>To receive Apologies for Absence</b>  Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sarah Codling, Peter Crew, James Davis, Jan Holloway and Steven Kane.
------------	---

158	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
159	<p><b>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2017</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Michal Kus  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Clive Webb</p> <p>A member pointed out that the wording on the Agenda relating to the Mayor had not been changed from 'he' to 'she' as previously requested.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That with the above exception, the minutes be approved.</p>
160	<p><b>To receive announcements and communications from the Town Mayor</b></p> <p>The Town Mayor reported that she and the Mayoress had attended 87 engagements to date and that the Deputy Mayor had attended 3 engagements on her behalf.  The Town Mayor then highlighted the following significant events:</p> <p>Grant Presentation to the Dairy Festival (£2,000 Town Council Grant)  Flower Show 2017 (Event supported by Town Council)  High Sheriff's Garden Party  Opening of Weston Museum  Re-launching of the Blakehay Theatre  3 x Radio Interviews (2 on Weston &amp; Tourism)  Past Mayor's Cream Tea  Uphill Scarecrow Competition</p> <p>The Town Mayor then informed of future dates for diaries:  30<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Christmas Lights switch on  17<sup>th</sup> March 2018 The Mayor's Charity Ball</p>
161	<p><b>To receive the Notes of the Youth Council Meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017</b></p> <p>The notes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the notes be noted.</p>
162	<p><b>The work of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)</b>  Presentation by Fiona Cope, Chief Executive of the CAB</p> <p>The Town Mayor invited Fiona Cope to address the meeting.</p> <p>Unfortunately due to technical issues, members were unable to view Fiona's powerpoint presentation and it would be emailed to them as soon as possible.</p> <p>Fiona advised that she had been in post for two years and had worked within the service for 25 years. People needed help making decisions in their lives and came to the CAB for Welfare Rights, Money Advice, Housing Advice, Family Law, Employment, Consumer Issues, Law and Courts, Health, Immigration and anything else. CAB had been present in Weston since 1939 and operating continuously since 1961. Weston was the CAB's biggest office and had many outreach centres over the district. The current location of the Badger Centre on Wadhams</p>

	<p>Street was a very important hub for the CAB. CAB was a local charity and part of a national charity networking with others across the country. If CAB had to pay its volunteers it would cost over £300,000. It was also a training provider and quality checked. Many students worked with CAB and developed a wealth of knowledge and experience, a training opportunity which it would like to keep. Universal Credit had created a tsunami effect on people of which was clearly not working. Working people were coming to the CAB for food vouchers. CAB was a business and an employer. CAB had applied for the Agilisis contract but lost it at stage 2 due to its finances. CAB was accredited and quality marked.</p> <p>The CAB had been operating from the Badger Centre for over 12 years and its time there was limited. The lease would expire in March 2018. An alternative premise had been found at 10, Waterloo Street, subject to negotiations with the Landlord. The service needed to cover Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon. £20,000 was needed for a refit to comply with Health &amp; Safety and DDA standards. The landlord could help with the refit costs, however this would mean a bigger monthly outlay for the CAB. An architect had been appointed and the lease would be signed over the Christmas period.</p> <p>Finally, Fiona invited members to the Badger Centre to witness first hand the service they provided and she provided the Town Clerk with a rota for members to sign up.</p> <p>A member thanked Fiona for her presentation and from personal experience of using the service found in exceptional facility for the community. He asked for Fiona to elaborate on the support CAB was receiving from the local authority. Fiona informed that she had been in communications with Mike Jackson, Chief Executive, North Somerset Council who had verbally agreed a financial contribution, however this was not yet confirmed.</p> <p>A member had visited the Badger Centre and had worked with students who had worked at the CAB. He could not understand the logic of why the service was scattered around the district and felt that the CAB should be situated within the Town Hall where it would be more accessible and cost effective. Fiona explained that the option had been explored but there was an issue with lack of front line space.</p> <p>A further member thanked Fiona and wanted to review the Town Council's financial contribution and the location of the CAB.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDED:</b> That the Town Council's Financial contribution and future location of the CAB be referred to the next Expenditure &amp; Governance Working Party on 6<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p><i>At this point in the meeting, Councillor Catherine Gibbons declared a personal interest as a volunteer at the CAB.</i></p> <p>Whilst she appreciated the members comments relating to situating the CAB within the Town Hall, with her advisors hat on, people liked the fact that the CAB was separate from the local authority as it gave them a sense of privacy.</p> <p>In response to a question, Fiona explained that the timescale the CAB had to vacate was 3-5 years and that they had only been informed of the sale of the Badger Centre in June 2017.</p> <p>The Town Mayor thanked Fiona for attending the meeting.</p>
<p>163</p>	<p><b>Political Balance and Committee Allocations</b></p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed that due to the tragic death of Councillor Derek Mead (independent) there had been a vacant seat on the Town Council for Worle North Ward. A by-</p>

	<p>election had taken place on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August when the seat was won by Denise Hunt who had indicated her intention to join the Labour Group on the Town Council.</p> <p>The Town Council's political balance had therefore changed to: Conservative 20, Labour 6, Liberal Democrat 4, and UKIP 1. A percentage calculation (to the nearest 2 decimal places) indicated no change of the make up of committees of 12 or fewer. The report therefore recommended that the vacancies on the Planning and the Tourism and Leisure Committees be filled and gave an opportunity for any other changes to committee allocations to be made.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor Catherine Gibbons that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councillor Denise Hunt would replace Councillor Richard Tucker on the Community Services Committee and</li> <li>2. Councillor Denise Hunt would replace Councillor James Clayton on the Youth Council.</li> </ol> <p>It was then proposed by Councillor Robert Payne that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Councillor Raymond Armstrong would fill the vacancy on the Tourism and Leisure Committee and</li> <li>4. Councillor Robert Payne would fill the vacancy on the Planning Committee and</li> <li>5. Councillor Raymond Armstrong would replace Councillor Robert Payne on the Weston In Bloom Working Party.</li> </ol> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Michal Kus  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Clive Webb</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the above changes to the committee allocations be approved.</p>
164	<p><b>Consultation on the Accessible Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document</b></p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda and recommended that the Town Council should support the document.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
165	<p><b>Lease and Funding of Parking Spaces at the Museum</b></p> <p>At this point in the meeting, The Town Mayor advised that this item would be moved and discussed at the end of the meeting.</p>
166	<p><b>Motion to Council under Standing Order 11 from Councillor Anita Spencer-John:</b>          "This council expresses its deep concern about overzealous on-street parking enforcement in the town and its effect on business and tourism. the Town Council calls on North Somerset Council to urgently carry out an open and consultative review of its parking restrictions and on-street parking enforcement policies and practices"</p> <p>Councillor Anita Spencer-John addressed the meeting and began by welcoming Councillor Denise Hunt to the Town Council. She had met with Alan Taylor (Parking Manager, North Somerset Council) accompanied by the Town Clerk to discuss some of the issues raised by local residents and business owners about parking enforcement in the town. Unfortunately, her concerns were met with lack of compassion which had pushed her to bring this motion to the Town Council meeting. It was noted that Alan Taylor had declined the offer to attend the</p>

meeting to answer questions from members.

The motion above was therefore

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Anita Spencer-John

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor James Clayton

A dual hatted member informed that he had pushed for a review of parking enforcement which would take place the following year and that a scrutiny panel meeting had been arranged in October. He felt that a review should involve all interested parties and not just members and therefore proposed an amendment to the motion.

An amendment was

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Rischard Nightingale

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

that *“This council expresses its deep concern over comments made by residents regarding overzealous on-street parking enforcement in the town and its potential effect on business and tourism. The Town Council insists, that along with residents, both should be part of the review being undertaken by North Somerset Council into parking restrictions and on-street parking enforcement policies and practices”*

Debate ensued. Support was expressed for the motion and concern about the amount of unacceptable complaints she had received.

The view was expressed that the current parking restrictions were necessary but that it was the way in which they were enforced that was causing the problems. The situation had gone from one extreme to the other. Having read the Traffic Management Act 2004 Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and Enforcement, the current scheme was actually in breach of many of them and was discouraging economic activity within the town rather than encouraging it.

It was felt that North Somerset Council was enforcing restrictions that had always been there and that it was the changes of use within the town that needed to be addressed. For example, the Boulevard that once hosted the old town library and a doctor’s surgery did not need the excessive amount of disabled parking bays outside. A survey of the town should have been done, removing all redundant disabled parking bays and double yellow lines before any restrictions were enforced.

A member was not in favour of inviting officers to meetings where they would be confronted by members’ questioning and suggested inviting Councillor Elfan Ap Rees to any future meeting.

Further accounts of situations of excessive enforcement were reported.

A vote on the amendment was taken and **carried**

A vote on the substantive motion was then taken and **carried** and it was therefore:

**RESOLVED:** That *“This council expresses its deep concern over comments made by residents regarding overzealous on-street parking enforcement in the town and its potential effect on business and tourism. The Town Council insists, that along with residents, both should be part of the review being undertaken by North Somerset Council into parking restrictions and on-street parking enforcement policies and practices”*

It was noted that the reason for some members voting against the amendment, was for the choice of wording used.

<b>167</b>	<p><b>Motion to Council under Standing Order 11 from Councillor Robert Payne:</b></p> <p>“This council notes that North Somerset Council has radically changed the parking culture in the town centre with the introduction of on-street charging and the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme”</p> <p>“We remain concerned that while the positive benefits of these new arrangements have been largely aimed at businesses, the needs of residents who live in the town centre and those who live a short distance outside continue to be overlooked. The lack of provision for these residents has resulted in significant parking difficulties for them.”</p> <p>“We therefore call on North Somerset Council to review these arrangements as a matter of urgency, and to give consideration to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of a reasonably priced scheme for residents with Residents’ Parking Zones (RPZ) in strategic places in residential streets close to the town centre.</li> <li>• The creation of more parking spaces, both off-street by identifying unused land that can be brought into use, and on-street by reviewing parking restrictions and yellow lines.</li> <li>• Reducing charges for town centre parking to encourage motorists accessing the town centre and seafront to park in designated car parking places, rather than in residential streets.”</li> </ul> <p>Councillor Payne addressed the meeting by stressing that the people that lived and worked in the restricted zone areas relied on street parking. People living in the area could not park outside their own homes and were competing for parking spaces with visitors. Having researched into resident parking schemes, Devon County Council provided one at the cost of £30 per year.</p> <p>The motion was therefore</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Robert Payne  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Raymond Armstrong</p> <p>A member explained that despite members of the opposite party pushing for a review Councillor Ap Rees had refused to review residents parking. One of the most concerning problems experienced by residents was that they were not able to drive home and park within an acceptable vicinity of their home and were having to park elsewhere and walk home with their shopping. The town needed a parking regime but not this one. Increasing the parking charges by 50%, as North Somerset Council had done, was immoral. Weston was now more expensive to park in than Bristol and Torquay which was detrimental to the town and he therefore supported the motion.</p> <p>The concept of residents not being able to park outside of their own homes was not a viable option.</p> <p>A member agreed with the spirit of the motion however, arriving at a ‘reasonable’ price for residents parking scheme with North Somerset Council would be a problem. He suggested that the council needed to go one step further and make a statement by asking North Somerset Council for free parking for residents which would put pressure on them to develop the out of town park and ride site and therefore proposed an amendment to the motion.</p> <p>An amendment was</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Richard Nightingale  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Fox</p>
------------	--

“This council notes that North Somerset Council has radically changed the parking culture in the town centre with the introduction of on-street charging and the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme”

“We remain concerned that while the positive benefits of these new arrangements have been largely aimed at businesses, the needs of residents who live in the town centre and those with live a short distance outside continue to be overlooked. The lack of provision for these residents has resulted in significant parking difficulties for them”.

“We therefore call on North Somerset Council to review these arrangements as a matter of urgency, and to give consideration to:

The introduction of a free parking scheme for residents through Residents ‘Parking Zones (RPZ) in strategic places in residential streets close to the town centre.

The creation of more parking spaces, both off-street by identifying unused land that can be brought into use, and on-street by reviewing parking restrictions and yellow lines and that a park and ride scheme should be implemented immediately to relieve congestion in residential areas.

Reducing charges for the town centre parking to encourage motorists accessing the town centre with at least 30 minutes free parking and Seafront to park in designated car parking places, rather than in residential streets, however the introduction of free residents parking should be given priority”.

Debate ensued on the amendment.

The view was expressed that any local authority needed to be able to cover the costs for a free parking service and a free scheme quite simply would not work. North Somerset Council would never except the concept of a free parking scheme and this therefore was completely unrealistic.

A member suggesting inviting Councillor Ap Rees to the scrutiny panel meeting and to a future Town Council Meeting.

It was felt that the Town Council needed to make its voice heard and be positive on behalf of its residents.

A vote on the amendment was taken and **carried**

A vote on the substantive motion was then taken and **carried** and was therefore

**RESOLVED:** “This council notes that North Somerset Council has radically changed the parking culture in the town centre with the introduction of on-street charging and the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme”

“We remain concerned that while the positive benefits of these new arrangements have been largely aimed at businesses, the needs of residents who live in the town centre and those with live a short distance outside continue to be overlooked. The lack of provision for these residents has resulted in significant parking difficulties for them”.

“We therefore call on North Somerset Council to review these arrangements as a matter of urgency, and to give consideration to:

The introduction of a free parking scheme for residents through Residents ‘Parking Zones (RPZ) in strategic places in residential streets close to the town centre.

	<p>The creation of more parking spaces, both off-street by identifying unused land that can be brought into use, and on-street by reviewing parking restrictions and yellow lines and that a park and ride scheme should be implemented immediately to relieve congestion in residential areas.</p> <p>Reducing charges for the town centre parking to encourage motorists accessing the town centre, with at least 30 minutes free parking, and Seafront to park in designated car parking places, rather than in residential streets, however the introduction of free residents parking should be given priority”.</p>
168	<p><i>To resolve 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> <p><b>Lease and Funding of Parking Spaces at the Museum</b></p> <p>The joint report of the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer was circulated at the meeting and an image of the parking spaces was appended to the report.</p> <p>The Town Clerk apologised for the late issue of the report.</p> <p>As members were aware, thanks to a £1.1 million Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant, around £1.6 million had been spent on a major refurbishment of the former North Somerset Museum giving greater emphasis to the historic gas company building as well as the exhibits. The Council decided to give free entry following refurbishment and the renamed Weston Museum reopened on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2017.</p> <p>The Town Council had always recognised that the location of the museum in a relatively quiet street was a challenge and had been working on signage to direct people to the museum from the sea front and elsewhere. In addition, the almost complete lack of vehicle parking other than the very restrictive and strictly enforced on street parking which was metered and restricted to two hours maximum was a further challenge. While the Council had always intended to subsidise the museum, in order to fund free entry it was important that all income opportunities were seized including the retail and catering elements and also special and corporate events and possibly weddings.</p> <p>The private owner of a small block of parking spaces located almost immediately opposite the Museum entrance had approached the Council and offered the opportunity to lease the parking spaces (5 or more if some vehicles block in others).</p> <p>Following an informal discussion with the Leader of the Council a meeting had taken place between the Landlord, the Responsible Financial Officer and the Town Clerk at which the Council’s potential interest in leasing the block of parking spaces was expressed. It had been made clear to the Landlord that any such discussion was informal and any outcome would be subject to formal approval by the relevant Committee. After discussion an offer had been received from the Landlord for the Town Council to lease the entire block of parking spaces for a cost of £10,200 per annum.</p> <p>Advice had been obtained from a Mike Ripley, a professional commercial valuer that in his view the parking could realistically achieve five parking spaces. In conclusion, there must be a premium to the value of the spaces and therefore a figure of £1,500 per space, ie. £7,500 could be justified.</p> <p>Benefits to the Museum of leasing a parking area opposite the main entrance would include corporate functions and wedding receptions. Education room: a drop off point for children would be helpful and was a challenge which could put off schools from choosing the museum as a destination. The Café were holding dementia cafes with our links with the Alzheimer’s Society again a drop off and parking for a mini bus would make this a more attractive offer.</p>



Disability groups visiting the Museum, Loading and unloading and as an additional income stream it could consider sub renting the back few places (maybe 3) to other local businesses keeping the front for a drop off point.

The Town Clerk advised that the spaces would not be used for staff parking. Having spent a large amount in both capital and revenue on the museum refurbishment project, it was considered a relatively small sum in addition and would be worthwhile as a good investment in the museum's future business development.

There was no financial provision for leasing parking spaces in the 2017/18 budget. Accordingly if the Council decided to take a lease, the cost in the current financial year, approximately £5,000, would have to be taken from general reserves.

The report therefore recommended the Council:

To consider whether the Council wished to take a lease of the parking area on Burlington Street and if so:

1. To authorise the Town Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader to negotiate the terms and seek to complete a lease of the parking spaces on Burlington Street with the Landlord.
2. To authorise expenditure if required to cover the cost of the lease in the financial year 2017/18 to be taken from the Council's general reserves.

Debate ensued. The general feeling was that members were not in support of the opportunity as felt that the reasons for it were not legible. Specifically, the idea of providing car parking for weddings was not realistic due to insufficient parking spaces. School trips should be able to unload children at the front door of the Museum and wouldn't need to park. Caution was aired over the idea of sub letting the spaces. The quoted figure from the land owner was unrealistic and that the concept would be unmanageable.

The Town Clerk confirmed in answer to a question that the cost would be a charge through the Museum budget but that the intention would be to recover the costs from business income.

The view was expressed that if the Council were to adopt any land within the vicinity then it should be via freehold.

A member informed in the defence of Officers that the idea was not to provide parking for wedding guests but for associated arrangements such as caterers.

It was suggested that it would be cheaper to pay for drop off permits. The Town Clerk informed that during the refurbishment of the Museum, the council incurred some hefty permit charges for the builders enforced by North Somerset Council.

A member felt that North Somerset Council should be encouraged to look at Compulsory Purchase Orders in the area rather than dealing with it in isolation. The Town Clerk reported that he had discussed this with North Somerset Council but so far to no avail. He understood members' concerns but advised that it was his duty to bring the opportunity to the attention of members.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Mark Canniford

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Michal Kus

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council do not pursue the matter further at this time.

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.06 p.m.

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor

Dated: .....