



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD ON 29TH APRIL 2024
AT THE TOWN HALL**

Meeting Commenced: 6.30 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.32 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Ciaran Cronnelly, (Town Mayor) Ray Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Joe Bambridge, Mike Bell, Gill Bute, John Carson, Annabelle Chard, James Clayton, Jemma Coles, John Crockford-Hawley, Catherine Gibbons, Simon Harrison-Morse, James Owen, Hugh Malyan, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Marcia Pepperall, Caroline Reynolds, Robert Skeen, Tim Taylor, Richard Tucker and Martin Williams.

IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Pearse (Town Clerk), Becky Walsh (Host and Communications Officer), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk- Operational Services), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer/Manager), Rebecca Saunders (Civic & Committee Officer), Molly Maher (Senior Development Officer), Sarah Jackson (Quarry Project Manager), Emily Burnell (We SEE Trees tree nursery), Tom Newman (Super Culture), Lynn Smith and Charlie Lester (Big Worle), Steve Winter-Gray (North Somerset LGBT+ Forum), Julie Crowther plus 11 from the (Fuchsia Cancer Support Group) Andrew Oliver plus 58 from the (Weston Ukulele Players) and 50 from the (Street Pastors) and 90 members of the public.

The 24th Annual Report of Weston-super-Mare Town Council had been previously circulated and was available on the Town Council's website.

1.	Introduction by the host, Beck Walsh The Town Mayor, Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly was formally introduced, welcoming everyone and officially opened the Annual Town Meeting.
2.	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Canniford, Peter Crew, Lisa Pilgrim, John Standfield and Helen Thornton. Councillors Mark Aplin, Justyna Pecak-Michalowicz and Charlie Williams were absent from the meeting.

3.	Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 20th March 2023 PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor James Clayton RESOLVED: That the minutes be agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.
4.	Presentations from Community Groups Presentations were made by the following community groups who worked in partnership with the town council over the past year: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emily Burnell from We SEE Trees tree nursery• Tom Newman from Super Culture• Lynn Smith and Charlie Lester Big Worle• Steve Winter-Gray North Somerset LGBT+ Forum• Sarah Pearse/Sarah Jackson Update on the Old Town Quarry.
5.	Presentation of the Annual Report 2023-2024 The Chairs of Committee's were invited to present their reports which were outlined within the 24 th Annual Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy & Finance Committee - Report of the Chair, Councillor Alan Peak• Community Services Committee – Report of the Chair, Councillor James Clayton• Tourism & Leisure Committee – Report of the Vice Chair, Councillor Simon Harrison-Morse• Heritage Arts & Culture Committee – Report of the Chair, Councillor John Crockford-Hawley
6.	Presentation of Mayors Awards The Town Mayor made his presentations as follows: Presentation of the Borough Shield The Borough shield was awarded annually to the person or organisation giving the greatest assistance to local people or charities. This year the shield was presented the Street Pastors, who were invited to come forward to accept the Borough Shield. A special mention to David Evans, founder of the Street Pastors back in 2006 who had very recently passed away. Mayor Awards The Mayor's Award was given to people who make an outstanding contribution to the local community and add significantly to the quality of life of those around them. The Mayor's

Award Ceremony formally acknowledges the positive difference made by those who live or work in the Town and is in recognition of their inspirational and dedicated work to the local community. The recipients are presented with a Weston-super-Mare Award, and their names are recorded on the Town Mayor's Roll of Honour.

- The First award goes to Julie Crowther of the Fuchsia Cancer Support Group who was invited to come forward and accept the award.
- The second award goes to Weston Ukulele players, having raised an impressive £9,000, for Children's Hospice South West, who were invited to come forward and accept the award.

7. **Matters raised by members of the public**

Members of the public were then invited to ask questions to the panel consisting of the Town Mayor, Chairs of Committee's and the Town Clerk.

- Question 1- Was in relation to the Town Quarry and the treatment of the tenants and artists who were locked out of their premises and excluded from conversations of the transition plans. How were the Town Council going to encourage them back to the site?
 - *Answer: The Chair of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee acknowledged the situation and advised that the Town Council were not yet in ownership of the Quarry. However, as soon as this was confirmed, the Town Council would reach out and work with the tenants to try and improve relations.*
 - *The Town Clerk added that the council had already contacted the artists to build and start communications and this would be continued and extended via the Quarry conversations as earlier reported.*
- Question 2- It was queried if the town council partnered with any community groups that represented people with disabilities? And when the shrine in the town was coming down as this was an obstacle for people with sight disabilities?
 - *Answer: The Town Clerk confirmed that the council worked in partnership with many community groups who did represent people with disabilities and that this would be considered for future presentations.*
 - *The Town Mayor welcomed further conversations on how the council could improve representations.*
 - *It was advised that the Shrine was provided by Super Culture and in situ for a 3year period.*
- Comment - A representative of the Citizens Advice Bureau thanked the Town Council for its continued support through the Service Level Agreement, which had enabled the in-person service to continue in the Sovereign.
- Question 4 – It was enquired when the Town Council would be moving to 32 Waterloo St and associated finance reports available?

- *Answer: The Town Clerk advised that the move had been delayed due to weather implications and was planned for late June/early July. The refurbishment project cost was £400.000 and all finances were reflected in the monthly financial reports, available on the website.*
- Comment – That the Victorian Café on the seafront would be an ideal place for a VIC.
- *Answer: Noted and advised that the café was under the jurisdiction of North Somerset Council.*
- Question 5 – What were the Town council doing to tackle the rise in the town centre street community as this was affecting the reputation of the town and there was no Police intervention?
 - *Answer – The Chair of the Community service Committee accepted that there was a problem and that the town council was trying to tackle this via its Service Level Agreements with Somewhere to Go, Town Centre Partnership – through Street Wardens and North Somerset Council by funding a Community Response Officer. All members of the street community are offered housing and support but are not engaging because of mental health issues, of which there is a national shortage of services to support.*
- Question 5 – It was reported that there was an issue with tents near Clarence Park.
- *Answer - It was advised that North Somerset Council had a criteria for housing support and that any reports of rough sleeping should be reported to them.*
- Question 6 – It was questioned why the Blakehay was running at a loss and what were the town council doing to utilise it more effectively. Which area or committee did the theatre sit tourism/leisure? There needed to be more cohesion across the council services
 - *Answer – The Town Clerk informed that the Blakehay was an arts venue which current sat under the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee and was also undertaking a business review to address the deficit. Covid had had a crippling effect on the arts and theatre industry and the council had sought grant funding to be able to open the theatre according to guidelines.*
- Question 7 – It was queried what the theory was by advertising days out in Cheddar on the Visit WsM website?
 - *Answer – The Vice Chair of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee explained that Visit Weston partnered with its neighbouring areas to provide a bigger offer to the customer and drive people staying in surrounding areas to visit Weston for the day/weekend.*

There being no further questions, the host thanked all in attendance and encouraged people's thoughts and ideas to come through throughout the year, with the 'Your Town Your Voice' surveys and in person meetings.

There being no further business, the Mayor, Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly thanked those for attending and closed the meeting at 8.32 pm.

Signed:Dated: Mayor of Weston-super-Mare