

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 13TH JANUARY 2020**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors James Clayton (Chairman), Marc Aplin, Roger Bailey, Gill Bute, Sarah Codling, Ciaran Cronnelly, Peter Fox, Peter McAleer, Helen Thornton and Roz Willis.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager), Zoe Scott (Community and Grounds Administrator), Kevin Lilwall (YMCA Operations Manager) and May Barnett (YMCA Youth Worker).

291	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutions No apologies for absence were received.
292	To receive Declarations of Interest No declarations were received.
293	To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Community Service Committee meeting held on 11TH November 2019 The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda. A member questioned if any further information had been provided by Victoria's Kitchen in relation to their grant application. The Town Clerk would clarify this with finance. PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roz Willis SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.
294	References from other Committees Minutes of Weston in Bloom Working Party held on 19th November 2019 (unapproved) The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda. RESOLVED: That the minutes be received and noted.
295	Management Reports: 295.1 Youth Services The report of the Operations Manager – YMCA had been previously circulated with the agenda.

Kevin Lilwall and May Barnett were in attendance to answer any questions.

Kevin introduced May who was a full time employee working closely with the youth café and its initiatives. They were pleased with the progression being made with the open access sessions.

The Wellbeing Event was due to take place on the 25th January at the Youth Café. Leaflets and posters were being produced for circulation. The target audience was children aged between 13 – 18 years of age and the event plans to offer them practical avenues to help them manage stress, anxiety and other struggles they may face in their daily life.

Throughout the Christmas period, hampers were produced from donations and offered to under privileged families and children. The YMCA were able to provide one family with a Christmas Tree and food for a Christmas lunch. If donations are continued, then the YMCA hoped to continue this initiative each year. Many Councillors showed their support and would like to contribute where possible.

The YMCA would also like to investigate the possibility of hosting community meals. They would need to find a suitable venue with a kitchen available.

Kevin informed the committee how the YMCA was working closely with schools and students who were at risk of or had been excluded.

It was also noted how 407 hours of work from those attending the YMCA had contributed to the success of recent projects.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Operations Manager - YMCA be noted.

295.2 Grounds

The report of the Grounds Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman began by congratulating the Grounds Manager on her hard work for bringing the dog bin contract in house. Since the service had been active, no complaints had been received regarding Town Council Dog Bins.

The Grounds Manager explained that the service was running smoothly and they were now in a position to provide an emptying service to other businesses and councils such as Alliance Homes and Kewstoke Parish Council. This would generate revenue.

Councillors expressed how they were happy to see such a productive service being provided.

In response to a question, the Grounds Manager confirmed that while currently agency staff had been stepping in to run the service, the positions would be advertised in February 2020 ready for employment in April 2020. This would run according to the budget approved at Full Town Council.

A member expressed the need for resilience in the Grounds Team. The Grounds Manager agreed and explained how the whole team will be able to provide the service should it be needed.

Members moved on to discuss the next part of the report, Public Toilets.

At this point in the meeting Kevin Lilwall and May Barnett left the meeting at 7.35pm

It was questioned why the blue lights were being removed and replaced with white lights. The Grounds Manager explained that this was a recommendation from the police. Blue lights did not give a good public perception. Many people used the torch on their phones to see or just prop the door open. It could also restrict the use of the cubicles for those who had visual impairments.

Recent vandalism had caused Clarence Park to be shut for the foreseeable future. A fire inside the cubicle had caused significant damage and would result in an insurance claim. The police and the antisocial behavior team at North Somerset Council had been informed.

The Chairman explained that he had met with the Grounds Manager and Officer. Whilst the Toilet Working Party had achieved some progress in the way of making the area more visible (by reducing the tree canopy) there was still significant issues which needed addressing. In order to gain a full picture of the issues the Chairman had visited the Grove Park Toilets and taken photographs of the condition they were in. These were tabled for members to see. The toilets were in a unsatisfactory state with clear issues surrounding vandalism and other Anti-Social behaviour. The Chairman had spoken to 2 members of the public who used the park regularly to ask them their views on the toilets. Both agreed something needed to change. It was thought perhaps a poll on Facebook and other Town Council media sources would help to understand the publics thoughts on the ongoing situation. The Chairman proposed that one option could be to keep the toilets fully functional during the summer months and close them during winter. Discussion ensued.

It was agreed that the opening times needed to be changed. Members wanted to understand from the officers their thoughts and experiences of dealing with public toilets, whilst not discounting the evidence before them.

The Community and Grounds Officer explained that Grove Park in particular was a problem site. The vandalism which often took place was not things which could be dealt with quickly. Often the cubicles were having to be re painted to cover blood stains on the ceilings and walls. The Grove Park toilets, being in the town centre, were a hive of activity for those partaking in anti-social behavior. Many times staff have had to attend the site, resulting in ambulances being called for members of the public who had been found in concerning states. The Community and Grounds Officer also highlighted that whilst she understood many people required public toilets frequently due to medical conditions, people had expressed previously that they were unable to use the ones in Grove Park due to them not being a sterile environment or clean enough for what they needed it for.

The current pre Planned Maintenance costs year to date for Public Toilets was £8,599.

The Grounds Manager highlighted that from as early as 8am the toilets were being used for Anti-Social Behavior with people staying in the cubicles overnight.

The Town Clerk stated that the Council had been aware of the toilets being problematic for many years now and the issue had been brought to the committee previously. The Town Clerk supported the idea of restricted opening hours.

	<p>A member highlighted that Ashcombe Park was used heavily by those who worked for services such as the Police and Ambulance. They would not want to see the Town Council advertise the closure of the toilets without also investigating the option of a Community Toilet Scheme.</p> <p>The idea of the Town Council running its own Community Response Team was discussed. It was pointed out that the Town Council currently financially supported the BID and their initiatives surrounding Community Response. This was also something businesses could pay for.</p> <p>A member expressed his disappointment as people depended on the service being provided. It was felt social problems were dictating society's needs. It was hoped there could be a way in the future to increase the surveillance of the area and hopefully the potential closure was not permanent.</p> <p>RADAR keys were also discussed but not thought a viable option at that time.</p> <p>It was suggested perhaps closing the toilets at 1pm or at random times would help to limit the Anti-Social Behaviour. Members agreed it was important to look at what service the Town Council wanted to provide the town and investigate the best way to carry it out. All agreed some form of action needed to be taken.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Gill Bute</p> <p>A vote was taken and accordingly it was carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>295.2.1 That further discussion of potential toilet closures be referred to the Toilet Working Party to report back with a recommendation at the next Community Services Meeting.</p> <p>295.2.2 To set the toilet closing hours to dusk with immediate effect.</p>
<p>296</p>	<p>Grounds Review Update</p> <p>The report of the Grounds Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A member was pleased to see the potential use of the chapel for events and weddings.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report of the Grounds Manager be noted.</p>
<p>297</p>	<p>Community Events</p> <p>The report of the Community and Grounds Administrator had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A member was pleased with the lineup and in particular the 'Laurie Lee' talk.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report of the Community and Grounds Administrator be noted.</p>

<p>298</p>	<p>Public Call Box Removals</p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was asked for Councilors to consider whether any public call boxes in their area were on the list for removal and if there were any objections.</p> <p>No objections were expressed at the meeting.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.</p> <p>Signed: Dated:</p> <p>Councillor James Clayton Chairman of the Community Services Committee</p>