

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE BLAKEHAY ON TUESDAY 16th FEBRUARY 2023**

Meeting Commenced: 2.39 pm

Meeting Concluded: 4.01 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), Dorothy Agassiz , Ray Armstrong, Roger Bailey, David Dash and Richard Tucker.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE : Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk) , Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk-Operational Services), Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager) , Matt Hardy (Operational Services Manager), Dave Peters (Tourism & Digital Marketing Officer) and Rebecca Saunders (Civic & Committee Officer).

288	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Hitchins who was substituted by Roger Bailey and John Crockford-Hawley with no substitution.
289	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest received.
290	To approve the accuracy of the minutes of The Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on 6th December 2022. The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda. PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ray Armstrong SECONDED BY: Councillor Dot Agassiz RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
291	Finance Reports The report of The Deputy Town Clerk had been circulated to Prior to the meeting. RESOLVED: That the finance report be noted.
292	Parks & Play Areas The Assistant Town Clerk - Operational Services (ATC-OS) reported that the team had sourced some specialist liquid to remove the paint that had caused the park to be closed following the spray jam. Two park inspectors had deemed the park unsafe and once the paint had been removed to make sure the canva was not changed from the paint , another inspection would be necessary. It was hoped the park would be ready to be reopened by Easter. It was enquired how expensive the liquid was to which it was informed that it was £150 for each container and until a sample area had been cleared , it would be impossible to calculate the cost.

There was a crime reference number for the incident but no CCTV footage to support so any arrests would be unlikely.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

General Update

The ATC-OS reported that the following week she would be meeting with Alliance homes regarding the Town Council taking over the Dartmouth Close Play Area.

It was noted that the Town Council was on track to be in control of 2 - 3 play areas by 2024.

A member enquired if so many new sites would put pressure on the grounds team to maintain. The Assistant Town Clerk (Operational Services) assured members that the Grounds team had capacity to undertake the extra work and had continued to attend upskill training to allow them to carry out services such as replacing gates, to keep outsourcing to a minimum.

A member reported that there had been some graffiti to the signage at Clearance Park play area.

The ATC-OS was not aware of this and would get the team to carry out an inspection of the area and advised that there was a plan to unify all park signage in keeping with The SEN signage to be sited at the Castle Batch site.

292.1 RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

293

Waterpark Procurement

Discussion ensued with regard to the new issue of procurement information following advice from NSC in relation to GDPR and commercial sensitivities. Members felt strongly that it would be better for details of procurement to be done on red paper if there were concerns rather than not having full contractors / suppliers' information. It was felt that the new system could be problematic as without information members could not be aware if there was need to declare interests as one example. Members requested that this was brought back to P & F to reconsider at the earliest convenience.

Plant Room

The Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) reported that three companies had submitted specialist design tenders and there was some variant in cost but two very close. The Grounds team had been involved with communicating with the companies and felt they could work best alongside PR-Q2. The director of this company had been involved with fitting the original plant room in a previous role so was familiar with the site.

The timescale for all 3 tenders was a 4-6-week lead time and 3-4-week work frame which would take the project end date right on the Easter opening, so members may choose to have works carried out in between Easter and Summer holidays instead of straight away.

A discussion ensued and the Chairman and a member decided that the splash pad was the main feature at the site so work should be carried out as soon as possible.

A member raised that due to there being a delay in receiving all the tenders and making a decision sooner, due to the PR-Q2 tender being submitted late, had concerns if they would be able to deliver the project on time. If they had been late submitting their quote

enquired if it would be possible to install a late penalty clause.

The DTC advised that it would be too late to include a late penalty clause and PR-Q1 had performed the best on submitting their tender and relevant paperwork, but was not the preferred contractor by the Grounds team who would be working closely with the winning candidate.

The committee decided to select PR-Q2 and would like to reinforce the importance of an Easter opening but noted that the Chairman and Officers could have final decision on the opening date between themselves, without coming back to committee for approval.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

SECONDED BY: Councillor Richard Tucker

A vote was taken and **carried** accordingly

293.1 RESOLVED: to accept PR-Q2 tender at a value of £78,013.11 and for works to be scheduled as soon as possible ahead of the summer opening. It was noted that depending on lead time the splash itself may not be on for the Easter holidays although the park would still be open for all other use.

Charges April 2023

The Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) had been requested by Officers to bring back to the committee the charges approved by Policy & Finance committee in December 2022, noting that with a 10% increase to cover increasing overhead costs this brought the charge to £2.75 for the year 2023 / 2024. The Tourisms team had expressed concern that with this cost being uneven it could be problematic and result in bigger cash floats being needed to cope with the inevitable 25p change needed as well as the time factor to do this on a busy day. A Councillor suggested that this be increase to £3 for 2023 / 2024. The DTC advised that if this was acceptable to the committee it would need to be ratified by Policy & Finance or full Council for ratification as committee's could not overturn a decision made by another committee.

A discussion ensued and it was decided that an entrance fee of £3 was still very reasonable and sensible.

A vote was taken and **carried** accordingly

293.2 RECOMMENDED: That a price increase of £3 should be recommended for the year 2023/2024 with the necessary approval from either Policy and Finance or Full Council.

294

Castle Batch

.1 Funding

The DTC Reported that no further funding had been received so there would be a need to use the £40k contingency fund but officers would continue to secure more funding.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

.2 Build Update

The DTC reported that the build was going well with some aspects ahead of schedule, despite some inclement weather and the contractor was proving to be very good to work alongside.

Communications had been covering the build with lots of engagement from the public.

Two pieces of equipment had outstanding planning permission but was very confident that they would be in place in time for the scheduled Easter opening.

A tree consultant was working on planting trees to provide some shade and the Development Officer continued to work with SEN school partners on signage.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

.3 Community Engagement

The DTC reported that a community engagement day would be held on 28th February following the success of the last event. The aim of this event would be to cover the safety of the park and community response. Police officers and The Police Crime Commissioner would be attending and it was hoped their presence could lead to further funding to help protect the park. Members were encouraged to attend the open day.

A member thanked the officers for their hard work on this project.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

.4 Launch Event

The DTC reported that the launch event would be discussed on the 28th February as community input was desired on how the opening was undertaken.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

295 Tourism Update

.1 Staffing Update

The Chairman announced that this would be the Tourism Managers last meeting, as she would be retiring at the beginning of March, having given three months' notice on 3rd January. He was pleased to report she would be retained to inspect hotels on council's behalf.

The Tourism Manager (TM) introduced Dave Peters as the new Tourism & Marketing Officer (TMO) who had previously worked for the council as a seasonal Team Leader.

It was reported that 13 of the 14 seasonal staff from the previous season had committed to returning this season, which had put the team in a strong position to launch in April.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

.2 Partners update

The Tourism Manager (TM) advised that members may need to look at how the committee signed new partners and highlight the advertising opportunities better, giving business the option to cherry pick the elements of the package they would like to utilise.

Two new members had signed since the last report but two had also been lost due to retirement.

The TM thanked the committee for the last 7 years of support in her role.

RESLOVED: That the report be noted.

.3 Statistics

The TM congratulated the TMO on a strong start to his role with his first post reaching more than 14,000 people.

The TMO expressed his excitement to take on the role with a fresh insight to produce new, varied content.

The Chairman requested it would be useful to play the film produced for coach companies at the next Town Council meeting.

The TM had received positive feedback from the film and it had now been turned into a YouTube link as well as DVD and was being used by 350 coach companies.

RESOLVED: To request that the Tourism film be screened at the next Town Council meeting on 20th March.

.4 Waterpark Satellite opening dates

The TM reported that the site would open on 1st April even if the splash pad was not ready to launch, so there was a presence on site and could therefore explain when the planned splash pad re launch would take place.

There would be a small selection of stock this season and the site would act as a starting point for the welcome hosts. The welcome hosts would receive more uniform this season and would utilise the E Bikes.

.5 Silca update

The DTC reported that the handover was going smoothly and it was hoped that it would be in the council's control by 1st April 2023.

Screens were being sourced by NSC following recommendations provided by WSMTTC but in the event these were to be used for advertisements, not just notices and signposting, NSC had advised that NNDR would be applicable.

3.51pm Councillor Ray Armstrong left the meeting.

The site would have a peppercorn lease and North Somerset Council would continue to maintain the lights.

296 Request from NSC for Additional Funding for Digital Marketing

The DTC reported she had attended a meeting with the ATC-OS where North Somerset Council had requested an additional £5k to make up a shortfall they had in their Digital Marketing budget.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed not to make the shortfall up as there were other avenues NSC could explore to make up the shortfall and was therefore

RESOLVED: Not to fund the additional £5k Digital Marketing to North Somerset Council.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 4.01 pm

Signed: Dated:

Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee