

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE  
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON  
MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2022**

**Meeting Commenced:** 7:00 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 8:45 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Pete Crew (S), John Crockford-Hawley (S), Pete Fox, Catherine Gibbons (S), Robert Payne, Lisa Pilgrim, Tim Taylor and Helen Thornton.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearce (Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer/Officer Manager), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk Operational Services) and Steve Matthews (SJ Surveyors).

106	<p>In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice Chairman, nominations for Chairman of the meeting were invited.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor John Crockford-Hawley <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Councillor Peter Crew be elected Chairman of the meeting.</p> <p><b>To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alan Peak, with no substitution, Mark Canniford who was substituted by John Crockford-Hawley, Dave Dash who was substituted by Catherine Gibbons and Ian Porter who was substituted by Peter Crew.</p>
107	<p><b>To receive Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
108	<p><b>To approve the minutes of the Policy &amp; Finance Committee Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes had been previously circulated.</p> <p>It was noted that minute number 36. should reflect 'Equality Impact Assessments'</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>.1 RESOLVED:</b> That with the above amendment, the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p><b>To approve the minutes of Special Policy &amp; Finance Committee Meeting held on</b></p>

109	<p><b>the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes were circulated at the meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the date was incorrect and should be the 8<sup>th</sup> <u>August</u> (not April) 2022.</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>.2 RESOLVED:</b> That with the above amendment, the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p>
110	<p><b>To receive the minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure &amp; Governance</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> It was noted that the meeting scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> July had been cancelled.</p>
111	<p><b>Monthly Financial Reports: May &amp; June 2022</b></p> <p><b>a) For Approval</b> Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>.1 RESOLVED:</b> That the Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure for May &amp; June 2022 be approved.</p> <p><b>b) For Noting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Bank Reconciliations</li> <li>ii. Budgetary Control Report</li> <li>iii. Bank Interest Report</li> <li>iv. Schedule of Receipted Income</li> <li>v. Bad debt report</li> <li>vi. Overspend report</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that item 5b)v Bad debt report required approval.</p> <p>The net value of the debt was £626.83 (including costs incurred).</p> <p>Members were requested to choose from the options suggested within the report in order for the council to pursue the debt further.</p> <p>It was felt that the debtor's failure to respond gave the council no choice but to pursue Option 1 -Sending bailiffs to collect payment (Warrant of Control) at a fee of £83.</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>.2 RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) That Option 1 -Sending bailiffs to collect payment (Warrant of Control) at a fee of £83 be pursued.</li> <li>b) That reports 5b i – vi be noted.</li> </ul>
112	<p><b>CIL Spend – consideration for allocation to Castle Batch Play Area</b></p>

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk had been previously circulated.

Members were asked to consider the use of unallocated funds to increase the budget available for SEN Play provision and play area upgrades at Castle Batch Park in Worle. (Available monies = £46,868). Also to note that the procurement exercise currently being undertaken would now have an officer recommendation that a contractor is approved only at this point in time, to allow for further design and enable opportunities to increase the budget available to maximise the impact of any new play provision at Castle Batch.

Steve Matthews, the council's Surveyor advised that accessible equipment was expensive, for example an accessible swing was in the region of £30,000.

The Town Clerk supported the recommendation to utilise the CIL monies for this purpose and reported that there was an expectation to spend CIL monies within 5 years of which the council was 2.5 years into.

A member questioned why it was not being referred to as a SEND play area to which Steve advised that it was not an educational facility but a fully accessible and inclusive facility.

Officers advised that the titles were interchangeable and the title could be changed if needed. Steve added that this could be reassessed at press release stage.

A member expressed concern over the choice of location for the play area as Castle Batch had a reputation for vandalism and the equipment was at risk of damage.

Officers advised that part of the consultation was to work with local community groups to better protect the area and include CCTV. Also communication with North Somerset Council regarding sharing the use of the community centre for officers and Community Response Officers, which would give a greater presence on site.

It was advised that specialists in the field had been consulted including Baytree School and that the tender deadline would be the 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Tim Taylor

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

**RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the use of unallocated funds (£46,868) to increase the budget available for SEN Play provision and play area upgrades at Castle Batch Park in Worle.
2. To note that the procurement exercise currently being undertaken would now have an officer recommendation to the Tourism & Leisure Committee, that a contractor be approved only at this point in time, to allow for further design and enable opportunities to increase the budget available to maximise the impact of any new play provision at Castle Batch.
3. To note the concerns regarding the Castle Batch site and risks of vandalism to equipment.

Steve advised that Castle Batch was the only site that offered suitable nearby parking which was a key factor in providing a fully accessible and inclusive facility.

113	<p><b>Remembrance Day 2022- Large Screen Hire for Italian Gardens</b></p> <p>The report of the Civic Officer had been previously circulated which advised the estimated cost for this was £7,500.00 + VAT and an additional cost of £135.00 to pay to North Somerset Council for use of the Italian Gardens and a power supply.</p> <p>The Town Clerk suggested deferral to await a response from the College who had not responded to communication regarding the use of their screen.</p> <p>Members considered the cost was too high and the timescale to arrange it for this year's event was too short. Instead it was felt that it would be more helpful to have a suitable Compere with a military background to compere the event using the PA system.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Robert Payne  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That due to the excessive cost, the use of a screen would not be included in this year's event and that conversations with Weston College continue in respect of possibilities for a screen in future years.</p>						
112	<p><b>Procurement for Various Projects and Services:</b></p> <p>The specification reports from the councils appointed Project Administrator and report of the Deputy Town Clerk, approving contractors as necessary for each of the following procurement Areas had been previously circulated:</p> <p><b>.1 Museum Kitchen</b> (Additional function kitchen) Procurement as per Contract Finder and Financial Regulations JCT Minor Works Contract</p> <p>It was advised that costs had almost tripled for the works:</p> <table data-bbox="188 1435 983 1574"> <tr> <td>The original Budget provision (in EMR)</td><td>£20,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lowest cost from procurement process</td><td>£56,384</td></tr> <tr> <td>Balance not within budget</td><td><u>£36,384</u></td></tr> </table> <p>The works had been approved by the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee 2 years ago and if members wanted to proceed, the difference in budget would need to come from the council's PPM budget allocation for 2022/2023 and the schedule cut in other areas.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk reported that without functions, the café was not sustainable. The café was run on a skeleton team of contracted staff and the use of casuals, which was working well.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor John Crockford-Hawley  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>, Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To approve the lowest tender and allocate monies from the council's</p>	The original Budget provision (in EMR)	£20,000	Lowest cost from procurement process	£56,384	Balance not within budget	<u>£36,384</u>
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Lowest cost from procurement process	£56,384						
Balance not within budget	<u>£36,384</u>						

PPM budget (estimate as £36,834) to make the shortfall to the EMR figure (£20,000) provided.

**.2 Cemetery Walls** (Behind Tea hut wall repair due to collapse) Procurement as per Contract Finder and Financial Regulations JCT Minor Works Contract

The cemetery walls and path repairs remained a continuing provision within the council's PPM budgets each year. Due to their age deterioration that was inevitable. The wall in question within this report was located behind the tea hut. It had collapsed and was currently barriered off with temporary fencing. The wall provided the boundary to the rear of a residential property (back garden) which was lower than the wall itself, and as such the garden was currently exposed to view from the cemetery. The council had assumed the boundary was shared and as such had negotiated that if it replaced the wall to a basic ground floor level (to its side) the resident will then provide the fencing to keep their property secure.

Budget available in the PPM	£12,384
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(EMR for these works rolled over from 21/22)

Lowest cost from procurement process	£11,850
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**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Helen Thornton

A vote was taken and **carried** (one against), Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED:** To approve the contractor to allow orders to be placed and works to be done as soon as possible.

**.3 HQ Roof Repairs** (Works include recovering of pitched roof and stone repairs to tower area) Procurement as per Contract Finder and Financial Regulations JCT Minor Works Contract

The roof and tower structure is in need of repair but other than any emergency stone work repairs it was suggested that the award of this contract be delayed until costs were in for the essential works which are needed for the council to occupy the building (ground floor renovations). The roof works were able to be done when the council had moved into the building and it was felt that there is a need to be prudent and wait for all costs to come in to enable a capital works cost programme to be presented to the council so works could be phased according to affordability.

Steve advised that contractors were including caveats on quotes that they were only valid for 2 weeks due to industry price increases and supply and demand of materials. If the council delays the work until the spring, then there could be a cost saving of up to £30,000 by using the same contractors. The costs were based on a worst case scenario to be prudent, subject to further testing.

He further reported that only one contractor had submitted a social impact assessment, which was causing extra work. This had prevented some of the smaller businesses from tendering although he had explained that the council did not require a glossy brochure but an honest statement on how they would carry out the work. The council was not at

the same level as unitary authorities and others like the MOD who could afford to attract only big contractors who were geared to provide these assessments and smaller businesses needed to adapt in this way.

Members raised concern that the Social Value Policy was hindering the procurement process and preventing the council from getting best value for money.

The Town Clerk suggested reviewing the policy, as from an economic development perspective the council still wanted to use local businesses wherever possible.

It was recommended reviewing the policy after the current procurement as the council could be subject to criticism if it changed course halfway through the process and doing this would hold up other procurement. It was suggested the Social Value Policy be reviewed by E&G Working Party to avoid further deferrals from committees and within the current financial year.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew

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

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

**RESOLVED:** To appoint John West as the contractor in principle to undertake the works, which would not commence until all internal works costs were in and included in a capital works cost programme.

**.4 HQ Other works** (Internal works on ground floor and M&E procurement).

The report from SJ Surveyors which provided detail of works needed that overlap each other had been previously circulated.

Budget provision was available to cover the costs in the revenue Strategic Planning budget. (£25,000).

Project Planning / Strategic fees balance remaining at month 5 = £21,000

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew

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

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

**RESOLVED:** To approve the lowest cost option. Working with the councils appointed contract administrator (SJ Surveyors) issuing orders for works for the design as required.

**.5 Solar Weston Museum** (to receive the update report from the councils Surveyor / DTC regarding this procurement (Covered in report 8.0).)

Budget provision available: £158,000 (for both the Museum Solar and HQ Lighting and Heating upgrades and other works recommended to meet Carbon ambitions at HQ).

Within the council's Road Map to Zero there was recognition of the Museum being a

	<p>suitable place to put in south facing Solar panels on the flat roof. Indicative quotes had previously been received to allow for understanding of potential costs.</p> <p>Steve advised that in order for works to proceed to design and full procurement there was a need to understand structural integrity of the roof in question so any interested parties have this information when quoting for the works and have clear knowledge of load capacity and maximum sizes etc.</p> <p>Initial Investigation works have commenced and the council's structural surveyor had advised that he will need to see the loading beams and trusses in order to make the calculations and provide the detail required. Site meetings at the museum had taken place to see how this could be achieved (inside). However, in order to do this, it had been recognised that holes would need to be made in the ceilings within the landscape and seaside galleries. This is not possible to do in the areas needed due to the fitted display cases for the collections without removing the exhibits, then the fitted cabinets, as there is no head room above to allow this to happen without this process. This would cause considerable disruption, raise costs and would potentially mean the museum closing the gallery for a period of time to allow the works to take place.</p> <p>With this in mind we had asked the structural engineer for an alternative way to do his work and he had advised that he would be able to do this with openings to the exterior roofing to allow him to view and test the beams etc. It should be noted that the council replaced the covering to the flat roofs in recent years and this would mean cutting into this surface to do this. We needed assurance that this would not in any way make our roof guarantees void if this were the case and the council's appointed contract administrator (SJ Surveyors) had received confirmation of this in writing.</p> <p>Debate ensued regarding the cost and differing opinions were expressed.</p> <p>Steve explained the potential financial returns for the Museum from solar panels and members agreed they made economic sense.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Tim Taylor</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To carry out the structural investigations to enable Solar Panels to be achieved at Weston Museum as per the council's Road Map to Zero by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Approving the opening up of the flat roofing area as required to undertake structural weight testing to allow solar design and procurement to take place.</li> <li>2 Noting the delay in this procurement due to these works being required.</li> </ol>
113	<p><b>To receive the Final Audit Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 – Action Report summary and update</b></p> <p>The Final Audit Report and Action Report summary and update had been previously circulated.</p>

	<p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Final Audit Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 – Action Report summary and update be received.</p>
114	<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>
115	<p><b>Town Quarry Update</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk verbally reported that the demolition of the structure could not be done within the required window of time in autumn 2022 due to nature concerns and would now be on hold for a year. This would however free up expenditure for other projects.</p> <p>A member expressed his disappointment at the further delay.</p> <p>The Town Clerk stressed that the Quarry was currently the responsibility of North Somerset Council as freeholder and the Civic Society as leaseholder. Despite this, town council officers had met regularly with the sub tenants to maintain communications. If North Somerset Council were to come forward with a proposal, then this would be brought before committee for consideration.</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the update be noted.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 pm</p> <p>Signed.....Dated.....  Chairman of the Policy &amp; Finance Committee</p>