

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD VIA ZOOM
ON MONDAY 12TH APRIL 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 7.01 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.53 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Crew (Chairman), David Dash, Catherine Gibbons, Pete McAleer, Alan Peak, Marcia Pepperall, and James Clayton.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk and Grounds Manager), Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager), Emma Williams (Tourism Marketing Officer), Beverley Milner-Simonds and Sarah Milner-Simonds (Eat:Festival).

Beverley and Sarah Milner-Simonds addressed the meeting to thank the Town Council for their continued support of the Eat:Festival events held in Weston-super-Mare. It was reported that the next event planned for 17th April would be the 10th held in Weston and the 50th Eat:Festival over all.

The Chairman invited attendees to join him in a minute of silence in remembrance of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for their address and welcomed them to stay for the meeting.

256	<p>Apologies of Absence and Notifications of Substitutions</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Crockford-Hawley with no substitution.</p> <p>Councillors Marc Aplin, David Hitchins and Ella Sayce were absent from the meeting.</p>
257	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
258	<p>To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 8th February 2021</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Councillor David Dash SECONDED: Councillor Pete McAleer</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.</p>

259

Tourism Function Update

The reports of the Tourism Manager and Tourism Marketing Officer had been circulated prior to the meeting and were shared on screen as a Powerpoint presentation.

259.1 Spring 2021

The Tourism Manager summarised the information on the Powerpoint. Updates were reported within the Tourism department and its collaboration with the Weston Place Agency from North Somerset Council. The Visitor Information Centre telephone had seen a large increase in calls ahead of the prospective reopening of the centre after 21st June 2021 - following the next phase of lockdown easing.

The two 'Tic Tuk' vehicles would be delivered in May (at least one, possibly both). Images of the vehicles with Visit Weston livery were shown on screen to members. Concerns were raised as to whether the vehicles would be driven along the promenade, the Tourism Manager confirmed they would not, as no vehicular access to the promenade was permitted between 10am and 5pm. Training was being organised for staff permitted to drive the Tic Tuks, that would better prepare them for navigating the town in close proximity to pedestrians.

259.2 Reopening the VIC

The Tourism Manager reported on weather damage sustained through water and damp ingress to the VIC, that had been reported to NSC. A deep clean would take place in the centre in the days following the meeting.

Seasonal staff recruitment for the VIC was imminent, with positive news received from the 2019 team, all confirming they would like to work at the centre again this year.

The report went on to outline the recent TV and radio coverage Visit Weston had been invited to participate in, with a video clip of the Tourism Manager's Zoom interview for BBC West Midlands News, which was shown to all via screen share.

259.3 Website & Social Media Update

The Tourism Marketing Officer continued to present the Powerpoint presentation, briefly explaining the decrease in website traffic, coinciding with the announcement of the third national lockdown, but that numbers were beginning to return to more expected levels as the population were able to move around the country and businesses reopened.

A social media campaign had been launched that offered a twelve-month free listing on the Visit Weston website, designed to support struggling local business to bounce back following the closures associated with the pandemic. There had already been an encouraging response to this invitation, with around ten organisations making enquiries.

259.4 Destination Marketing

As per a member's suggestion at the last Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting, a TikTok social media account had been set up by the Tourism

	<p>Marketing Officer with content already being posted. The platform would heavily be involved in the promotional launch of the Tic Tuk vehicles once delivered. Destination Marketing had commenced with the invitation for new website listings and that Pear Communications would supply 'Welcome Packs' to the VIC and Tik Tuks to distribute to visitors requiring information, leaflets and a map etc.</p> <p>A question was posed by a member to the TMO in relation to the sorting order of suggested activities and attractions on the Visit Weston website; with little or no preference given to listings inside the Weston-super-Mare area. It was agreed by the TMO that this could be amended, and could select a priority placement for local businesses instead of an alphabetical or membership level sorting order. The Tourism Manager added that when the website was first launched, it had been important to create as many listings and partner businesses as possible in order to 'flesh-out' the site with more content. However, that as the focus of the 'support local' ethos was now of a higher priority, the very nature of the site was changing to become more Weston-centric.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted</p>
260	<p>Parks and Play Areas</p> <p>260.3 Update on all Parks and Play Areas</p> <p>The Grounds Manager verbally updated the committee with activities from the Grounds team. As the evenings were now lighter, vandalism had become more prevalent across all parks and play areas, as well as dangerous litter including broken glass. A meeting was scheduled with the WTC Community Response Officer, to agree a strategy to deter the type of behaviours through proactive increased presence. The synergy between the Town Council and District Council through the post holder had also recently facilitated the swift moving-on of campers in Ellenborough Park.</p> <p>The Grounds team had received many requests from community groups and residents in relation to the use of Ellenborough Park West as a wellbeing space. A resident had recently required some re-education from the Grounds team, as they had been misinformed by the NSC Contact Team that metal detecting was permitted in the park.</p> <p>This incident had led to the Grounds Coordinator creating a guide to be sent to NSC in relation to the responsibilities of the Town Council and what its policies and strategies permitted, to avoid a reoccurrence of this type of misunderstanding.</p> <p>260.1 Renovations at the Water Park</p> <p>Somerset Wood Recycling had attended the Water Park and made a number of repairs, including a reconditioning of the wooden xylophone toy. The benches had been removed, repaired and painted. Martin D'Arcy was still booked to paint and decorate the Water Park, once the site had received a longer spell of dry weather to better prepare the surfaces for work.</p> <p>The Grounds team had taken a phone call from a nearby resident, reporting a recent increase in disruptive antisocial behaviour in the Water Park on an evening. The low walls on the west side of the park, although planted with holly bushes,</p>

were being scaled to gain access. A suggestion was made by The Chairman to the Town Clerk to consider locating a Town Council mobile CCTV camera at the park to deter gatherings. The Grounds Manager confirmed that this had already been discussed with NSC and the Community Response Officer.

260.2 Water Park VIC Cabin

The Town Clerk reported on that the Property and Asset Management Team at NSC had now confirmed in principle that they would grant Landlord's Consent for the proposed cabin under the lease of the park.

The Town Clerk also reported on the issue of whether, due to the park's location within a conservation area, planning permission was necessary to erect a cabin in the Water Park. In his view, under per part 12 (A) of the General Permitted Development Order, development undertaken by a parish council to provide an information kiosk did not require planning permission. This had since been confirmed by the NSC Planning Department and final confirmation of Landlords' Consent was expected to be given very soon.

The Grounds Manager confirmed that she and the Tourism Manager were conducting a site visit to the Water Park the following day, to discuss the practical details of the plans.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:53 pm.

Signed: Dated:
Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee

Tourism & Leisure Committee

8th June 2021

Agenda Item 6 - Tourism Function Updates

Agenda Item 6.1 Spring/Summer Update

Verbal update from Tourism Manager



Rear



Side



Front



Rear



Side



Front



Agenda Item 6.2

Reopening of VIC

- ▶ Preparation of the main VIC is well underway with the return of 2 contracted staff from 2019.
- ▶ Four of the casual staff team are also returning and interviews will be held shortly for any new staff.
- ▶ The two Tuk Tuks have been delivered so our VIC can be mobile.
- ▶ We are awaiting confirmation of date for delivery of the satellite VIC in the Waterpark.
- ▶ Merchandise has been sourced, priced and entered into the till at the main VIC

Agenda Item 6.3

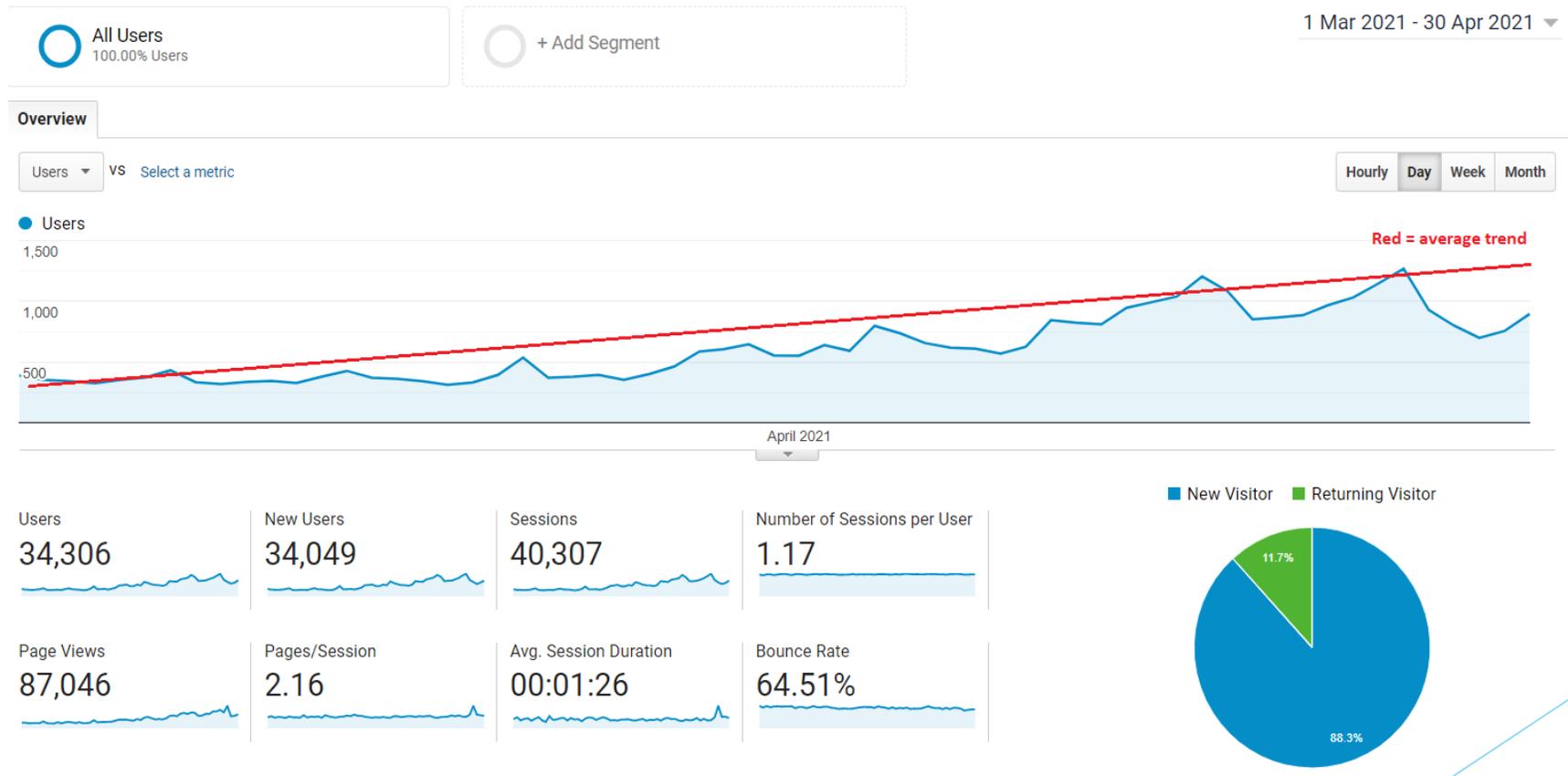
Visit Weston and Weston Place Agency

- ▶ The Tourism Manager and Tourism Marketing Officer have continued to meet the WPA Project Group via Zoom either weekly or fortnightly as decided at each meeting. We are often joined also by the Assistant Town Clerk and the Communications Officer. The group is led by North Somerset Council officers but is not exclusively their meeting.
- ▶ The Project Group concerns itself solely with events and event planning and is creating a calendar of these from across the members such as Theatre Orchard, The Sovereign Centre, Culture Weston, the BID and Weston Artspace.
- ▶ We have offered to ensure that all such events are promoted on the Visit Weston website and social media channels, which will be done once events have met the SAG criteria and contracted in full with the landowner.

Agenda Item 6.4

Website & Social Media Updates

- ▶ During the reporting period of March and April '21 the Visit Weston website received the following number of visitors:



Agenda Item 6.4

Website & Social Media Updates (cont.)

During the reporting period of March and April '21 the Visit Weston website received visitors from the following Top 25 UK cities:

1. Bristol	5,274 (15.52%)	14. Walsall	284 (0.84%)
2. London	4,971 (14.63%)	15. Gloucester	240 (0.71%)
3. (not set)	3,451 (10.16%)	16. Glasgow	236 (0.69%)
4. Weston-super-Mare	1,948 (5.73%)	17. Redditch	233 (0.69%)
5. Birmingham	1,745 (5.14%)	18. Southampton	232 (0.68%)
6. Bridgwater	555 (1.63%)	19. Glastonbury	221 (0.65%)
7. Cardiff	527 (1.55%)	20. Wolverhampton	218 (0.64%)
8. Taunton	510 (1.50%)	21. Nottingham	215 (0.63%)
9. Clevedon	476 (1.40%)	22. Worcester	190 (0.56%)
10. Cheltenham	379 (1.12%)	23. Leeds	189 (0.56%)
11. Coventry	339 (1.00%)	24. Newport	189 (0.56%)
12. Manchester	330 (0.97%)	25. Exeter	169 (0.50%)
13. Bath	310 (0.91%)		

The list of locations shown, confirms again our traditional target markets of: the South West, Midlands, South Wales and North West England.

This data helps us to decide on the best locations to place destination marketing materials and advertising campaigns.

Agenda Item 6.4

Website & Social Media Updates (cont. i)

This data (taken from Google Analytics) shows the top performing pages on the website.

It is encouraging to see pages listed of a far more 'general' nature - as opposed to specific events, businesses or attractions, as this could suggest these are first time visitors to Weston wanting to learn more before their trip.

		87,046 % of Total: 100.00% (87,046)	71,128 % of Total: 100.00% (71,128)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. / (Home Page) 	13,123 (15.08%)	10,019 (14.09%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. /things-to-do 	4,426 (5.08%)	3,074 (4.32%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. /things-to-do/attractions 	3,470 (3.99%)	2,671 (3.76%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. /visitor-info/travel-information/car-parking-and-car-parks 	2,151 (2.47%)	1,911 (2.69%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. /accommodation/caravans-and-holiday-parks 	1,918 (2.20%)	1,229 (1.73%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. /whats-on/events-in-weston-super-mare 	1,818 (2.09%)	1,403 (1.97%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. /whats-on 	1,804 (2.07%)	1,277 (1.80%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. /accommodation 	1,769 (2.03%)	1,129 (1.59%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. /things-to-do/weston-super-mare-beach-p1548913 	1,684 (1.93%)	1,526 (2.15%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. /visitor-info/dog-friendly 	1,465 (1.68%)	1,310 (1.84%)

Further information from Google also lists (not shown here) the time spent reading/reviewing these top-performing pages. The time users spent in the 'Dog Friendly' pages was almost three times more than time spent reading about events. This has been a result of adding the 'Dog Friendly' page to the homepage shortcuts.

Agenda Item 6.4

Website & Social Media Updates (cont. ii)

- ▶ As of 1st June, our total social media account followers stood at: **12,653**
- ▶ This includes our newest social media presence TikTok which will be the chosen platform for the launch of the TicTuk vehicles later this month
- ▶ The predominantly mobile-based platforms of Instagram and TikTok, now feature a 'Linked in Bio' extension as work-around for their lack of live URL/hyperlinks embedded in posts and captions. This add-on acts as a middle man between social media and our website, where pages of our choosing can be created as quick links for users' ease.
- ▶ These referrals can also be tracked and amended as necessary and the add-on can integrate with all our social media accounts if required.
- ▶ Facebook continues to be our best-performing social media platform with the most engagement; our most successful post during the reporting period was the announcement of our offer for 12 month free listing on the Visit Weston website, which was shared 17 times and seen by over 5,500 people.
- ▶ We are receiving an increased number of enquiries via Facebook Messenger from would-be visitors, mostly with questions re: toilets, car parking and various reopenings.

The screenshot displays the Visit Weston Super-Mare website interface. At the top, the logo for Visit Weston Super-Mare is visible, along with the handle @visitweston. Below this, there are social media icons for TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. A section titled 'MY FAVORITE LNKS' lists various links, each with a circular icon and a text label:

- FREE BUSINESS ADVERTISING
- MARINE LAKE WORKS APRIL UPDATE
- BBC WEST MIDLANDS RADIO INTERVIEW 19.04.21
- SPRING 2021 UPDATE
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
- VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE
- LIST YOUR LOCAL EVENT WITH US - FREE!
- THINGS TO DO IN WESTON-SUPER-MARE
- WHERE TO STAY IN WESTON-SUPER-MARE
- TIDE TIMES FOR WESTON-SUPER-MARE
- VISIT WESTON BLOGS

At the bottom right of the page, there is a purple button labeled 'Lnk.Bio'.

Agenda Item 6.5

Destination Marketing

- ▶ Campaigns for 2021 have been launched;
- ▶ A half page print advertisement in Camping & Caravanning Club Magazine (July '21), 400,000 readership of club members, nationwide Royal Mail distribution, provides exposure to market of dedicated holidaymakers, and capitalises on the increase in popularity/demand for self-catering holidays following the pandemic.
- ▶ Eight 'Hundred Tournament' cricket matches played at Warwickshire County Cricket Ground (Edgbaston) via Elonex Outdoor Advertising. All games will be televised on BBC and Sky Sports - 4 ladies and 4 gents matches, in-ground crowd and global television audience, LED scoreboard placement every 60 seconds throughout the matches.
- ▶ Digital advertisements and postcards still available at various Motorway Service Areas in England, via Pear Communications.
- ▶ Visitor Information Centre, Water Park VIC, Blakehay and Weston Museum all placed advertisements in centrefold map pull-out in the Explore Guide 2021.
- ▶ The team have recently met with two additional agencies to assess their product range and how they could benefit our destination marketing strategy for 2021/22.

7.1 Renovations to Water Park and VIC Cabin

Report for Tourism and Leisure - written by Fay Powell

The painting carried out by Martin D'Arcy and his team has progressed well. There has been a slight delay due to the weather and not being able to paint during wet conditions. The park will be re-opened to the public on Saturday 29th May ready for the bank holiday weekend and start of half term. Martin will then return with his team after the half term break to finish the remainder of the painting and the mural.

All equipment, benches and the concession hut are being painted as well as a mural. The castle is nearly completed and has been given a new lease of life. It was also lovely to see that when announced on social media about the renovation work and the park being closed temporarily, no negative comments were received. People are showing a keen interest and looking forward to splash returning.

We are re commissioning the splash pad w/c 31st May. The legionella testing is booked in for the 7th June with the water being switched on for the 21st June.

The cabin has been ordered and John West will be attending to do the preliminary works for the electricity supply, changing the gate to accommodate the cabin and other necessities. The aim is to have the cabin installed and up and running for the 21st June when the splash is turned on. This is also the day national restrictions are lifted.

We are looking into having new signs installed at the park. Currently there is a mix match of designs, shapes, logos ect. from throughout the years. Old signs will be removed and new ones installed.

Myself and Caroline have also been working towards the date of the 21st June for the satellite VIC ensuring all elements are covered, including staffing.

This should be a positive year for the Waterpark and the team look forward to it being launched back into the community on the 21st June, with a fresh look!

Recommendation – To note the report