

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 3rd FEBRUARY 2020**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.40 pm

PRESENT: Peter Crew (Chairman), James Clayton, John Crockford-Hawley, David Dash, Catherine Gibbons, David Hitchins, Peter McAleer, Daniel Marcos-Ashworth, Alan Peak, Marcia Pepperall and Sonia Russe.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager) Zoe Scott (Community & Grounds Officer) Caroline Darlington (Tourism Manager) and Emma Williams (Tourism and Marketing Officer).

336	<p>Apologies of Absence and Notifications of Substitutions</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Marc Aplin with no substitution.</p>
337	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
338	<p>To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting held on the 2nd December 2019</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED: Councillor Alan Peak</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.</p>
339	<p>Tourism Function Update</p> <p>The report had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Assistant Town Clerk explained how the report set the scene for the forthcoming financial year covering the actions taken as a result of budget reductions within the tourism function for 2020/2021. The details of which included known challenges and fed into the accompanying reports of the Tourism Manager and Marketing Officer.</p> <p>There were no questions from members.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report of the Assistant Town Clerk be noted.</p>
340	<p>Parks and Play Areas</p> <p>The report had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. Areas covered included the cemetery, training, waterpark, play areas and open spaces.</p>

	<p>The Grounds Manager explained that the Splash Pad refurbishment was complete with just a few final snagging items to resolve. The Splash Park would be fully operational and ready for the next season starting in April 2020.</p> <p>Conniston Green Play Area Refurbishment was now complete and had been well received by the community. A formal opening would be arranged for the near future.</p> <p>A member questioned if the topple testing at the Cemetery was being recorded. The Grounds Manager confirmed a full record was kept. Families had been getting in contact to enquire how to rectify the deteriorating graves. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the Grounds Team followed the regulations set out by the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematory Management) and how the team was passionate about the work they carried out and went beyond what was recommended to ensure the memorials were safe.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the SLA agreement with North Somerset Council was in place for the next season at the Waterpark. Some members commented on the condition of Castle Batch play area and Clarence Park. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed the Essential Maintenance Repair and Replacement Programme would be brought to the next meeting to be discussed and adjusted if needed. The Grounds Team carried out works to ensure that the play areas were safe.</p> <p>There were ongoing issues trying to be resolved regarding the adoption of play areas in West Wick.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report of the Grounds Manager be noted.</p>
341	<p>Destination Advertising and Visit Weston Website Stats</p> <p>The report had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. Areas covered included the departmental KPI's, website stats and updates, social media and new destination marketing campaign plans for 2020.</p> <p>The Tourism Marketing Officer explained how that a year-long campaign with Pear Communications had been established, starting April 2020. They were a large advertising company who worked with both digital and print campaigns. 12 selected motorway services would display the campaign on 60inch screens and be accompanied by a stand with printed literature for people to take away. There was the ability to track where print material was being taken from and if any more or less were needed in certain locations, re-stocking would take place. Platinum Plus members would have additional benefits which could be site specific and uploaded almost instantaneously. By the end of 2020 Pear was hoping to have developed software which allowed clients to access and change the campaign material themselves, subject to necessary approvals.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report of the Tourism Marketing Officer be noted.</p>
342	<p>Visitor Information Centre (VIC)</p> <p>The report had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. Areas covered included former awards accomplishments, the r South West Tourism Awards 2020, Visit Weston Partnership updates, wider tourism matters, Visit</p>

Somerset updates, OYO Hotels progress, partnership working with North Somerset Council, UK TIC Forum and the VIC aspirations for 2020.

The Tourism Manager referred to an industry report prior which used Torbay as a comparison, the extract from the report read “When destination marketing stops there is not a quick change in fortune but the results over a number of years have always been the same – lower visitors, less income, less employment and less investment” An example is Stratford District Council, which withdrew its destination marketing funding only to later find that the destination had dropped from being one the highest visited destinations in the country, hence they elected to reinvest a few years later which took time to recoup, the lesson learned was that even Shakespeare’s England needed promotion.”

The Tourism Manager was pleased to announce the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) had been nominated for “Visitor Information Service of the Year” at the South West Tourism Awards in Exeter. Hopefully the Visitor Information Centre, would be able to include “award winning” on its advertising and promotion which gave industry kudos, customer confidence and excellent PR for Weston-super-Mare Town Council.

The Chairman added that award winning products that were promoted and labelled as such in retail i.e. wines were usually sell-out products which was likely to be as a result of customer demand in award winning products.

Members noted the VIC was also nominated for Weston Chamber of Commerce Awards under “Services to Tourism” along with Weston Museum and the Blakehay Theatre in other categories.

A member asked how OYO Hotels were structured. It was explained they were a venture capitalist company who took on ownership of hotels, keeping the current staffing structure in place, whilst carrying out renovations if needed and it was hoped they would be investing in Weston-super-Mare shortly.

The Tourism Manager highlighted the current state of play within the Tourism Team and the challenging task management had of juggling staffing cuts and increased income targets.

The Chairman was going to set up a meeting with the Leader of Council to discuss flexibility within the budget. The Leader of Council explained that the budget had been set at Full Town Council and solutions would have to be sought within the constraints set.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Tourism Manager be noted.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.40 pm.

Signed: Dated:

Councillor Peter Crew
Chairman of the Tourism & Leisure Committee