

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIA ZOOM ON
MONDAY 25TH JANUARY 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 7.02 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.24 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mark Canniford (Town Mayor), Dot Agassiz, Mark Aplin, Ray Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Mike Bell, Gill Bute, Gillian Carpenter, James Clayton, Sarah Codling, Peter Crew, John Crockford-Hawley, Ciaran Cronnelly, David Dash, Peter Fox, Catherine Gibbons, Jan Holloway, Pete McAleer, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Marcia Pepperall, Lisa Pilgrim, Ian Porter, Sonia Russe, Ella Sayce, Tim Taylor, Helen Thornton, Richard Tucker and Roz Willis.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Tania Middlemiss (Assistant Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager), Samantha Bishop & Emma Williams (Committee Officers), Becky Walsh (Communications Officer), Chris Millard (Mayors Civic Officer), Fiona Walsh (Finance Officer), Reverend Peter Ashman (Town Mayors Chaplain), Mary Adams (CCG) and Lily Newton-Brown (Weston & Somerset Mercury).

The Town Mayor invited his Chaplain to say prayers.

156	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutions There were no apologies for absence were received. Councillor David Hitchins was absent from the meeting.
157	To receive Declarations of Interest There were no declarations on interest received.
158	To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on the 23rd November 2020 (attached) PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.
159	To receive announcements and communications from the Town Mayor The Mayor's announcements and communications were circulated prior to the meeting. The Town Mayor and Mayoress had attended 9 engagements. This was a total of 235 to date.

	<p>The Town Mayor congratulated the Blakehay Theatre for being awarded ‘Theatre of the Year’. He would like the council’s gratitude to all staff involved in achieving this recorded and to members for their support.</p>
<p>160</p>	<p>To receive the Notes of the Youth Council Meetings held in November and December 2020</p> <p>Notes of the Youth Council meetings had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Councillor Sarah Codling reported on behalf the Youth Council that the YMCA had worked hard on increasing its offer in all sorts of ways through the pandemic. The Youth Council were constantly looking at ways of refreshing its membership and that a recent workshop had taken place supported by town council members, encouraging them and developing skills.</p> <p>It was noted that the Youth Council were also looking at ways to improve their social media.</p> <p>The Town Mayor offered the opportunity for interested Youth Councillors to shadow him and possible other dual hatted councillors in their council meeting roles.</p> <p>Councillor Sarah Codling explained that the workshops were a tool to ease Youth Councillors in and that the possibility of shadowing members would certainly be conveyed in time.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the notes of the Youth Council meetings for November and December be received.</p>
<p>161</p>	<p>To approve the budget for the year 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022 and set the precept for the same period</p> <p>The revenue budget for the year 2021 /2022 and precept rate for the year 2021/2022 for submission to NSC had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Town Mayor invited members to propose the draft budget recommended by the Policy & Finance Committee and it was therefore,</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor Sarah Codling</p> <p>An AMENDMENT was then</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Helen Thornton SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne</p> <p>Councillor Robert Payne reported that his party was pleased to collaborate with the Labour group to achieve a cross party amendment to the budget.</p> <p>The amendment which had been previously circulated to members earlier that day proposed the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To use £30,000 of the surplus from this financial year and create earmarked reserves to fund:

- Street Art Festival in Weston at some point during 2021/22 (Covid restrictions dependent) - working with Culture Weston, North Somerset Council and Upfest in Bristol - £20,000
 - Provision of Showers on the Beach -£10,000
2. Increase the Community Events Budget by £10,000 from £50,000 to £60,000, with £10,000 ring-fenced for Diversity and Inclusion Events.
 3. Increase the Strategy and Planning Professional Fees budget by £10,000 (from £15k to £25k) to fund feasibility Studies for:
 - Grove Park Toilets
 - New allotment site
 - Plant nursery
 - Making one of our parks suitable for people with disabilities
 - Community Centre
 - Seafront lighting enhancements
 - Information point at Silica
 - Marine Lake enhancement
 4. To add £5,000 to the Community Services Budget for public art grants, with a stipulation that schools are encouraged to apply and are prioritised for a proportion of the grant.
 5. Restore the Staff training budget - £20,000 – with effectiveness to be monitored through staff 1 to 1s and appraisals.

The amendments equated to a small net increase to the budget of £45,000, but would bring great benefits to the community in the uncertain times.

Rigorous cross party debated ensued both for and against the amendments.

Some members opposed the amendments as it was unfair to increase taxpayers' burden at a time of crisis and sent the wrong message. The council already had enough in the budget, unspent from the previous year, to move forward in developing its community services and achieving carbon neutral status by 2030.

In response it was argued that it was the town council's responsibility to deliver residents' wishes and be proactive in tackling the problems within the town. The amendments were in support of this and council tax was raised in order to pay for public services.

To aid debate, the Town Mayor requested the Deputy Town Clerk to confirm that the amendments equated to a 1.74% budget increase / £1.74 on band D property increase.

Some members were aggrieved that they had either not received or had sufficient opportunity to read the amendments before the meeting. The amendments were then displayed on screen.

A vote was taken on the AMENDMENT and **carried** (16 for; 12 against).

This then became the substantive motion and a vote was taken and **carried** (16 for; 11 against) and was therefore:

	<p>RESOLVED: To approve</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the net revenue budget for the year 2021/2022 £2,587,982 and 2. the town council precept at £2,587,982 for submission to North Somerset Council.
<p>162</p>	<p>To approve the Earmarked Reserves for 2021 / 2022 (first Draft) (attached)</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk’s report outlining recommendations for approval had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk added that there was a notable increase in the proposed EMR provision for 2021 / 2022. This in the main was due to the fact the council had not yet been billed for the CCTV £100k, however it was anticipated it would before the year end (31st March). As such the final EMR figure could change subject to this and the unspent Environmental/Climate Change and Civic budgets. Final EMR levels would therefore be brought before the Policy & Finance Committee in February for approval.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the final EMR for 2021/2022 would include the £30,000 previously resolved within the budget item.</p> <p>It was therefore,</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>A vote was taken and accordingly it was carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the first draft earmarked reserves for the year 2021 / 2022 and approve that Policy & Finance Committee receive and approve final estimates at its meeting on April 2021.</p> <p>Noting that this approval reflects the increased provisions as detailed in the report for the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital Works 2. Environmental / Climate Change – Solar provisions 3. PPM for planned works & EMRRP for the creation of a purpose built disabled play provision. (venue to be confirmed) 4. Civic Events – provision in light of COVID pandemic
<p>163</p>	<p>Ellenborough Park Charges</p> <p>The report of the Deputy Town Clerk had been previously circulated, recommending set charges.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk apologised for the report heading and advised that it was not a supplementary EMR report.</p> <p>Members had requested that the park charges came back to council for approval.</p> <p>The recommendations for the charges were as a result of officers’ time and research undertaken. The income had not been recognised within the first year and was a best</p>

estimate based on research. Approval for discretion to approve further charges within year was also recommended.

The Chairman of the Weston in Bloom Working Party said he would like to see the park utilised for WIB events.

A member queried the use for of the park for central ward schools. The Town Clerk advised that there was an agreement in place with Corpus Christi for use of the park, free of charge, on dates agreed by prior arrangement. If other schools wished to use the park, then this could be decided under officer discretion.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey

A vote was taken and accordingly it was **carried**.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the suggested charges for the year 2021 / 2022 for Ellenborough Park West for inclusion within the council's charges schedule.
2. To approve discretion to the Town Clerk / Deputy Town Clerk to approve further charges within the year if there is demonstrable need, reporting to the Tourism and Leisure Committee as required.

164 Motion to Council under Standing Order 10 from Councillor Dot Agassiz

'The Town Council resolves to lobby the CCG to express its concern about the choice of location for the much needed new medical centre. It also requests a consultation to enable us to understand the rationale for this decision and consider the alternatives.

The proposed site is on the wrong side of the railway line, it is difficult for patients to access by walking, cycling and public transport; and is therefore predicated on car use. As part of our climate emergency policy it is incumbent on us to look at the carbon footprint of all new developments and preserve the few green spaces around the town. There are several brownfield sites with good transport links in the town centre which would be better locations for a medical centre.'

The Town Mayor invited members to propose the motion.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak

SECONDED BY: Councillor Dot Agassiz

Councillor Agassiz spoke in support of the motion.

An AMENDMENT was then

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mike Bell

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Payne

As follows:

'That the Town Council welcomes proposals for a new town centre primary healthcare facility put forward by the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group. Existing primary care provision at Graham Road is not fit for

purpose and there is an urgent need for a better range of services for residents and patients living in the town centre area.

The Town Council is concerned that the suggested location of the new development on non-playing land at Weston Rugby Club has particular problems in terms of access, both for pedestrians, cyclists and by public transport, for residents and patients living north and west of the railway line in the town centre.

The Town Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to the CCG to set out these concerns and ask them to in particular 1) publish the options appraisal undertaken on alternative sites considered; 2) set out planned improvements and mitigations to improve access to the proposed site; 3) commit to consulting with residents and patients as the full business case is developed during 2021 to ensure the best possible long-term solution is delivered.'

The AMENDMENT was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the initial motion and therefore, became the substantive motion.

Councillor Mike Bell added that the health care provision in the town was very important and that investment had been implored for a long time. The process needed to be conducted in an open and fair way and needed to take into account the elderly and new residents. Journey times and limited points of crossing the railway lines for central ward and hillside residents needed to be recognised. There was no point building a new facility in a location which residents could not access.

Discussion ensued over the suitability of the site and about the transport and access routes needing to be improved.

Victoria Methodist church and the former Argos building were suggested as alternative sites for the facility.

A dual hatted member, who sat on North Somerset Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel, agreed that he would make these points at their next meeting.

A vote was taken and accordingly it was unanimously **carried**.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council welcomes proposals for a new town centre primary healthcare facility put forward by the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group. Existing primary care provision at Graham Road is not fit for purpose and there is an urgent need for a better range of services for residents and patients living in the town centre area.

The Town Council is concerned that the suggested location of the new development on non-playing land at Weston Rugby Club has particular problems in terms of access, both for pedestrians, cyclists and by public transport, for residents and patients living north and west of the railway line in the town centre.

The Town Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to the CCG to set out these concerns and ask them to in particular 1) publish the options appraisal undertaken on alternative sites considered; 2) set out planned improvements and mitigations to improve access to the proposed site; 3) commit to consulting with residents and patients as the full business case is developed during 2021 to ensure the best possible long-term solution is delivered.

165 Town Councillor Email addresses

Members were reminded of the resolution and correspondence sent in relation to transferring all email communication to the newly set up individual WSMTC email addresses. This was a polite reminder to ensure that all members were now using this as the means of email communication for the council and as such, were fully set up to access and do so. If any members were not able to access their WSMTC emails, please could they indicate this and a member of staff would be able to assist with this.

It was noted that the email addresses on the Council's website for councillors would be changed to WSMTC councillor addresses following the meeting.

The Communications Officer reported that the Development Officer had been very busy assisting members and identifying and resolving equipment issues. She wanted to thank all members for their patience and support and indicated that all members were on track to be operational by the 31st January deadline.

The Town Mayor stressed the importance of members communicating any problems to officers as soon as possible in order to achieve a more streamlined and effective way of working.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.24 pm.

Signed: Dated:
Town Mayor