WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL ON MONDAY 20TH JANUARY 2014

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 p.m. **Meeting Concluded:** 8.11 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Keith Morris (Town Mayor), Peter Crew (Leader of the Town Council), Raymond Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Michael Bell, Mark Canniford, John Crockford-Hawley, Clive Darke, Peter Fox, David Hitchins, Jan Holloway, Cyril King, Clare Kingsbury-Bell, Michal Kus, Derek Mead, Frederick Parsons, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Lisa Pilgrim, Ian Porter, Len Purnell, Sonia Russé, Tim Taylor, Richard Tucker, Clive Webb and Roz Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Responsible Financial Officer), Helen Morton (Finance Officer), Samantha Middlemiss (Committee Officer), Chris Millard (Mayors Civic Officer), Jocelyn Holder (Mayoress), Alderman Ken Lacey (Parishioner), Richard Knowles (Chairman of Weston In Bloom) Beth Evans (Weston & Somerset Mercury) and Reverend Andrew Alden (part attendance).

The Town Mayor invited Reverend Andrew Alden to say prayers.

The Reverend Andrew Alden left the meeting at 7.04 p.m.
Richard Knowles joined the meeting at 7.04 p.m.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Town Mayor invited questions from parishioners.

Alderman Ken Lacey highlighted the increase in housing and how this would affect the precept. He asked why the Town Council had included £20,000 within the Tourism & Marketing budget for the provision of a Shuttle Bus and £25,000 for a Wi Fi Centre. He also requested to know how much income had been generated from the Tourism Website and whether it was near the £12,000 envisaged.

The Town Mayor thanked Alderman Ken Lacey for attending the meeting and advised that he was welcome to stay for the duration of the meeting and attend the Mayor's reception after the meeting. His questions would be addressed within the debate on item 7.

Richard Knowles explained that he was in attendance to answer any questions that Councillors may have in relation to the work of Weston In Bloom and he reported that Weston In Bloom were a substantial group of volunteers who looked after a considerable amount of floral displays and projects throughout the town and Worle. The group had taken on more and more work over the past 18 months. There were other projects 'on the cards' and they were struggling with manpower. He asked the Town Council to please consider this when setting their budget.

The Town Mayor thanked Richard Knowles for attending the meeting and advised that he was welcome to stay for the duration of the meeting and attend the Mayor's reception after the meeting. His concerns would be considered within the debate on item 7.

369.	**To receive Apologies for Absence** Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Micheal Lyall, Simon Stokes, Tony Probert, Rose Warwick and Holly Young.

	The Town Clerk advised that Councillor Tony Probert was unwell and was waiting for an operation. Councillor Probert would be absent from future meetings and the Town Clerk suggested that Councillor Probert's absence be noted by Council to avoid future complications with the 6 month rule. **RESOLVED:** That Councillor Tony Probert's absence from future meetings be noted.
370.	**Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest received.
371.	**To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 25th November 2013.** **PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew **SECONDED BY:** Councillor Roz Willis **RESOLVED:** That the minutes be signed and approved.
372.	**To receive announcements and communications from the Town Mayor** The Town Mayor informed that he had to-date attended 194 engagements. The Town Mayor reported that there had been a quiet spell with engagements and preparations were well on the way with the up and coming Mayor's Charity Ball on 15th March 2014.
373.	**To agree a Group Leader and Deputy Group Leader for the Labour Party** **RESOLVED:** It was noted that Councillor Tim Taylor would step in as Leader of the Labour Group Party and that Councillor Cyril King would remain as Deputy Group Leader of the Labour Group Party.
374.	**References from Committees if any** **To approve the Terms of Reference of the Allotment Management Sub Committee** The Minute extract and the Terms of Reference from the Allotment Management Sub Committee Meeting on 19th December 2013 had been previously circulated with the agenda. **PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Clive Darke **SECONDED BY:** Councillor Clive Webb **RESOLVED:** That the Terms of Reference of the Allotment Management Sub Committee (appended to these minutes) be approved and adopted.
375.	**To agree the Budget and Precept 2014/15** The report of the Responsible Financial Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda. A further report was presented by the Responsible Financial Officer which took into account the reduction of North Somerset Council's grant funding for future years and

	indicated changes to the Utility & Services costs and revision of the cleaning costs for the public toilets to be included within the Town Council's Medium Financial plan to be submitted to the Policy & Finance Committee in February 2014. This would result in a £1,530.00 reduction in the budget and calculated an overall 8.9% budget increase which needed noting. The Leader presented the budget requirement of £1,622,703 (9.02% increase) and total precept increase of 17.7% and summarised the process by which the budget was formulated. **PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew **SECONDED BY:** Councillor Robert Payne **MOTION:** To approve the proposed budget with the amendments reported by the Responsible Financial Officer. The Town Clerk clarified in response to a question that all expenditure on Tourism and Marketing, other than delegated expenditure within the authorised delegations or emergencies would be brought to Committee for approval. Debate ensued regarding how the Town Council was handling the Tourism & Marketing budget. Management needed to be undertaken in conjunction with experts in the field with clear direction and evidence of what would be the most efficient way of spending the budget. Councillors were informed that at a future Tourism Consultative Group meeting, a suggestion would be made to set up an independent, non-profit making company that could trade and work with the Town Council, North Somerset Council and field experts for the benefit of Tourism for Weston-super-Mare. The Responsible Financial Officer clarified in response to a question that the Tourism income budget generated this year to date was less that £2,000. Debate ensued regarding the Town Council taking on services that had been abandoned by North Somerset Council and although there were divided opinions the Town Council had managed to take on some excellent projects. An AMENDMENT was then proposed: That the £1,530.00 net saving recovered by the Responsible Financial Officer be used to increase the Weston In Bloom budget from £20,000 to £21,530.00. **PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Michael Bell **SECONDED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew **RESOLVED:** That the £1,530.00 net saving recovered by the Responsible Financial Officer be used to increase the Weston In Bloom budget from £20,000 to £21,530.00. Debate ensued with the view expressed how unsatisfactory it was to see such an increase in precept, considering how people's earnings had decreased and how no effort had been made to cut costs and make savings. The Town Clerk clarified, in response to a proposal to refer the budget to further scrutiny at a Policy & Finance Committee meeting that this would not be possible as the Town Council were required to set and submit its precept to North Somerset Council by 31st January 2014. Scrutiny and setting of the revenue budget was the purpose of today's Town Council meeting which had the power to make detailed amendments to any part

of the proposed budget.

Further debate ensued.

A SECOND AMENDMENT was then proposed:

To withdraw the £25,000 allocated for the Wi Fi Centre within the Tourism & Marketing budget.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter
SECONDED BY: Councillor Clive Webb

A vote was taken and **carried.**

RESOLVED: To withdraw the £25,000 allocated for the Wi Fi in the Town Centre within the Tourism & Marketing budget.

A THIRD AMENDMENT was then proposed:

To grant £30,000 to the RNLI out of the Reserves budget rather that the Revenue budget.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford
SECONDED BY: Councillor Richard Tucker

A change to the wording of the third amendment was proposed:

To grant £10,000 out of the 2014/2015 Reserves budget with the intention to take a further £10,000 each year out of the 2015/2016 & 2016/2017 budget.

The altered wording was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the amendment and a vote was taken and **carried.**

RESOLVED: To grant £10,000 out of the 2014/2015 Reserves budget with the intention to take a further £10,000 each year out of the 2015/2016 & 2016/2017 budget.

The Responsible Financial Officer advised that based on the above and accepted amendments to the original proposal the budget requirement now stood at £1,587687 (6.6% increase) and a precept of £1,374117 (14.8% increase) (North Somerset Council grant £213,570.46).

The substantive resolution was as amended by the first, second and third amendments was then voted on and **carried**.

It was noted that Councillors Michael Bell and Mark Canniford voted against the proposal.

SUBSTANTIVE RESOLUTION:

To approve the proposed budget with the changes reported by the Responsible Financial Officer and:

375.1 That the £1,530.00 net saving recovered by the Responsible Financial Officer be used to increase the Weston In Bloom budget from £20,000 to £21,530.00

	375.2 To withdraw the £25,000 allocated for the Wi Fi in the Town Centre within the Tourism & Marketing budget **375.3** To grant £10,000 out of the 2014/2015 Reserves budget with the intention to take a further £10,000 each year out of the 2015/2016 & 2016/2017 budget **375.4** Accordingly to approve a budget requirement which now stood at £1, 587687 (6.67% increase) and a precept of £1, 374,117 (14.8% increase) (North Somerset Council grant £213,570.46).
	There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.11 p.m. Signed: ..... Dated: ..... Town Mayor