

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT
THE TOWN HALL ON
MONDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2019**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.30 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, John Crockford-Hawley, Ciaran Cronnelly, David Dash, Peter Fox, Catherine Gibbons, Jan Holloway, Daniel Marcos-Ashworth, Pete McAleer, Robert Payne, Alan Peak, Ian Porter, Ella Sayce, Tim Taylor, Helen Thornton, Richard Tucker and Roz Willis.

IN ATTENDANCE: Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer), Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer), Chris Millard (Mayors Civic Officer), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager), Becky Walsh (Communications Officer) Reverend Peter Ashman (Town Mayors Chaplain), Henry Woodsford (Weston & Somerset Mercury) and Alan Rice (Parishioner).

The Town Mayor invited his Chaplain to say prayers.

Alan Rice a parishioner and patient of Graham Road Surgery addressed the council with his concerns over the recent news that Graham Road Surgery was up for sale and patients would be referred to Clarence Park surgery. The patients had only learnt of this via the estate agents rather than the CCG. Central ward had already lost a GP clinic in the town centre and he had grave concerns over the impacts of this decision on its patients. He requested the council to show their disappointment of the decision and communicate it to the CCG.

156	<p>To receive Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Crew, David Hitchins Marcia Pepperall, Lisa Pilgrim and Sonia Russe.</p>
157	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p> <p>The Town Mayor reminded councillors that they needed to formally register their interests with the Town Clerk if they hadn't already done so.</p>
158	<p>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on the 15th July 2019</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Leader highlighted that the word 'demand' should be replaced with 'request' on the last item on the last page of the minutes.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried.</p>

	<p>RESOLVED: That with the above amendment the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p>
<p>159</p>	<p>To receive announcements and communications from the Town Mayor</p> <p>A member reported that the Mayors announcements and communications had not been received electronically by members.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would be emailed out to members the following day.</p> <p>The Town Mayor didn't have anything to add but reported that he had attended the service of dedication for RFA Tideforce. It was identified that the ship's library did not have any books. The Mayor was waiting for a reply from the Captain to confirm that he would like the Mayor to have public appeal to stock the ships library.</p> <p>The Town Mayor and Mayoress had attended 32 engagements and the Deputy Mayor had attended 4 on his behalf; which was a total of 84 to date.</p>
<p>160</p>	<p>To receive the Notes of the Youth Council Meeting</p> <p>The notes of Youth Council meeting held on 9th July had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Mayor invited any members who sat on the Youth Council to comment.</p> <p>A member explained that the Youth Council were very keen to tackle climate change.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Noted.</p>
<p>161</p>	<p>.1 Committee Structure</p> <p>The recommendations from the Policy & Finance Committee held on 19th August had been previously circulated with the agenda as a minute extract.</p> <p>The Town Clerk had submitted a report to the Policy & Finance Committee advising that an informal meeting of councillors had been called including the Chairman of both the Community Services Committee and Museum and Heritage Sub Committee, to discuss the committee structure. The main issue being that the Community Services Committee, with a remit too large to deal with agenda items in an appropriate time.</p> <p>The Town Clerk suggested that if the recommendations were approved, that the changes come into effect from 1st October 2019.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Museum and Heritage Sub Committee was in favour of the recommendations, but did question whether recommendation 3, to increase the Museum and Culture Committee's membership from 6 to 9 was needed.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that it was purely up to members to decide, however he advised that in comparison to other full committees which had membership of between 9 to 13, there could be a risk of no quorum.</p> <p>Councillor Pete Fox had previously volunteered himself to sit on the proposed</p>

	<p>Museum and Culture committee, but due to work commitments and the day and time of the meeting, would have to retract this.</p> <p>Debate ensued. It was questioned whether the Museum and Culture Committee would still report to the Policy & Finance Committee. The Town Clerk advised it would not, unless it exceeded its terms of reference and budget. The idea of combining the Blakehay Theatre and the Museum was challenged. The Museum & Heritage meetings were very specific to the Museum and there was concern as to how much the Blakehay would feature, as it needed a lot of work also.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Community Service Committee was in favour of the recommendations for the reason that Community Services meetings were too long and tiring for members. The Blakehay and the Museum were the two largest council assets and needed a dedicated forum and time to prosper and flourish.</p> <p>The new committee could discuss its own terms of reference and these could be reviewed at a future meeting.</p> <p>As a point of information, the Town Mayor informed that any member could attend any meeting of the council. He also asked members if they would consider changing the name to the 'Heritage and Culture Committee'.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter SECONDED BY: Councillor Crockford-Hawley</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That responsibility for the Weston Museum and the Blakehay Theatre be removed from the Community Services Committee's terms of reference. 2. That the Museum and Heritage Sub Committee be renamed the Museum and Culture Committee reporting direct to the Council, with responsibility for the Blakehay Theatre transferred to it. 3. To review the new Committee's terms of reference at a future meeting. <p>.2 Committee Appointments</p> <p>The Leader proposed a change on the Personnel Committee membership; to remove Councillor Helen Thornton and replace with Councillor Catherine Gibbons.</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Councillor Helen Thornton be replaced by Councillor Catherine Gibbons on the Personnel Committee.</p>
<p>162</p>	<p>Museum Roof Replacement</p> <p>The recommendations from the Policy and Finance Committee held on the 19th August 2019 had been previously circulated with the agenda as a minute extract.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Museum and Heritage Sub Committee advised that the Museum needed a new roof, of which the council would need to fund. There had been some misinterpretation on social media about the health and safety of the</p>

	<p>building which was not helpful and was not the case. He then queried the solar panel element of the recommendation and highlighted that the council would later in the meeting be discussing climate change and so should be careful not to contradict themselves when considering solar panels.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee reported that the committee had discussed the use of solar panels at length and that they were neither for or against them at this stage until the costs had been fully investigated.</p> <p>Further debate ensued. The committee had also requested to know if the roof was structurally sound enough to hold solar panels. The council needed to and would replace the roof, but there was no budget identified for the inclusion of solar panels within the current budget. Discussion had also taken place about looking at using solar panels on other council buildings, which may reduce the overall costs. The minute extract did not reflect the discussion around the council moving towards combatting climate change.</p> <p>The Town Mayor advised that there were other options such as the Green Energy Company to help reduce the carbon footprint.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk said she would take members' suggestions on board regarding exploring the use of solar panels on all council buildings. She also confirmed that the estimated £119,000 was for the replacement of the roof only.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Alan Peak SECONDED BY: Councillor Ian Porter</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a full replacement of the Museum roof take place at an estimated cost of £119,000 (this figure excluded the cost of any reinforcement needed to accommodate solar panels in the future which would increase the amount needed from general reserves). 2. To investigate the possibility of incorporating solar panels on all town council buildings in the future.
163	<p>Request to re-join NALC and ALCA</p> <p>A letter from ALCA inviting the council to re-join NALC and ALCA and outlining the benefits, had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed that the council had been a member until 2009, and had left along with other councils when the subscription fee had increased to almost £8,000. The subscription fee had now reduced to £2,800 and if the council did choose to re-join, then he advised to do so from 1st April 2020. Alternatively, if members wished to re-join straight away, then the fee would have to be found from General Reserves.</p> <p>Discussion ensued for and against re-joining and it was predominantly felt that the council had managed without the service for the last 10 years and had enough of its own resources in place to not need the services of NALC. From previous</p>

	<p>experience of the service from ALCA, some members were not impressed and found it difficult to recall anything useful it had done. Other members countered that it would be worth trying out the service for a year or two to see if it was useful.</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Ian Porter SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk write to the ALCA Secretary, to decline the offer to re-join NALC and ALCA.</p>
164	<p>CCG Reply to Council Motion from July</p> <p>The Letter from Julia Ross re Weston General Hospital to Weston-super-Mare Town Council had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Mayor invited Councillor Mike Bell, who along with Councillor Richard Tucker was dealing with the matter at North Somerset Council, to update the council.</p> <p>Councillor Bell informed that a meeting would be held on 1st October, where the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would make their final decision. The final business case would be available to North Somerset Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP) members on 23rd September and discussed at their meeting on 30th September. All members were welcome to attend these meetings.</p> <p>This council meeting was the Town Council's last opportunity to make any further comments ahead of the final decision. Although the final case had not been seen, it could not deviate to much from the previous one and the CCG had rejected all other proposals. There was no clarity or assurance from the CCG and not enough information provided on their proposals. There were three key points to consider. 1) The concerns that the place of the Healthy Weston proposals in the context of the wider Healthier Together Programme across the BNSSG area have not been articulated. 2) That greater clarity was needed on the benefits of the proposed changes and the wider system improvements being delivered and 3) that the councils are unaware that a business case for the proposed merger of University Hospitals Bristol (UHB) and Weston Area Health Trust (WHAT) has been published or consulted upon.</p> <p>Debate ensued. There was no point responding to the CCG, they were ignoring the council as a democratically elected body. They had failed to mention within their letter that 69% of residents wanted a 24/7, consultant led, A&E department. Their statistical information was incorrect and there were the added concerns of the closing of GP surgeries. Their long-term strategy was to close the A&E department totally and that Weston hospital become a cottage hospital doing minor planned surgery only.</p> <p>It was argued that the MP has had nothing to support on the matter. A letter must be written to HOSP immediately and members were encouraged to attend all public meetings on the hospital, including the demonstrations held prior to them.</p>

Opposing views were debated on whether to wait for the HOSP meeting outcome before contacting the Secretary of State (SOS) to object to a 'substantial variation'. It was important to take on board the reported risks surrounding health & safety and staff retention in providing a consultant led A&E department. There were still more questions to be answered by the CCG which needed to be directed to them and HOSP.

A member informed that the HOSP wrote to the SOS requesting a substantial variation over 3 years ago. The reasons need to be clear and evidenced and cannot be made on the grounds of health & safety and finance. The HOSP would deal with how this could be dealt with. The council must wait for the final business case to be published before further action.

The Chairman of HOSP advised that further details were not known and that there was a Weston Area Health Trust AGM to be held at the Blakehay Theatre on 17th September where he encouraged all members to attend. It was hoped that the HOSP meeting on 30th September will recommend NSC to build a case for a substantial variation.

The Leader stressed what a long process this had been and that the final hurdle was only 2 weeks away. The letter states the intention to close the A&E department permanently.

It was worth sustaining dialogue with the CCG even though it would be ineffective.

For a point of information, the final business case would be available to HOSP members only on 23rd September and only published on 24th September.

The Mayor asked the Chairman of the HOSP if he would suspend standing orders at the meeting on 30th September, to enable non-voting members to approach the panel. The Chairman of the HOSP advised that any member was welcome to approach the panel within the public participation section at the beginning of the meeting.

Councillor Mike Bell reiterated his 3 key points for the benefit of members and was happy for it to be used to form a resolution.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Alan Peak

A vote was taken and **carried**.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk write to the CCG in response to their latest letter to say that in addition to the points the council has made previously in its correspondence with the CCG, it would add the following: -

1. The council is concerned that the place of the Healthy Weston proposals in the context of the wider Healthier Together Programme across the BNSSG area has not been articulated. In particular, we want to understand the strategic process to identify appropriate locations for 24/7 A&E and urgent care across BNSSG and the role of acute hospitals strategically.
2. The council would like to see greater clarity on the benefits of the proposed changes and the wider system improvements being delivered, including

	<p>primary care, mental health, frailty service, integrated localities. The pace of delivery of out-of-Hospital initiatives needs to be stepped up and shown to achieve positive impacts before further changes to the Hospital-based services are taken forward.</p> <p>3. The council is not aware that a business case for the proposed merger of UHB and WAHT has been published or consulted upon. More evidence is needed to show the impact of a merger upon the delivery of A&E and urgent care, critical care and emergency surgery. In particular, we want to see evidence that the opportunities for addressing recruitment and retention issues in WAHT through a shared rota with UHB have been fully evaluated.</p>
165	<p>Motion to Council by Councillor Gibbons – Climate Emergency</p> <p>The Town Mayor invited Councillor Catherine Gibbons to present her motion to the council as follows:</p> <p>“I propose that Weston Town Council continues to build on its clear environmental agenda by joining with NSC in declaring a Climate Emergency, with the aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and taking what actions it can to mitigate the effects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Starting with committing to a re-wilding programme in as many areas of the parks and open spaces it operates, as possible. WTC can take the lead in this and help community groups with their own re-wilding and tree-planting projects. This will be beneficial in creating additional habitats for bees, insects and other wildlife and create attractive “wild” areas of educational value to the community. These areas will be easy to maintain and send a positive message out to the wider area about Weston as an environmentally aware, eco- friendly town. 2. Creating a “Climate Change and Environment Working Group”, which will be able with engage with other groups including NSC, and facilitate actions such as a public meeting (hosted by Chris Sperring)” <p>Councillor Gibbons added that climate change was a very important concern for everyone. North Somerset Council had passed the motion back in February and she would like to see the Town Council join them.</p> <p>A rewilding meeting, which the Grounds Manager had attended had taken place in Worle and ideas to included sites like the cemetery had been suggested.</p> <p>A member was in support of the proposals however raised concern over the management of the rewilding programme and that it should not be an excuse for overgrown/messy vegetation. He would also like to see the encouragement of hedgerows planted instead of fences and that every new built house planted a tree in their garden as a stipulation.</p> <p>The Chairman of Weston in Bloom Working Party reported that they were very supportive of the rewilding programme and suggested introducing a plaque scheme to mark rewilding projects.</p> <p>Members were very supportive and after a recent tv documentary on Climate Change, it was time that Britain excepted that climate change was immanent and made positive strives to tackle it.</p>

A third element to the motion was proposed, which was to join the Covenant of Mayors. This was a free and very positive opportunity for Weston to be a part of.

The Town Mayor thanked the member for this suggestion and reiterated the need to sign post projects effectively.

The proposer refused the offer to add a third element to her motion but would be happy to take the suggestion of joining the Covenant of Mayors to the Climate Change and Environment Working Group. The motion was about setting up a framework to engage with people and a public meeting hosted by Chris Sperring would be the first step in engagement.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Catherine Gibbons

SECONDED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor

A vote was taken and **carried**.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That Weston Town Council (WTC) continues to build on its clear environmental agenda by joining with North Somerset Council (NSC) in declaring a Climate Emergency, with the aim of becoming Carbon neutral by 2030 and taking what actions it can to mitigate the effects:

1. Starting with committing to a re-wilding programme in as many areas of the parks and open spaces it operates, as possible. WTC can take the lead in this and help community groups with their own re-wilding and tree-planting projects. This will be beneficial in creating additional habitats for bees, insects and other wildlife and create attractive “wild” areas of educational value to the community. These areas will be easy to maintain and send a positive message out to the wider area about Weston as an environmentally aware, eco-friendly town.
2. Creating a “Climate Change and Environment Working Group”, which will be able with engage with other groups including NSC, and facilitate actions such as a public meeting (hosted by Chris Sperring)”

The Town Mayor introduced and welcomed the Town Council’s newly appointed Grounds Manager, Fay Powell.

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Dated: