

**WESTON-SUPER- MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON
MONDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2020**

Meeting Commenced: 7.03 pm

Meeting Concluded: 9.08 pm

PRESENT: Councillors James Clayton (Chairman), Mark Aplin, Roger Bailey, Sarah Codling, John Crockford-Hawley, Ciaran Cronnelly, David Dash (S), Peter Fox, Peter McAleer, and Helen Thornton, Ella Sayce and Roz Willis.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Marcia Pepperall, Sonia Russe and Robert Payne, Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager) and Samantha Bishop (Committee Officer).

The Chairman was having technical difficulties joining the meeting, and so in his absence, the Vice Chairman chaired the meeting

74	<p>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutions</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gillian Carpenter who was substituted by Councillor David Dash, Councillor Gill Bute with no substitution and the Community and Grounds Administrator.</p>
75	<p>To receive Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Councillor Sarah Codling declared a personal interest in item 6 as used to be a volunteer Street Pastors.</p> <p>Councillors John Crockford-Hawley and Robert Payne declared a personal interest in item 6 as a trustee of Birnbeck Regeneration Trust.</p> <p>Councillor Roger Bailey declared a personal interest in item 9 as a holder of an allotment.</p>
76	<p>To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the Community Service Committee meeting held on 14th September 2020</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.</p>
77	<p>References from other Committees</p> <p>77.1 Toilet Working Group</p>

The Grounds Manager briefly summarised that a very serious incident of criminal behaviour at the Grove Park toilet had led to the need to close the toilet in the interests of staff and public safety. The toilets had been reopened for half term but discussions at the Toilets Working Group had discussed whether the Grove Park toilet should be closed until further notice.

Councillor James Clayton joined the meeting at 7.12 pm.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that there had been an increase in antisocial behavior problems in Grove Park and especially around the toilet area over the last 15 years. To the point where members of the public and staff avoid walking through this area. A situation occurred last year where she administered CPR to an individual until the ambulance arrived. The activity and behavior was very distressing for the cleaning contractors and staff. The safety of staff/contractors and members of the public was a serious issue.

Members were in agreement the council had a duty of care.

The Town Clerk advised that a final decision whether to close the Grove Park toilets could be made by full council on the 23rd November and that committee members views were requested at this point.

The Chairman of the toilet working party reported that the subject had been discussed at length. Much effort had gone into addressing the anti-social behavior problems such as getting the hedgerows cut to expose the area. It was time for the council as a whole to look at the possibility of closing the toilets and he would like group leaders to come up with some long-term suggestions for the future of the toilets.

Debate ensued. It was queried whether the toilets were marked as high risk on the council's risk register as she had concerns regarding the council's liability.

A question was asked whether the toilets were still open at present. The Town Clerk clarified that they were but recommended that they should close for at least the Winter, however the long term position was up to members to decide.

Members felt that it was a wider antisocial behaviour problem that needed addressing and required consistent Police intervention.

The Grounds Manager informed that the incident had failed to be immediately reported to the police by the cleaning contractors. If they had been, the Police would have been in attendance at the time. She was working with the Police to target this and the contractors had been instructed to call 999 if they encounter any threatening antisocial behavior incidents. The Street Wardens were patrolling the park every day which seemed to deter this behavior for a while and then it would return. This was a frequent pattern experienced.

The Deputy Town Clerk in answer to the earlier question confirmed that the toilets were scored as high (7) on the risk register, with a medium impact as scored across all toilet sites.

It was therefore

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roz Willis

SECONDED BY: Sarah Codling

That the Grove Park toilets be closed with immediate effect until a better solution could be found and the council had a duty to protect the public, contactors and staff.

Further debate ensued. A member was concerned about the impacts this would have on disabled people, children and the elderly and questioned what provision would be in place for them if the toilets were closed. Other members felt it was a case of balancing the risks and that the risks for protecting the public, contactors and staff were greater in the present situation.

It was suggested to position a CCTV camera to help tackle the problems. The Grounds Manager informed that she had a meeting the following day to discuss achieving a CCTV direct link.

An **AMENDMENT** was proposed that the toilets be temporarily closed until it was reviewed and voted on at full council on 23rd November.

The AMENDMENT was accepted by the proposer and seconder and became the substantive motion.

A vote was taken and accordingly it was **carried** (7 for; 3 against; 1 abstention)

RESOLVED: That Grove Park toilets be temporarily closed with immediate effect until a better solution could be found and the matter be reviewed and voted on at full council on 23rd November.

A member then requested to propose that the toilets close during the week and open on weekends.

The Town Clerk advised the chairman that it was not good practice to reopen debate after a resolution had been carried and that in any event the item would be discussed again at full council on 23rd November.

The member then requested that members of the public be signposted to alternative toilet facilities during the closure.

The Grounds Manager confirmed that she would arrange for this to be actioned.

At this point in the meeting, the Vice Chairman handed the Chairmanship over to the Chairman, who took his place as Chairman of the meeting.

77.2 Literary Festival Working Group (to follow)

The Town Clerk informed that a meeting had not yet taken place.

RESOLVED: That a meeting take place before the next Community Services meeting.

78

Management Reports:

78.1 Youth Services

The report of the Operations Manager – YMCA had been previously circulated.

The Operations Manager was not in attendance.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Operations Manager - YMCA be noted.

78.2 Grounds

The Grounds Manager verbally reported that the grounds team were worked well within their bubbles; the toilets were taking up a lot of the team's time; the cemetery had been cut and was looking very good; winter planting had commenced and had been a real team effort; allotments were ticking over nicely and tree surveys undertaken and the Allotment Club Chairman was happy not to meet virtually; dog bins were working well and a replacement agency member of staff was in place and being trained on the emptying routes; the cemetery was busy and people are visiting the trees in the cemetery as a result of the video posted on YouTube.

A member referred to a letter of complaint in the Mercury from a parishioner with regards to a request for a dog bin made over a year ago, which the council needed to respond to.

The Grounds Manager informed that she was not aware of the request and that she would respond to the complainant.

The Town Clerk reassured that the complaint would be looked into and added that the ground team were considerably short staffed at present.

A member complimented on how good the Cemetery was looking and informed that Weston In Bloom had been busy planting but were in need of more plants to finish the donkey.

The Grounds Manager advised that the grounds team could not pursue any more leads for external dog bin emptying contracts at present as they were understaffed, but they would do so in due course once the team was fully staffed.

In response to a question regarding progress at Uphill play area, the Grounds Manager reported that fences and equipment were being replaced and looked on track for completion in two weeks' time. There had been a delay in the sourcing of the wood for the fencing. Uphill Village Society had agreed to fund the replacement of bins and benches in the park, which would be sourced through the council.

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

79 Grant applications

Grant applications for grant funding from community groups and the report of the Deputy Town Clerk had been previously circulated.

The Chairman informed that there was £6,068 left in the 2020/21 grants budget and that the applications before committee totaled £12,527.

It was noted that there were an increasing amount of applications being made from national organisations.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that all the applications met the grant criteria.

Councillor Sarah Codling had declared an interest as an employee of one of the applications. The grant was for an event which did not go ahead. The suggested limit for a grant was £1,000 and some applications were in excess of this. There were also applications from the same organisation applying every year which was not compliant with the grant criteria. For example, the PRIDE had applied every year for the past few years. The Town Council should support them but through another channel of funding and suggested that the Town Council budget £2,000 per year for PRIDE.

Debate ensued and it was raised how the council would justify committing itself to a £2,000 annual grant rather than with other organisations and large events.

It was stated that PRIDE had brought successful events to the town over the past seven years which bring people into the town and help local businesses. The council should be seen to support this and the national event that had been postponed to 2021.

A member suggested investigating the possibility of an SLA with PRIDE as part of the council's Equality & Diversity policy.

The Town Clerk advised that whilst he encouraged the council to support PRIDE, there was doubt over the current application as it was for an event that was due for September that hadn't happened. He added that the council tended not to support national organisations with employment costs as they are well funded. He encouraged members to look at local organisations seeking funding.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed that all applicants had been contacted in June asking if they still required the funding of which all applications before the committee had been confirmed. PRIDE would like to use the funding for an event that had been postponed to later in the financial year.

It was then

PROPOSED BY Councillor Roger Bailey
SECONDED BY Councillor Roz Willis

That in view of limited funds not to approve grants for the Great Western Air Ambulance, Marie Curie, or Birnbeck Regeneration Trust

A vote was taken and the motion was **LOST** by 2 votes to 7.

To aid debate the Deputy Town Clerk queried which grants did the committee want to discuss.

The Town Clerk declared a personal interest as his wife was a volunteer with Read Easy.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Sarah Codling
SECONDED BY: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly

A vote was taken and accordingly it was carried

RESOLVED: That under power: Local Government Act 1972 section 137 that the following be granted from the 2020/2021 Community Grants budget.

	<p>Birnbeck Regeneration Trust £0</p> <p>Great Western Air Ambulance £0</p> <p>Marie Curie £0</p> <p>NS People First Withdrawn</p> <p>Read Easy WsM £400</p> <p>Revitalise £500</p> <p>Somerset Storyfest £500</p> <p>That Creative Thingy Wotsit CIC £600</p> <p>WsM Street Pastors £500</p> <p>Worle Wind Band £500</p>
80	<p>Application to Weston Town Council for events support</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk had distributed the supporting application from Culture Weston earlier that day, requesting the sum of £32,000 for three large events. The item straddled over two committees and therefore would also be discussed at the Heritage Arts and Culture (HAC) committee on Thursday. The award of the money would need to be approved by this Committee but the implementation would need direction from HAC committee.</p> <p>The council had budgeted £50,000 for community events in January and the only brief for the expenditure of the money had been to help boost the economic growth of the town.</p> <p>Meetings had been had with Richard Blows and Fiona Matthews of Culture Weston to see if there was any synergy between organisations in putting on events which had resulted in the proposal before members.</p> <p>Both the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk had no recommendation and sought direction from members. Tourism grants had ranged between £7,000-12,000 and had gone through a grant process.</p> <p>The Chairman of the HAC committee was perplexed by the process for considering the application. If the committee decided not to award the grant, then there would be much point discussing it at HAC. It would also be embarrassing for members as Fiona Matthews would be in attendance at the HAC meeting. He noted concerns over the amount of the grant sought but argued that if the events were good then it would be money well spent.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk advised that there were no issues with budget provision, but direction was needed on how to spend the £50,000.</p> <p>Debate ensued. Some members felt more information on the events was required and that officers should be given more direction in the budget setting process. Others who had read the proposals were impressed and felt that the events would be good for the town. Some had concerns regarding the impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk clarified that the application stated that the events were COVID-19 secure. Page 10 of the application stated that the Winter Wonderland event would not happen without the council's funding. The funding would boost the town economy and the events could be considered individually.</p>

	<p>It was argued that delaying consideration of the application until January would make it difficult for events to go ahead.</p> <p>It was therefore</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p>A vote was taken and was carried (7 for; 1 against; 2 abstentions)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Council award £20,000 towards the Winter Lights and that the remaining £12,000 application be considered at a future Community Services or Town Council meeting.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk queried if members were happy for HAC to have the ability to assess the success.</p> <p>The Town Clerk clarified that the HAC committee would assess the success of the grant and make recommendations to the Town Council.</p>
<p>81</p>	<p>Public Toilets Procurement for a full maintained and cleaning contract</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the tender evaluation report was unavailable as the current contactor had withdrawn from the tender process. A full report would be submitted subsequently to Policy and Finance or the Town Council because the deadline had had to be extended due to late arrival of information regarding the TUPE transfer of staff.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Noted.</p>
<p>82</p>	<p>Allotment Management Sub Committee Meetings</p> <p>A report outlining proposals from the Chairman of the Allotment Management Sub Committee had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The proposals would reduce the cost of having evening committee meetings and the cost of officer involvement whilst maintaining a good measure of control.</p> <p>It was noted that the council had resolved to review its committee structure and terms of reference at the Town Council meeting in March. Some members felt that the item should be postponed for consideration at the Town Council meeting.</p> <p>To aid discussion, the Town Clerk advised that the Allotment Management Sub Committee used to meet on an ad-hoc basis and had only been included within the council committee schedule to meet quarterly in recent years. He suggested that if there was no need to meet so often then it was at the Chairman's discretion to cancel meetings until the proposals could be reviewed by the full Town Council meeting in March.</p> <p>It was therefore</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Helen Thornton SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p>

A vote was taken and was **carried**

RESOLVED: That proposals from the Chairman of the Allotment Management Sub Committee be considered amongst the committee structure review at the Town Council meeting in March.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.08 pm.

Signed: Dated:

Chairman of the Community Services Committee

Weston-Super-Mare YMCA and Town Council Partnership

Report for Community Services - written by Alli Waller, Senior Lead Youth Worker at YMCA Dulverton Group

1. Purpose of report

This report covers services and work delivered and supported by YMCA in the Weston-super-Mare area, from the beginning of October 2020 to the end of December 2020. This includes the development and progress of programmes and services for young people and the community at YMCA Weston-super-Mare, 2 Bristol Road Lower and Weston Youth and Community Centre, Coleridge Road.

2. Work with Young People – Youth & Community Café

a) Open Access:

The Youth & Community cafe provides a youth focused, free, well-appointed space for young people after school and on Saturdays with additional opening during school holidays.

Through this service we aim to ensure that every young person should:

- Feel safe and welcome
- Have someone they can talk to and access to support
- Have the opportunity to make friends, socialise and be active
- Feel more connected with their community
- Have the chance to achieve and challenge themselves to reach their full potential
- Have fun

The youth café had a glimmer of re-opening in October however, we were unable to due to the second national lockdown restrictions. It now remains closed to public. The Homelessness Support team are using the space to continue to offer support to the significant number of rough sleepers in the town.

b) Targeted Work:

We recognise that for some individuals or groups what we regularly offer may not be easily accessible to them. So, we look at targeted work to support people to access our facilities and services who might not otherwise be able to. This work is predominantly carried out in partnership and we currently work with:

- Young Carers – Junior & Senior sessions, on hold
- Home Education Network - youth project, moved to online Zoom sessions
- Young people with disabilities – Still on hold
- Ups & Downs South West Youth Project- still on hold
- Adult young carers- Still on hold
- Care Leavers- Still on hold
- Groups tackling isolation for young people – Still on Hold

3. Work with Young People – Satellites and Outreach

Unfortunately, due to lockdown 2 and 3 we have not been able to deliver in our usual way. However, the team have been creative and finding ways to engage young people.

South Ward

The Bournville youth club remains closed, however we have continued to identify ways the “pop up café” idea could work, when we return to face to face delivery, in the South Ward area. As the

demand for mental health support increases within the younger demographic, the team felt the “pop up café” would be a great way to offer that support, whilst following social distancing guidelines.

The team continue to support some of the most vulnerable young people we work with in this area by offering one to one and small group support sessions and online support when needed.

In December, the team worked with the South West Activity Network (SWAN) again by identifying families that would benefit from a Christmas food and activity hamper. The team helped to make, fill and deliver 160 large boxes of hope to 160 families during the Christmas week. This partnership has worked incredibly well for both agencies, and the community, and we will continue to offer this support in a new project over the coming weeks during this new lockdown.

Worle

Our work with Big Worle continues. Due to the pandemic, the youth club has not been able to meet as we cannot use the Hub due to the restricted size.

The team have been delivering online zoom sessions, focusing on coming up with a young person led programme. Members who join the online sessions suggest ideas of what they want to do for the programme. We also offer young members one to one sessions with youth workers for extra support.

The Youth & Community team created and delivered Christmas activity packs for all the young people that attended the Youth Club. This continues to give us a safe opportunity to check in with all the families and young people that may not have returned to the sessions during the first lockdown.

Home Education

We have been providing face to face and online zoom youth sessions for members of the Home Education youth club during the winter months. We make sure all parents receive communications with the club details weekly to encourage more young members to join. We also post on their home education social media page about the weekly sessions.

Social Media

During the last two months we have continued to offer an online support service through our social media platforms to all young people, via our Facebook and Instagram pages.

We have made sure our online social media presence is high, so young people can access easily to combat boredom. We set up a new programme of different weekly themed posts, challenges and competitions for the young people of our youth groups during the November lockdown. In the Christmas period, we also created an advent calendar where we would post every day in the run up to Christmas. Our figures show that we have had a huge increase of youth activity on our pages.

Instagram

Reporting Period		Total Account Reach	Total Interactions	Total Followers
01/10/2020	to	126 (+38.4%)	162 (+800%)	177 (+9.2%)
31/12/2020				

The data shows an 9.2% increase in followers subsequently followed by an increase in account reach and user interaction. This can be attributed to the increased volume and consistent content created by the YMCA youth team, tailored to reach the target groups.

Reporting Period	Total of New Likes	Total Reach	Total Engagement
01/10/2020 to 31/12/2020	+ 11	1,739	232

The data shows an increase of 11 followers for the YMCA DG Youth Clubs Facebook page. Total reach and engagement are positive following an increase of creative content from the youth team.

The direct online support service has continued to increase during each lockdown. Young people are reaching out for information, advice and support. The youth team are continuing to monitor social media, so young people have someone to talk to whenever needed.

Youth Council

Weston-super-Mare Youth Council meet via Zoom each Month. The new members have been learning all about how the Youth Council works through a presentation, kindly provided by the Town Councillors that support the Youth Council. The members are also working on how they can reach out to young people in the Town by making short informational videos. As there has been a change in membership, we will be electing new roles in the coming month.

Links to Town Council Strategy

The work being undertaken always strives to meet the presented needs of the community, whilst building the quality of provision for young people, and developing the scope of the work that the Town Council supports with young people. We are always keen to look at addressing the needs of young people across the area and are happy to look at establishing any new work, or work in new areas, that there is an identifiable need for.

Parks and Play Areas Report

Report for Community Services - written by Fay Powell

1. Public Toilets

All the public toilets with the exception of Grove Park have been open throughout all lockdowns. It was agreed at full town council on the 23rd November that Grove Park Toilets remain closed until Spring. Also agreed was to appoint Healthmatic to undertake works for the Annual Maintenance and Management Cost as well as Contactless Payment point installation.

2. Cemetery

On the 18th November the team walked through the entire cemetery section by section, a winter works programme has been produced. At each point notes were made as to what needed doing. Some examples of the works scheduled are:

- Installing new entrance signs at the bottom and top of the cemetery.
- Adding information boards throughout. This will tell the history of the cemetery and certain sections.
- Adding speed signs along the main drive
- Sweeping paths
- Adding new planters
- Painting existing noticeboards
- Adding finger posts to direct people to individual sections
- Replacing taps with push taps to reduce water wastage

Memorial garden plots are still a very popular choice. The full burial plots which were identified are being allocated quickly. We are still very busy with funeral arrangements and statutory declarations. The following is being carried out by staff within the Grounds Team.

- Full Burials
- Ashes Interments
- Memorial permits Issued
- Grave Plots sales
- Grave Plots – deed transfers

We are working with staff from other departments within the council who are currently unable to carry out their roles. These staff have been photographing and documenting sections of graves so they can be added to a wider mapping project we have planned. When 'normal service' resumes this piece of work will be continued

by our volunteers based at the Museum, who have already registered a keen interest in this project.

3. Allotments

We continue to have regular dialog with the allotment Chairman and Reps at specific sites. A site visit by the Grounds Manager and Grounds Supervisor took place before Christmas with the Allotment Rep. Areas of work were identified and a plan is being put together.

4. Bus Shelters

The Grounds Team have been carrying out an audit of existing bus shelters and looking at Eco friendly alternatives with multiple functions along with other options. Report to be given at next Community Services Committee.

Recommendation – Members please read and note the report.

Community Services 18th January 2021

Grant Application Summary Report - Report of the Finance Officer

The following grant applications have been received for the committee to consider:

1. Friends of Grove Park

The amount of financial assistance sought is £900 for the replacement of two bin bags that are currently tied to the bench adjacent to Jill Dando's garden with a bin at the cost of £498. The remainder of the grant will be used to replenish the volunteers' tools, fixings and protective clothing.

2. Homestart

The amount of financial assistance sought is £1500 for the recruitment, training and expenses of one volunteer whom would spend their time helping several families in the area with emotional and practical support.

Additional Information:

The full scoring matrix required by the committee for both applicants will be circulated separately alongside the application forms to committee members ahead of the meeting to meet with the agreed process in relation to grant applications.

Our annual budget for small and voluntary grants is £7500 with £4432.00 already being approved in 20/21 with a **£3068.00 balance remaining**.

Members are requested to:

Consider the above grant applications for decision on grant award

Proposal for Future Tech event at Weston super Mare

Request for funding – Weston Town Council

Introduction

This is an application to the Weston Town Council to support an event in the Town Centre in July 2021 to raise the awareness of future technologies and the jobs related to this, and to raise aspirations of school children to see the jobs that they may wish to undertake for the future. Weston is the home to the West of England Institute of Technology, a DfE supported programme to raise the profile of Technical Skills and Education across the West of England region, but based in Weston, and led by Weston College on behalf of the consortium of Employers and Colleges. The West of England IoT has 12 Anchor employers, of which North Somerset Council is one, and we share a vision and an ambition to showcase future technologies and jobs to the Town to grow and adapt the Town to be a place where people and industry thrives.

Background to the Future Technology

Based on the CAPRI Project (<https://caprimobility.exhibition.app>) funded by Innovate UK, AECOM and Westfield were involved in looking at the creation of autonomous vehicles. The project completed late last year. This means that the partners are experienced in running trials and have no conflicts in running an event in Weston. Currently Westfield are looking for other locations across the South West to trial their technology, various legal, technical and operational aspects of autonomous vehicles, including the commercial viability. Following meeting with AECOM, Westfield and Weston College in November this is proposal for an event to be funded with the Town Council, to be discussed at their next meeting in January 21.

Technology to be demonstrated

The Westfield pod has been successfully trialled in several locations across the UK. The POD is a 4-6 seater, electric powered vehicle which can be manually driven, via externally connected joystick, or automatically along a predefined route. It has lights, signals, amber flashing lights and an audible alarm for operational safety.

The pod has been successfully used in the Lake District to shuttle passengers around the area and has been used as a first mile - last mile solution at Heathrow airport. We believe that the pod has a number of operational opportunities one being a replacement for the land train which used to operate on the promenade, another being a transport solution from the bus exchange at Victoria to the sea front. Below are some images of the pod in operation. There are also industrial applications that the pod can be used for including goods transportation and road sweeping.



This autumn, the UK will host the COP26 event in Glasgow. Focus on climate change and the actions of all to reduce the carbon emissions of the UK and the world. Electric and autonomous vehicles will become more important with the requirement to reduce the use of combustion fuelled vehicles.

A showcase of the potential technology that could be used respond to the challenge would be a great opportunity for the town, to show the residents of Weston super Mare what the future for the town could be, and to give the public an opportunity to see future technology in action in 2021.

Linking to the 5 pillars for Weston Town Council

In drafting the proposal for the Town Council, we have been mindful to ensure that this project is able to help the Town Council to meet their aspiration for the future of the town.

We believe that this event will **promote and better present** the Town of Weston to local and regional employers as a forward-thinking area. Autonomous or driverless vehicles are at the forefront of emerging technologies which attracts profile and publicity for all those involved. This event also links to the Town Council's aspiration to be **Cleaner and Greener** – by showing the impact of green and future technologies this demonstrates to the general public the Town Council's commitment to improve the local environment, and electrically powered Autonomous vehicles could be a green solution to providing transport around the major attractions of the region. There are currently no seaside tourist locations engaged in this technology, so this could be a real draw for the town, and the wider region.

Linked to the green and future tech agenda there may be opportunities to build in links to the Town's aspiration for **Healthier and Happier** residents and will actively look for opportunities to promote the health and wellbeing of residents, by showcasing electric vehicles the public would see the Town Council commitment to a greener, cleaner Weston and the demonstration of other uses – such as the road sweeper – could open a public debate on how the Town Council may make greater use of autonomy in the future.

The whole drive for the plan was to create **A Bright Future**, and to promote to the pupils in schools and students at Weston College, the future jobs to inspire them with the job roles that they can aspire to, and to drive business to the Town to create jobs for local residents. By the demonstration of the pods and a number of opportunities for different ages of the Town population to engage with the technology, there could be some very positive benefits to both the pupils and students in the town, along with the wider population.

Outline Plan

There are several strands of work which we aim to deliver with this event and project plan, these include:

- General public awareness raising
- Student inspiration events
- Weston College students' engagement
- Business engagement event

Details for these groups are discussed below.

Timing

Based on events already planned within school settings, and the potential for an improving situation with the pandemic, the following dates are possible for the event (*based on availability of the Winter Gardens and outline discussions with the North Somerset Council events team*):

Summer 2021 (All dates are Thursday to Sunday)

JUNE	Plastic-Free JULY		
17 – 20 June	8-11 July	15 -18 July	22 -25 July
GCSE and A levels will still be ongoing Great Science Share – UWE Air Show	Potential event in Weston	Preferred timing for North Somerset	First weekend of the School holidays

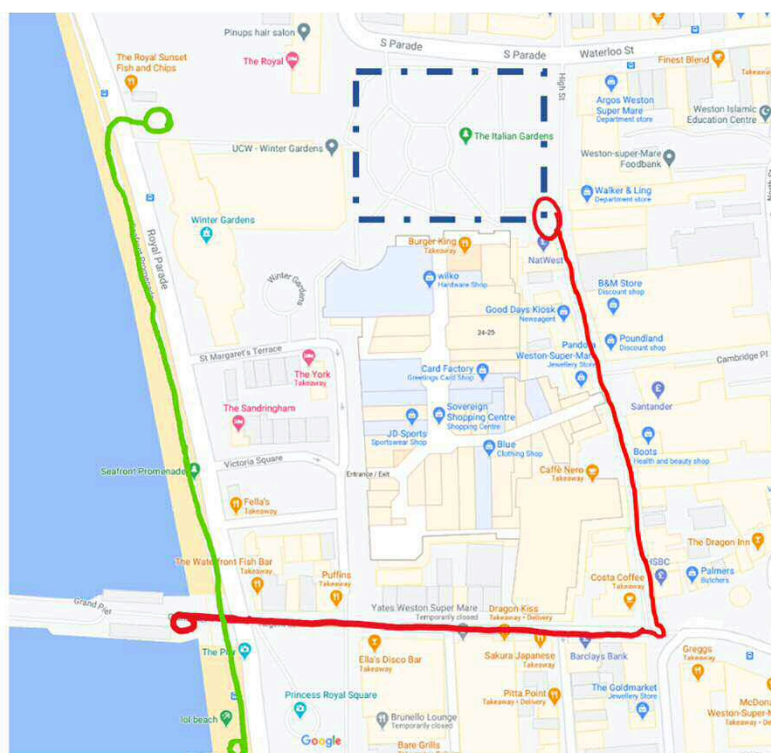
Pod Demonstration

In order to have impact on visitors to the event, the best way would be to see the pod in action, demonstrated to the attendees to the event, rather than a static pod, and there are a number of potential options being considered by the proposal team and the Highways at NSC and the Town Council.

The Pod is best demonstrated when operated automatically along a predefined route. It has lights, signals, amber flashing lights, object detection (such as pedestrians, dogs, cyclists) and an audible alarm for operational safety. We have a number of options for the Pod demonstration with the preference being a demonstration along the promenade to show the full capability of the Pod in the town in a real setting.

Our preference would be to run a pod down the Promenade to have the maximum impact to be seen passing WSM icons such as the Pier and Winter Gardens. This is demonstrated in the green tracking, we also have mapped a scenario from the Italian Gardens through the High Street to the Carrot, and then proceeding to the Pier using Regent Street.

We have secured access to the Italian Gardens with North Somerset Council already, we are now working through potential routes and options with the team in Highways. *These routes have been shared with Highways in advance of the meeting.*



Summary of the proposed audiences and benefits to these groups

A: Schools engagement

Different strategies could be used to engage with local schools and colleges and attract people to the event. Initial ideas include:

- design competition for primary school pupils,
- engineering / green technology focused challenges for secondary pupils, and
- Westfield coding and development autonomous vehicles for FE students.

This could include students being engaged in the setup of the demonstration area and learning how the plotting of the geocache works for the safe operation of the pod.

These activities could be led by sponsors to engage with local schools and raise their profile and to attract parents and people into Weston super Mare during the festival. With careful planning we could engage Primary pupils to submit entries to a competition and have a showcase of their thoughts /

designs/ results in the Town Centre to draw parents and children into the Town Centre over the Weekend.

Employers could sponsor different events / competitions, and this would need to be handled to ensure that schools were not swamped with offers and that there is fair representation. There could be an opportunity to host a careers fair / showcase for some schools / pupils as part of the event.

During discussions with UWE Bristol, there may be a fit with the Primary Engineers project around electric vehicles, and the F1 student projects. These are being investigated for fit with the project, but due to timings engagement with Primary Engineer programme from Sept 21 may be a better fit for the Town Council, and the Pod may be a catalyst for Schools to register to engage with the Programme for 21-22. (Cost approx. £10k for 10 Primary Schools to be sponsored in the event)

B: Employer engagement

There could be several strands to this and a proposal over several days could be delivered as part of the grant funding (to cover the costs of hiring, catering etc. of the spaces) around Winter Gardens, Sovereign Centre and Italian Gardens.

Our initial plan includes:

Thursday: Opening event - with an opportunity for all employers exhibiting to meet and network with each other, and an opportunity for the Town Council / Placemaking Agency to engage with employers to show the offer of Weston as a place to locate their businesses.

Friday: an event focused on school children (probably secondary) with a marketplace / careers area within the Winter Gardens and other spaces around Weston. We have secured commitment from the Local STEM Ambassador Hub to help create the Careers focused element of the programme.

Consideration: Would need to be timed entry for each of the schools to ensure that there is a steady flow of pupils throughout the day. Would need a good mix of employers with future tech to demonstrate and to make this attractive for schools to engage. May need to incentivise schools to bring a group to the event.

Saturday: A more general public focused event with maybe a display of the primary school competition entries which would then attract parents with their children into Weston super Mare to see the outcome of the competition. Event could run into Sunday (if necessary) but will also have impact on costs and commitment from employers to cover with staffing time. (Approx. 4k)

C: General public awareness

Suggest that there is a publicity campaign based around social media to raise awareness of the event, and that there is some information made available to schools for pupils to take home to parents/carers for information. A wider '@Future Weston' type communications to the local population to encourage engagement into the town for the Saturday event.

We are in discussions with the Sovereign Centre as to the possibility of hosting a pod in the Centre for the fortnight/ month ahead of the event to draw public attention to the event.

Budget

A draft budget has been drawn up and it is estimated that the sum of £50,000 is needed to support the event from start to finish. This includes costs of £30,000 that will need to be committed and spent by March 21 in order to secure the health and safety sign off and legal papers needed, to meet a July demonstration deadline. A decision on the level of funding from the Town Council promptly would be appreciated.

We are hoping to raise some funds by selling sponsorship of the pod to local business(es) depending on the routes approved and the number of Pods available for use. We have secured commitment from a Weston based design company to apply the vinyls to the pods at the appropriate time.

Resources needed

There is a need significant cost in preparing an event of this scale, and there are a number of significant elements of compliance that need to be obtained and cleared in order to be able to make an event of this type safe and secure, including compliance with regulations, safety and risk assessment, future planning, etc, these services can be provided by AECOM, having worked on the trials previously they are well placed to support the partnership in meeting the requirements for compliance and Health and Safety. This is a significant piece of work and is expensive due to the nature of the operation of the pod.

Initial plans have been drafted and we are investigating what support could be drawn from the student body within Weston College. This could include creating digital collateral (and website?) to support the event. Proposals are being discussed within the College to support these at low / no cost to the project.

We will need support in securing access to venues within Weston Town Centre to allow this event to take place safely, and there will need to be licencing and permits for the access to the Italian Gardens if we are to allow the pod to navigate around the location, to demonstrate the opportunity of the autonomous vehicles. There is significant investment needed in securing relevant permissions and insurances for the events, and the safe running of the Pod around the town.

We are in the process of gaining support from the Sovereign Centre, as a location to hold the pod, overnight and as a 'coming soon' exhibit in one of the units the fortnight / month beforehand to show people what is coming and to draw them to the event.

The event organisers will make links with Visit Somerset / Visit Weston to ensure this is on their calendars and that promotion starts straight after Town Council approval if this is to proceed and be successful.

Conclusion

We believe that this proposal demonstrates to the Town Council a forward thinking solution to the town, which would **promote and better present** Weston as a forward-thinking town, showing commitment to being **Cleaner and Greener**, creating **A Bright Future**, for all Weston town residents, and provide a **Healthier and Happier** Weston,

Please feel free to contact me, if there are any queries or questions.

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