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**Minutes of meeting**

**MEETING:** Services Committee

**DATE & TIME**: Wednesday 10 March 2021 at 7.00pm

**PLACE:** Zoom

**Councillors**

**Present:**

Cllr David Northam (C) Cllr Kevin Brookes (VC) Cllr Alex Fuhrmann

Cllr David Harris Cllr Gill Taylor Cllr Mark Tewkesbury

Cllr Graham Lambert Cllr Ryan Hope Cllr Tia Roos

Cllr Ken Whatley Cllr Christine James

**Officers**

Matt Ryan (Deputy Town Clerk)

Tara Williams (Parks and Open Spaces Manager)

Tony Hurley (Operations Manager)

Charmaine Denny (Facilities & Contracts Officer)

Niki Ayles (Democratic & Administration Officer)

Kevin Good (Beach Manager)

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| S0125 | **Welcome by the Chair**  Cllr Northam welcomed attendees to the meeting. |
| S0126 | **Apologies for Absence**  Apologies were approved from Cllr Bergman. |
| S0127 | **Declarations of Interest**  There were no declarations of interest. |
| S0128 | **Minutes of the last meeting**  **Resolved:**  Councillors agreed unanimously that the minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 27 January 2021 were a correct record. The minutes will be signed at the first opportunity the Committee has to meet face to face. |
| S0129 | **Councillors Questions**  There were no Councillor questions. |
| S0130 | **Public Comments and Questions**  There were no public questions and no members of the public were present. |
| S0131  S0132 | **Service Plans and Performance Management**  Matt Ryan introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation, before the Service Plan for each service area was presented by the respective Officers.  **Cleansing Service:**  Charmaine Denny presented the Service Plan for the Cleansing Service.  Cllr Whatley asked if there was any update regarding the locks on the new toilets at the Beach Office building.  Tony Hurley reminded Members that the resolution from Committee was that work regarding the locks would be undertaken from in-house resources. The new Maintenance Officer will be starting in post next week and Officers will then look at the feasibility of new locks. Tony Hurley will consult with Cllr Whatley as things move forward.  It was highlighted that a strength of the cleansing service is that the quality of the toilets is better than in previous years.  Cllr Taylor stressed that she would like to see income generation featuring in all service plans.  **Parks and Open Spaces:**  Tara Williams presented the Service Plan for the Parks and Open Spaces service.  Cllr James reported that the map of the town near Kings Statue only features two attractions, and suggested that parks and gardens be added as an attraction. Tara Williams will explore this on behalf of Cllr James.  Cllr Taylor was concerned about the number of staff under the Parks Operations and Development Supervisor and asked whether there is a structure under this post.  Tara Williams responded that there is a Working Chargehand, Team Leaders and a Senior Arborist under that particular role. In addition, many staff have been in position for a number of years and know their roles well.  Cllr Taylor requested that this be considered in the future as she feels it is a large number of staff to be reporting to one Officer.  With regards to the risk register, it was requested that some thought is given to Health and Safety in WTC’s parks and gardens.  It was noted that the performance targets do not mention the Friends groups, and it was suggested that something be included about their involvement with the parks and gardens.  Point 3.3 of the Service Plan refers to re-wilding, and Tara Williams clarified that some areas of grass are being left longer in swathes and at the edges of larger open spaces in order to allow flowers to grow to feed the bees. Signs will be displayed to inform members of the public that this is happening and why, and this will also be promoted on social media.  It was felt that it would be of benefit to try and capture visitor numbers to the parks and gardens. Tara Williams will explore this.  **Beach Management:**  Kevin Good presented the Service Plan for the Beach Management Service.  With regards to the loud speaker system, Kevin Good reported that the PA system needs to be installed in the new beach office but the system is being rolled out. The prom surface is flagged up daily as cosmetically unsound and Officers are working with DC partners to try and influence them in a longer term plan for the structure of the prom.  Cllr Harris requested that the concept of having a “library” of recyclable buckets and spades available for visitors to the beach be included under new projects.  Kevin Good explained that numerous projects were initiated last year but were impacted by the building work at the beach office as well as Covid-19. However, it is hoped that these projects can take place this year. Kevin Good will circulate a document to Committee members which details as many projects as possible.  Cllr Taylor referred to the SWAT analysis which mentions the lack of opportunities for staff development, particularly around seasonal staff, and wondered whether there have been any thoughts regarding how young people could be incentivised to remain in the town and work. Additionally, Cllr Taylor asked whether a risk register could be included in the service plan as there are a number of risks associated with the beach.  Kevin Good will add a risk register to the service plan.  With regards to staff retention, Kevin Good reported that the beach team have some very good staff members who stay for a few years but who then feel that in order to develop their skill set, they have to move on.  Cllr Tewkesbury asked why jet skis would no longer be able to launch from Bowleaze.  Kevin Good responded that he has been working with the landowner and Waterside Holiday Park. Bowleaze has changed dramatically and has become more popular with a lot of sea users, and the number of near misses has increased. It was difficult for the landowner to manage the private slipway and, after a comprehensive assessment, it was a risk they were no longer willing to take. The landowner has therefore made the decision to close the slipway.  Cllr James highlighted that with many people using the sea, a facility is needed for them to store their belongings when they are in the water, and asked whether a facility could be provided somewhere on the beach that charged a small fee.  Kevin Good responded that there was previously a locker but this was not financially viable at that stage. However, the assets review being undertaken is looking at whether or not there is some premises that could be utilised for that facility.  When asked whether there was a weather/temperature monitoring station at the new beach office, Kevin Good replied that this can be explored.  **Events Service:**  Tony Hurley introduced the Service Plan for the Events Service.  Cllr Taylor noted that the highest score on the risk register relates to possible reduced income due to staff capacity, and asked whether something needs to be done to address this.  Tony Hurley reported that the Events Service has a staff of 1.8 FTE and a busy events programme which is a mix of events put on by WTC as well as events that are facilitated and coordinated with other organisers. Staff capacity will always be an issue but there is a need to make better use of other service areas and how they can contribute to income generation.  It was suggested by Cllr Taylor that for service plans where risks have been identified, a column is added for risk mitigation measures.  There was concern that the service objectives do not mention community events and roadshows as a priority, despite it being a request from the Tourism, Events, Arts and Festivals (TEAF) working group.  Cllr Hope felt that the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are more project targets rather than measuring satisfaction, and suggested that it would be useful to send surveys to event organisers, to ask how they found working with WTC, and to the general public to ask what events they enjoyed in Weymouth and what they would like to see more of. Cllr Hope felt that two annual surveys should be sent out via SurveyMonkey and Facebook in order to shape the events service going forward.  Tony Hurley responded that it is a priority to bring forward community events and Officers are working with the Community Development Champion to develop this aspect.  Cllr Hope requested that the development of community roadshows be included in paragraph 1.4.  The next meeting of the TEAF working group will review the 2021 events programme, and TEAF group members will be asked to work with Officers to identify what those community events will be.  The service plan for the Events Service will be brought back to the Services Committee after the next TEAF group meeting, and should reflect the changes discussed this evening.  Cllr Lambert felt that the climate emergency is not considered as much as he would like and requested that this is brought to the fore in Officers thinking and day to day operations when writing reports.  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Northam Seconder: Cllr Fuhrmann  Members noted unanimously in favour to:  a) Agree any comments on the Service plans.  b) Recommend the Service plans for adoption; with the Events Service Plan to be reviewed by TEAF and brought back to the Services Commitee .  **Report on first year operation of cleansing service**  Charmaine Denny introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation.  Members congratulated everyone involved in the delivery of the cleansing service which has been a real success story for WTC. The Council is rewarding the staff who work for it and this is resulting in a better service.  When asked whether Officers are in a position to make any comparison with how much the cleansing service cost WTC last year, Charmaine Denny reported that it appears that the comparison will be a positive one this year. There are some aspects of the service where savings have been made. WTC had previously been told that they would spend £50k on consumables but has spent much less than that. It is felt that next year will be a better comparison.  **Resolved:**  Members noted the information report. |
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| S0133 | **Volunteer Group Insurance**  Matt Ryan introduced the item as detailed in the agenda documentation, and said that another option might be to make some form of grant available to each Friends group in order for them to approach a broker regarding insurance.  Cllr Taylor and Matt Ryan will work together to explore what might be possible in terms of obtaining a better deal with regards to multiple group insurance.  Cllr Northam proposed that a third recommendation be added to agree that Officers investigate whether a single policy of insurance for all groups can be obtained and to report this to the Finance and Governance Committee.  Cllr Lambert was concerned about any implications for Tumbledown Farm which runs volunteer days but is not a formalised Friends group.  Matt Ryan explained that the volunteer days at Tumbledown are held with employees or town councillors and therefore should fall under WTC’s insurance policy as there is a form of supervision with risk assessments undertaken. However, he will have a conversation with Clive Tuck, Weymouth Area Development Trust (WADT).  **Resolved:**  Proposer: Cllr Northam Seconder: Cllr Tewkesbury  Members voted by a majority of 10 in favour, with 1 abstention, to:  a) Consider providing financial assistance to the Friends groups for a period of 12 months and;  b) Recommend to the Finance & Governance Committee that funds be agreed for this purpose.  c) Officers to investigate whether a single policy of insurance for all groups can be obtained and to report this to the Finance and Governance Committee. |
| S0134 | **Information Items** |
|  | **Lighting up of Jubilee Clock**  Cllr Whatley highlighted the recent problems with the Jubilee Clock and reported that he had been informed by the engineer that the lighting up of the clock may be causing some problems.  Tony Hurley had not been informed of this but will make some enquiries.  Cllr Fuhrmann noted that number of applications for the Light up the Jubilee Clock project and asked that, when a press release is published, WTC states why the success charities were chosen and provide further information about the charities that were accepted.  **Resolved:** |
|  | Members noted the information items.  The meeting closed at 8.33 pm. |