

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held at Northwood House, Cowes on Wednesday, 3rd March, 2010 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Wells (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Banks, Birch, Deacon, McGregor, Matthews, Mazillius, Peacey-Wilcox, Sanderson, Slade, Thwaites, Walters and Wilcox.

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting the Town Mayor submitted a letter from the Chairman of the I.W. Ethical Standards Committee; it stated that Capt. Anthony Brindle, an Independent Member of the committee had reported that he had observed the February Town Council meeting and that he wished it recorded that he had found it to be well-run and that it reflected well on the Town Council and the way that it conducted its business in public.

6306 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Giffard, Hammond and Jones.

6307 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked the following question:

Q. Could Arctic Park be designated a 'dog free' area.

A. Councillor Peacey-Wilcox stated that she had met with the Parks Officer and the Dog Warden at Arctic Park; they considered that there were two feasible options for the area. A request could be made by the Town Council for Arctic Park to be designated a 'dog free' zone or it could transformed into a play park with play equipment and as a play area it would prohibit dogs.

It was agreed that the Town Mayor would seek the views of the general public regarding the two options through the Town Council article in The Beacon; the matter would then be considered at the next meeting of the Town Improvements Committee.

6308 REPORTS BY ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Fuller circulated a written report referring to the following:

- a). That Cowes High School had been categorised a Good School by Ofsted following their recent inspection.
- b). That the fence that had been erected forward of the building line on the Crossfield Estate had been investigated by the Planning Enforcement Officer; he understood that the owner would be told to remove the fence.
- c). That Council Tax would be increased by 2.5% in the new financial year; he had supported an alternative budget that had been proposed by opposition parties.
- d) That the contracts for local bus services 30 and 32 were soon due to be renewed; he was seeking residents views regarding these services.
- e). That from Thursday 1st April Concessionary Fares before 9.30am during weekdays for the over 60's would stop; in addition, Student Riders journeys would increase from £1 per journey to £1.20.
- f). That he had arranged a meeting at 2pm on Thursday 18th March at Solent Middle School with children, Governors and Highway Officers to progress the school's Travel Plan Review.
- g). That guidance would appear in the April edition of the local Beacon in respect of when residents should make their refuse bags available for collection; persistent offenders putting refuse out well in advance of their collection day would be issued with a fixed penalty.

h). That cycle security marking and dog chipping would be offered at the I.W. Community Club on Saturday 27th March between 10.30am and noon.

Councillor Mazillius had submitted a written report which referred to:

a). That the I.W. Council's Outline Business Case in respect of the Highways PFI had been evaluated by the Treasury as being of a high standard, even to the extent of being recommended as an exemplar to other PFI bidders. It had now been confirmed that the bid had been successful and the approved grant of £364.6 million was some £40 million more than the sum originally agreed when the Council's Expression of Interest was accepted in 2008. The 25 year programme from 2013 to re-build public highways, pavements, street furniture, street lighting and bridges would bring long term new employment opportunities for Islanders.

Councillor Banks wished to congratulate the I.W. Council for their financial investment regarding the Highways PFI; despite continued criticism from certain quarters their persistence had been shown to be justified by this award.

b). That repairs had now been carried out at the St. Mary's roundabout; he understood that the I.W. Council had been repairing potholes at a rate of 1,000 per week.

c). That the I.W. Council had agreed to increase Council Tax in 2010/11 by 2.5%.

d). That together with the Town Clerk he had re-instated a vandalised flower trough near the Somerton 'park & ride'.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox reported as follows:

a). That Planning Officers were recommending refusal of the application for development on land at the rear of 46 Mill Hill Road.

b). That a mimosa tree was to be planted in Arctic Park.

c). That the I.W. Council had dealt with a anonymous letter that she had received.

Councillor Brown submitted a written report which referred to:

a). That at the end of January the percentage of the Island's resident working age population in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) was 4.9%; this was 0.4% higher than the figure for the end of December with 3.2% for the south east and 4.3% for Great Britain.

The I.W. Council was currently hosting 11 placements under the Future Jobs Fund initiative, providing opportunities for young people to experience work and develop skills to help future employment. Following its initial success the Council had been granted an additional 10 placements with the possibility of securing funding for a further 30 placements later in the year.

b). Councillor Brown circulated the I.W. Council press release in respect of the Highways PFI Credits. The award would have a massive effect on the Island's economy for the next 25 years; it would create employment and increase skills training and business opportunities.

c). That Crown Estates had announced its Round 3 offshore wind development partners; two of the development sites were within support reach of the Island – west of the IW Zone and Hastings Zone. The I.W. Council had initiated positive dialogue with the successful bidders for these areas and meetings had been arranged with both.

Councillor Brown had also attended the Crown Estates' supplier event where presenters from Island companies had a combined SEEDA/IWC stand to promote the Island as a strategic base for the development and servicing of the wind farms; it was a very successful launch pad event with significant potential opportunities for Cowes.

d). That the 2010 tourism marketing campaign had been launched in January with the continuing theme of 'just add water' that had proved so successful in the 2009 campaign. The 2010 campaign began with advertising at 20 illuminated poster sites on strategic routes in central London and also at 50 key poster sites across the East and West Midlands. In addition to press advertising, the Isle of Wight was part of a number of direct mailing campaigns that would have reached over 1 million potential customers by the end of January.

e). That the Island had been identified by the organisers of the London Olympics as a possible venue for a pre Olympic Games training camp.

f). That performance in determining planning applications in a timely manner and the Council's performance in respect of appeals had continued to meet targets.

6309 REPORT FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

Acting Sergeant Justin Pringle reported as follows:

- a). That the last month had been relatively quiet; although he did not have the official statistics, there had been a significant reduction in recorded crime.
 - b). That the main police focus on the I.W. was to centre on anti-social behaviour. A new local initiative would provide anyone reporting anti-social behaviour the opportunity to see a Safer Neighbourhood Officer as soon as the incident had been dealt with.
 - c). That the police now had new legislation to deal with persistent drink related anti-social offenders; he hoped that the police would be able to issue a fixed penalty fine for three offences. In respect of shopkeepers selling alcohol to minors they would lose their licences for two offences within a 6 month period rather than the existing three offences.
 - d). That the police had powers under section 27 of the Public Order Act that enabled them to remove any person over the age of 16 from a locality for up to 48 hours if due to the likelihood of alcohol they could cause a public nuisance offence; the new legislation had reduced that age limit to anyone over the age of 10 and anyone breaching the order could be arrested.
- The police now had good powers to reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour on local communities.

6310 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Jacqui Darby referred to the following:

- a). That she had worked on a Partners Against Crime event – feedback had been very positive and had highlighted that the Island was a very safe place to live and work.
- b). That she had issued 4 verbal warnings and 2 written warnings in respect of domestic refuse being put out too early and one verbal warning for business refuse being deposited with domestic refuse.
- c). That she had dealt with three ‘out of tax’ vehicles on the highway.
- d). That she had issued a verbal warning in respect of a dog off a lead next to the highway.
- e). That she had requested Parking Enforcement Officers deal with an illegally parking van – an enforcement penalty notice had subsequently been issued.
- f). That she had had bags of rubbish removed from Mornington Road car park.
- g). That there had been serious dog fouling issues along The Esplanade and in York Street; she was undertaking early morning patrols in an attempt to catch the dog owners.
- h). That a Boneshaker event would be held at the I.W. Community Club in Cowes on Saturday 27th March between 10am and noon; cycles could be security marked at this event free of charge and dogs could receive security chipping for £10.
- i). That as part of I.W. Council cutbacks, they would cease supply of dog bags in the new financial year. She accepted that responsible owners would continue to clean up after their dogs and that the supply of the bags had not had the intended effect of reducing dog fouling; however she questioned whether the Town Council would wish to finance dog bags in the future.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council does not assume the responsibility for the supply of dog bags and requests that the I.W. Council removes the dog bag dispensers from the town.

6311 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 3rd February, 2010 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6312 MATTERS ARISING

a). CCTV (Min. No. 6302h refers)

The Town Mayor introduced Simon Dennis, Operations Manager for Community and Safety Services, who had attended to update the Town Council regarding the installation of CCTV in the town.

Mr Dennis stated that the necessary infrastructure for the CCTV scheme was now in place and all of the cameras and associated equipment had been delivered to his premises. He had had to seek official wayleave agreements from the owners of ten buildings where the cameras were to be installed; although eight had been obtained it may take a further 2-3 weeks to receive agreement from the remaining two. Once all agreements were in place it would only take a further week to install the cameras.

Councillor Banks referred to the large repeater mast that had been erected at the bottom of Terminus Road which had been the subject of a number of complaints. Mr. Dennis stated that the Town Council had received all of the information and specifications; it had been difficult to visualise from that information the size of this particular mast until it was actually in place. However, he had agreed with Councillor Wilcox, the Chairman of the Town Council's CCTV Working Group that once the installation had been completed they would consider any issues that the Town Council or members of the public may have with the system.

It was agreed that any further questions or complaints would be funnelled through Councillor Wilcox; Mr Dennis would be prepared to make home visits to any local residents who had concerns regarding the scheme.

The Town Clerk then referred to the Town Council's payment for the CCTV work; although the completion date was likely to be towards the end of April, the I.W. Council had received all of the equipment and had requested reimbursement in the current financial year.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk be authorised to release the sum of £73,794.18 being the total cost of the Priority 1 and 2 cameras for Cowes and of the wireless link from Cowes to Osborne School.

b). Cycle routes, Cowes (Min. No. 6260 refers)

The Town Mayor introduced Mrs. Sue Cracknell the I.W. Council's Cycling Officer who had attended to outline her proposals for cycling routes for Cowes.

Mrs. Cracknell stated that the problems raised in Cowes in respect of cycling were not unique to Cowes; similar issues of conflict between user groups had occurred in other areas around the Island and had been successfully overcome. The I.W. Council were about to launch a new initiative by issuing a leaflet 'Bikes, boots and hooves' which would give basic advice on how to use and share the Islands paths and countryside.

In respect of Cowes, the I.W. Council had produced a dedicated map detailing the 'Round the Island' cycle route, the 'National cycle network' both of which bypassed the main town centre and a colour coded route for cyclists wishing to access the town centre; the maps would be made widely available and could be incorporated on the Town Council website.

The other issue that had been raised was that of cycling on The Green; there was no specific Order to prohibit cycling despite 'No cycling' signs having been erected. These signs would have to be removed even though the I.W. Council did acknowledge that there was an issue of conflict between user groups; they would be replaced by signs indicating a shared path and stating that all groups should consider other path users.

Members generally agreed that promoting shared facilities was the way forward; Mrs. Cracknell was thanked for her hard work and diligence in reaching what would hopefully prove a satisfactory outcome for all.

c). Lion monuments, The Esplanade (Min. No. 6267b refers)

The Town Clerk reported that Lion Aid would be hosting a Fundraising Gala Evening at the Priory Bay Hotel on 22nd March; they would be auctioning a variety of items including one of two

limited edition cricket bats that had been given by the current South African Cricket team and signed by all the players.

On 23rd March Lion Aid would temporarily shroud the famous lion monuments on The Esplanade from 10am as a symbolic gesture to represent the loss of wild lions in Africa.

d). Town Plan (Min. no. 6302f refers)

The Town Clerk reminded members that a meeting had been arranged with the I.W. Society for Thursday, 4th March at 7.30pm at the Beckford Centre; the aim of the group was to assist the Town Council in obtaining the views of the community to enable the council to develop Community Led Plans for the future of the town.

The term Community Led Plans referred to a number of different initiatives all of which were run by the local community. **Parish Plans** were developed by the local community to describe the area; the things that were important and the things they would like to see changed or improved. **Market Town Health Checks** look at the social, economic and environmental aspects of a town and its surrounding countryside and **Village Design Statements (VDS)** describe the qualities, characteristics and local distinctiveness that people value in their neighbourhood and its surroundings.

It was essential that all local communities develop their own detailed local plans which, once adopted could form part of the Local Development Framework.

The I.W. Society had drafted a questionnaire regarding preferred policies for Cowes; a copy of the questionnaire was circulated to each member; they would produce a report as soon as all responses had been collated.

e). Local street names (Min. No.6286 refers)

The Town Clerk referred to a previous discussion regarding the importance of retaining street names particularly if they have a historic and local significance; the I.W. Council had given an assurance that they would take the Town Council's request to be consulted on any future name changes into account.

6313 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a). Northwood House

Councillor Thwaites reported that she had assumed the role of Chairman of the Northwood House Trustees; the Trust had recently appointed an Honorary Treasurer and an advertisement had been placed seeking two further trustees and an Assistant Secretary to bring the Trust to full strength. Further investigations had been made into the bar ceiling by English Heritage; they were now less concerned than their initial reaction indicated. The Trustees had had unsightly skips adjacent to the approach road to the Registrars removed and they had expressed no objection to the refurbishment of the interpretation panels in the park. Discussions were ongoing with the I.W. Council and the local Bowls Club regarding the transfer of leisure facilities; nothing had been finally decided.

b). Finance Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 23rd February 2010 were received.

1) Town Clerks Gratuity Account.

The Town Clerk's Contract of Employment stated that he was entitled to a sum equating to 5% of final salary multiplied by the number of years service on termination of employment; there was a shortfall on the Gratuity account.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk be authorised to immediately transfer £2,275 to the Gratuity Account by utilising the 2009/10 General Contingencies budget.

2) Applications for Financial Assistance.

- i). Rotary Club of Cowes - towards 2010 St. George's Day celebrations
- ii). Cowes Carnival Committee – towards the 2010 carnivals and the associated programme of events

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk obtains further clarification regarding the accounts of both the Rotary Club of Cowes and the Cowes Carnival Committee prior to these applications being further considered at a future meeting.

(Councillors Peacey-Wilcox and Wilcox declared personal and prejudicial interests in both of the applications for financial assistance on the grounds of membership of the Rotary Club and sponsorship of the Cowes Carnival and they left the room while these items were being considered)

3). Application for Grant.

Age Concern had requested a grant towards the operating costs of the Cowes New Good Companions Club which existed to provide a social facility for the older residents of the town.

RESOLVED

- 1). That a grant of £250 be made to Age Concern in respect of the Cowes New Good Companions Club; and
- 2). That the balance of £850 in the estimates be kept in reserve pending further applications which may be received.

4). Preparation of Accounts.

The Town Clerk requested authority to invite Bright Brown, Chartered Accountants, to undertake the preparation of the final accounts for the financial year 2009/10.

RESOLVED

That Bright Brown, Chartered Accountants, be appointed to undertake the preparation of the accounts for the financial year 2009/10.

(Councillor Mazillius declared a personal interest in the above item on the grounds that his accountants were Bright Brown)

c). Town Improvements Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Improvements Committee held on 23rd February 2010 were received.

1). Enhancement, The Cut.

The planning consent in respect of the enhancement works at The Cut had expired.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council re-submit a planning application at the earliest opportunity in respect of the enhancement works at The Cut.

2). Town Clock.

The town clock was currently operated by batteries powering a small motor for each clock face; this had not proven very successful and one of the two clock faces had not worked properly for some time.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council appoint a local clock specialist to determine how best to modify the clock to ensure its reliability and then provide an estimate of the cost of the necessary modifications.

3). Decorative Lighting Motifs.

The majority of small decorative lighting motifs situated on lamp columns along Birmingham Road and at various other locations through the town were in some way faulty.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council removes the decorative lighting motifs from the 23 locations through the town and then has a sufficient number re-rope in blue/white LED rope light to be re-installed along Birmingham Road at an approximate cost of £1,500; and
- 2). That the Town Council undertakes no work at this stage to the remainder of the motifs but retains them pending the determination of a suitable location for their re-installation.

4). Interpretation Panels, Northwood Park.

(Councillor Banks in the Chair for this item only)

Some of the seven panels had deteriorated so badly that they would have to be replaced.

The Town Clerk retained copies of the original drawings; these could be laminated and installed at relatively little cost but they would deteriorate over time. The following quotations had been received for alternative options:

A.J. Wells & Sons	420mm x 297mm vitreous enamel signs, the steel panels to be sprayed white and screen printed in two graphic/text colours to face, each panel with individual image	£188.00 each
	To install sign to existing prepared flat surface	£ 66.00 each
The Sign Company	A3 map prints reverse printed on acrylic panels to fit existing cases	£ 29.50 each
	As above but with new cases	£180.00 each
	Studio fee to originate map artwork	£ 65.00 each
	To install signs to existing surfaces	£ 25.00

RESOLVED

That the Town Council accepts the quotation from the Sign Company to have the 7 signs reverse printed on acrylic panels at a cost of £29.50 each and then fitted for a further £25.

(Councillors McGregor and Wells declared personal and prejudicial interests in this item on the grounds that they were related to the owners of A.J. Wells & Sons)

(Councillor Deacon declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item on the grounds that he was employed by A.J. Wells & Sons)

5). Adventure Play Equipment, Northwood Recreation Ground.

Councillor McGregor reported that work to install the new adventure play equipment was scheduled to commence week beginning 29th March; there had been an £800 deficit on the adjusted tender price which Play Builder had agreed to fund. Unfortunately, the Aiming High grant for additional speaker tubes at a cost of £4,650 and to make the play park more accessible for children with disabilities had not been forthcoming. The I.W. Council was prepared to contribute a further £1,700 to help enable the speaker tubes to remain a part of the final scheme if the Town Council was prepared to finance the £2,950 difference; a decision had to be made before the work commenced.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council finances the balance of £2,950 from the Town Improvements budget for New Projects to enable the speaker tubes to be added to the equipment that will be installed in the new adventure play park at Northwood Recreation Ground.

(Councillor Mazillius left the meeting at 9.03pm.)

d). Cowes Flood Plan

The Town Mayor reported that Councillor Matthew had relinquished his lead role in developing a Flood Plan for Cowes; Councillor Walters had assumed that position.

Councillor Walters stated that he had attended an Environment Agency Flood Planning follow up workshop; the Environment Agency was putting much effort into the development of local Flood Plans and had given it high priority. He would report later when he had prepared a draft Plan.

e). Shoreside Committee, Cowes Week Ltd.

Councillor Walters stated that that the funding of the traditional end of Cowes Week firework display was discussed in some detail by the Shoreside Committee of Cowes Week Ltd. at their last meeting. The I.W. Council had always managed the display, while in recent years Cowes Week Ltd. had procured the necessary funding; there had been a funding shortfall in 2009. It was felt that it would be more appropriate for an organisation concerned with matters of the general community to take on the overall Cowes Week firework responsibility and they would be delighted if the Town Council took on that mantle.

It was agreed that issues surrounding the funding of the Cowes Week fireworks be included as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Town Council.

6314 WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox reported that the Cowes Community Partnership had been unable to access funding towards the War Memorial project; they would be happy if the Town Council assumed the lead role. The Town Council should request a formal letter to that effect prior to raising the matter at a future meeting of the Town Improvements Committee.

(Councillor Slade left the meeting at 9.17pm)

6315 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). Payment of the Town Clerks £10 subscription to the local branch of the SLCC.
- b). *To consider commenting in respect of the bus network currently provided in the Cowes area.
- c). Request from the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society for use of the Town Councils Public Liability insurance to cover their commemorative event on 2nd May.
- d). Notification that a commemorative plaque has been removed from the entrance to Northwood Recreation Ground and to consider a request to have it replaced.
- e). To consider whether or not the Town Council should arrange further concerts on the bandstand in 2010.
- f). *Details of miscellaneous correspondence.
- g). Details of a memorial service to be held in The Minster, Newport for former Councillor Effemey.
- h). Request from the Cowes Youth Forum to use the skatepark for SK8 events on 22nd May and 25th September 2010.

(Councillors McGregor, Peacey-Wilcox and Wells all declared personal interests in h) above as they were all members of the Cowes Youth Forum)

(* copies circulated to all members)

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Clerk's subscription of £10 to the I.W. Branch of the SLCC be paid by the Town Council;
- 2). That the Town Clerk responds to the consultation regarding the Cowes bus network requesting that services 30 and 32 detour through the Crossfield Estate rather than taking a direct route along Crossfield Avenue;
- 3). That the Town Council is unable to provide their Public Liability insurance for use by the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society;
- 4). That the Town Clerk attempts to determine the wording on the plaque that has now been removed from the entrance to Northwood Recreation Ground;
- 5). That the Town Clerk be authorised to arrange two concerts on the bandstand in addition to the concert to be given by the South London Concert Band on 29th May 2010; and
- 6). That the Town Council authorises the use of the skatepark for the SK8 events on 22nd May and 25th September 2010.

6316 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

It was agreed that the following item be included on a future agenda:

- a). The town notice board (Councillor Banks)

(The proceedings terminated at 9.35pm)

CHAIRMAN