

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held at Northwood House, Cowes on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2010 at 7.00 p.m.

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

The Town Mayor welcomed Councillor Ellis to his first meeting following his election to the Town Council as a representative for the Cowes Medina Ward.

### 6356 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

### 6357 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the public asked the following questions:

Q. The Cowes Steering Group wish to commence a publicity campaign and consultation with the Cowes community in order to create a Village Design Statement for the town. It is considered that the internet is one of the best mediums for this. The Cowes Town Council website appears to be the most appropriate for this project. However, while the Council site supplies useful information on history, councillors, meetings and improvements the site does not cater for two-way communication with the community.

We therefore request that the Town Council agree in principle to support the Steering Group with funding in order for the Steering Group to engage a professional to enhance the Council's website for the purposes of the project and potentially for the Council's future requirements.

We feel that there is a need to provide the public with more information about the town so that they have the knowledge on which to base their comments. We also feel that the internet will help us to reach members of the community who do not attend meetings or belong to organisations.

**A. The I.W. Council were engaged to develop the website; during its development the Town Council took a decision not to have the facility for a forum on the site. However, could the Steering Group devise a questionnaire that could be posted on the website to be downloaded or completed online. Councillor Matthews would investigate with the I.W. Council IT section whether it would be feasible to increase the capacity of the Town Council website; the matter would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.**

Q. What can be done to improve the appearance of the relatively new railings in front of Grantham Court; the paint is already peeling?

**A. The Town Clerk had already received other complaints about these railings which he had reported. He would write to the Esplanade and Beaches Officer requesting a copy of the specification that was issued for the installation of the railings and their painting.**

### 6358 REPORTS BY ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

**Councillors Brown, Fuller and Mazillius had apologised for their absence absence.**

**Councillor Mazillius had circulated a written report referring to the following:**

- a). Changes to the Cowes/Gurnard/Northwood bus routes
- b). The new Northwood Recreation Ground play area
- c). The I.W. Council review of their Street Inspection functions

- d). The government review of national electoral constituencies – he supports the campaign to retain the I.W. Constituency as a single entity
- e). That the I.W. Council was having to re-plan the services it delivered to Island residents in order to meet the drastic reduction in government funding

**Councillor Fuller circulated a written report referring to the following:**

- a). A Government announcement giving Councils new powers to prevent inappropriate development in back gardens; gardens would no longer be deemed ‘brownfield’ sites.
- b). That there would be no Sail Bus operating during Cowes Week this year. He had also been approached by youngsters angry that the Cabinet were considering stopping the Student Rider Concession and he had received confirmation that the Service 30 to Newport via Rew Street would cease to operate from September.
- c). An update following the unveiling of plans for the new Cowes Secondary School.
- d) That he had met with the Head of Highways regarding local projects – due to budgetary constraints, Blackberry Lane could not be brought up to an adoptable standard at this time.
- e). That he would not be pursuing funding for a bus shelter at Briary Court following residents concerns over perceived Crime & Disorder issues.
- f). Isle of Wight Health Profile 2010.
- g). That he had contacted the I.W. Council concerning the unkempt condition of the pavement outside Egypt House on Egypt Esplanade.
- h). That he had asked a question at Full Council regarding the I.W. Council decision to withdraw from Northwood House; he also questioned where were the minutes of the meeting at which the decision was made.
- i). That he had dealt with a variety of miscellaneous issues on behalf of residents during the last month.

**Councillor Peacey-Wilcox referred to the following:**

- a). That she had received complaints about the new contractors working in Maxted Close; she had sorted the problems with Medina Housing.
- b). That there had been a parking issue in Pelham Road; two cars had been ticketed for parking on badly maintained double yellow lines. The I.W. Council had agreed to rescind the tickets and have the lines re-painted.
- c). That there had been complaints about rubbish from holiday homes in the Pelham Road and York Street area; occupants were leaving the homes and putting rubbish for collection often days before the official collection day.
- d). That she had received complaints about the possible charging for foot passengers on the Floating Bridge; no decision had yet been taken.
- e). That there had been complaints that ‘kite buggies’ were being used in Northwood Recreation Ground; this was not appropriate for that area.

## **6359 REPORT FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM**

Councillor Wells reported that this would be the last Town Council meeting that Sgt. Julie Cocks would attend; her move to Shankin would represent a great loss to the local community and he wished to express the Town Council’s thanks to both Julie and her team.

**Sgt. Julie Cocks reported as follows:**

- a). That following her last report regarding concerns at the volume of alcohol being consumed by youngsters particularly in the Northwood Park, Northwood Recreation Ground and Northwood Cemetery areas the police had started a campaign to tackle this problem. They had undertaken a series of test purchases from off licences and all were successful. However, on the first night of operation the Cowes Arcade off licence had been caught selling alcohol to underage youngsters and they had been issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

The second part of the operation entailed utilising a new law that created an offence for persistently possessing alcohol in a public place; if the police seize alcohol three times in a twelve month period

from a young person under eighteen, on the third occasion that youngster would be arrested; 26 street drinking occurrences had been raised and there were 7 youths on two strikes and 3 had been arrested. She was convinced the operation was working as sporadic criminal damage and anti social behaviour had all stopped in roads around Northwood Park and Northwood Rec.

b). That the police were working hard on preparations for Cowes Week – the Friday firework would be her last working day in Cowes; Sgt. Mike Sizer would be her replacement.

#### **6360 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

**Gillian Mulcahy had submitted a quarterly progress report which referred to the following issues:**

a). That there had been 95 reported incidents in Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood during the period.

b). That since Jacqui Darby had left her post in April the I.W. Council had undertaken a review of street based inspection functions; the report had been circulated to all Town & Parish Councils.

c). That the CCTV in Cowes was being tested prior to being declared fully operational.

d) That there had been teething problems following the change to kerbside collections of domestic waste.

e). That there had been a significant reduction in the amount of cyclists on pavements.

f). That they had undertaken joint dog fouling/enforcement patrols with the Dog Wardens.

g). They had held regular meetings and walkabouts with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team.

h). Environmental Visual Audits (EVA's) had identified that graffiti, dog fouling, fly tipping and untaxed cars were the main problems in Cowes.

i). That the key priorities for the next quarter would be further EVA's, enforcement litter patrols on identified routes to school, enforcement dog fouling patrols, continued walkabouts with Medina Housing and the police and a Mini Neighbourhood event at Somerton School on 17<sup>th</sup> August.

#### **6361 MINUTES**

##### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2010 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **6362 MATTERS ARISING**

##### **a). Vacancies, Cowes Medina and Cowes North wards (Min. No. 6353e refers)**

The Town Clerk reported that only one nomination had been received to fill the vacancy in the Cowes Medina ward and therefore Councillor Ellis had been elected unopposed.

In respect of the Cowes North ward the Town Clerk had advertised the vacancy and one application had been received.

##### **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk would invite the one applicant of the vacancy in the Cowes North ward to attend prior to the September meeting for informal interview.

##### **b). Northwood Recreation Ground play park (Min. No. 6354i refers)**

Councillor McGregor had produced a short video clip of the events leading to the installation of the new play park; this was shown to members.

She stated that the intention was for the I.W. Council to assume responsibility for the management, maintenance and insurance of the site; they had refused to adopt the site until a few minor low risk problems had been rectified; these had been identified following the final Inspection. The contractors would be on site on 22<sup>nd</sup> July when it was hoped all defects would be rectified.

The Agreement had not yet been produced by the I.W. Council solicitors; however, the annual equipment maintenance cost would be £1,524 and this figure would increase in future years by R.P.I.

It was agreed that when received, the agreement would be circulated to all Councillors and all Councillors would be required to respond with their comments.

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Mayor be authorised to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Town Council subject to no objections to the Agreement being received from Councillors.

**c). Assistant Town Clerk (Min. No. 6324c refers)**

The Town Mayor reported that a number of applications had been received for the Assistant Town Clerk post.

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk arranges a meeting of the Assistant Town Clerk Working Group at the earliest opportunity to shortlist and then interview candidates for the post.

**d). Flagpole, Francki Place (Min. No. 6353a refers)**

The Town Clerk also reported that the three flags that had been ordered for the flagpole in Francki Place had now been received.

He also reported that providing the flag being flown from the flagpole was a national flag, County flag or flags of Saints the flagpole itself would not require planning consent. However, the Town Council flag would not fall within these categories and therefore advert consent would be required for the flagpole.

**e). CCTV (Min. no. 6353d refers)**

The Town Clerk submitted correspondence from the CCTV Manager which stated that all of the ten cameras were now live and recording and were being tested to ensure maximum quality images via the wireless system.

Members of the Town Council had been invited to visit the CCTV Control Room on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August.

**RESOLVED**

That Councillors Ellis, Jones, Matthews, Peacey-Wilcox, Thwaites and Wilcox visit the CCTV Control Rom on 13<sup>th</sup> August at 11 a.m. and that the Town Clerk makes another appointment for a visit by the remainder of the Council in September.

**f). L.W. Council review of Street Inspection Functions (Min. No. 6342 refers)**

The Town Clerk submitted a report outlining the outcomes from the Review of Street Inspection Functions, a copy of which had been circulated to all members. It stated that the following changes would take place:

- On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010 the Area Superintendents (Waste) team and the Environment and Neighbourhoods Officers team would cease to exist in their current form.
- A single inspection team of Environment Officers (eight posts) would be created within the Waste Management area. This team would be focussed on public realm maintenance and management, including the enforcement of environmental offences and leading on community based environmental improvement projects and initiatives. One of the eight posts would be designated as Senior Environmental Officer with overall responsibility for the team. Creation of a single Environment Officers team would address areas of duplication and create a post which had more rounded responsibility for public realm related issues.
- Two Contract Inspectors (Parks & Leisure) posts and one Parks & Beaches Inspector post would form a separate Parks & Beaches Inspection team within the Parks & Countryside Management area. The remaining Parks & Beaches Inspector post would be deleted through natural wastage on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010 to allow for the seasonal works to finish.
- A team of four Community Support Officers would be created within Community Safety Services. This team would cover the entire Island and focus on multi-agency crime reduction and prevention, tackling anti social behaviour including environmental offences, supporting the victims of crime, reducing re-offending and community engagement work. The teams would play an essential role in keeping the Island safe and in addressing the fear of crime. The work of this team would be locally based and would focus on the Island's four areas with

the highest number of incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour – Cowes and East Cowes, Newport, Ryde and Sandown, Shanklin, Ventnor.

The restructure would result in a reduction in the service to Town and Parish Councils in terms of attendance at meetings or undertaking non essential/non statutory work; it would ultimately save Council tax payers £250,000 per year.

**g). The War Memorial (Min. No. 6354i refers)**

The Town Clerk reported that £4,700 had been 'ring fenced' by the Town Council towards the War Memorial project and the Cowes Community Partnership had obtained a further grant of up to £952. Quotations for the plaques had been requested from eight companies; only four had submitted quotations as follows:

- |                      |                            |                     |                 |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| • Delabole Slate Co. | 1" Cornish Slate           | 2 plaques 48"x60"   | £5044 plus VAT  |
| • Delabole Slate Co. | 2" Cornish Slate           | "                   | £6,838 plus VAT |
| • George Isaac & Son | 1 1/4" Honed black granite | 2 plaques 48"x46"   | £2,802 plus VAT |
| • Celtic Mason Art   | 1" Cornish Slate           | 6 plaques 47"x23.5" | £1,440 plus VAT |
| • Wight Stonemasonry | 1 1/2" Honed black granite | 7 plaques 48"x14"   | £2,800 plus VAT |

The quotations had been based on 2,168 letters although the exact number could not be predetermined at the moment. George Isaac had offered additional letters at £1 plus VAT and Wight Stonemasonry £0.90 plus VAT.

It was recommended that the minimum thickness of each plaque was 1 1/2" and that the lettering was gold gilded for good definition in all weathers.

Also, based on a comprehensive method statement & specification of works for upgrading the memorial 3 quotations had been obtained by the Cowes Community Partnership in October 2008 as follows:

- G.J. Banks (IW) Ltd. £4,485.80 plus VAT
- John Nicholson Ltd. £6,289.78 plus VAT
- A Carpenter & Son £4,975.00 plus VAT

The Town Clerk had ascertained that although there should have been a uplift in price since the quotations were obtained the Directors of G.J. Banks (IW) Ltd. were willing to waive the increase.

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Council accepts the quotation from Wight Stonemasonry in the sum of £2,800 plus the cost of any additional lettering that may be required for the seven plaques in 1 1/2" honed granite and the quotation from GJ Banks (IW) Ltd. in the sum of £4,485.80 for the other works associated with the refurbishment and upgrading of the War Memorial.

## **6363 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS**

**a). Northwood House**

Councillor Thwaites reported that the Trustees had been shocked to receive the I.W. Council letter giving various dates for terminating different aspects which to date the Council had been managing; the shortest deadline had been house insurance. Despite the Registrars remaining the Council would not insure the building; suitable cover had been identified by the Trustees and insurance was now in place. The first claim could be due to a recent incident of lead being stolen from the roof.

Taking out insurance would enable the registrar to remain and for two potential fund raising events to take place; the events would also raise the profile of the house and provide other benefits. The public would have a chance to visit and see the house dressed for a reception and also enjoy a six week opportunity for a Michelin Star dining experience – teas, lunches and dinners. Both designed to raise money to direct to the Northwood House Charitable Trust account, not to the funds managed by the Isle of Wight Council. To prepare the house for this short season, set designers have assisted and much basic housework has been done. Chandeliers sparkled and windows were cleaned. Our Mayor spoke some encouraging words to the assembled 150 or so people present. Our event raised over £2500 and was a great success, organised at very short notice. Trustees very much appreciated

people's willingness to come and support the Trust. I am delighted that the Mayor's reception can now go ahead.

Trustees are very aware of the need to inform the public about what we are trying to achieve; rumour can be destructive and there were some malicious comments and personal attacks being made.

Car parking in the Rotunda area has been a concern. This area is unfortunately used by all day parkers, some overnight, which sometimes makes it impossible for visitors to the house and park to find a parking space, and we will be taking steps to stop long term parking here. Car parking is far and away the most effective way of raising substantial funds to go towards maintaining the house, and Trustees are in the process of short listing tenders for managing all parking areas owned by the Charitable Trust.

Recently a safe and secure area had to be created for skips, deliveries and for moving heavy equipment to prepare for the two events, and the rotunda car park was out of bounds for a short time, but once that was done most of the parking area has been returned to public use.

We must maximise income and minimise expenses which are a drain on trust funds; the cost of maintaining various Council installations in the Park must be addressed. It is the Trustees duty to raise funds for use on overdue house maintenance.

The Northwood House website is now on line, and we plan to get current information on there just as soon as possible, which will give people the chance to be up to date and well informed. We are shocked that the Council wants to remove the rather special large seascapes to storage, when they look so good in the house setting, and people wish them to continue to be on public view.

On Monday we received from IWC a copy of another Cabinet Document for consideration this for next Tuesday. This was unannounced and Trustees do not have sufficient time to prepare for the meeting so may request a postponement to allow the Cabinet to be fully briefed before making this important decision.

You will know that various expressions of interest have been received over the past few months from organisations which have seen Northwood House on the 'at risk' register. One such was the Robert Thompson organisation, but I stress that this summer's short term event does not indicate any favour in the long term. Visits have been requested by some individuals and organisations, which we have facilitated on an even handed basis. The feasibility study recommended by the IWC as well as English Heritage and other professionals will give some guidance and, once this is complete and potential options identified, it is possible that we will advertise formally for interested parties to come forward. The process must be fair and open, and if any proposals fall outside the terms of the Deed of Gift they will have to be presented to the Charity commission for consideration which may or may not give permission to proceed.

Meanwhile, the Trustees are getting on with business, working to generate the best income, trying to find ways of bringing life back to the House after the Council decided not to continue occupation or taking bookings. This resulted in loss of advance bookings and therefore income which we now have to address.

Trustees welcome the interest shown by the Friends of Northwood House and users of the park. We are dedicated to working for the benefit of the Trust, taking professional advice whenever needed. It is a hard task, but a worthwhile one. I am so grateful to colleagues and advisors who give their time as volunteers to work for this cause which is so dear to so many people. Trustees are putting in long hours and need to be sure of full support continuing from Cowes Town Council; this may be more suitable now that they have decided not to take on the role of custodian trustee.

**b). I.W. Society Village Design Statement Steering Group**

Notes of the Meeting of the I.W. Society Village Design Steering Group held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010 were received.

**c). Finance Committee**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010 were received.

**1) Application for financial assistance.**

Cowes Week Ltd. was seeking financial assistance towards the £21,400 needed for the 2010 firework display infrastructure.

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Council makes a donation of £1,000 towards the 2010 firework display with an agreement to underwrite up to a further £1,000 should there be any eventual shortfall of funding and on the production of a profit & loss account following the event.

(Councillors Matthew and Walters left the meeting at 9.25p.m.)

**2) Applications for grants.**

**a). Cowes Royal British Legion Band.**

Towards the upkeep of their uniforms and the costs associated with representing the town in Deauville.

**b). Cowes Town Regatta Committee.**

Towards Challenge trophies for 2 new classes of event and keeper prizes to local classes.

**c). Association of Sail Training Organisations.**

Assistance with the costs of the 2010 ASTO sailing event that is held for disadvantaged and disabled youngsters.

**d). Victim Support.**

Funding towards the recruitment, training and support of volunteers to work with local residents..

**RESOLVED**

1). That grants be made to the following organisations in accordance with the amounts shown:

a). Cowes Royal British Legion Band	£400
b). Cowes Town Regatta Committee	£200 towards trophies

(Councillor Banks declared a personal and prejudicial interest in a) above as he was Vice President of the band and Councillor Sanderson in b) above as he was a member of the Cowes Town Regatta Committee; they left the room for these items)

2). That the Town Council makes a donation of £360 towards prizes for the 2010 ASTO event; (Councillor Wells declared a personal and prejudicial interest in c) above as he was a member of the ASTO committee and he left the room for this item)

3). That no grant be made in respect of the application from Victim Support; and

4). That the balance of £3,480 in the estimates be kept in reserve pending further applications which may be received.

**3) Affiliation to the I.W. Playing Fields Association.**

The I.W. Playing Fields Association, which after a number of years of inactivity had been resurrected to an active association, were requesting all Town and Parish Council pay an annual affiliation fee of £25.

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Council pays an annual affiliation fee of £25 to the I.W. Playing Fields Association.

**4) Remembrance Day.**

The Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion had requested a donation to enable them to provide refreshments for those taking part in the Remembrance Day Service and Parade on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2010.

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Council contributes £200 to the Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion to assist with the cost of refreshments for those taking part in the 2010 Remembrance Day Parade.

## 6364 WISHING WELL, SHOOTERS HILL

Councillor McGregor stated that members of the public had complained to her about the poor state of the wishing well on Shooters Hill.

The Town Clerk reported that the wishing well was in the care of the Cowes Carnival Committee; it was a source of income for them. The Carnival Committee had not been in a position to clean it as it had been partially fenced off while works were taking place at the adjacent shop; they were in the process of having new doors fitted and it was their intention to have the seating re-varnished. It was agreed that it should be left to the Carnival Committee to undertake the necessary works.

## 6365 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). A request that the Town Council install a plaque to the mural covering the frontage of the Three Crowns site indicating who created the mural.
- b). \*To consider nominations to the Conservation & Design Team Local List.
- c). \*To consider responding to the MP regarding a government proposal to equalise constituencies and to reduce the number of MP's nationally and the effect that could have on the Island.
- d). \*To consider commenting on the I.W. Council Community Governance Review that deals with all aspects relating to boundaries and electoral arrangements for Town & Parish Councils.
- e). \*Details of accounts and petty cash payments for the period April to June 2010.
- f). \*Details of miscellaneous correspondence.
- g). A reminder that members should complete another Register of Financial and Other Interest should their circumstances have changed in the last year.
- h). A reminder that a presentation regarding a Renewable Energy Centre for Stag Lane would be held at the UKSA on 22<sup>nd</sup> July at 7p.m.

(\* copies circulated to all members)

### RESOLVED

- 1). That subject to permission from the owner, the Town Council attaches a plaque to the mural outside the Three Crown acknowledging the work of Cowes High A level students and stating that it was funded by the Town Council;
- 2). That the Town Council supports the local MP with his campaign to retain a single constituency status for the Isle of Wight; and
- 3). That the following accounts and petty cash payments for the period April to June 2010 be noted and confirmed:

IW Beacon	Newsletter (Min No 6157e)	110.00
R Hendey	Salary	831.37
HM Revenue & Customs		381.21
Rotary Club	Grant – St. Georges Day (Min. No. 6313b)	1,000.00
R. Williams	Skatepark cleaner (Min No 4999f)	200.00
I.W. Sports & Rec.	Affiliation fee (Min. No. 6326f)	5.00
Bay Tree Florist	Blyskawica wreath & Cowes in Bloom (Min. No. 6326c)	130.22
BTCV	Membership subscription (Min. No. 6326g)	35.00
IW Beacon	Newsletter (Min No 6157e)	110.00
R. Hendey	Salary	831.37
HM Revenue & Customs		381.21
R. Williams	Skatepark Cleaner (Min No 4999f)	200.00
Groundwork Solent	Stage 2 payment – New playpark (Min. No. 6216b)	1,000.00
Gurnard Parish Council	50% cost of dog bin emptying (Min. No. 6243a)	66.00
Petty Cash		300.00

South London Concert Band	Concert (Min. No. 6258d)	200.00
Caroway	1 <sup>st</sup> Stage payment – new playpark (Min. No. 6290b)	36,029.23
IW Beacon	Newsletter (Min No 6157e)	110.00
Cowes Youth Forum	Grant (Min. No. 6345b)	460.00
Bright Brown	Final accounts and audit work (Min. No. 6313b)	700.00
R. Hayman	Transport planters – Cowes in Bloom	75.00
R. Hendey	Salary	831.37
HM Revenue & Customs		381.21
Forest View Nursery	Hanging baskets – Cowes in Bloom	714.47
Ryde House Nursery	Bedding plants	75.74
R Hendey	Broadband charges April-June 2010 (Min No 5728)	38.13
R. Williams	Skatepark cleaner	200.00
Aon/Allianz Ins.	Annual insurance (Min. No. 6354h)	1,927.13
IW Council	Hire of Meeting Rooms Northwood House	169.20
Wight business Services	Printer cartridges	303.23
ROSPA	Annual inspection – skatepark (Min. No. 6304c)	78.00
IW Beacon	Newsletter (Min No 6157e)	110.00
DMR Eng.	Interpretation panels – Northwood Park (Min. No. 6344c)	698.00

**Petty Cash Payments April to June 2010**

R. Hendey	Telephone Line rental April to June 2010-07-06	34.49
R. Hendey	Telephone calls, April to June, 2010	17.70
R. Hendey	Postage “ “	17.96
R. Hendey	Travelling “ “	38.16

(The proceedings terminated at 9.49pm)

**CHAIRMAN**