

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor McGregor (Town Mayor) (Chairman)  
Councillors Banks, Birch, Brown, Fuller, Hammond, Jones, Matthews,  
Mazillius, Peacey-Wilcox, Robinson, Walters and Wells.

### 6548 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sanderson and Wilcox.

### 6549 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

An opportunity was given for members of the public to ask questions but none were asked.

### 6550 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

**Councillor Brown submitted a written report referring to the following:**

#### **a). Planning and Regulatory services –**

- **Island Plan** – Examination of the Core Strategy had taken place and if the Inspector considers it sound it would be adopted in early 2012 and would replace all Unitary Development Plan policies.
- **Planning Enforcement** – That the builder of a new end of terrace house in Sun Hill had been prosecuted by the I.W. Council; he pleaded guilty in Court to non-compliance with the enforcement notice. The building has now been demolished.

#### **b). Regulatory Services –**

- **Enforcement Cases** - On 27 October a 16 year old volunteer test purchaser under the supervision of Trading Standards Officers attempted to purchase cigarettes from two shops and fireworks from five shops; all the shops refused to sell.

#### **c). Economy –**

- The two bids submitted to the Regional Growth Fund on behalf of the Isle of Wight were unsuccessful. Officers would shortly enter into dialogue with partners in the Solent Offshore Energy Centre (SOEC) bid to identify alternative ways to advance the project. The failed RGF bid to improve tourist accommodation may be resubmitted to the Government's Coastal Communities Fund when the criteria for this fund are announced.

#### **d). Tourism –**

- Visitor statistics for the peak tourist season on the Island (Quarter 3; 19<sup>th</sup> July to 5 September) show an estimated 605,000 people visited the Island in the period. This is 5% lower than for the same period in 2010 but still higher than in 2007 and 2008. 96% of visitors to the Island originated from the UK.

What is important in these figures however, is that the number of domestic overnight visitors increased by a 2% to 363,000, this is a welcome increase following the 10% increase achieved in staying visitors in 2010. An overnight domestic stay is estimated to be worth £275 per visitor to the Island's economy.

The number of domestic day visitors to the Island (210,000) was unfortunately 13% fewer than in the same period last year. A domestic day visitor is estimated to be worth £39 per visitor to the Island's economy.

The detailed report on the Island's visitor statistics for the Quarter to 5th September 2011 was available on the Islandbreaks website at: [www.islandbreaks.co.uk/site/isle-of-wight-tourism-research-reports](http://www.islandbreaks.co.uk/site/isle-of-wight-tourism-research-reports)

**Cllr Fuller had submitted a written report referring to the following:**

- a). That he had been dealing with parking issues from residents on the Crossfield Estate.
- b). That there still appeared to be confusion over waste collection arrangements when they come into force at the end of January; there would be a rigorous consultation with householders between Christmas and commencement.
- c). That most of the work on the Cross Solent gas main was due to finish before Christmas.
- d). That following a meeting between residents, Highways and the Police a number of outcomes had been agreed that would hopefully resolve issues relating to the enforcement of the 6ft 6 width restriction along Baring Road.
- e). That a number of issues had been raised by owners of local business following consultation visits by Councillors Fuller and Robinson.
- f). That he had dealt with numerous other miscellaneous incidents during November.

**Councillor Mazillius had submitted a written report referring to the following;**

- a). That the Island NHS Trust had now set up a **Local** call centre number for non 999 emergencies but you need urgent medical help. This **NHS 111** service is available to callers living on or visiting the Isle of Wight. For more information visit [nhs.uk/111](http://nhs.uk/111).
- b). That the Friends of Cowes Library were holding a book sale at the Library in Beckford Road on Saturday 10th December from 10.30am to 4.30pm.
- c). That he had visited the new Pathfinder Centre for Learning buildings that were now reaching the fitting out stage of the £30m plus development; the centre was on course to open in September 2012.
- d). That in view of certain recent comments about local policing levels, he would like to reassure residents that there was police cover for the whole Island, including of course Northwood and Cowes which operates 24 hours a day seven days a week. The 24/7 emergency response was provided by officers from the Targeted Patrol Teams based at Newport and Shanklin Police Stations. Each part of the Island also continued to have its own Safer Neighbourhood Team. These Teams, which were never designed to provide a 24 hour response to 999 calls, concentrate on long-term policing priorities set in co-operation with the local communities. In our local case this co-operation takes place with the Cowes Area Local Action Group.
- e). That necessary repairs were being undertaken at the Cowes end of the Cowes-Newport cycleway and work had started at the Newport end to extend the cycleway through the industrial estate past the Quay and County Hall and across the bottom of the High Street into the heart of Newport.
- f). That the speed reactive sign at the Cowes end of Place Road would be moved into Nodes Road as soon as the 30mph speed limit was introduced in Nodes Road.
- g). That following complaints about the parking of several large vans either side of the entrance into Northwood Recreation Ground, Highways had confirmed that sufficient lengths of double yellow lines would be painted either side of the exit to leave a good visibility splay.
- h). That following a complaint about empty bottles and cans being left by football teams playing on Council pitches in Northwood Recreation Ground, he had asked Sports Officers to warn teams that their conditions of hire forbids the leaving of litter any litter.
- i). That one of the two new houses at the top of Upper Moor Green Road had now been completed and fitted well into the street scene; the more controversial second dwelling had yet to be built. A small grassed area damaged during the works had been re-instated.
- j). That the I.W. Council had sufficient salt stocks for treating roads during freezing conditions and an option for more should the need arise.
- k). That an illegal advertising sign at Four Cross had now been removed.

**Councillor Peacey-Wilcox had nothing to add to what had already been reported.**

Councillor Wells asked Councillor Peacey-Wilcox whether she had had any contact with the member of public who raised the question at the November meeting about the photograph in the I.W. County Press of Councillor Wells with the Mayoral Chain and depicted as the Town Mayor.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox stated that the member of public was one of her constituents – she had received a number of calls regarding the photograph but had explained to all the callers that it was

probably an old photograph and that they should contact the I.W. County Press for further clarification.

## **6551 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

### **Sgt. Sizer reported as follows:**

a). The SNT priorities at present:

- Drug dealing – several operations resulting in the closure of 3 cannabis cultivation sites, the recovery of a significant quantity of pills and a quantity of what was suspected to be heroin. Many searches had been conducted on people suspected of being in possession of controlled drugs and the police continued to work with local licensees regarding this issue.
- Theft from motor vehicles – successful two months with only two offences reported regarding this crime. A 16 year old youth had been interviewed and had admitted 3 offences of theft from unlocked motor vehicles in the town and a 19 year old had admitted to not only stealing from cars but also carrying out two household burglaries.

b). In the last ‘rolling year’ thefts from motor vehicles were down from 50 to 32 while the detection rate for this type of crime of about 50% was top for areas within the local constabulary.

c). CCTV had played an integral part for the police in reaching the truth regarding a very serious assault in the town; the offender was due to be sentenced on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

d). Crime statistics for Cowes over a ‘rolling year’ period were:

- Total reported crimes down by 23.2%
- Public order down by 23%
- Criminal damage down by 48%
- Vehicle crime down by 36%
- House burglary down by 8.3%

The detection rate for all crimes in Cowes was approximately 29%; this compared with a detection rate of 26% for the remainder of the constabulary.

e). Complaints had been received regarding trailers being left in roads; the police had limited legislative powers if it was deemed an un-necessary or dangerous obstruction.

f). With Christmas approaching, the police would be undertaking operations to educate and try to ensure residents adequately lock their homes.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox asked if the police could act in respect of cars parking on pavements and Councillor Fuller raised concerns regarding the parking of cars across private driveways particularly in Charles Road.

Sgt Sizer stated that the police only had limited powers but they could act if cars were causing a dangerous obstruction.

## **6552 REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT OFFICER**

The Town Clerk had been unable to contact the Environment Officer and therefore no report was available.

## **6553 MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011 were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**a). Public toilets, Northwood Recreation Ground (Min. No. 6450b refers)**

Councillor Walters referred to public toilets in Northwood Recreation Ground and questioned whether or not the Town Council should take on a long term lease from the I.W. Council for this amenity.

He stated that Councillors Banks and Sanderson had undertaken a condition survey at the toilets and while they were found to be in reasonable order, they would benefit from deep cleansing and other limited remedial works. However, I.W. Council Property Services Manager had indicated that the Town Council would have to adopt the toilets in their current condition should they elect to take the lease.

Councillor Mazillius stated prior to leaving the room, that it would not be satisfactory from either the I.W. Council or Town Council standpoint not to provide toilets all year round at a location where excellent new facilities had been introduced; he had suggested to appropriate members of the I.W. Council that they should make some capital contribution to assist the Town Council in taking over the toilets and he remained hopeful his request had not fallen on 'deaf ears'.

Members considered that the I.W. Council had a moral obligation to undertake repairs to the toilets in line with the condition survey; it was therefore

**RESOLVED**

1). That the Town Clerk forwards a copy of the condition report for the toilets to the I.W. Council and formally requests that they be brought to an acceptable standard in line with the report prior to the Town Council giving further consideration to adopting a full lease; and

2). That the Town Council engage their three members on the I.W. Council to lobby and negotiate on behalf of the Town Council for the small amount of funding required to bring the toilets to an acceptable standard that will enable the Town Council to adopt them on a long term lease.

(Councillors Fuller, Mazillius and Peacey-Wilcox declared personal and prejudicial interests on the grounds that they were I.W. Councillors and they left the room for this item).

**b). Christmas in the town (Min. No. 6546b refers)**

The Town Clerk reported that the 'Lights of Love' carol service around the Christmas tree in Francki Place in aid of the Earl Mountbatten Hospice had been arranged for Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm. The landlady at the Painters Arms had kindly agreed to provide mulled wine and the local Co-Op would be providing mince pies.

Additionally, the CBA had arranged for a brass band with a choir to sing carols in the town between 1pm and 4pm on both 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December; they hoped to have a chestnut seller involved and some of the shopkeepers had agreed to offer a 10% discount on their goods on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**c). Queens Diamond Jubilee (Min. No. 6542c refers)**

The Town Clerk reported that he had applied for the road closure for The Parade between 31<sup>st</sup> May and 7<sup>th</sup> June for celebrations for the Queens Diamond Jubilee; however, he had had no positive response to the request for expressions of interest from companies willing to organise the celebrations.

Following much discussion and various suggestions it was

**RESOLVED**

1). That the Town Council reconvenes the Queens Diamond Jubilee sub committee for them to prepare recommendations for submission to the January Town Council meeting;

2). That Councillors Hammond and Mazillius be added to the membership of the Queens Diamond Jubilee sub committee; and

3). That the Town Mayor advertises in her January column of The Beacon magazine that local organisations requiring funding towards celebrations for the Queens Diamond Jubilee should approach the Town Council through the normal funding routes.

## 6555 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

### a). Northwood House

The Town Council received and noted a report from the Chairman of the Northwood House Charitable Trust.

The full report is attached to these minutes and the most recent report to the Town Council can also be viewed at [www.northwoodhouse.org/news](http://www.northwoodhouse.org/news).

### b). Bowes Business Association Open Forum

Notes of a Meeting of the Cowes Business Association Open Forum held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2011 were received.

Councillor Fuller reported that together with Councillor Robinson he had visited local shopkeepers to ascertain their issues and views for promoting the town and their businesses; he would provide a detailed report to the January meeting.

### c). Finance Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2011 were received.

#### i). Payroll Services.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Town Council appoints A.H. Cross as their provider of payroll services with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012.

#### ii). Parking permits.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Town Council provides CS2 parking permits for the Town and Assistant Town Clerks.

#### iii). Budget and precept 2012/13.

#### **RESOLVED**

1). That the Town Council approves the following budget in the sum of £95,500 for the financial year 2012/13:

#### **INCOME**

Precept	86,700
From reserves	<u>8,800</u>
	<b><u>95,500</u></b>

#### **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

Salaries/NIC/Superannuation	24,000
Hire charges for office	6,000
Stationery and office equipment	1,500
Telephone/broadband	600
Postage	200
Travelling and Conference fees	800
Training (including Councillor training)	400
Hire of meeting rooms	500
Subscriptions	400
Insurance	2,500
Audit and Accountancy fees	1,500

#### **MISCELLANEOUS TOWN EXPENDITURE**

Town Mayors allowance	1,400
Cowes in Bloom – plants and watering	3,400
Northwood Recreation Ground – skatepark, playpark, toilets	9,000
Dog and litter bin emptying	2,500
CCTV – licence fee	3,000
Newsletter/Website	1,500

Grants to local organisations and charities	5,500
Support for special events	4,000
Elections	4,000
Miscellaneous pre approved annual expenditure and contingencies	4,500

**TOWN IMPROVEMENTS**

Seat/sign/information boards/finger post maintenance	2,500
Decorative lighting	800
New projects and services	15,000

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON TOWN AFFAIRS 95,500**

- 2). That the Town Council make a precept on the Isle of Wight Council in the sum of £86,700; and  
 3). That the Town Clerk be authorised to utilise the ‘Miscellaneous pre approved annual expenditure and contingencies’ budget up to a £500 maximum for any one item without prior recourse to the Town Council.

**d). Northwood Recreation Ground Sub Committee**

Notes of the Meeting of the Northwood Recreation Ground Sub Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011 were received.

**6556 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK**

- a). Councillor invitation to a Community Resilience 2011 event to be held at Red Cross House on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December between 6 and 8pm.  
 b). \*Details of miscellaneous correspondence.

\* Copies circulated to all members.

**6557 TOWN BENCHES**

The Town Clerk reported that the Probation Service had offered to utilise offenders sentenced to undertake community service, to paint and stain benches at various locations in the town over a two day period – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> January 2012. The charge was £65 per day; the Probation Service would provide brushes but the Town Council would additionally have to supply all other materials.

**RESOLVED**

- 1). That the Town Council accepts the offer from the Probation Service for the painting and staining of benches in the town at a cost of £65 per day and authorise the Town Clerk to provide any materials that may be necessary for them to undertake that work.

**6558 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Town Mayor stated that the next scheduled meeting was due to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> January; she suggested that the date be changed to 12<sup>th</sup> January for the following reasons:

- To ease the workload of the Town Clerk over the Christmas and New Year period
- That several members had indicated that they would be unable to attend a meeting on 5<sup>th</sup>
- That the closing date for tenders for the supply and installation of the new MUGA was 23<sup>rd</sup> December – postponing the Town Council meeting for 1 week would allow sufficient time for the Town Improvements Committee to meet to consider the tenders and submit a recommendation to the Town Council on 12<sup>th</sup>

**RESOLVED**

That the next meeting of the Town Council be held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

**6559 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

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

a). Make up of the Town Council's committees (Councillor Fuller)

(The proceedings terminated at 8.47pm)

**CHAIRMAN**

## Transcript of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011

**Cllr Wells:** I'd like to ask Cllr Peacey-Wilcox a question.

I notice there was a question from a member of the public at last month's meeting I was absent from regarding a photograph which appeared in the County Press, a photograph of me wearing the mayoral chain. As I think councillors remember or recall it was explained that it was old photograph that was used. I don't whether our colleagues are aware or not that the Mayor and I are subject to a complaint of the Standards Committee over that, at time that was not exactly best suited to us in that we were going through. I would just like to ask Cllr Peacey- Wilcox whether she has any knowledge or connection with the member of the public who asked the question?

**Cllr Peacey-Wilcox (PW):** I wasn't at that meeting Alan.

**Cllr Wells:** Well if I can help you there I understand that the person who asked that question was a Mr Steve Turner of Cowes.

**Cllr PW:** Um yeah I understand that he's one of my constituents, yep.

**Cllr Wells:** OK - and can I ask you whether you had any contact with him about that question and in asking him to pursue that?

**Cllr PW:** No I certainly didn't ask him to pursue it.

**Cllr Wells:** Did you have any contact with him? Can I ask through the chair?

**Cllr PW:** I'm sorry I don't understand why you are questioning me on this, why? Did he complain to the Standards Board about it then?

**Cllr Wells:** Did he, no, he didn't make the complaint to the Standards Board, but he was clearly *(interruption)*.

**Cllr PW:** I had a number of phone calls about that picture and just said the same as anyone else - its probably just an old picture. I said you'd have to check with the County Press. I had about 6 or 7 phone calls about it and all I said was just check with the County Press it probably an old photo.

**Cllr Wells:** OK well I think you are probably aware that Mr Turner was asked by you at a previous application to the Standards Committee and it just seemed a rather odd circumstance that this man appeared again at a public meeting.

**Cllr PW:** I didn't know anything about Mr Turner as a constituent. As a matter of fact it was Cllr (George) Brown who I asked who he actually was. He is one of my constituents and Cllr Brown informed me a bit more of the background of the man. Up until then I didn't know anything about him.

I have met him if it is of any interest to any of you. Actually I think it was a meeting I was at of The Friends of Northwood Cemetery, I didn't know that was him until sometime when Cllr Brown clarified who he was and he said "I'm the most male chauvinist man you're ever going to meet" or something. This was when I was out, I don't know, it might have been canvassing; it might have been the Kingston Pub, he just said

“yeah look at my email address” or something which was completely. I still don’t know what it means “yiddo” means but that was right yeah and what?

I went home to my husband and said I’ve just met one of my constituents, apparently, and he was pretty aggressive towards me, which he was, and I didn’t know anything about him. I’ve never met him before up until that time he spoke to me there and then. It wasn’t until I saw Cllr Brown in a Council meeting and I said “who is this guy?” and Cllr Brown filled me in that he’d been there with Andrew Turner talking to him.

**Cllr Walters:** Can I just clarify something.... This Mr Turner...

**Cllr PW:** Yeah...

**Cllr Walters:** ...Yeah the one that you referred to. Is it the same Mr Turner who was involved with yourself, Mr Joyce and Cllr Mazillius then?

**Cllr PW:** Yeah apparently yeah... praps he don’t like me, I don’t know.

**Cllr Wells:** Could I just read from a document, a public document that’s in the public domain. “In June 2010, unhappy with the announcement from the Leader of the Council, David Pugh, that he was creating an additional position on the cabinet which Mr Mazillius would fill, Mr Turner wrote to his local Councillor Lora Peacey-Wilcox. He asked for Cllr Peacey Wilcox to make enquiries on his behalf. Mr Turner told the Ethics Sub-Committee that Cllr Peacey-Wilcox was reluctant to pose the questions on Mr Turner’s behalf fearful of the reaction she would get from Cllrs. Instead she suggested the names of other Councillors who would pass on the enquiries on his behalf.

**Cllr PW:** Yeah yeah, sorry.

**Cllr Wells:** It would appear from (*interruption*)...

**Cllr PW:** Yeah but I didn’t actually know who he was up until that was when I spoke to and that’s when I put two and two together. I didn’t know his face, his name and who he was. He was just somebody who had come to me that I first met when I was down at the Kingston and I don’t know whether I was canvassing or I was with friends. And I didn’t know to put name and face together. I’ve be down the Polling Station loads and every time he shows up and I still didn’t know his name up until when I went to Cllr Brown to find out who he was and that’s when I got information about him.

He was very threatening to me at the pub if I’m honest ‘cos I went home and said to my husband what he said (*undecipherable*). So you know it’s not like I’m like best mates with him.

**Cllr Wells:** It just seems rather strange he contacted you and gave evidence to a Sub-Committee that he had spoken to you.

**Cllr PW:** He may have met me down at the Polling Station and said something, you know. He turns up and now I know the face to the name but I didn’t at the time.

**Cllr Wells:** OK fine, thank you.