

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 12th January 2012 at 7.00 p.m.

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

6560 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peacey-Wilcox and Wilcox.

6561 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

6562 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

- a). That it had been confirmed by the practice manager at the Cowes Medical Centre and by the PCT that contrary to press reports an NHS dentist would remain in Cowes.
- b). That recent storms had loosened corroded anchor bolts on litter bins at Egypt and Princes Esplanade; he had requested they be re-fixed.
- c). That a public meeting (referred to as 'State of the Island Debate' within the I.W. Council constitution) would be held at the Riverside Centre on 21st January at 10am; the meeting would provide an opportunity for Island residents to air their view on the I.W. Council and the services they provide.
- d). That he had spoken to passengers using the Community Buses to ascertain their views for improving the service.
- e). That he had received a number of complaints about dogs not on leads whilst being walked. Owners are therefore, not always aware when dogs are fouling and he had requested Environment Officers take action in these circumstances.
- f). That he had dealt with numerous other miscellaneous incidents during December.

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

- a). That the Youth Service Restructure Report was now available; the report showed that only 13% of 13-19 year olds made use of current provision and the proposals sought to increase this to 20% by 2014. The report seeks to implement staffing and premises changes which would achieve Council Tax savings of £128,000 in 2012/13. The premises in Arctic Road had been identified for possible disposal but retaining the facilities for the benefit of the local community.
- b). That a delegated decision had been taken to consult with tourism industry stakeholders on the principles for establishing an industry led Destination Management Organisation (DMO). The Council's current year net tourism budget was £340,000 and it was proposed that this level of funding would be provided for the next 9 years giving a total tourism provision of some £3million over that timeframe but subject to the DMO raising significant additional funds from the private sector.
- c). That he had been asked by a local resident if the Local Economic Improvement Fund could be utilised to repair the important and architecturally prominent Nunnery Steps entrance to Northwood Park
- d). That the Library Supporters Christmas book sale had raised over £200.
- e). That the I.W. Council road safety unit was running another six week theory and practical combined better driving course starting on Tuesday 17th January. A similar course for motorcyclists would start on 15th March.

- f). That he had been reminded by the NHS that there was still an opportunity to have the winter flu injection.
- g). That it had been announced that Her Majesty The Queen would be touring the South East of England as part of her Diamond Jubilee celebrations; whilst it was not clear if she would be visiting Cowes he hoped an appropriate event could be organised to mark these ‘once in a lifetime’ celebrations.
- h). That he had been pleased to attend the recent ‘Topping Out’ ceremony of the Cowes Enterprise College.
- i). That parents should use motor vehicles with care and consideration when delivering and collecting children from schools. It was inconsiderate to block driveways and against the law to park on zebra crossing zigzags or double yellow lines; Parking Attendants had been alerted to particular issues of this kind at local schools and would be issuing tickets to offenders.
- j). That the Planning Inspector had found the Island Plan Core Strategy to be sound and the I.W. Council could now adopt it as it’s main planning policy document to determine planning applications. The important fine detail of housing development sites would now progress to full public consultation with any further suggested housing sites being submitted for evaluation.
- k). That the V Dub Festival, a vehicle and music event, would span five days over the first weekend of August at the I.W. County Showground. Concerns about noise and nuisance from last years four day festival had been listened to by the Licensing; they had reduced the hours of music and the sale of alcohol without radically affecting the enjoyment of festival-goers.
- l). That a substantial repair and resurfacing programme of the A3020 from St Mary’s roundabout to Northwood traffic lights would commence on 17th January and work was expected to last until 27th January.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox had submitted a written report referring to:

- 1). The new recycling arrangements which were due to start at the end of January. Householders would be receiving a pack containing detailed information as to what items could be recycled; those electing not to have the wheelie bins would receive 4 clear sacks a fortnight.
- 2). That garden waste bags were still available to purchase and use.
- 3). That she had been informed by the police that they had powers to fine owners of cars parked on pavements causing an ‘unnecessary or dangerous obstruction’.
- 4). That the Friends of Northwood Cemetery were holding a Quiz Night at the Kingston Arms on 24th February.

6563 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Sgt. Sizer reported as follows:

- a). The SNT priorities at present:
- Drug dealing – three house searches in the last month resulting in the discovery of 1 cannabis cultivation site; the police had also made other seizures of suspected controlled drugs. They had carried out undercover work in Cowes targeting those dealing drugs and had arrested several persons.
 - Criminal damage – the aim was not only to reduce the commission rate but also to increase the detection rate. The commission rate to date in a rolling year was down by 45.3% while the detection rate had increased by 1.1% to 6.9% - still a lot of work to do.
- b). Crime statistics for Cowes over a ‘rolling year’ period were:
- Total reported crimes down by 21.8%
 - Public order down by 17.7%
 - Criminal damage down by 45%
 - Vehicle crime down by 35%
 - House burglary down by 12%

The detection rate for all crimes in Cowes was above the Constabulary average at approximately 30% of all reported crime.

- c). New Years Eve had been busy with the occasional unfortunate scuffles; however, there was nothing dramatic from the policing point of view.
- d). That they had recovered a quantity of stolen goods (stolen from out of the Cowes area) and arrested the culprit; he had been sentenced to 200 hours community service.
- e). That he also covered the East Cowes area; their Pavilion project which provided excellent youth services and almost surrogate parenting for 8 to 18 year olds in the town was closing due to lack of funding; he was trying to support them by finding alternative funding streams and would welcome suggestions from anyone who may be able to help.

Councillor Banks questioned why those responsible for serious vandalism and criminal damage were not always prosecuted.

Sgt. Sizer was aware of a particular incident to a Church in East Cowes that he thought Councillor Banks was referring to; he stated that in that particular case they were prosecuted but given a police caution. First offenders or those 'low down in the offending ladder' could be given a caution where the criminal damage was under £5,000.

Councillor Fuller requested that zero tolerance policy for drug dealers should be the subject of a press release; he also asked whether the local SNT would be doing anything in respect of Community Speed Watch?

Sgt. Sizer stated that the press were present- they would probably be reporting the meeting. In respect of Community Speed Watch, he had to be mindful of the priorities he was given. Community Speed Watch would require significant work to get 'up and running'; he was light staffed at present and this issue was not considered high priority.

6564 REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

The Environment Officer reported that only a few minor damage reports had been received in the lead up to Christmas. However, following the festive period there had been numerous reports relating to fly tipping of black bags ect.; these bags had been removed within a 24 hour period. Also, wheelie bins were now being delivered to properties in readiness for the new waste collection service which starts at the end of January.

6565 MINUTES

Councillor Walters referred to the question to Councillor Peacey-Wilcox by Councillor Wells at the last meeting regarding the photograph in the I.W. County Press of him wearing the Mayoral chain; a member of the public had now written to Councillor Matthews alleging that Councillor Peacey-Wilcox had been the subject of verbal abuse during the questioning. A full transcript of this particular item had been made and for the avoidance of any doubt regarding the verbal abuse accusation he requested that it be attached to the minutes.

Councillor Wells stated that he was the Councillor accused of the verbal abuse; he would like the full transcript added to clearly show that he had not verbally abused his fellow Councillor.

RESOLVED

- 1). That subject to the correction of a spelling mistake under minute no. 6555b, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st December 2011 were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman; and
- 2). That the transcript referred to above be attached to the minutes of the December meeting.

a). Assistant Town Clerk (Min. No. 6485d refers)

As members were aware, Mrs. Randall had resigned for family reasons from her position as Assistant Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk stated that he had placed an advertisement for a replacement in the I.W. County Press to be published on 13th January. The advertisement offered the same terms and conditions that applied previously except that the successful applicant would be required to work their 10 hours on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings between 9.30am and noon with time off in lieu for evening meetings. Two weeks had been allowed for the return of applications and interviews would be held during the first two weeks of February.

The Town Clerk requested the Town Council appoint an interview panel with delegated powers to assess the applications, select a short list, interview candidates and make the appointment.

RESOLVED

1). That the interview panel with delegated authority to make the appointment of an Assistant Town Clerk would comprise the Town Mayor and Councillors Birch, Fuller and Sanderson.

b). The office suite (Min. No. 6498d refers)

The Town Mayor stated that the Town Council office was now well established; an office risk assessment had been drafted and a suite of 4 computer terminals were available for use by the general public. However, if the computers were to be used it was essential to have at least one other person in attendance as well as the Town Clerk. She questioned whether that was feasible or if the computers would be better utilised in the Library.

Members were in general agreement that the Library was better placed to accommodate the computers; Councillor Birch agreed to raise the issue at the next meeting of the Library Supporters Group although it was acknowledged that the final decision would not rest with them but with the Library Service.

The Town Mayor also referred to the lack of a post box outside Baring Chambers; members of the public were therefore unable to drop letters in when the building was unattended. DN Associates had indicated that they were not prepared to allow a post box at the entrance to the building.

Councillor Sanderson agreed to raise the issue with the landlord on behalf of the Town Council

c). Accessibility crossing points, Cowes (Min. No. 6535 refers)

The Town Clerk reported that in October the I.W. Council had notified the Town Council that they had acquired funding to improve accessibility crossing points at various locations in Cowes. The I.W. Council had received conflicting comments from Town Councillors in respect of the proposed crossing for The Parade; they were now requesting that the matter be officially considered by the Town Council and a formal response supplied.

The Town Clerk also submitted a letter from a member of the public supporting the crossings.

There was obvious support from members for the extension of crossing points for Cowes to make the town more accessible; the debate centred on the proposed location of The Parade crossing which necessitated a raised central island.

Councillor Banks stated that the central island would not be necessary if the crossing point was moved 20metres further to the north, although this suggestion had been dismissed by the Highways and Transport Manager.

Following much further discussion it was

RESOLVED

That the Town Council accepts the I.W. Council proposals for accessibility crossing points in Cowes with the exception of that on The Parade where the Town Council would prefer to have it moved to the north negating the need for a central island.

d). Community bus scheme (Min. No. 6525c refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the I.W. Council to the Secretary of the Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood Community Transport Forum, a copy of which had been circulated to all members. It stated that to facilitate the Community bus schemes the I.W. Council had agreed to fund up to eight

vehicles (including fuel, insurance and driver training) with community groups required to provide volunteer drivers. Because of difficulties establishing the volunteer driver base, the I.W. Council had further agreed to fund cover drivers to assist for the first six month set up period allowing sufficient time for community groups to secure sufficient drivers to successfully operate the scheme. This funding for cover drivers would not be available from 1st April and where volunteer drivers were not available, services would have to be withdrawn. However, the Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood scheme had provided a significant percentage of drivers, many of whom were being used for other schemes across the Island.

Details of daily passenger numbers and donations/fares for the No. 32 route were also circulated. Councillor Ellis stated that there had been some confusion with accurate passenger numbers; nonetheless, over £920 collected since the commencement of the route represented a very credible performance.

e). Quality Status re-accreditation (Min. No. 6511b refers)

The Town Mayor stated that the Council's re-accreditation portfolio for Quality status had now been submitted; the re-accreditation fee had been £120.

Together with the Town Clerk, she would attend an interview panel in respect of the portfolio on 26th January at 2p.m. The only concern in respect of the submission was that full contact details for Town Councillors had not been published in at least 4 issues of the Town Council newsletter.

f). Lights of Love carol service (Min. No. 6554b refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the Earl Mountbatten Hospice thanking the Town Council for once again organising the Lights of Love carol service in the town.

He stated that many people had contributed to this very worthwhile event; the landlady at the Painters Arms had provided mulled wine, the Co-op had provided mince pies and Chris Ealy had arranged the musicians. The overall total raised during the evening towards Hospice funds was £662.31.

6567 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.

b). Cowes Harbour Commission Advisory Committee

The Minutes of a Meeting of the Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee held on 9th December 2011 were received.

c). Consultation with Cowes Businesses

Notes of the consultation exercise with local businesses undertaken during December were received. A number of suggestions had been received – one common theme was that parking in the town was a particular issue.

RESOLVED

That the full report be referred to the Town Improvements Committee for them to devise an Action Plan to assist businesses in the town.

d). Web Site Working Party

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Web Site Working Party held on 14th December 2012 were received.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council seeks additional training through the I.W. Council to enable the existing web site to be enhanced rather than working with another web site designer.

e). Queens Diamond Jubilee Sub Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Queens Diamond Jubilee Sub Committee held on 9th January 2012 were received.

RESOLVED

- 1). That as there had not been sufficient interest to organise events on The Parade the Town Council cancels their application for a road closure and notify the Royal Yacht Squadron of that decision;
- 2). That the Town Council 'ring fence' up to £4,000 to support organisations running their own events to celebrate the Queens Diamond Jubilee;
- 3). That the Town Council seeks permission from the I.W. Council to plant a tree on the grassed area of Mornington Road;
- 4). That the suggestion of a Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee plaque/horizon plaque would be considered by the Town Improvements Committee; and
- 5). That the Town Council accepts in principle that they would supply a memento to all pre and primary school children in Cowes.

f). Finance Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 9th January 2012 were received.

i). Application for financial assistance – Friends of ORP Blyskawica Society.

Financial assistance towards a programme of events to be held between 4th and 7th May 2012 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the defence of Cowes by the Polish destroyer ORP Blyskawica

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council agrees to underwrite the 2012 ORP Blyskawica commemoration in the sum of £3,000 in respect of the activities taking place in Cowes.
(Councillors Banks and Walters declared personal and prejudicial interests on the grounds that they were on the organising committee)
(Councillor Jones declared a personal and prejudicial interest on the grounds that he was Treasurer of Cowes Heritage and they were staging an exhibition as part of the commemorative events)
(Councillor Mazillius declared a personal and prejudicial interest on the grounds that he was a member of the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society)

g). Town Improvements Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Improvements Committee held on 10th January 2012 were received.

i). MUGA

RESOLVED

That following the completion of the analysis of the tenders for the MUGA, a special meeting of the Town Council will be convened to make the final decision on the appointment of a contractor for the project.

(Councillor Banks declared a personal and prejudicial interest as his company had submitted a tender for the contract and he left the room for this item)

ii). Economic Improvement Fund

A match funding scheme specifically designed for projects which would directly or indirectly contribute to the economic wellbeing of the town.

Councillor Mazillius stated that a local resident had requested the Town Council utilise part of the Economic Improvement Fund to improve the Nunnery steps entrance to Northwood Park as they were an important and architecturally prominent feature in the town.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council applies to the Economic Improvement Fund for assistance towards projects to improve Northwood Recreation Ground; and
- 2). That the Town Council invites the Northwood House Trustees to submit a full proposal for the improvement of the Nunnery Steps to the Town Council including quotations for the work and details of any match funding; the proposal to be considered by the Town Improvements Committee prior to the February meeting of the Town Council.

iii) Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee plaque

RESOLVED

That the Town Council accepts the quotation from G.J. Banks (IW) Ltd. in the sum of £595.80 for re-lettering the Queen Victoria plaque and the firm be appointed to complete the works in accordance with their specification.

(Councillor Banks declared a personal and prejudicial interest as his company had submitted one of the quotations for the work and he left the room for this item)

iv). Town Council flags

RESOLVED

That the Town Council purchases three Town Council flags from Turtle & Pearce.

6568 TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Councillor Fuller stated that since his election to the Town Council he had not been appointed to any of the Town Council committees; he wished to sit on the Town Improvement and Northwood Recreation Ground Committees.

The Town Mayor stated that together with the Deputy Town Mayor, she was often required to make urgent decisions in respect of licensing applications; she recommended that the Planning Committee be re-named Planning and Licensing Committee to avoid that necessity.

RESOLVED

- 1). That Councillor Fuller be appointed to the Town Improvements and Northwood Recreation Ground Committees for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/12; and
- 2). That the Planning Committee be re-designated Planning and Licensing Committee to deal with all future licensing applications.

6569 STAKEHOLDER BENEFITS FOR CONSIDERATION BY COWES HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

Councillor Walters stated that Cowes Harbour Commission operated by statute from the Department of Transport and from time to time they had to amend their rules to cope with changing times; a draft Revision Order had recently been prepared for consultation.

The Department of Transport had stated that as Trust Ports have no shareholders they must use any profits generated to support the long term viability of the port that would include strategic investments and contingencies. Surpluses were not to take the form of a dividend but must be used for stakeholder benefits.

The Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee want the Harbour Commissioners to focus on what future benefits they intended to return to stakeholders and beneficiaries and they would like a clause to that effect inserted in the Harbour Commission draft Revision Order.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council supports the inclusion of a clause in the draft Harbour Commission Revision Order regarding future benefits they intended to return to stakeholders and beneficiaries

(Councillor Mazillius left the meeting at 9.26p.m.)

6570 STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED

That in accordance with S.O. 9.1.8 Standing Orders be suspended to enable the remaining items of business listed on the agenda to be transacted.

6571 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Councillor Hammond stated that the town lacked festive atmosphere over Christmas and questioned whether much more could be done in future years.

A letter from the Cowes Business Association making a similar point was submitted.

RESOLVED

That the Town Improvements Committee be requested to consider what improvements could be made in future to enhance the town over Christmas periods.

(Councillor Sanderson left the meeting at 9.35 p.m.)

6572 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

a). Urgent decision: application for Street Trading consent – Julies Ices (*no objection but requested that a condition was attached to any permission that might be given to exclude trading at Princes Green and beach, Princes Esplanade, Mornington Road car park and Green, The Parade, Park Road Recreation Ground and outside of all schools in the town*)

b). Payment of the Town Clerk's subscription in the sum of £140 to the Society of Local Council Clerks;

c). *Request for the addition of a name on the War Memorial and to discuss who was now responsible for the Memorial.

d). Subscription to the Local Council Review magazine.

e). Renewal of the Town Council's Associate membership of the CBA.

f). *To receive details of accounts and petty cash payments for the period October to December 2011

* Copies circulated to all members.

RESOLVED

1). That the action taken by the Town Clerk following consultation with the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor in respect of the urgent decision be noted and approved;

2). That the Town Clerk's membership subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks in the sum of £140 be paid by the Town Council;

3). That the item relating to the War Memorial be deferred to the next meeting of the Town Council;

4). That the Town Council subscribes to one copy of the Local Council Review magazine – each issue to be left in the office for Councillors to read;

5). That the Town Council renews their Associate Membership of the Cowes Business Association; and

6). That the following accounts and petty cash payments for the period October to December 2011 be noted and approved:

IW Council	Salaries	1,745.73
R Williams	Skatepark Cleaner (Min No 4999f and 6387c)	220.00
IW Council	Election expenses	2,138.65
BT	Telephone	46.64
Beacon	Newsletter (Min no 6511b)	220.00
Wight Business Services	Copier paper	19.99
IW Council	Toilet cleaning, Northwood Rec (Min no 6450b)	1,493.40
Southern Electric	Electricity charges Northwood Rec toilets	89.17
Wight Business Services	Office phones, H & S posters etc	77.14
DN Associates	Rent of office (Min No 6397b)	487.50
ASTO	Grant (Min no 6512e)	250.00
IW Council	Salaries	1,745.73
Sula Products	Councillor nameplate	15.00
R. Williams	Skatepark Cleaner (Min Nos 4999f & 6387c)	220.00
Royal British Legion	Poppy Appeal – wreath (Min no 6530)	50.00
Giftbridge Ltd	Artificial grass matting (Min no 6530)	149.85

Southern Electric	Electricity charges Northwood Rec toilets	72.67
BT	Telephone	46.18
DN Associates	Office rent (Min no 6397b)	487.50
Beacon	Newsletter (Min No 6157e)	110.00
IW County Press	Advertisement – Queen Diamond Jubilee (Min no 6512g)	51.50
Royal British Legion	Contribution toward refreshments – Remembrance Day (Min no 6542b)	200.00
IW Council	Salaries	1,745.73
R. Williams	Skatepark Cleaner (Min No 4999f & 6387c)	220.00
MJ Hayles	Professional services and planning fee – MUGA (Min no 6526d)	835.00
Beacon	Newsletter (Min No 6157e)	110.00
BT	Telephone	47.79
DN Associates	Rent of office (Min No 6397b)	487.50
IW Council	Salaries	1,745.73
Earl Mountbatten Hospice	Donation (Min no 6531)	400.00
R. Williams	Skatepark cleaner (Min Nos 4999f & 6387c)	220.00
Supporters Cowes Library	Corporate membership & donation (Min no 6543e)	55.00
IW County Press	Advertisement MUGA (Min no 6543d)	51.50
NALC	Quality re-accreditation fee (Min no 6511b)	120.00

Petty Cash Payments October to December 2011

R. Hendey	Travel expenses to SLCC Conference, Reading	30.00
B & Q	Paint rollers etc. – painting shelter, skatepark	13.07
R. Hendey	Travelling	25.76
R. Hendey	Postage	2.18

6573 COWES WEEK LTD

The Town Mayor stated that she had received a letter from Cowes Week Ltd. who were currently in the process of registering Cowes Week as a trade mark in order to protect the integrity of the Regatta into the future. As part of the process, she has been asked to complete a questionnaire on behalf of the Town Council for the Trade Mark Examiner; one of the questions was ‘*Do you associate the phrase Cowes Week exclusively with any particular entity or organisation*’. The Town Mayor was of the opinion that she could not answer that Cowes Week Ltd. were the only organisation associated with the term Cowes Week.

RESOLVED

That the Town Mayor replies to Cowes Week Ltd. stating that the Town Council cannot support the term Cowes Week as being exclusive to Cowes Week Ltd.

(The proceedings terminated at 9.44pm)

CHAIRMAN