

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 6th December 2012 at 7.00 p.m.

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

PRESENTATION – NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

The Town Mayor introduced and welcomed Liz Nials, Human Resources Officer for the NHS, to the meeting; Liz had attended regarding the NHS consultation on their application to become an NHS Foundation Trust.

Liz explained that the consultation would run until 11th January 2013 and the document asked questions covering three areas:

- Their vision and future plans
- Their membership
- The Council of Governors

She stated that an NHS Foundation Trust was the required model for NHS service providers by April 2014 and that five good reasons had been identified for them to become an NHS Foundation Trust:

- Even more involvement of local people through membership – NHS Foundation Trusts were membership organisations
- More staff involvement – staff would have more opportunities to get involved in the direction of the Trust and would be able to stand for election as a staff Governor
- More opportunities for services to innovate – staff, carers and the people who use the services often know how services can be made even better and becoming an NHS Foundation Trust would provide even more opportunity to introduce new ideas
- More financial freedoms – able to decide locally the capital investment needed to improve the services and the ability to generate and retain a surplus each year for re-investment
- Well organised – the process of preparing to become an NHS Foundation Trust was very rigorous and involved them making sure that the organisation was delivering good quality care and was fit for purpose

The alternative would be to split the services on the Island up so that

- The hospital becomes part of Southampton or Portsmouth Hospitals
- Ambulance service becomes part of South Coast Ambulance Service
- Mental Health and Community Health services to become part of other mainland Trusts

None of these alternatives was believed to be good for the Island.

The way in which the proposed NHS Foundation Trust would run would change; its governance would have three main strands

- Membership
 - members aged 16 and over will be eligible to stand for and elect a Council of Governors
 - is a carer of someone who currently receives treatment provided by IW NHS Trust
 - all IW NHS Trust staff and volunteers become automatic members unless they choose to 'opt out'
- Council of Governors
 - Appoint (or remove) the Trust's Chairman and Non-Executive Directors
 - Approve the appointment of the Trust's Chief Executive
 - Appoint the Trust's external auditors
 - Agree the pay of Non-Executive Directors and the Chairman
 - Receive the annual report and accounts

- Advise the Board on how they should provide and improve services
- Help develop the Trust's membership strategy and help the Trust to recruit members
- Board of Directors

It was proposed there would be 21 members of the Council of Governors made up as follows

- 2 appointed Governors – LA and CCG
- 2 appointed Governors – voluntary sector and Chamber of Commerce
- 5 staff Governors
- 1 NHS volunteer Governor
- 10 Island based public Governors
- 1 off Island Governor

A number of questions were then asked including concerns that 16 year olds and prisoners could effectively become Governors.

Councillor Banks then thanked Liz Nials for attending; he stated that this was a vitally important issue for the Island that should receive full Town Council consideration.

6693 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Peacey-Wilcox.

The Town Mayor reported that since the last meeting Councillor McGregor had resigned from the Town Council due to pressures at work and her family commitments. He stated Councillor McGregor had worked tirelessly over the last few years on many projects for the Town Council and her input would be sorely missed; she had proved to be an excellent Councillor and Town Mayor during her year in office in that role.

The Town Mayor then reported that two new Councillors had been chosen from the three that had been interviewed; it had been a difficult selection process as he considered all could have made a worthwhile contribution to the Town Council.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Town Clerk advertise for a further co-opted Councillor to fill the vacancy created following the resignation of Councillor McGregor.

Councillor Banks read a letter from Mrs. Leigh thanking the Town Council for the tribute they had paid at the last meeting to her husband and former Town Mayor, John who had died suddenly.

6694 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the public asked the following questions:

Q. Could the Town Council do anything to improve the alleyway between Maxted Close and Windmill Close; it was not lit at night and would benefit from some visible paint on the steps?

A. The Town Mayor stated that in the I.W. Council were responsible for this area; the Town Clerk would notify them of the residents concerns.

Q. That officers had been suspended following the delays to the completion of the Cowes Enterprise; should not more senior figures consider their positions and resign?

A. How the I.W. Council deal with those involved in the new build Cowes Enterprise College was a matter for them.

6695 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Brown had apologised for his absence.

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

a). That at the latest Local Action Group Meeting the three local policing priorities were identified as being:

- Drug dealing
- Speeding on local roads
- Policies to tackle dog fouling

- b). That he had accepted the opportunity of meeting the new Independent Police Commissioner.
- c). That he would like to hear from local residents regarding the possibility of overnight parking restrictions on Princes/Egypt Esplanades.
- d). That he had received a number of calls regarding chalara, the airborne fungal disease which is now devastating ash trees; the I.W. Council advises to call the dedicated helpline email plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk for details. So far, investigations that have taken place on the Island have proved negative.
- e). That winter gritting and salting routes remain unaltered from last year with Newport Road, Nodes Road, Place Road, Park Road and Victoria Road remaining the primary salt route. Baring Road, Crossfield Avenue and Ward Avenue continue as secondary routes and he was endeavouring to have Egypt Hill added to the list.
- f). That two members of I.W. Council staff had been suspended as a precautionary measure pending the outcome of an internal investigation into the management of the new Cowes Enterprise College bid; in the meantime, the Director of Economy & Environment would take the lead on the project.
- g). That members of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel received presentations which focused on supporting residents with mental health issues.
- h). That the NHS Trust were consulting on becoming an NHS Foundation Trust.
- i). That a local PFI roadshow would be held at the new Cowes Enterprise College at 6pm on 30th January 2013.
- j). That while the No. 32 local bus service continued to operate, volunteer drivers were still needed on a continuing basis from Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood. Without drivers the scheme would cease; Islandwide, there were insufficient drivers to cover the six schemes which operate
- k). That he had dealt with other miscellaneous incidents in the last month.

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

- a). That the Library would be closed between 3rd and 7th December for the installation of new self-service kiosk and more user friendly counter.
- b). That the present NHS Trust was applying to become a Foundation Trust by April 2014.
- c). That he had asked for the asphalt plant application to be determined in view of further delays occasioned by the applicants employing new Contaminated Land Consultants to further investigate ground conditions. The Head of Planning had advised that the new contaminated land report would be available within an acceptable timescale and that it would be better practice to wait for that.
- d). That the sewer works necessitating the closure of Newport Road had been completed on schedule despite the most adverse weather conditions. Additionally, the excess binder had been removed at the contractors expense on the A3020 road to Newport re-instating the surface grip.
- e). That pavements in need of re-surfacing and general repair would be included in the PFI scheme under the planned programme which commences April 2013. In the meantime, areas with safety issues should continue to be notified for repair. The PFI roadshow for Councillors and residents in the Cowes area would be held in the new Cowes Enterprise College (to be confirmed) on 30th January at 6pm.
- f). That, as a member of the administration at County Hall, he apologised for any adverse impact caused by the delay in completing the final stages of the new build Cowes Enterprise College. However, the pupils were still fully engaged in the educational programmes being delivered at the College and would be so engaged until their eventual complete occupation of the new building.

Councillor Mazillius then updated members on further matters that had arisen since his written report:

- a). That there would be traffic light control at the Stag Lane/Newport Road junction on 21st December between 9am and 4pm.
- b). That a 'one way' system would be in operation between 10th and 16th December in Three Gates Road for a new traffic island to be built at the junction of Seaview Road.

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

- a). That she continued to receive concerns regarding the asphalt plant planning application..

- b). That the proposal to locate the BSED unit at the former Love Lane school site had been dropped by the I.W. Council.
- c). That she had attended a meeting regarding the Music Festival site; Solo had employed a local ex policeman to ensure that problems experienced this year did not occur again.
- d). That there had been yet another accident at the Victoria Road/ Mill Hill Road junction; she had requested the I.W. Council install a Stop sign at the junction.
- e). That she had received questions regarding street cleaning in minor roads locally.
- f). That she had received comments regarding the Christmas trees.

6696 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Sergeant Mike Sizer reported as follows:

- a). That crime statistics continued to be very good; there had been an 11% reduction in overall crime with no categories of crime going up.
- b). That the Christmas Drink Drive campaign had got off to a disappointing start on the Island; he would encourage members of the public to report anyone they suspect of drink driving either on the usual numbers or by texting 80999.
- c). That 4 arrests had been made following burglaries from dwellings; there had been a spate of dwelling and car thefts and he would urge residents to ensure that valuables are out of site and that their homes and cars are kept locked.
- d). That two 16 year olds had been arrested the previous evening for dwelling burglaries.
- e). That there had been a problem from 'cold callers' in Gurnard.
- f). That the police had launched 'Action Fraud'; this was the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and internet crime. Members of the public, the police, businesses and charities could report to Action Fraud online or on the phone and receive crime reference numbers; by reporting incidents of fraud and internet crime to Action Fraud it would enable the police and fraud authorities to build a profile and catch those committing the offence. Leaflets explaining 'Action Fraud' were issued to all members.

6697 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That subject to changing line 1 of the AAM Cowes Week presentation to read 'The Deputy Town Mayor introduced...', the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st November 2012 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6698 MATTERS ARISING

a). Cowes Enterprise College (Min. No. 6683 refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the I.W. Council Chief Executive which stated that the Council were examining the reasons for the delay to the opening of the new build Cowes Enterprise College and that they would share the outcomes when all the information was available. He also submitted a later statement from the Chief Executive that had been issued to the press which confirmed that there was still work to be completed and a handover and snagging process to be undertaken before staff and pupils could begin to familiarise themselves with the new building prior to full occupation. Mindful that previously set deadlines had proved optimistic he had informed governors, trustees, parents and staff that the move would not now be possible until the Spring. They would continue to scrutinise the project in detail to fully understand the reasons for the delays.

b). Computer suite (Min. No. 6649b refers)

The Town Mayor referred to the office suite of computers which remained unused. He again stressed that it would not be an ideal situation for members of the public to be using the computers when staff were working.

Councillor Fuller stated that there were computer facilities at the Gurnard Village Hall which many residents from Cowes utilised; it might be that Gurnard would welcome additional computers. It was agreed that this issue be referred to the Town Improvements Committee for further consideration.

c). Representatives to outside bodies (Min. No. 6619 refers)

Councillor Banks referred to his appointment as Council representative to the Island Waste Services Advisory Group and stated that he had not been invited to any meetings during the year. The Town Clerk confirmed that organisations had been notified of their Council representatives; he had raised this issue with Island Waste Services who confirmed that no meetings had been held due to staff sickness.

Councillor Brown also stated that she had not been invited to any meetings of the Cowes/Deauville Twinning Association; the Town Clerk would seek to clarify the situation.

6699 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). Town Improvements Committee

The Notes of the Meeting of the Medina Valley Area Action Plan Sub-Committee held on 6th November 2012 were received.

i). Summer bunting.

RESOLVED

That a figure of £3,500 be included in the budget for 2013/14 for bunting in the town.

ii). Finger posts.

Following a survey of street furniture it had been established that a finial was missing from the finger post at the top of Watch House Lane.

RESOLVED

That a replacement finial be purchased from Leander Architectural at a cost of £157 plus VAT.

c). Supporters of Cowes Library

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library held on 12th November 2012 were received.

d). Northwood Recreation Ground Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Northwood Recreation Ground Committee held on 19th November 2012 were received.

i). Skatepark

RESOLVED

That the floodlights remain on until 9pm each evening.

ii). MUGA

A request for cricket coaching sessions at the MUGA had been received.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council has no objection to the MUGA being utilised for regular cricket coaching sessions although these sessions cannot be booked as that would conflict with the open access policy for the facility.

e). Dispensation to participate in budget debate

The Town Clerk reported that prior to the Localism Act 2011 there had been an automatic dispensation which allowed members to speak, participate and vote on issues including the setting of the precept. This dispensation has now fallen as the Localism Act 2011 introduced new arrangements for the granting of dispensations to allow members to take part in matters in which they have an

interest; the setting of the precept has been deemed a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as it affects the level of tax payable on properties that members have an interest in within the town council area. A request dispensation can be granted for a maximum of 4 years if so great a proportion of its members would be prohibited from participating in that business as to impede the council's transaction of that business without the dispensation

RESOLVED

That the Town Council grant a dispensation until 2 May 2013 so that all members can speak, participate and vote on the setting of the precept at any meeting of the Council or its Committees.

f). Finance Committee

The Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on 26th November 2012 were received.

i). Applications for grant.

a). Community Action Isle of Wight.

Towards the Optio Voluntary Car Scheme.

b). Northwood House Charitable Trust.

Funding for the provision and installation of new dog/litter bins for Northwood Park.

Councillor Brown gave a verbal report regarding the condition and location of the existing bins.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council gives a grant of £500 towards the running of the Optio Voluntary Car Scheme;
- 2). That the Town Council funds the provision and installation of new litter bins for Northwood Park on condition that the Trust provide signs confirming they were to be used for ordinary and dog litter and that they had been sponsored by Cowes Town Council; and
- 3). That the Town Council place the orders for the supply and installation of the new litter bins.

ii). Budget and precept for Financial Year 2013/14.

The Town Clerk reported that changes were being made to council tax; council tax discounts would replace council tax benefits. This could mean that the council tax base may reduce by between 5% and 10% because HM Government was only going to offset 90% of the Town and Parish element of council tax caused by the introduction of the discounts.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council defers setting of the budget and precept for 2013/14 until the January meeting when further details regarding the changes being made to council tax may be available.

6700 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). A request that the Town Council re-join membership of the I.W. Association of Local Councils.
- b). Notification that the hire charge for the Parish Meeting Room will be increased from 1st January 2013.
- c). Notification that the I.W. Council would be pursuing the variations with their preferred supplier for the Cowes Parade Village 2013 – 2016.
- d). Renewal of the Town Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks.
- e). *Details of miscellaneous correspondence.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the request that the Town Council re-join IWALC be deferred until the January meeting;
- 2). That the increased hire charge for the Parish Meeting Room be noted and accepted; and
- 3). That the Town Clerk be authorised to renew his membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

6701 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- a). Tree planting, Mornington Green (Councillor Fuller)
- b). To consider whether or not the Town Council should re-join IWALC (deferred from December meeting)
- c). To consider the budget and precept for 2013/14 (deferred from December meeting)

(The proceedings terminated at 9.25pm)

CHAIRMAN