

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Drawing Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 21 May 2015 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Jones (Town Mayor) (Chairman)

Councillors Banks, Brown, Corby, Cowan, Ellis, Fuller, Hammond, McNeill, Nicholson, Oliver, Spalding & Wardrop.

Prior to the election of the Town Mayor, Councillor Banks thanked Councillor Jones for being his right hand man and using a level headed approach to matters. Councillor Banks also thanked the Town Clerk & Assistant Town Clerk for working diligently and showing their support. Councillor Banks also thanked all the Town Councillors for their support. Councillor Banks reported that an inordinate amount of business has gone through the Town Council. He has sent or received over 7000 emails during the last 2 years and attended 152 meetings in the last 12 months; he advised Councillors to consider this should they be thinking of standing for Town Mayor.

7080 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

Proposed by Councillor Nicholson and seconded by Councillor Brown that Councillor Jones be elected Town Mayor until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016.

There being no further nominations, it was:

RESOLVED

That Councillor Jones be elected Town Mayor to serve until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016.

Councillor Jones thereupon made a Declaration of Acceptance of Office; he thanked the Town Council for his election. Councillor Jones said that it is a great honour to be elected Mayor of such a great town and he hopes to fulfil his duties well. He gave a vote of thanks to Councillor Banks and acknowledged the amount of work that Councillor Banks has undertaken – he will be a hard act to follow.

7081 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

Proposed by Councillor Corby and seconded by Councillor Nicholson that Councillor McNeill be elected as Deputy Town Mayor until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016.

There being no further nominations, it was:

RESOLVED

That Councillor McNeill be elected as Deputy Town Mayor to serve until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016.

Councillor McNeill thereupon made a Declaration of Acceptance of Office; he thanked the Town Council for his election. Councillor McNeill said that there is an awful lot of work to be done this year which will need to be shared among all of the Town Councillors in the hope that each Councillor can do a little bit more.

7082 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peacey-Wilcox & Robinson.

7083 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Ellis & Hammond declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No 7098g(ii); in respect of the grant application for Cowes Carnival.

7084 PLANNING & LICENSING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the following members be appointed to serve on the Planning & Licensing Committee until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016:

The Town Mayor, the Deputy Town Mayor and Councillors Banks, Brown, Cowan, Nicholson, Oliver & Wardrop.

7085 PROJECTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the following members be appointed to serve on the Projects Committee until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016:

The Town Mayor, the Deputy Town Mayor and Councillors Banks, Brown, Corby, Nicholson & Spalding. There remains one vacancy on this Committee.

7086 FINANCE, ACQUISITIONS & STAFFING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the following members be appointed to serve on the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016:

The Town Mayor, the Deputy Town Mayor and Councillors Banks, Brown, Corby, Ellis & Hammond. There remains one vacancy on this Committee.

7087 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED

That the following representatives, having been duly proposed and seconded, be appointed to serve on the following outside bodies until the Annual Town Council Meeting in 2016:

Cowes Business Association

Councillor M. McNeill

Deputy – Councillor J. Corby

Cowes Deauville Twinning Association

Councillor L. Brown

Deputy – Councillor V. Cowan

Cowes Harbour Commission Advisory Group

Councillor J. Corby

Deputy – Councillor J. Spalding

Cowes Good Neighbour Volunteer Group

Councillor L. Hammond

Deputy – Councillor S. Ellis

Fireworks Committee – Cowes Week Ltd

Councillor M. McNeill

Deputy – Councillor P. Fuller

Highways PFI District One Group (2)

Councillor P. Fuller & Councillor J. Nicholson

Island Waste Services Community Advisory Group

Councillor L. Brown

Deputy – Councillor D. Jones

Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils Executive Committee

Councillor P. Fuller

Deputy – Councillor V. Cowan

Medina Valley Area Action Plan Group (2)

Councillor G. Banks & Councillor D. Jones

Member Auditor – Town Council Accounts

Councillor G. Banks

Shoreside Committee – Cowes Week Ltd

Councillor M. McNeill

Deputy – Councillor S. Ellis

Tree Wardens (3)

Councillor L. Brown & Councillor L. Hammond & Councillor J. Oliver

Wight In Bloom – Steering Group (2)

Councillor D. Jones & Councillor J. Oliver

7088 STANDING ORDERS

A review of Standing Orders was carried out which included some minor amendments.

RESOLVED

1. That Standing Orders are amended, as detailed by the Town Clerk, and approved.
2. That Councillors advise the Town Clerk if they consider that any further amendments are required.
3. That the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk meet with a group of three Councillors to review whether any further amendments are required and bring any proposals back to a future Town Council meeting.

7089 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A review of Financial Regulations was carried out which included some minor amendments.

RESOLVED

1. That Financial Regulations are amended, as detailed by the Town Clerk, and approved.
2. That Councillors advise the Town Clerk if they consider that any further amendments are required.
3. That the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk meet with a group of three Councillors to review whether any further amendments are required and bring any proposals back to a future Town Council meeting.

7090 POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

A review of the following documents was carried out, which included some minor amendments, and the findings were presented to the Town Council:

Child, Young person and vulnerable Adult Protection Policy; Code of Conduct; Complaints Procedure; Complaints procedure for complaints against members; Equality & Diversity; Freedom of Information under the model publication scheme; Health & Safety Policy; Risk Assessment – Insurance; Risk Assessment – Office; Risk Management; Internal Grievance procedure.

RESOLVED

1. That the Town Council approves the annual reviews, and amendments, where necessary.
2. That Councillors advise the Town Clerk if they consider that any further amendments are required.
3. That the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk meet with a group of three Councillors to review whether any further amendments are required and bring any proposals back to a future Town Council meeting.

7091 DATES OF MEETINGS 2015 / 2016

RESOLVED

That the Town Council & Committee meetings be held on the following dates and start times in 2015 / 2016.

TOWN COUNCIL	7pm
16 July 2015	
3 September 2015	
1 October 2015	
5 November 2015	
17 December 2015	
4 February 2016	
3 March 2016	
7 April 2016	
28 April 2016	(Annual Town Meeting)
5 May 2016	(Annual Town Council Meeting)

FINANCE, ACQUISITIONS & STAFFING COMMITTEE 6.15pm
7 July 2015
8 September 2015
10 November 2015
12 January 2016
8 March 2016

PROJECTS COMMITTEE 6.15pm
16 June 2015
21 July 2015
15 September 2015
20 October 2015
17 November 2015
22 December 2015
9 February 2016
15 March 2016
19 April 2016

7092 ATTENDANCES

The Town Clerk reported that the attendances of Members at Town Council & Committee Meetings during 2014 / 2015 were as follows:

TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	12	12	100
L. Brown	12	11	92
J. Corby	12	11	92
V. Cowan	12	10	83
S.E.J. Ellis	12	9	75
P.A. Fuller	12	12	100
L. Hammond	12	5	42
D.J. Jones	12	12	100
M. McNeill	12	10	83
J. Nicholson	12	12	100
J. Oliver	1	1	100
L.J. Peacey-Wilcox	12	8	67
R.E. Robinson	12	10	83
J.A. Spalding	9	8	89
W. Wardrop	12	11	92

PLANNING & LICENSING COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	19	18	95
L. Brown	19	15	79
V. Cowan	19	14	74
D.J. Jones	19	19	100
M. McNeill	19	11	58
J. Nicholson	19	11	58
R.E. Robinson	19	11	58
W. Wardrop	19	8	42

WORLD WAR 1 COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	1	1	100
D.J. Jones	1	1	100
J.A. Spalding	1	1	100

FINANCE COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	8	8	100
L. Brown	8	5	63
J. Corby	8	7	88
S.E.J. Ellis	8	4	50
L. Hammond	2	1	50
D.J. Jones	8	8	100

NORTHWOOD RECREATION GROUND COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	4	4	100
L. Brown	4	4	100
S.E.J. Ellis	4	0	0
P.A. Fuller	4	1	25
D.J. Jones	4	4	100
J. Nicholson	4	4	100

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	7	7	100
L. Brown	7	7	100
D.J. Jones	7	7	100
J. Nicholson	7	4	57
L.J. Peacey-Wilcox	7	7	100
R.E. Robinson	7	7	100
J.A. Spalding	3	2	67

ACQUISITIONS COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	3	3	100
L. Brown	3	1	33
J. Corby	3	3	100
S.E.J. Ellis	3	0	0
L. Hammond	3	1	33
D.J. Jones	3	2	66
M. McNeill	3	3	100
J. Nicholson	3	0	0
W. Wardrop	3	3	100

STAFFING COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR	POSSIBLE	ATTENDANCES	%
G.J. Banks	3	3	100
J. Corby	3	3	100
S.E.J. Ellis	3	2	66
L. Hammond	3	3	100
D.J. Jones	3	3	100
M. McNeill	3	2	66

7093 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 April 2015 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7094 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present therefore no questions were raised.

7095 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox provided a written report which was circulated to all Councillors. She made reference to local matters including the Post Office, the bus shelter at Carvel Lane, cycling in Birmingham Road and abandoned cars. Councillor Peacey-Wilcox gave apologies for the meeting and was therefore unavailable for questions.

Councillor Fuller provided a written report which had been circulated to all Councillors. He made reference to local matters including Planning, road closures, Cowes Enterprise College and footpaths. Councillor Fuller, when asked, explained that a slightly modified planning application for Dottens Farm was expected but as yet the details are not known. Councillor Fuller was also asked about the policy of enforcing table and chair licences in the High Street. He is happy to receive details of where the rules are being flouted and follow this up with the Isle of Wight Council. Cowes Enterprise College was discussed in relation to demolishing the old building and Councillor Fuller was asked to keep the Town Council informed about the future of the sports hall as this was not expected to be demolished. Councillor Fuller has received complaints about the flowerbeds in Queens Road and he has agreed to forward the complaints to the Town Clerk.

A further discussion ensued regarding the condition of the Park Road Rose Bed of which the Town Council are in the process of securing a licence from the Isle of Wight Council. It was agreed that whilst we are awaiting completion of the legal formalities the Town Council would tidy and maintain the area for the benefit of Cowes residents.

Councillor Nicholson provided a written report which was circulated to all Councillors. He made reference to the Place Road Planning application, traffic issues and works in Seaview Road. Councillor Nicholson was available for questions but none were raised.

Councillor Bertie did not provide a written report and was absent from the meeting.

7096 REPORT FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

PC Gary Knight gave verbal apologies for his absence, he said that the police will endeavour to attend future Town Council meetings on a quarterly basis but will continue to provide written monthly reports.

PC Knight provided a written annual report from the Cowes Neighbourhood Policing Team for the period 1/4/14 – 31/3/15. Crime figures are up by 9.6%; antisocial behaviour figures are up by 2.8%. The current community priority for Cowes is cars and cyclists using the High Street during times of prohibition. During the year numerous cyclists have been stopped, their details have been taken, they have been educated and provided with a verbal warning. Police have not stopped any repeat offenders. Police have created two new community priorities – Theft, Terminus Road and Criminal Damage, Arctic Road. The community priority regarding cyclists and cars using the High Street during times of prohibition remains current. There were no crimes of note to bring to the attention of the Town Council.

7097 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Skip at St Mary's Road Car Park (Min Nos 6976 / 6996a / 7015a / 7034a / 7050a / 7064a refers.)

A new sign was put in place on 5/5/15 indicating the type of rubbish that can be placed in the skip. The skip itself was changed to 4 cu. Yd. covered skip on 21/4/15 to reduce the opportunity for vermin to scavenge and remove contents from the skip. The skip has been emptied 4 times, to date, at a cost of £520 net of VAT (£130 per skip). The majority of the contents have been black bags containing household waste but have also included unauthorised and commercial waste. The trial period of 12 weeks and the skip licence expires on 8/6/15.

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council does not extend the trial period and the current skip, when full, is removed. A public statement will be issued explaining the reasons for the removal of the skip on the grounds of cost and unauthorised waste, including commercial waste, being placed in the skip.

b) Invitation for Island Roads to make a presentation to Cowes Town Council on Asset Management (Min No 7062 refers).

Island Roads are unable to attend the Town Council meeting on 4 June 2015. They have agreed to attend the Town Council meeting on 16 July 2015.

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council invite Island Roads to take part in a public meeting with a date to be arranged, subject to their agreement.

c) Invitation to NHCTCL to give a presentation to Cowes Town Council on Northwood House & Northwood Park (Min No 7079a refers)

The Board of Directors were invited to make a presentation to Cowes Town Council at a future meeting but have stated that their preference would be to have an informal meeting between all Town Councillors and all Board Members.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk makes arrangements for an informal meeting to take place between all Cowes Town Councillors and all NHCTCL Board Members during September 2015.

d) Cowes Community Sports Facility. (Min No. 7071 refers)

Councillor Spalding enquired whether there had been a response from the Isle of Wight Council in relation to the correspondence sent regarding this sports facility. The Town Clerk explained that no response had been received and this is an ongoing action for follow up.

Councillor Wardrop left the meeting at 8.40pm.

7098 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Informal Meeting with Janet Allan (NHCTCL) & Margaret Ankers (IWLF)

The notes of the Informal Meeting with Janet Allan & Margaret Ankers held on 31 March 2015 were received.

b) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee Meetings held on 9 April 2015 & 30 April 2015 were received.

c) Supporters of Cowes Library Group

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library Group held on 20 April 2015 were received. Discussion ensued regarding the future of Cowes Library and the possibility of the Post office being located in the Library.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council consider writing a letter to the MP & the Post Office about the relocation of the Post Office and consider at a later date raising a petition in conjunction with Cowes Business Association. Cowes Town Council will continue to forward complaints through to the dedicated Post Office email address.

Councillor Cowan left the meeting at 9.04pm.

d) Acquisitions Committee

The Minutes of the Acquisitions Committee Meeting held on 22 April 2015 were received.

RESOLVED

(i). Grounds Maintenance – The Parade Bandstand

1. That Cowes Town Council does not take responsibility for the weekly emptying of the two litter bins on the Bandstand, as this is currently part of the Island Roads contract.
2. That Cowes Town Council takes responsibility for the planting of bedding plants in the existing troughs at the Bandstand.
3. That Cowes Town Council continues to maintain the plaques in situ at the Bandstand.
4. That Cowes Town Council will not be taking on any responsibility for the maintenance of the bandstand structure.

(ii). Grounds Maintenance – Moorgreen Reservoir

1. That Cowes Town Council continue to pay for the weekly emptying of one litter bin at the cost of £161.57 for 2015 / 2016.
2. That Cowes Town Council arrange a meeting with the Allotment Association to discuss grounds maintenance in this area, with a view to them taking over this work.
3. That Cowes Town Council monitors the condition of the grounds following the withdrawal of Isle of Wight Council grounds maintenance works.

(iii). Grounds Maintenance – Mornington Green (Inc Jenny's Wood & Mornington Woods)

1. That Cowes Town Council accept the revised specification for 2015 / 2016 of £928.20 which includes retaining the litter bin in the top car park.
2. That Cowes Town Council monitor the effect of the revised specification and follow up with the Mornington Woods Volunteer Group.

(iv). Grounds Maintenance – Arctic Park

1. That Cowes Town Council accept the revised specification for 2015 / 2016 of £737.76.
2. That Cowes Town Council monitor the effect in this area of the revised specification.

(v). Grounds Maintenance – Northwood Recreation Ground

1. That Cowes Town Council accept the proposal to retain the current specification for 2015 / 2016 at a cost of £7222.24 as this is an important community amenity.
2. That Cowes Town Council consider a long term strategy for this area with the possibility of securing a lease or licence from the Isle of Wight Council in the future.

(vi). Grounds Maintenance – Costs for Community Sites

1. That Cowes Town Council pay the Isle of Wight Council the additional grounds maintenance costs for 2015 / 2016 in the sum of £3345.27.

(vii). Beach Cleaning

1. That Cowes Town Council accept the Isle of Wight Council's reduced specification for beach cleaning.
2. That Cowes Town Council monitor the effect that the revised specification has on the beaches in Cowes.

e) Medina Valley Area Action Plan Group

The Minutes of the Medina Valley Area Action Plan Group Meeting held on 28 April 2015 were received.

f) 'The Cut' Informal Meeting

The Minutes of 'The Cut' Informal Meeting held on 11 May 2015 were received.

Councillors Ellis & Hammond left the room at 9.10pm for the following agenda item.

g) Finance Committee

The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 12 May 2015 were received.

RESOLVED

(i). Annual Audit & Final Accounts for 2014 / 2015

1. That the Internal Auditors report for the year ended 31 March 2015 be received and noted.
2. That the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor.
3. That the Annual Governance Statement section of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2015 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor.

(ii) Application for Grants

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

a) Cowes Carnival	£2,500
b) Cowes Firework Committee	£3,000
c) Cowes Open Bowls Tournament	£400
2. That having reviewed the grant application from the Royal Yacht Squadron and, following consideration, Cowes Town Council ask the Royal Yacht Squadron to arrange for the portaloos invoice to be addressed and sent to Cowes Town Council who will pay the supplier invoice direct.
3. That Cowes Town Council, at a future meeting, consider whether organisations should be considered for funding each year outside of the grant application process i.e. Cowes Carnival, Cowes Firework Committee.
4. That Cowes Town Council considers taking out an events insurance policy which could cover the activities of outside organisations on a piecemeal basis.
5. That Cowes Town Council reviews the amount allocated under the budget heading of Grants and Special Events for 2015 / 2016.
6. That the balance in the budget of £8,100 be kept in reserve pending further applications which may be received.

Councillors Ellis & Hammond re-joined the meeting at 9.15pm.

7099 RESIGNATION OF JON MATTHEWS

The Town Clerk reported that Jon Matthews resigned as Town Councillor for Medina ward on 1 May 2015.

RESOLVED

The Town Clerk will start the process of advertising the Casual Vacancy immediately.

7100 SLCC NATIONAL CONFERENCE 15 – 17 OCTOBER 2015

The Town Clerk reported that as part of her Contract of Employment she is required to attend the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) Annual Conference. This year it is taking place in Hinckley, Leicestershire on 15 – 17 October 2015. The Town Clerk asked permission to attend the conference as this will leave the Town Council office closed for two days – Thursday 15 October and Friday 16 October 2016. The Assistant Town Clerk will be unable to provide cover as she will be attending the conference on behalf of Gurnard Parish Council.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk attends the SLCC Annual Conference in October 2015 and takes measures to inform Councillors and members of the public of the temporary closure of the Town Council office.

7101 TRANSPARENCY FOR LOCAL COUNCILS TRAINING – 22 APRIL 2015

The Town Clerk provided a written report on the recently undertaken training – Transparency for Local Councils. The training related to government changes to the smaller authorities' local audit and accountability framework which was introduced in March 2015. The main aim of the legislation is to improve accountability for smaller councils by ensuring that certain documents are uploaded onto Parish & Town Council websites for residents to read. Cowes Town Council is quite well ahead of the new regulations so this should not put a huge additional administrative burden on the Town Clerk.

7102 COWES TOWN COUNCIL INSURANCE 2015 / 2016

Cowes Town Council are currently insured through the agent AON UK Ltd on behalf of Allianz Insurance plc; the insurance renewal date is 1 June 2015. It was initially thought that the Town Council was tied into a three year contract with Allianz but this is not the case.

Therefore two other insurance companies were approached for a quotation; those being Zurich Municipal & Came & Company who specialise in insurance for Town & Parish Councils.

Came & Company were unable to provide a quotation within the given time limit. The two quotations received were from AON UK Ltd on behalf of Allianz Insurance plc and Zurich Municipal. After discussing and comparing the two quotations it was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council enter into a three year long term agreement with Zurich Municipal with the insurance start date of 1/6/15.

7103 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Details of miscellaneous publications and correspondence was circulated to all Town Councillors.

7104 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- a) Destination Cowes – Councillor McNeill
- b) Gateway Cowes – Councillor Banks

(The proceedings terminated at 9.29pm)

CHAIRMAN