

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 6th March 2014 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Banks (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Brown, Corby, Cowan, Ellis, Fuller (7.56p.m.), Jones, Matthews, Nicholson and Wardrop.

6868 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hall, Hammond, McNeill, Peacey-Wilcox, Robinson and Walters.

6869 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest at this stage.

6870 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th February 2014 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6871 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the public asked the following questions:

Q. The Town Council has raised its precept by almost 100%; can you give assurances that the extra income raised will be spent for the benefit of the residents of Cowes and not on sailing events?

A. The Town Mayor confirmed that the increase had been made purely to safeguard discretionary services in the town that might otherwise be lost.

Q. When black bags are deposited by householders for collection they are often not secured properly causing rubbish to spill onto the roads; what can be done about this problem?

A. The bags are often broken open by dogs or foxes which is a problem. Also many second home owners put their rubbish out well before the official collection day; we have asked for collections in Cowes to revert back to Mondays which would help but have been informed that that would not be possible until a new contract was negotiated in 2015. The Town Clerk will report this complaint to the correct authority.

6872 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

- a). That the I.W. Council had approved a Council Tax increase of 1.99% for 2014/15 to help retain several of the services that may otherwise have been lost; the final recommendations followed several months of consultation, scrutiny and dialogue between the five political groups in County Hall.
- b). That a review of future Island Housing Need was being undertaken.
- c). That he had attended a meeting to receive an update regarding the Medina Valley Area Action Plan.
- d). An update regarding the PFI contract. The Principle I.W. Council Monitoring Officer for the PFI contract was leaving the post but he was in the process of arranging regular meetings with the replacement officer and I.W, Council colleagues to monitor future progress.
- e). That he had attended a public meeting hosted by the MP regarding recent storms and the severe impact that resultant flooding had had for many local residents.

f). That following the last Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel meeting he had arranged a further meeting with the Cabinet member and a business representative to discuss the Council's Parking Strategy.

g). That he had dealt with other miscellaneous incidents in the last month.

Councillor Nicholson's written report referred to the following;

a). That the nuisance parking around the Place Side area had now been resolved following robust intervention from the police.

b). That new concerns had been raised about unfinished paving crossing Spinnaker Close; a resident had suffered a nasty accident requiring hospital treatment as a result of the unfinished surface. The road had not been adopted as Persimmon Homes had failed to enter and complete the adoption process; the I.W. Council and Island Roads would raise concerns over public safety with them.

c). That the motion regarding the local beer industry had resulted in the formation of an autonomous Island Licenced Trade Group called 'Fight 4 Wight Licensees.

d). That following the Police Motion it had been announced that the Chief Constable was overseeing massive restructuring and greater community and associated organisation involvement within the force.

e). That he had met the newly appointed head officer for Health and Wellbeing; he looked forward to further discussions regarding his ideas to progress a best and meaningful health and wellbeing for the community which would include Complementary and Alternative Health services.

f). That there now appeared to be general agreement regarding safety issues experienced by horse riders on newly laid SMA type road surfaces.

g). That he had reached agreement with the Parks Officer and affected residents concerned by flooding in the NW and NE corners of Northwood Recreation Ground. The soil in the NW corner had been aerated to help drainage and larger and deeper holes would be dug to enable water to reach the porous substrate more directly. A resident had dug a shallow channel alongside the path in the NE corner to save their properties from flooding and this would be developed by the Parks Officer.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox referred to the following:

a). That she had attended a Sports Award event which celebrated the great success of Island children.

b). That there was ongoing consultation regarding the small area that used to host a playpark in Maxted Close.

c). That a number of residents had written to the I.W. Council with regard to the proposed removal of a part of the bank and trees from part of Upper Newport Road in connection with the Parkhurst Wind Turbine planning application; although the official consultation period had expired the Planners were still accepting comments .

d). That she had received a good response from her Beacon article this month; comments would be forwarded to the correct bodies for implementation.

e). That she had been able to help a new local business regarding their business rates.

f). That she had visited a homeless shelter at Downside that was run by volunteers.

g). That the I.W. Council was hoping to have a consultation regarding the future of the floating bridge which would include possible sponsorship. There had never been an intention to charge children for using the bridge; the I.W. Council was investigating whether the charging of adult foot passengers would be cost neutral.

Councillor Bertie submitted a written report referring to the following:

a). That he had attended Full Council in February when the main topic for debate was the budget; he was pleased that a proposal not to finance school crossing patrols had not been accepted.

b). That David Thornton of Visit Isle of Wight would be attending a special CBA meeting on 24th March to discuss how best we can promote Cowes in the future.

c). That the Chapel site in Market Hill had still not started; he understood the developers were still waiting for a covenant to be signed although he would be chasing this up.

d). That several local residents considered the latest planning application changes for the Waterside Pub Site Development substantially altered the look and size of the development and have request it be determined by the Planning Committee rather than by Officer delegated powers.

- e). That the roads all around Cowes seemed to be in a rapid state of deterioration; he would seek to hold another meeting with Island Roads.
- f). That the drainage system in the High Street appeared to be blocked in several areas; he was chasing this up with Island Roads.
- g). That highway safety issues were becoming a major problem within the I.W. Council; he had highlighted
- Abuse of highway access time by vehicles and cyclists
 - Speed of drivers using the High Street after 6pm – he was recommending the speed limit be reduced to 10mph
 - The accident black spot at the corner of Victoria/Mill Hill Roads
- g). That he was against the proposal submitted by Cowes Week Ltd. in respect of the Cowes Week Trademark; he was now of the opinion that we should seek to have the registration of the name revoked.
- h). That he had inspected the recent High Street flooding; most affected shops did not suffer too much damage. He wished to record that the Fire Service had been magnificent during the flooding problems.

6873 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Sgt. Gary Knight reported as follows:

- a). That crime was down by 12% in February and year on year to date by 14%.
- b). That cycling in the pedestrianized High Street remained a priority; three cyclists had been stopped and warned during the last month and there had been no incidents of repeat offending.
- c). That the Beat Surgeries were being held on 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month between 6pm and 8pm.
- d). That there were no crimes of note to report in the last month.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones, Sgt Knight confirmed that the CCTV was a valuable tool for the police.

Finally, the Town Mayor asked Sgt. Knight to pass on the Town Council's best wishes to Sgt. Sizer who had been ill for the last few months.

6874 MATTERS ARISING

a). Seating on The Parade during AAM Cowes Week (Min. No. 6841 refers)

The Town submitted a response from the Deputy Director, Economy and Environment regarding the removal of street furniture from The Parade for AAM Cowes Week; it stated that this was important in creating a safe space necessary to host the Parade Village. There was seating available within the Parade Village which could be used by all; the provision of alternative seating had not been raised as an issue in the past but he would welcome any views on why it should be the case now.

Councillors stated that it was not permissible to use seating within the Parade Village without purchasing a drink or food; one Councillor had been asked to move by security staff.

It was generally agreed that the bandstand which was classified as a Village Green, should be excluded from contractual arrangements for the event and also that any additional toilet facilities should be provided by the commercial company responsible for the Parade Village.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk writes again to the Deputy Director, Economy and Environment pointing out that the bandstand had Village Green status and also that additional toilets for The Parade during AAM Cowes Week should be provided by the company responsible for the Parade Village.

6875 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a). Supporters of Cowes Library Group

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library Group held on 10th February 2014 were received.

b). Meeting with Island Roads

The Town Mayor reported on an informal meeting with Island Roads held on 12th February 2014. The Town Council had given prior notification regarding a list of 21 issues that required clarification. In response to one of those issues regarding roads such as Cockleton Lane having been resurfaced whereas Park Road, at its junction towards Ward Avenue and Ward Avenue itself were disintegrating daily, those present were told that the delivery of the contract was very much financially led. The prioritisation was related to programming by a computer determined modelling system based on expediency. It was Island Roads intention to undertake resurfacing of poorer roads partway through their delivery contract in order not to have to repeat their resurfacing more than once during the contract period.

The representative from Island Roads also stated that when resurfacing took place to the roads there would not necessarily be any replacement or remodelling of the kerb line; the kerbs would only be replaced, as would any castings, on a needs only basis.

The condition and functioning of the drainage channels in the High Street was also raised; the Town Council had long been concerned by their lack of maintenance and many sections of the metal covers had now corroded leaving them in a danger to the public. Island Roads acknowledged the safety issue regarding the metal covers and were then questioned regarding the cleaning of the drainage channels. They had since confirmed that they were last cleaned in May 2013.

The Town Mayor concluded by confirming that responses were given to the Town Council's full list of questions; the responses were enlightening but not all were welcome or expected.

c). Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning & Licensing Committee held on 17th February 2014 were received.

d). Finance Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 17th February 2014 were received.

i). Applications for grant funding

Armed Forces Day – towards the costs of staging Armed Forces Day on 21st June.

Ability Dogs 4 Young People – towards the cost of a quality laser jet solid ink printer.

RESOLVED

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

- a). Armed Forces Day £100
- b). Ability Dogs 4 Young People £500

ii). Preparation of 2013/14 accounts

RESOLVED

That Bright Brown, Chartered Accountants be appointed to undertake the preparation of the Town Council's accounts for the financial year 2013/14.

The Town Clerk also reported that the Member Auditor had conducted an internal audit on 18th February; his spot checks on bank transactions for the calendar year 2013 had shown them to be entirely accurate and in respect of petty cash, he confirmed that both the book keeping and cash in hand had been correct.

e). Northwood Recreation Ground Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Northwood Recreation Ground Committee held on 20th February 2014 were received.

i). Skatepark

RESOLVED

1). That the Sign Company supply and install a new skatepark sign in the sum of £75 plus VAT;

- 2). That the Assistant Town Clerk be authorised to employ ‘Dial a Wash’ to clean the signs and shelter at the skatepark provided their quotation was less than £500; and
- 3). That J.A. Dempsey be contracted to repair the tarmac at the skatepark in the sum of £475 plus VAT.

ii). Playbuilder playpark

RESOLVED

That the Town Council makes a contribution of £3,250 to the I.W. Council towards the cost of repairs to the playpark.

iii) MUGA

RESOLVED

- 1). That the shelter to be ordered from Broxap be in a green and yellow colour;
- 2). That the Assistant Town Clerk be authorised to contract with Steve Porter Transport for the collection of the shelter if the cost is less than the £970 quoted by Broxap;
- 3). That Colin Newnham Services be contracted to install the shelter on the area of tarmac between the skatepark and the MUGA;
- 4). That permission be sought from the I.W. Council to install cycle hoops outside the entrance to the skatepark and MUGA;
- 5). That cycle hoops be ordered from Broxap as required; and
- 6). That Colin Newnham Services be engaged to install the cycle hoops at a maximum cost of £75 per hoop plus VAT.

iv). Toilets

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Assistant Town Clerk be authorised to purchase consumables as required for the toilets from Betapack;
- 2). That safety signs be purchased to advise members of the public when toilets were being cleaned;
- 3). That the Assistant Town Clerk laminates signs advising members of the public when the toilet block was closed due to vandalism; and
- 4). That the toilets would normally be open by 9am daily to 6pm in the winter and until 9pm in the summer.

v). Outdoor table tennis table

RESOLVED

That the project to install an outdoor table tennis table will not be progressed.

f). Town Improvements Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Improvements Committee held on 25th February 2014 were received.

i). War Memorial, Northwood Park

RESOLVED

That the Assistant Town Clerk liaise with the I.W. Council with a view to adopt ownership of the War Memorial.

ii). Outdoor gym equipment

RESOLVED

That the Town Council ‘ring fence’ £15,000 from balances to complete the installation of an outdoor gym.

iii). Town guide/residents handbook

RESOLVED

That the Town Council does not proceed with the provision of a Town guide/ residents handbook.

iv). Seafront shelter

RESOLVED

That the Town Council ‘ring fence’ £17,000 from balances for a seafront shelter pending further investigation regarding the project.

g). Cowes Week trademark

Councillor Corby reported on a meeting with Cowes Week Ltd. and the CBA regarding the application of the Cowes Week trademark; he stated that Michelle Warner had appeared to have passed negotiations to CWL's newest board member, Lisa Anderson.

Since that meeting, the CBA had been issued with a draft contract although the Town Council had not received a copy; this contract had been totally rejected by the CBA at their meeting on 3rd March.

A further meeting was scheduled to be held on 21st March; it was agreed that the Town Clerk would arrange a meeting for the Town Council and CBA representatives for them to formulate a unified position prior to the meeting with CWL.

h). Cowes Business Association

Notes of a Meeting of the Cowes Business Association held on 3rd March 2014 were received.

6876 COWES/EAST COWES CHAIN FERRY

Councillor Walters had submitted a paper in respect of a meeting at East Cowes Town Hall regarding the possible charging of foot passengers on the Cowes/East Cowes chain ferry; a member of the public had given such a very good presentation on the impact of charges that the Deputy Leader of the I.W. Council agreed at the meeting to look again at this possible option and the cost implications charges would have on working families and the elderly.

Councillor Fuller reported that on inspection, the figures presented by Officers were not sustainable and that the I.W. Council would be looking again at the implications charging foot passengers would have. He confirmed that charges for foot passengers would not be implemented for at least the next 12 months.

6877 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). *A request for grant funding towards the 2014 AAM Cowes Week fireworks.
- b). Renewal of the Assistant Town Clerks membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks.
- c). Renewal of the Town Councils affiliation to the I.W. Sports & Recreation Council.
- d). *Consultation on the draft Children's Services Facilities Contributions and Solent Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Documents.
- e). *Details of miscellaneous correspondence
- f). Invitation to a Duke of Edinburgh Information & Networking event on 27th March.

(* Copies circulated to all members)

RESOLVED

- 1). That the application for grant towards the AAM Cowes Week fireworks be referred to the Finance Committee;
- 2). That the Assistant Town Clerks subscription to the SLCC in the sum of £101 be paid by the Town Council;
- 3). That the Town Clerk be authorised to renew the Town Council's affiliation to the I.W. Sports & Recreation Council; and
- 4). That the consultation on the draft Children's Services Facilities Contributions and Solent Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Documents be referred to the Planning & Licensing Department.

(The proceedings terminated at 8.55pm)

CHAIRMAN

