



Minutes of the Thirty fourth Annual Town Meeting held in the Drawing Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 9 May 2019 at 6.15pm, convened under the provision of the section 99 and schedule 12 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

Present: Councillor Fuller (Town Mayor) (Chairman)

Councillors Bertie, Brown, Bustin, Gilpin, Jones, Nicholson (6.18pm), Oliver, Peacey-Wilcox, Rafferty, Reynolds and Taylor

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk.

**226 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Ellis, Hammond and Wardrop.

**227 MINUTES  
RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the Thirty third Annual Town Meeting held on 17 May 2018 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**228 REPORT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Councillor Fuller welcomed Councillors Gilpin, Rafferty and Reynolds to their first Annual Town Meeting.

The Mayor had provided a written report which was circulated to attendees.

This is my last report as Mayor of Cowes.

Thank you to my wonderful colleagues who gave me the honour of representing our community for a further year.

For me, it has been a fantastic two years, where I have met some lovely warm people who are committed to our town and dedicated to enhance and improve the lives of the people of our town.

I also wish to place on record my grateful appreciation to deputy mayor, Lora Peacey-Wilcox and our Town Clerk, Debbie Faulkner and Deputy Clerk, Kate Gibbs who have always gone above and beyond the call of duty in their support to me and to Cowes.

This year has proved to be an eventful year, and the summer sunshine has acted as a draw to increasing visitor numbers to our town, and the numerous events by our clubs, our groups and our organisations.

It is with sadness that this year the Town Council has lost three very inspirational, dedicated and enthusiastic Councillors in Amanda Glendenning, Jean Bartrum and Roger Bartrum who have all left their legacy to the Town Council.

In their place, the Town Council welcomes new Councillors Steve Reynolds, Ken Gilpin and Jock Rafferty who, I trust, will be an inspiration to the town in the months and years ahead.

It goes without saying, much work has happened in the past year and with changes of Councillors within the Town Council, but also changes within some of the Council's partners at Cowes Business Association, Northwood House Trust and Destination Cowes to name but three.

It is noted that it isn't what goes on during our Full Council meetings that makes the difference to residents, it is what goes on outside our meetings and within our community. The dialogue, discussions and the differences of opinions which we all have and, so long as this can be respected, our Council can and will grow stronger.

I would like also to place on record all Town Councillors, all of whom give our Council diversity and experience in the work they fulfil for our community, do this unpaid. Although there are many rewards when things go right, this is often only as a result of Councillors investing freely of their precious time. To all my colleagues, I give my vote of thanks. In the last year (despite shorter meetings), the Council continues to achieve a great deal. From liaising with Island Roads on the prohibition of vehicles in the High Street, to supporting the Road Crossing Patrol in Park Road, to supporting retention of the Watch House Shelter, refurbishing toilets, supporting our library service, emergency plans, parking and welcoming royal visitors. By supporting good causes, investing in organisations that support our most vulnerable and needy and promoting events and activities which encourage both residents to love the town they live in.

**Organisations Funded by Cowes Town Council 2018/9**

Age UK - Cowes Memory Group £200	NHCTCL - Tennis Court Fencing £2,786
Moorgreen Road Allotment Society £370	RAF 100 Event £250
Destination Cowes £2,000	TeamSpy £1,000
Breakout Youth Charity £250	Citizens Advice IOW £500
British Power Boat Racing Club £1,000	Cowes Primary School - Shed (Part funded)
NHCTCL - Cowes Week Tennis Lessons £360	£500
Isle of Wight Literary Festival Youth Zone £5,000	Cowes Open Bowls Tournament £400
Cowes Primary School Defibrillator (Part funded) £750	IOW Music, Dance & Drama Festival £100
Cowes Medical Centre Patient Participation Group £500	Cowes Week Fireworks £1,500
Armed Forces Day Committee 2019 £350	Jigsaw Family Support £1,000

**A Summary of issues Cowes Town Council has supported this year.**

- May Day Bank Holiday proved busy with popular events to commemorating the Blyskawica's defence of Cowes. This offered myself and Lora a really good opportunity to meet up, listen and speak to both service personnel and their families.
- The Town Council discussed options to brighten up the High Street with hanging baskets. Following kick-starting this initiative, responsibility was transferred to Cowes Business Association.
- A meeting took place with residents to discuss the community orchard proposal for The Green, Crossfield Avenue. I found the meeting and outcomes suggested by residents very positive and look forward to Cllr Taylor's efforts in making this proposal a reality at an alternative site.
- I met with East Cowes Councillor, Cllr Karl Love to discuss closer collaboration between both towns, particularly with respect to the ongoing concerns of being a commuter point and the mirrored challenges that both towns share. A meeting with all local IW Councillors (and both Town Councils) took place, and subsequently there is now a greater cross-over between both Councils.
- The Cowes Floating Bridge User Group was established to feed back issues between residents, local Councils, businesses and the IW Council.
- Cllr Wardrop and I attended a dinner with Cowes/ Deauville Twinning Association and delegates from across the Channel. At the event, it was a real pleasure to receive hospitality and friendship from the people of Deauville.

- With colleagues, I attended the RAF 100 Commemoration event which took place at St. Mary's Church.
- I have attended several meetings of the Cowes Mobility Forum, and look forward to addressing concerns that will improve access within the town.
- Cowes Week remained popular, with an increase in visitors. Working with the Shoreside Committee and sponsors, Lendy, the Plastic Free and Water Refill initiative proved popular.
- Meetings have taken place throughout the year with the IW Council who have given feedback on Fire Reviews, Waste, Planning, Transport, Regeneration, Parking and the prospect of transferring further services to Town and Parish Councils.
- Isle of Wight Day was held in Cowes in September.
- Artists have been selected to work on the mural for The Cut.
- A drop in was arranged for residents to switch energy suppliers with the Footprint Trust at Cowes Library. Subsequently, 19 home visits took place identifying £4,722 savings for residents.
- Councillors attended the 2018 Remembrance Service at St. Marys Church, Northwood Park and The Parade.
- Jigsaw, a charity set up to support those affected family separation, attended the Town Council's meeting and received grant funding for drop-in sessions held at Cowes Library.
- Meetings took place with Cowes Police.
- Queen Victoria switched on the Christmas Lights in Cowes High Street.
- Councillors Taylor, Oliver, J Bartrum, R Bartrum and I attended the Cowes Foodbank in Love Lane.
- Cowes Foodbank, Cowes Classic Boat Museum and the Friends of Northwood Cemetery were recipients of a financial donation made by organisers of the Cowes Big Lunch.
- Cllr Peacey-Wilcox and I attended an event held by the Cowes Sea Cadets promoting their activities for young people in Cowes.
- Cowes Town Council manned a stall at Cowes Yacht Haven's Christmas Event. Councillors at the event spoke to residents about their future hopes, desires and aspirations for our town.
- Meetings have taken place with Town Councillors, IW Councillors and businesses to strategically look at parking in town.
- Following campaigning, a new Post Office counter was created within the Cowes Town Central shop. Also following support from Red Funnel, a new free ATM was installed at the Red Jet Terminal.
- Cowes Town Council continued to support the Mountbatten Hospice at the Light Up A Life Christmas Service.
- Whilst Cowes Town Council largely supported the IW Council's proposals for Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's), the Council suggested that dogs on leads are permitted in cemeteries. The Town Council suggested that all beaches on the Island are covered by alcohol dispersal orders.
- Following savings being identified, Cowes Town Council's precept was frozen.
- The Town Council met with Cowes Business Association, who raised concerns regarding long stay parking in Cowes, increasing parking availability and improved access to the park & ride.
- Repairs to the skate park were undertaken.
- Cowes and East Cowes Town Councils met to discuss concerns on the confidence of, and reliability of the Floating Bridge. Following the meeting several recommendations were made.

- Discussions have taken place for the Town Council to take on a more hands-on approach at Mornington Woods.
- Code of conduct training took place for Councillors with the Monitoring Officers at the IW Council. Of particular interest are potential changes to take place to re-enforce the requirements of prejudicial interests for local councillors.
- Flood defence information is being updated for local residents. Cllr Peacey-Wilcox reported Cowes Flood Plan was an exemplar of Good Practice to other local councils.
- Proposals to resurrect a proposal for a hard surfaced path to circumnavigate Northwood Recreation Ground was supported.
- The Town Council commemorated Commonwealth Day by raising the Commonwealth Flag in Francki Place.
- Cowes Town Council are working with the support and sponsorship of private contractors to save the Watch House shelter.
- Cowes Town Council has financially supported retention of the Park Road Crossing Patrol, following a puffin crossing being considered unviable.
- Following a successful bid, the Town Council is to pilot a sustainable weed killer made with acetic acid to control weeds around the Skatepark and MUGA at Northwood Recreation Ground.
- I attended the Red Funnel's naming ceremony for its latest vessel (for freight), Red Kestrel.
- The Visitor Cowes Working Group met, and things are now looking more positive with the Town Council stepping into the shoes left by Destination Cowes. I remain really positive through the Working Group, and with support from the CBA, inroads can be made to build upon the foundations laid by Destination Cowes.
- I had a fantastic afternoon at Old Charlton House's Easter Event, and felt privileged to judge residents' Easter Bonnet competition.
- My last civic event as Mayor will be the wreath laying to commemorate the ORP Blyskawica's defence of Cowes on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2019.

Questions were invited but none were asked.

**229 ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019**

Copies of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 were circulated at the meeting. Ms Debbie Faulkner (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer) was available for any questions but none were raised. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 be received and noted.**

**230 ANNUAL SUMMARY – SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM**

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Police Constable Dollery was unable to attend the meeting. Crime levels in the area for the last twelve months are lower than for the same period last year.

**231 ANNUAL SUMMARY – IW COUNCILLORS**

Written reports were received from Councillors Bertie, Fuller, Nicholson and Peacey-Wilcox.

**Councillor Paul Bertie (Cowes North)**

I serve as both an IOW Councillor and a Cowes Town Councillor, and attend regular full Council meetings and various committee meetings as and when required.

I remain an active member of Cowes Business Association and Destination Cowes.

Thankfully, Cowes does not have many major problems, the exception being cycling in the pedestrian precinct. I am working on a scheme to have bollard covers at strategic points

asking cyclist to dismount. Car parking is another major problem, and I am following proposals very carefully.

My main concern is the Cowes economy. Without a strong economy, everything else starts to decline, and it is no secret that all High Streets in the country are suffering, which has a knock-on effect on supporting businesses.

The promotion of Cowes is a major requirement, as we face tough competition from other coastal regions. The various bodies in Cowes such as CHC, CBA, Cowes Week Ltd., Yacht Clubs, etc. all have their own agendas. I have taken the lead therefore (hopefully with the full support of Cowes Town Council) to create a new portal website which combines information from all the various bodies so that anybody can see instantly what is happening in Cowes. This will be a major administration project.

#### **Councillor Paul Fuller (Cowes West and Gurnard)**

In a Nutshell: Some of the key issues I've been pursuing since last year:

For details of these and other issues please visit [paulfullercc.blogspot.com](http://paulfullercc.blogspot.com)

#### **April 2018**

- Anti-social floodlighting at The Range was resolved following officer support.
- Following the withdrawal of recycling banks, I supported residents receiving help.
- Within my Scrutiny role, a support group was created to feedback to Floating Bridge stakeholders.
- Following the growth of the Cowes West & Gurnard ward, it is intended Queens Road, Cliff Road, Baring Road (east of Egypt Hill), Park Road (east of Firs Close) and Ward Avenue will become part of Cowes North from 2021.

#### **May**

- With the grateful support of Gurnard Church, Trading Standards undertook scam drop-in's for residents at Coffee and Chat during May and June.
- Meetings took place to support resident, shopper and visitor car parking in Cowes.
- Successful action was taken against a building contractors' bonfire in Gurnard.
- After feedback, repairs to the railings on Cowes/Gurnard Seafront took place.
- Large rubbish bins were installed on Gurnard Green, following complaints of litter. In addition, following fly-tipping, the Biffa Bin in Shore Road was removed

#### **June**

- Place Road was realigned to cater for the new Meadow View development.
- I received feedback following complaints of increased fees to Beach Hut owners. I suggested fees were increased to mainland residents, rather than locals.
- Proposals for the new Gurnard School rebuild was circulated to residents.
- Discussions took place with the IW Council regarding restricting overnight parking on Cowes seafront during summer. This continues to be pursued.
- I supported Southampton City Council's Clean Air Strategy.

#### **July**

- Complaints of anti-social parking were received. Discussions took place with those responsible.
- I met with the Place Road developer, and discussions took place concerning bonfires and reassured residents' speculation on developing nearby land.
- I met with and supported the ongoing concerns of regulars from the Apex Church.
- Complaints were received and action pursued following delays at Lynnbottom Tip.

#### **August**

- It was a privilege as Mayor spending Cowes Week promoting our town and listening to residents and visitors about improving the event for future years.

- Following a request for call-in being supported, the Planning Application for the contemporary Watersedge Café, Shore Road was approved by Planning Committee.
- I was invited to a public meeting hosted by Gurnard Pines residents requiring support following the site owner installing new water and electricity meters to chalet owners.
- Tuttons Hill and Marsh Road were resurfaced.

### **September**

- Solent View Road was resurfaced in favour of Worsley Road following false starts.
- Cowes hosted this years' Isle of Wight Day Event.
- It was indicated that my suggestion to include footpaths to and from Newport via the Medina Valley would be included in proposals for the new IW Coastal Path.
- At Full Council, I was one of three Councillors to oppose an increase to IW Councillors' Allowances.

### **October**

- A new application was received, and a letter-drop took place for a revised planning application next to Dottens Farm. This scheme for 11 dwellings was later approved.
- Consultation took place concerning seafront cycling. Following feedback, no action was taken due to the numbers of families cycling on the footway safely. However, a request was made to monitor those cycling at speed.
- I met with Southern Vectis to request better capacity on the No.1 Bus Route.
- Following positive feedback, a new ATM was provided at the Red Jet terminus.
- It was reported that Cowes benefitted from an uplift of visitors during Cowes Week.

### **November**

- I attended Remembrance Events at St Mary's Church and All Saints Church.
- Following acceptance by the Post Office of need within the Town Centre, a new counter service was provided in town. It is intended a second counter may follow.
- 70 residents attended my Gurnard Pines drop-in event giving support. The event was supported by Jigsaw, The Footprint Trust, The NHS, Citizens Advice & Amey.
- Work commenced on removal of Japanese Knotweed adjacent to Dottens Farm.

### **December**

- At Full Council, I voted for increased Council Tax support to those on low incomes.
- With support from the Footprint Trust I arranged a drop-in for residents to switch energy suppliers in Cowes Library.
- Action was taken following anti-social parking complaints outside Gurnard School.
- Action was taken following land clearance taking place off Woodvale Road
- I arranged a visit by local councillors to Cowes Foodbank.

### **January 2019**

- I requested Egypt Hill and Cockleton Lane being gritted in icy conditions.
- Access to the beach from Shore Path was closed. With resident's support, I campaigned successfully to see the access restored.
- A letter-drop took place in response to the Island Planning Strategy (IPS).
- I've requested better distribution of developers' contributions towards local projects.
- Toilets reopened in Cowes following mindless vandalism.

### **February**

- I voted against proposals to increase Council Tax.
- Within the Island Planning Strategy I formally objected the increase in annual housing numbers from 525 to 641; I supported increasing local homes for local people and opposed proposals put to develop the green gap between Cowes and Gurnard.
- Support and action was taken following damage being caused to Blackberry Lane's kerb.

- Meetings took place to safeguard the Park Road crossing patrol. This is necessary following the non-viability of a zebra crossing and the loss of parking provision.
- Discussions are ongoing to replace Watch House Shelter on Cowes Parade.

### **March**

- Southern Housing arranged a meeting to increase housing at Bucklers View. Further feedback will take place by me on submission of plans.
- Assurance has been given that the Cowes Traffic Order is next on the priority list to be implemented by the IW Council. This remains a priority for me!
- It was indicated my 2015 proposals to redirect the English Coastal Path through Spencer's Copse and Shore Path will be supported by Natural England.
- Discussions have taken place to address Car Parking issues in Cowes. Increased parking capacity for residents, shoppers and visitors remain a priority.

### **Councillor John Nicholson (Cowes South and Northwood)**

- Chairmanship of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Adult Social Care, coordinating and levying severe criticism where it was due, coordinating and liaising between Health partners and other authorities, encouraging and supporting examples of good practice, giving constructive feedback in support of illustrations of real patient experience, attending Health Service partner's meetings, making introductions, constructive observations and suggestions.
- Supporting, representing and advising residents in various local and personal issues and concerns, from planning matters to parking issues social concerns.
- Negotiating and being actively engaged with Island Roads with regards to road works quality and impact mitigation. Campaigning against unnecessary disruption and inconvenience caused by poor consideration in Utility roadworks.
- Instigating and seeing through to implementation a fit for purpose Policy to properly and effectively regulate and control scaffolding erected on the Public Highway.
- Acting as representative on Island Roads Health and Safety Forum.
- Supporting Isle of Wight high-tech industry through activating links and assisting in events.
- Liaising with local schools and businesses, to support, encourage, connect and facilitate.
- Being outspoken, when needed, to represent and voice concerns that have caused local outrage.
- Being an actively involved member of Northwood Parish and Cowes Town Councils and sub-committees.
- Instigating a joint business survey, sponsored by IW Council and Northwood Parish Council, of Northwood businesses.

### **Councillor Lora Peacey-Wilcox (Cowes Medina)**

As always full details month by month can be accessed via [www.islandmagazines.co.uk](http://www.islandmagazines.co.uk) or on the Cowes Town Council website.

Taking part in speed watch, beach cleans, chasing up abandoned cars, road resurfacing, floating bridge, traffic orders, PARKING, planning issues, dog fouling.

Every day (and that isn't an exaggeration) is taken up with these issues and more. Most frustrating is having to keep chasing (particularly Island Roads) for answers. Once again, I thank fellow Cowes Town Council Councillors for their support and time in making us a very good council, the HOURS they give, is not unnoticed.

Sincere thanks for your support and to our Town Mayor for the past two years' service.

Questions were invited but none were asked.

**232**

**QUESTIONS FROM THE MEETING**

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

The proceedings terminated at 6.20pm.

**CHAIRMAN**