

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 6th October 2011 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor McGregor (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Birch, Brown, Fuller, Matthews, Mazillius, Peacey-Wilcox,
Robinson and Walters.

6519 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Banks, Ellis, Hammond, Jones, Sanderson, Wells and Wilcox.

6520 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

6521 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox submitted a written report referring to the following:

a). That she had been dealing with a number of complaints from her constituents including parking and cycling through the pedestrian area of the High Street.

Councillor Brown submitted a written report on the following issues:

a). Planning and Regulatory services –

i). that the Decentralisation and Localism Bill was expected to receive Royal Assent in the autumn.

ii). that the pre hearing meeting had now taken place in advance of the Examination into the Island Plan Core Strategy which was due to commence on 18th October.

iii). that the Cheverton Wind Farm planning appeal had been dismissed.

iv). That Bestival 2011 had attracted 50,000 people; the principal issues related to noise complaints although the number of formal complaints (14) was relatively low.

b). The economy – That in August the number of people out of work claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) was 3.4% (2,829 people) this compares with the rest of GB 3.9% and the South East 2.6%. The Council recognised the particular difficulty of young islanders finding work and/or training opportunities and a pre apprenticeship programme was in development, targeting those not in training employment or education (NEETs). The Council were still waiting to hear the outcome of the two Regional Growth Fund bids submitted on behalf of the Island. It was hoped that a decision on these bids for the Solent Ocean Energy Centre (total cost £3M) and a visitor accommodation improvement programme (total cost £2.2M) would be made in the autumn. The implementation of superfast broadband across the Island was one of the priorities in the Council's economic development plan. The Government had recently awarded the Council £3M towards the estimated total cost of £15M to install superfast broadband across the Island; the Council would need to identify matching funding for the £3M and to make best use of it to secure the balance from private sector internet service providers.

c). Tourism –

i). that in the year ending in the second quarter of 2011 (April to mid July) there were an estimated 2.5 million visitors to the Island. There were 1.47 million domestic staying visitors in the period, a 5% increase on the previous 12 month period, largely driven by an increase of some 113,000 holidaying visitors. There was however a reduction in domestic day visitors of 91,300 individuals (9%) compared with the 12 month period ending in the first quarter of 2011. This was a trend the

Council and its industry partners had been trying to achieve as staying visitors are known to have a greater economic impact than day visitors.

ii). That the annual I.W. Cycling Festival was well under way with over 5,000 participants. It was one of the biggest cycling events in the country and part of the reason why the Island had recently been voted the World's best cycling destination by the Lonely Planet travel guide.

iii). That the Council has recently promoted the Island on the mainland with a high profile event at the world famous Hamley's toy store in London's Regents Street.

d). Leisure – a delegated decision in support of the Waterside Community Trust's proposal to take over the management of the Waterside Pool.

e). Strategic Assets – a delegated decision agreeing terms for the disposal of Ventnor Winter Gardens.

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

a). That the new Cowes Community Bus had been operating for a month with relatively few complaints.

b). That he had passed residents concerns regarding 'crime & disorder' to the local MP; the concerns included the loss of the front desk, the imminent closure of Cowes Police Station and the loss of frontline police officers. The Chief Constable had told I.W. Councillors how CCTV should be monitored, how victims of crime would receive a 'follow up', how pubs causing high levels of anti-social behaviour would be closed down and he gave an assurance that more hand held cameras would be made available for Community Speedwatch Schemes.

c). That he had responded to the Parliamentary Boundary Review consultation.

d). That the I.W. Footprint Trust could help residents stay warm and save over £300 on fuel bills during the winter. For details call 822282, or visit <http://www.footprint-trust.co.uk/energetic.htm>

e). That a planning application was pending for a replacement radio transmitter mast at Cowes Golf Club.

f). That the Licensing Committee had approved the third largest Festival for the Island – Wow Fest in Shanklin; following representations it would have an 18,000 capacity for the first year and would be held on a busy weekend with both AAM Cowes Week fireworks and the Garlic Festival.

g). That he continued to respond to numerous complaints concerning the redevelopment of three sites in Egypt Hill.

h). That work on the new Cowes Enterprise College was running to schedule.

i). That he had dealt with numerous other miscellaneous incidents during September.

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

a). Changes to the waste collection arrangements due to start on 30th January 2012. Members of the public could still seek exemption if they have good reason but should do so without further delay.

b). That he had recently attended a well supported meeting of potential volunteers at the Cowes Library.

c). That the community bus scheme was running well after initial teething difficulties; unfortunately, he had had to withdraw from the voluntary driver training.

d). That the Public Enquiry regarding the Island Plan Core Strategy was due to start on 18th October with the Council's projections for local housing need being the first part of the strategy under examination.

e). That residents had responded promptly to a request that they cut back their hedges.

f). That he was pleased to report PC Sarah Waldergrove had replaced Mark Thomas on the local policing team.

g). That the I.W. Council was undertaking a major consultation regarding 'Care for older people'. Statistics showed that the rest of the country would not reach the Island level of over 65's until 2048; recognising this major demographic demand on Council and Health services had led to the need to review how best to cope with such a high proportion of elderly residents.

6522 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

An apology was received from Sgt. Sizer. PC Sarah Waldergrave and PCSO Steve Oatley reported as follows:

PC Waldergrave stated that she had been on the Safer Neighbourhood team since the summer; since starting she had primarily been involved with Love Lane Primary School and the thefts from vehicles. Her beat was on the High St.

The police were moving out of the busy summer period and would be concentrating their efforts on new priorities set by the Local Action Group.

Theft from motor vehicles would remain a priority although this was currently low level following two convictions and a further two men being charged.

Operation Nemesis 2 was a part of the Hampshire Constabulary initiative – it focussed on burglary, robbery and vehicle crime which were a large proportion of reported incidents and these incidents caused people a lot of distress.

In respect of crime statistics compared to the previous year, total crime was down by 18.9%, public disorder and assaults by 23.7%, criminal damage by 48% and vehicle Crime 19%. The only blip to these statistics related to house burglary which was up by 31.3% (15 to 21 incidents) although this could be accounted for by one individual who had now been arrested and imprisoned.

Finally, PC Waldergrave first stated that Hampshire and the I.W. was the first force to use mapping technology for crime information and it could be accessed on www.crimereports.co.uk;

Councillor Mazillius stated that the statistics continued to show a year on year reduction in crime for which the Safer Neighbourhood team should be congratulated.

6523 REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

The Town Clerk had been unable to contact the Environment Officer and therefore no report was available.

6524 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th September 2011 were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6525 MATTERS ARISING

a). Election – Cowes North Ward (Min. No. 6511a refers)

The Town Clerk reported that as the charges for the July election in the Cowes North ward had been significantly greater than the election in March in Cowes South, he had queried the charges with the Elections Manager. The Elections Manager had submitted a letter including a breakdown of the charges for the elections; the letter stated that the reason for the increase in costs was primarily due to the difference in size of the electorate between the areas. Cowes South had 1017 electors with 138 postal voters whereas Cowes North had 2677 electors and 501 postal voters; the main cost was postage of both poll cards and postal votes but there was also extra costs for printing higher volumes of poll cards and ballot papers and for staff time in issuing postal ballot papers.

The issue of poll cards had cost nearly £900 yet still only 15% of the electorate had voted; the Town Council would need to think very carefully about their benefit when another election was called.

b). War Memorial Project (Min. No. 6429b refers)

The Town Clerk reported that the War Memorials Trust had finally authorised a grant payment of £623 in respect of the War Memorial project in Northwood Park; the initial grant offer from them had been for £952. The total payable grant had been reduced to exclude items regarding the paving and

the new inscription panels which had been undertaken contrary to the approved Method Statement issued with the Grant Contract.

c). Community Bus Service (Min. No. 6512b refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from Northwood Parish Council which stated that they had received income from the Service 32 community bus scheme. They were seeking the Town Council's approval for Northwood Parish Council to be the responsible body for receiving income; they had offered to open a dedicated deposit account for these funds although any income/costs would be split between Northwood, Gurnard and Cowes Councils. There would be no administration charge for them providing this service.

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council has no objection to Northwood Parish Council opening a dedicated bank account and being the responsible body for receiving and banking income from the community bus scheme.

(Councillor Fuller declared a personal interest in this item as he was a member of Northwood Parish Council)

6526 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). Library Support Group

Notes of a Meeting of the Library Support Group held on 14th September 2011 were received.

c). Northwood House Sub Group

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Northwood House Sub Group held on 4th October 2011 were received.

RESOLVED

That, as advised by the Charities Commission the Town Council does not offer a view regarding the three options at this time but will engage at the Public Consultation stage when the chosen option is put forward by the Trustees; the Town Council will comment at that time if they have any salient points to make.

(Councillor Fuller declared a personal interest in this item as he was a member of the Friends of Northwood House)

d). Town Improvements Committee

Minutes of the Town Improvements Committee held on 6th October 2011 would be circulated and received at the next Town Council meeting although a recommendation from the meeting was considered.

RESOLVED

That M.J. Hayles Architectural be engaged for the fixed sum of £850 to draft and submit revised plans for a MUGA rather than a basketball court in Northwood Recreation Ground and to draft a revised Schedule of Works.

e). Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee held on 23rd September 2011 were received.

6527 FORMAT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RECEIPT OF REPORTS

Councillor Walters had submitted a written paper regarding reports from Councillors and the Safer Neighbourhood team and the time they took to deliver at meetings; this significantly lengthened the

meetings. Nonetheless, the reports were important and were welcomed as they were all capable of bringing a wealth of information to the meeting.

Following much discussion it was

RESOLVED

That all reports be submitted to the Town Clerk in the body of an email at least three days prior to meetings in order for them to be circulated to all Councillors; questions should only be asked at meetings when they specifically relate to the reports.

6528 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Councillor McGregor had submitted a paper stating that Councillors offering to attend training had been minimal over the last three years. She had received a communication from Sue Chilton who regularly delivered training for IWALC and questioned whether Councillors would attend training sessions if it could be delivered locally on a more informal or private basis at more suitable times to Councillors.

The Assistant Town Clerk stated that some time ago she had requested Councillors notify her of their training requirements; not all Councillors had responded. She questioned whether she should re-send the matrix of training needs with a request for dates and times that were most suitable for any training.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Assistant Town Clerk requests details of any specific topics of training Councillors would wish to have covered and the days and times that most suited them for that training; and
- 2). That the Assistant Town Clerk would ascertain from Sue Chilton what modules she was qualified and competent to deliver and at what cost to the Town Council.

Councillors Mazillius and Peacey-Wilcox left the meeting at 8.25p.m.

6529 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). Street Trading application for Pixie Pixie during AAM Cowes Week 2012.
 - b). *Boundary Commission proposals for their 2013 review of Parliamentary constituencies
 - c). Details of the Home-Start IOW AGM to be held at the Quay Arts Centre on 20th October commencing at 3.30p.m.
 - d). Details of miscellaneous correspondence.
- (* Copies circulated to all members)

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council has no objection to the application from Pixie Pixie for a Street Trading Licence for AAM Cowes Week 2012; and
- 2). That the Town Clerk responds to the Boundary Commission stating that the Town Council welcomes the proposal that two MP's represent the Island. Further, they have no objection in principle to the proposed division of the boundaries but they recognise that there may also be alternative boundary divisions that would be equally or even more appropriate for the Island particularly at some of the margins where there may be scope to improve community cohesion.

(Councillor Fuller declared a personal interest in a) above on the grounds he was a member of the I.W. Council Licensing & General Purposes Committee)

(Councillor Fuller declared a personal interest in b) above on the grounds that he had already made a representation in his own right in respect of the Boundary Review)

6530 REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The Town Clerk reported that the Annual Remembrance Service would be held this year on Sunday, 13th November; it was usual to make a donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal for a wreath that the Town Mayor would lay on behalf of the people of Cowes at the Remembrance Service.

The Town Clerk also stated that the matting that was traditionally laid for people laying wreaths to walk on which had been stored in Northwood House had been lost during the transitional changes at Northwood House despite a thorough search; he questioned whether the Town Council should replace the matting and if so, whether it would be possible to store it in Northwood House.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council make a donation of £50 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in respect of a wreath that will be laid by the Town Mayor on behalf of the people of Cowes at the Remembrance Service on 13th November; and
- 2). That subject to suitable storage arrangements being identified, the Town Clerk be authorised to purchase replacement matting up to a cost of £200.

6531 CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Clerk questioned whether the Town Council wished to purchase two Christmas trees for the town this year, whether they wished to arrange a Lights of Love carol service in aid of the Earl Mountbatten Hospice Christmas Appeal and whether they wished to make a donation to the Hospice as they had traditionally done in aid of that appeal.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Clerk be authorised to have two Christmas trees installed in the town;
- 2). That the Town Clerk be authorised to organise a 'Lights of Love carol service in aid of the Earl Mountbatten Hospice; and
- 3). That the Town Council makes a donation of £400 to the Hospice as a contribution to their Christmas Appeal.

(Councillor McGregor declared a personal and prejudicial interest as she worked at the Earl Mountbatten Hospice – Councillor Walters (Deputy Town Mayor) took the Chair for this item only)

6532 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

It was agreed that the following item be placed on a future agenda:

- a). Engagement with young people (Councillor Fuller)

(The proceedings terminated at 8.50pm)

CHAIRMAN