



Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

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

The Town Mayor introduced and welcomed Councillor Flury to her first meeting of the Town Council.

### **6713 HARBOUR REVISION ORDER**

The Town Mayor introduced and welcomed Captain McIntosh to the meeting; he had attended to explain the General Direction proposals following the review of the Harbour Revision Order; it was therefore agreed that this item be brought forward as the first agenda item.

Captain McIntosh explained that the Harbour Commission was the statutory harbour authority empowered by central government through local Harbour Orders; Cowes Harbour Commission was established in 1897 with a set constitution providing their original powers. Since that time as new developments occurred, they were required to update and modernise their constitution and powers; this was achieved by promoting new Harbour Revision Orders.

Within the Harbour Orders, one of the powers was to promote local bylaws – local rules and regulations that were not covered by primary legislation.

The Department of Transport was now encouraging Harbour authorities to apply for Powers of General Direction which would be similar to bylaws at the local level. The Harbour Commission promoted the new Harbour Revision Order which gained approval last year; one of the provisions within the Order was a power to give local General Direction. Hence, the Harbour Commission was looking to modernise local harbour legislation by establishing a new set of local rules that would effectively supersede existing bylaws; they had been developed with the assistance of the Harbour Advisory Committee and the Royal Yachting Association and it was hoped that following the consultation they would come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

A number of questions were put to Captain McIntosh following which the Deputy Town Mayor thanked him for attending and stated that he hoped the consultation proved successful and that the proposed General Directions were passed without too many problems.

### **6714 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jones, Peacey-Wilcox and Wells; Councillors Fuller and Mazillius had apologised that they would be late for the meeting.

### **6715 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

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

### **6716 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 he was assessing various options that may help to address concerns of residents and parents about traffic generation outside Gurnard School in Baring Road during term times at the school.
- b). That a representative of the owners of the former Reader's site in Place Road made a short presentation to Gurnard Parish Council regarding the site; he advised that discussions were underway with Planners to use the site for commercial purposes and The Range had expressed an interest to make an application for the site- to operate alongside the Inner Space storage facility alongside. Following the Gurnard meeting, the Agent made an assurance that he would talk to both Cowes Town and Northwood Parish Council's, given the close proximity of this site to these neighbouring parishes. In addition, Councillor Fuller had requested that a pre-application exhibition be held to seek feedback from residents.
- c). That he attended a public Highways PFI meeting where it was stated that Island roads were considered to be the worst in the UK; an outline was also given as to what residents could expect once the contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Residents were advised that all street lighting would be replaced with more energy and cost efficient lighting within the first 3 years, and within 7 years all adopted roads would be resurfaced.

Locally roads to be resurfaced in Year 1, were:

- Egypt Esplanade, Park Road, Place Road (Cowes West)
- Church Road, Princes Esplanade, Shore Road and Woodvale Road (Gurnard)

Roads due to be resurfaced in Year 2 were:

- Firs Close, The Green, Parklands Avenue, Ward Avenue (Cowes West)
- Cockleton Lane, Jordan Close, Lower Church Road, Rew Street, Worsley Road, (Gurnard)

Given this work would be front loaded to be completed within the first 7 years of the 25 year contract, it was highlighted that from April there will be 15 times more roadworks on the Island than there is currently.

d). That he had attended a parents meeting at the Cowes Enterprise College following the 'inadequate' grading from OFSTED inspectors.

e). That following consultation regarding the merits of parking and no waiting restrictions for the Cowes/Gurnard Esplanade he had decided not to pursue the matter.

f). That he undertook a consultation with residents in Cliff, Mornington and Queens Roads to seek their views on the Cowes Conservation Area as part of the contribution on the Medina Valley Area Action Plan; it was also to find out more about residents views on replacing trees that had been lost last year. Comments on several items raised have been fed back to Cowes Town Council's Town Improvements Committee, the IW Council and Cowes Community Partnership who were managing the woodland on the IW Council's behalf.

The Highways Department would be reviewing parking signage for the Mornington car park.

g). That the overall effectiveness of the arrangements to protect children on the Isle of Wight was judged to be 'inadequate' by OFSTED following a recent inspection of the Isle of Wight Council. OFSTED had made various recommendations as areas for improvement.

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

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

- a). A detailed appraisal of the current I.W. Council Administration's budget proposals for 2013/14. The budget included a proposal to increase spending on adult social care by £8.7m over the next three years.
- b). That the Governors and the Trust at the Cowes Enterprise College had agreed to employ specialist educational advisers to deal with the early action required following the recent OFSTED inspection.
- c). That he had asked noticed that in Somerset they marked their potholes and road defects with an orange fluorescent paint which made them much more visible to road users. The Head of Highways had responded that each of the statutory utility companies used a different colour when marking the highway to distinguish between their respective works; the I.W. Council were trialling the use of yellow markings for highway repairs although they would exhaust their stocks of white paint first.

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

- a). That plans had been unveiled to open a Studio School on the Island which would specialise in marine manufacturing and offshore energy. It would cater for up to three hundred 14-19 year olds from September 2014 subject to approval from the Department for Education.
- b). That she had received a number of complaints regarding persistent dog fouling in the Love Lane, Maxted, Seaview and Windmill Roads area.
- c). That the Marine Management Organisation were happy with the Cowes Harbour Revision Order which would modernise and extend the powers considered necessary for the efficient and effective management and regulation of the harbour and clarify the limits of the harbour in modern terms.
- d). That trees on the bank of Newport Road were to be pruned.
- e). That she had attended the Medina Yard Community Planning weekend.

**6717 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

**Sergeant Mike Sizer reported as follows:**

- a). That following a period of relative calm, a number of vehicles in the Love lane area had been scratched and damaged over the last weekend; two youngsters had been apprehended and would be the subject of restorative justice.
- b). That a builders van had been broken into in Victoria Road and tools had been stolen; the van had not been securely locked. Sgt. Sizer stated that drivers should always ensure that their vehicles were locked and any valuables removed or at least out of site when parked.
- c). That a stolen axe had been used to smash another vehicle in Smithards Lane; two youngsters had been apprehended.
- d). That Minka Armitage would be leaving the Safer Neighbourhood team and would be replaced by Michelle Jackson. The Town Mayor asked Sgt. Sizer to pass on the Town Council's thanks for her valuable work in the community during her time in Cowes.

Councillor Matthews stated that his neighbour had been attacked in the High Street; they had been told by the police that the camera nearest the incident was not working.

Sgt. Sizer was unable to comment; the question should be asked of the CCTV Control Room Manager.

**6718 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**6719 MATTERS ARISING**

**a). Vacancy, Cowes North Ward (Min. No. 6693 refers)**

The Town Clerk reported that he had received two letters of application from persons seeking to fill the vacancy on the Town Council for the Cowes North Ward; however, one of the applicants had subsequently withdrawn their application.

**RESOLVED**

That Mrs. Wendi Hall be co-opted onto the Town Council until the elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013.

**b). Precept (Min. No. 6699f refers)**

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the I.W. Council Strategic Director of Resources which stated that from 2013-14 the tax base calculation methodology would undergo a considerable change as a result of the introduction of a Localised Council Tax Support scheme which replaced the Council Tax Benefit scheme. Under the new localised scheme, the amount of support given to claimants would not be classified as council tax income but categorised as council tax discount and result in a lower tax base for each Town and Parish Council area. The government originally proposed that

Town and Parish Council preceptors would be excluded from the effect of the reduction; the recently published tax base regulations confirm that is not the case.

Billing authorities would receive a grant from central government equivalent to 90% of the previous level of funding base; it would include an amount attributable to the Town and Parish Councils' element of council tax benefit. The I.W. Council was not legally obliged to pass on the grant although the government was expecting billing authorities to work with local councils to provide certainty over their funding by passing on the relevant amount of the council tax support grant to compensate for the lower tax base. The I.W. Council had agreed that the indicative amount of grant applying to Town and Parish Councils would be passed to them.

In addition, the Government was paying a one-off transitional grant if local council tax support schemes limited the reduction in support to working age claimants; the I.W. Council agreed to implement a Localised Council Tax Support scheme for 2013/14 that complied with conditions necessary to attract the additional one-off transitional grant and the relevant element of that grant would also be passed to Town and Parish Councils. The amount to be paid to Cowes in grant totalled £9,179; this would remain unchanged regardless of whether the 2013-14 precept increased or reduced from the 2012-13 level.

Taking all changes into account the net impact after grant on all Town and Parish Council's would be a cost of approximately £8,000; £430 of this cost would be the portion applicable to Cowes.

The Strategic Director of Resources was not expecting any transitional grant for the following year (2014-15) and any arrangements for passing on the support grant received from Government were currently uncertain.

The Town Clerk stated that he considered the changes would have minimal effect in 2013-14 although they could have a serious impact for 2014-15 and beyond.

**c). Parish Church of St. Faith (Min. No. 6629b refers)**

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the Diocese of Portsmouth regarding the potential closure of the Parish Church of St. Faith as a place for public worship; the Church currently formed part of a Group Ministry also comprising Gurnard, Northwood, Holy Trinity and St. Mary's and if the Church closed then the Group Ministry needed to be amended.

The Town Council should write to the Diocese if they wished to make any representation regarding the change.

**d). Nunnery Steps (Min. No. 6710 refers)**

The Town Clerk circulated to all members a copy of a report from the Chairman of the Northwood House Charitable Trust Company which set out the current situation regarding the Nunnery Steps including details of the difficulties they had encountered in completing the works.

He also submitted a separate letter from the Directors which stated that works to the Steps had been suspended due to adverse weather conditions; if the weather continued to delay work beyond 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 they requested permission that the EIF grant allocated to the project by the Town Council be carried forward into the 2013-14 financial year.

Following much discussion it was

**RESOLVED**

- 1). That the Town Clerk writes to the Corporate Governance Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer enclosing a copy of the letter from the Directors of the Northwood House Charitable Trust Company, requesting permission for that the EIF grant in respect the Nunnery Steps project to be carried forward into the 2013-14 financial year; and
- 2). That the Town Clerk writes to the Northwood House Charitable Trust Company to ascertain their intention if it proves impossible to complete the works to the Nunnery Steps within the limits of the funding allocated.

(Councillors Ellis and Hammond declared personal and prejudicial interests in the above as they were both members of the Cowes Carnival Committee who ran the AAM Cowes Week car parking at Northwood Park for the Trust)

(Councillor Flury left the meeting at 8.15pm and Councillor Mazillius at 8.20pm)

## **6720 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS**

### **a). Town Improvements Committee**

The Minutes of the Town Improvements Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were received.

#### **i). Horizon Plaque**

##### **RESOLVED**

That M.J. Hayles Architectural be appointed to obtain the necessary Planning and Listed Building Consents all in accordance with his quotation for a fixed sum of £450 plus VAT.

(Councillor Fuller declared an interest in this item as he was a member of the IWC Planning Committee)

#### **ii). Summer bunting**

##### **RESOLVED**

That 2,500 metres of bunting be purchased from Party Packs at a cost of £1,987.50.

#### **iii) The Cut**

##### **RESOLVED**

That the £40,000 'ring fenced' for The Cut project be placed back into reserves for any future Town Improvement; The Cut could be considered for improvement at a later date.

#### **iv). Office computer suite**

##### **RESOLVED**

That the computer currently used by the Town Clerk and three other computers with desks be offered to a charity or a charitable organisation.

#### **v). ROSPA inspections**

##### **RESOLVED**

That ROSPA Playsafety Limited be appointed to undertake annual inspections of the skatepark and MUGA at a total cost of £130.00 plus VAT.

#### **vi). Planting scheme, Mornington Green**

##### **RESOLVED**

That as the Cowes Community Partnership were currently working on a project within the Morning Woods and they were responsible for "infilling" the pond the Assistant Town Clerk refers this item to them for consideration.

#### **vii). Northwood Recreation Ground toilets**

##### **RESOLVED**

That the Assistant Town Clerk be authorized to sign a one year contract on behalf of the Town Council to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013 for the supply of electricity to the Northwood Recreation Ground toilet block.

### **b). Highways PFI District 1 Group**

Notes of a Meeting of the Highways PFI District 1 Group held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were received. The Town Mayor stated that it was important that Councils within District 1 had a coordinated and consistent approach to the Highways PFI; those attending the meeting had welcomed the opportunity to discuss their individual areas of concern and they all wished to continue group meetings on a regular basis for the foreseeable future. It was agreed that each Council within District 1 appoint a representative to attend future meetings.

A letter responding to Highways PFI enquiries had also been circulated to all members.

In response to a query in respect of the Cowes CCTV system the Highways PFI Contract Manager had stated that 'Island Roads would be responsible for the term of the Highways PFI contract to manage, operate and maintain the CCTV systems. Where parts of the CCTV system became inoperable they would be replaced on a like for like basis at no additional cost to Cowes Town Council.'. He further stated that he understood an offer had been made for 'the CCTV system in

Cowes to be taken over by the IWC without any cost and in consideration of this, IWC would waive the wireless licence of £3,000 per annum. The IWC was willing to consider this proposal if the Clerk of Cowes Town Council writes to formally make this request.’.

**RESOLVED**

- 1). That Councillor Walters be appointed to represent the Town Council on the Highways PFI District 1 Group until the Annual Meeting in 2013; and
- 2). That the Town Clerk writes to the IWC offering them the Cowes CCTV system at no cost on condition that Island Roads maintain and replace it as necessary, that the wireless licence fee is no longer paid by the Town Council and on condition that the CCTV cameras be retained at the current locations in Cowes for the duration of the Highways PFI contract.

**c). Medina Yard Community Planning Weekend**

A pamphlet outlining a vision for Medina Yard following the Community Planning Weekend was received.

**d). Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils (IWALC)**

The Minutes of a Meeting of the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were received.

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor Cowan be appointed to represent the Town Council on IWALC until the Annual Meeting in 2013.

**e). Supporters of Cowes Library Group**

The Minutes of a meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library Group held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were received.

**6721 COWES EVENTS**

The Town Mayor submitted a paper for information regarding Cowes Events, a copy of which had been circulated to all members. It stated that in November Cowes Harbour Commissioners together with the Directors of Cowes Yacht Haven had invited local organisations and Yacht Clubs to a meeting at the Island sailing Club. The purpose was to announce an initiative to encourage international yachting events to Cowes by offering heavily discounted berthing arrangements; a sub group of Race Officers from Yacht Clubs was also formed to investigate what more could be done or offered as an incentive to attract events. This group of Yacht Club Officers were calling themselves “Cowes Events” and they were actively in the process of promoting Cowes as a yachting venue.

**6722 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK**

- a). \*A proposal from Northwood Parish Council that the Twinning and Rotary Club signs at the entrance to Northwood be re-positioned to the Cowes boundary.
- b). The Assistant Town Clerk’s registration on the CiLCA training course.
- c). Renewal of the Town Council’s registration under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- d). An addition at 10.3 in the Council’s Standing Orders in respect of the recording of meetings.
- e). \*Details of miscellaneous correspondence.
- f). Notification of Authority Governor vacancies on school governing bodies.
- g). Notification of a CBA Open Evening to be held at Cowes Yacht Haven on 25<sup>th</sup> February at 5.30pm.

(\* Copies circulated to all members)

**RESOLVED**

- 1). That the Town Council has no objection to the Twinning and Rotary Club signs being re-positioned to the Cowes boundary either at Somerton or Three Gates;
- 2). That the Town Council agrees to fund the Assistant Town Clerk’s CiLCA registration.

3). That the Town Clerk be authorised to renew the Town Council's registration under the Data Protection Act 1998;

4). That the Town Council amends their Standing Orders with the addition of 10.3 as follows:

*'The recording of the Town Council meeting is made as an aid to the Town Clerk for writing the minutes; the recording will be retained until the minutes are approved. Councillors and members of the public may make a request to hear it at the Town Council office in the presence of the Town Clerk if it is still available'; and*

5). That Councillor Matthews represent the Town Council at the CBA Open Evening.

**6723 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

a). To consider whether or not the Town Council should take Corporate Membership of the Northwood House Charitable Trust (Councillor Walters)

(The proceedings terminated at 9.00pm)

**CHAIRMAN**