

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

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

Present: Councillor Banks (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Brown, Corby, Cowan, Fuller, Hall, Hammond, Jones, McNeill, Matthews, Nicholson, Peacey-Wilcox, Robinson, Walters and Wardrop.

PRESENTATION – THE ‘COWES WEEK’ TRADEMARK

The Town mayor introduced and welcomed Peter Dixon (Chairman of CWL) and Michelle Warner (Sales & Marketing Director) to the meeting; they had primarily attended to outline how they intended to administer the trademark ‘Cowes Week’ having successfully registered this with the Intellectual Property Office.

Peter Dixon commenced by outlining his background; he entered his first Cowes Week in 1966 and for many years took part in the event. He also had experience being a Race Officer for the event. He was inextricably linked to Cowes and his desire was to improve relationships between the Regatta and the town.

Michelle then gave details of the history of Cowes Week whose origins dated back to 1826 and a potted history of the evolution of the organisation behind the regatta. She stated that Cowes Week didn't “just happen”; CWL spent an enormous amount of time, effort, energy and passion in driving competitor entry numbers, visitor numbers and press interest to ensure it remained a flagship event and retained its position as the world's best known sailing regatta.

CWL successfully attracted upwards of 800 boats to the regatta each year bringing with them around 7,000 competitors and up to 100,000 visitors. Research in 2009 for Tourism South East showed approximately £6.4million flowed into the local economy during Cowes Week; vital for the economic health of the town and the Island.

There was general acceptance that Cowes Week was a world-famous sailing regatta that had earned a respected place in the global sailing calendar; it had developed its own character and brand identity over a period of almost 190 years – it was something that we should all take great pride in and protect and it was for that reason that CWL had sought to trademark the regatta.

Michelle then sought to dispel concerns and myths surrounding the registration; she stated the trademark would

- Preclude anyone holding another event called Cowes Week
- Provide protection for the local business community against ‘fly by night’ traders
- Protect the events family of sponsors and their investment in the event
- Ensure that no-one else could trademark the event with dishonourable intentions and possibly hold the event (and town) to ransom

The trademark had not been obtained to

- Prevent promotion of the regatta
- Prevent commercial opportunities for local traders
- Exclude local businesses and the community from an active involvement in, and association with, the event

Having safeguarded ‘Cowes Week’ through the trademark CWL needed to ensure that it was administered for the good of the town; they had begun a consultation process involving the CBA and Town Council in order to agree a long term plan. They proposed to hold an open meeting to secure wider feedback from the community in order that all parties could jointly establish a licence agreement/operational framework.

Michelle was adamant that the registration was merely to protect the regatta; it was done with the best of intentions and was in no way financially motivated. CWL now hoped that all interested parties

jointly move forward on a positive footing and work constructively to maximise the beneficial impact of the regatta for the local community.

A number of questions were then asked following which Councillor Jones thanked the guests for attending.

6821 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ellis. Councillor Fuller had apologised that he would be late arriving due to his attendance at an I.W. Council meeting.

6822 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd October 2013 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6823 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Banks, Corby, Cowan, McNeill and Walters all declared non-pecuniary interests in agenda item 7d regarding the trademark 'Cowes Week' as they were all members of one or more of local yacht clubs.

6824 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public referred to the poor state of the old Chapel site in Union Road; nothing had been done to tidy the site despite threats of action by the Planning authority.

Councillor Banks reported that Planners could serve a notice under section 215 of the Planning Act for the area to be cleared; they had appeared reluctant to take this action. He now understood that a letter had been sent by the Planning authority giving 28 days for works to commence; the developer had indicated he would comply within that timeframe.

It was agreed that Councillor Bertie (I.W. Councillor for the ward) be requested to raise this matter with the Planning authority and that the Town Council would submit a further request for clarification and if necessary, for the section 215 notice to be served.

6825 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

- a). That in respect of the planning application for 99 dwellings on land between Place Road and Tuttons Hill both he and Councillor Nicholson had worked to ensure residents living adjacent to the application site were notified and they had also organized two public events.
- b). That Full Council had overwhelmingly agreed that Ferry Operators should be challenged by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- c). That following consultation with the school and local residents, Island Roads had drafted proposals for a new traffic order for Baring Road; the order proposed No Waiting at Any Time restrictions on various stretches of Baring Road and at the top of Woodvale Road.
- d). That he had received representations from School Governors at the Cowes Enterprise College requesting more availability for staff car parking on the site. The I.W. Council had responded by highlighting that availability exceeded the 'minimum criteria' for one staff parking space per two employees.
- e). That Parking Strategy was due to be considered at the next meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

f). That he had opposed the planning application in respect of land at the rear of 86 Victoria Road; however, he was the only committee member to vote against the application.

g). That he had attended the Marine Management Organisations workshop; three of the main priorities that came out of discussions were:

- Ensuring the Solent's economy was enabled to grow sustainably
- Improving public access to the Isle of Wight's coastal fringes, and to ensure this was enabled and protected
- Allowing that future policy was flexible and able to adapt to environmental and economic pressures

h). That charges had recently been implemented on the Community bus service 32 which runs between Cowes, Gurnard and Northwood; neither he, the local bus forum or local councils were made aware of the new legislation.

Charges would apply to customers who do not carry a Concessionary Pass, Rover Tickets and those under 18.

He was hopeful that subject to Traffic Commissioners approval, the current service would soon divert via Aldi in Three Gates Road

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

Councillor Nicholson's written report referred to the following;

a). Various parking issues for Cowes – commuters being harassed and intimidated for parking in residential areas, changes to parking signage and regulations and the parking of unlicensed and uninsured vehicles on the highway (*Councillor Nicholson reported at the meeting that the unlicensed and uninsured vehicles had all been removed that day*).

b). That the issue of non-registered security personnel during AAM Cowes Week rumbled on!!!

c). That concerns were expressed regarding the reported manner that local police had dealt with a licensing issue at a local hostelry.

d). That a new planning application for housing in the parish of Gurnard but bordering Cowes was receiving much comment; together with Councillor Fuller he had held joint surgeries for the benefit of their residents.

e). Various issues at the County level.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox referred to the following:

a). That she had attended the Spectrum/Medina AGM Awards ceremony; many local residents had been awarded for their decorative gardens.

b). That she was still collating information to determine housing figures and patterns of homelessness. She had also received many calls regarding general housing issues and concerns following changes in legislation.

c). That she had attended a number of sessions of the recent Literary Festival.

d). That residents attending the recent Public Meeting had been particularly interested in the Harbourmasters presentation regarding the Outer Harbour Project.

e). That she had been appointed Chairman of the Cowes Sea Cadets Management Committee.

f). That one of the CBA's flag poles had fallen and narrowly missed six people.

g). That she had attended recent meetings regarding the Medina Valley Area Action Plan (MVAAP) and the I.W. Council Budget Roadshow. The I.W. Council would be required to save approximately £28million over the next three years.

h). That she had attended a tourism briefing at Visit Isle of Wight; over £1million was spent each year on advertising the Island.

i). That she had attended a Health and Wellbeing scrutiny meeting; it had concentrated on a number of issues particularly around domestic abuse and violence.

j). That she had contacted the NHS regarding a number of issues surrounding blood tests; the NHS had indicated that they could adopt a number of her suggestions that should alleviate some of the problems people were facing.

(Councillor Fuller entered the meeting at 8.01p.m.)

6826 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Sgt Gary Knight reported as follow:

- a). That crime in the Cowes/Gurnard/Northwood area was down by 32% over the last year and this followed a reduction for the previous year.
- b). That cycling through the pedestrianized High Street remained a serious problem for local residents; Kevin Burton from the I.W. Council had confirmed that the appropriate Traffic Order applicable to all vehicles was in place and was enforceable. The police would now be taking action against those offending; a warning would be issued for a first offence with a fixed penalty or cycle training at the cyclists own expense for any subsequent misdemeanour.
- c). That the Local Action Group had been disbanded; it would be replaced by local beat surgeries. These surgeries would be held at the local police station on 1st and 3rd Thursdays between 6pm and 8pm. The local police station would be closed to the public outside of these hours.

6827 MATTERS ARISING

a). Newsletter (Min. No. 6814a refers)

Councillor banks reported that 5,500 copies of the first newsletter had been printed; there had been issues surrounding the deliveries which had necessitated a reprint. The printers have given an assurance that the delivery problems would not be repeated for the Winter edition to be delivered in December. The Town Council had received approximately 180 responses to the MVAAP questionnaire included in the first newsletter.

The Winter newsletter would be 8 pages in black and white and would include articles from other stakeholders – in this edition it would include articles from the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Cowes Heritage and the Northwood House Charitable Trust.

Points were made in respect of free return postage and utilising the opportunity for the newsletter to engage with local residents.

RESOLVED

That the Town Mayor seeks the views of local residents in the Winter newsletter as to whether or not the Town Council should raise the precept to pay for the continuation of essential services that the I.W. Council may have to withdraw.

b). Destination Cowes Initiative (Min. No. 6815a refers)

The Town Clerk reported that the 'Destination Cowes' Steering Group were seeking "in principal" support for the scheme and if given, to appoint a representative to sit on the Steering Group. However, he also understood that East Cowes Town Council had opted not to participate at this stage.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council does not take part or contribute to the proposal regarding 'Destination Cowes'.

c). North Medina Community Development Trust (NMCDT) (Min. No. 6817 refers)

Notes of a meeting of the North Medina Community Development Trust (NMCDT) held on 7th October 2013 together with a paper from the Town Mayor following his meeting with Directors of the Trust were submitted to all Councillors.

The Town Mayor confirmed that the NMCDT had decided to sell Bridge House and to wind up the company following dispersal of funds generated from the property sale estimated to be circa £165k. The surplus funds would be dispersed by the Board on local projects in Cowes and East Cowes; local non-profit making organisations or charities could bid for this funding. The bid process would be for a maximum period of 12 months following which any surplus would be distributed equally between Cowes and East Cowes Town Councils.

The NMCDT were requesting that the Town Council appoint a representative to the NMCDT committee to help administer any bids and if possible for the representative to also become a Director of the Trust.

Members questioned why surplus funds from the sale of Bridge House could not be distributed immediately to the two Town Councils; the Town Mayor stated that the method for the dispersal of funds had been a decision of NMCDT.

It was also questioned whether or not surplus funds should be distributed on a pro rata basis; if Cowes Town Council contributed more when setting up the NMCDT then surely they should get more of the distribution.

RESOLVED

- 1). That Councillor Walters be appointed as the Town Council representative to the committee of the NMCDT for the twelve month term of administering grant applications;
- 2). That Councillor Walters agrees to become a Director of the NMCDT; and
- 3). That the Town Council representative seeks to have the surplus funds distributed on a pro rata basis.

d). Trademark ‘Cowes Week’ (Min. No. 6582g refers)

The Town Council had received a lengthy presentation surrounding the background to the grant of the ‘Cowes Week’ trademark; they should now decide what action if any, should be taken in response to the award.

It appeared that there were several options available; apply for Invalidation or Revocation of the trademark or submit a complaint to the IPO stating that they overlooked the Town Council’s original comments on the subject.

Councillor Walters had stated in a paper he submitted that CWL relied on revenue from exclusive promotions, banners etc. to run the event. The success of maintaining that income stream was achieved by exerting ‘control’ over the town’s and other business assets to prevent unofficial activities not under their control. This had led to many problems and disagreements with shops and local businesses over the years and would be a reason for their application for the exclusive use of the trademark ‘Cowes Week’.

Members were concerned that even if CWL were genuine now in their declaration that there was no financial motivation in seeking the award, it could not be guarantee that that situation would persist in years to come. Some legal security or covenant for the long term should be negotiated.

Councillor McNeill stated that a possible option would be for the trademark to be shared; CWL could jointly gift the trademark CWL/CTC/CBA.

Following much discussion it was

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council negotiates with CWL and the CBA to determine how best the trademark ‘Cowes Week’ could be administered; and
- 2). That should those negotiations fail the Town Council would consider what further action they might take.

e). Faith’s St Church (Min. No. 6719c refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a draft Pastoral Church Buildings Scheme in respect of pastoral proposals for St. Faith’s Church; he reported that the Diocese of Portsmouth had proposed the closure of St. Faith’s Church for Anglican worship and sell the building and its churchyard to the Apex Church for use for Christian worship and other religious activities. Although not included in the Scheme (because it was not subject to the Mission & Pastoral Measure 2011) the adjacent church hall would be included in the sale to the Apex Church. Representations in respect of the draft Scheme had to be submitted in writing no later than 9th December 2013.

RESOLVED

That members would make representations individually if they wished to do so.

f). Park Road Car Park (Min. No. 6812 refers)

The Town Mayor reported that together with Councillor McNeill they had met Northwood House Trustees to discuss the underutilisation of the Park Road car park; although no decisions could be reached, the Trustees had agreed to provide further information regarding the present utilisation of the car park.

A further report would be provided as negotiations progressed.

6828 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a). Cowes Week Ltd. Board Meeting

Minutes of a meeting of the Cowes Week Ltd. Board Meeting held on 20th September 2013 were received.

b). Supporters of Cowes Library Group

The Minutes of a Meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library Group held on 7th October 2013 were received.

c). Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning & Licensing Committee held on 10th October and 31st October 2013 were received.

d). Joint Town Council/Police/CBA Traffic Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Town Council/Police/CBA Traffic Meeting held on 17th October 2013 were received.

e). Northwood Recreation Ground Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Northwood Recreation Ground Committee held on 21st October 2013 were received.

a). Playbuilder Park.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council purchase sufficient 'cushionfall' bark to replenish where necessary, areas at the playpark.

b). Additional seating

RESOLVED

That the Town Council purchase three oak benches of the Kennington design from Broxap Ltd. at a total cost of £1,896.00 plus VAT and delivery.

c). Toilets.

RESOLVED

1). That the Town Council purchase a 300 litre litter bin from Broxap in the sum of £548.95 plus VAT to replace the bin outside the toilet block in Northwood Recreation Ground.

f). Public Meeting

The Notes of a Public Meeting held on 24th October 2013 were received.

g). Town Improvement Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Improvement Committee held on 29th October 2013 were received.

i). Litter bins.

RESOLVED

1). That the Town Council purchase 100 'dog waste' signs from the Sign Company at a cost of £1.65 each plus VAT; and

2). That 10 of the above signs be gifted to the Northwood House Charitable Trust.

ii). Town Council notice board.

RESOLVED

1). That the Town Clerk be authorized to engage a local contractor to install the new Town Council notice board; and

2). That the old noticeboard be scrapped.

h). Informal Town Council/Northwood House Charitable Trust Board Meeting.

Notes of an informal Town Council/Northwood House Charitable Trust Board Meeting held on 1st November 2013 were received.

6829 FLOWER TROUGHS AND PLANTERS

Councillor Jones submitted a report regarding the planting of troughs and planters around the town; although this work had historically been undertaken by volunteers, they had all indicated that they would not be able to continue with this task in future years.

The hanging baskets were already planted and installed by a local nursery and he was recommending that the Town Council also engage them to supply and plant out the troughs and planters.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox suggested that prior to engaging contractors for the planting of troughs, the Town Council should first seek volunteers through an article in the Spring edition of the newsletter.

RESOLVED

That an article be included in the Spring edition of the newsletter seeking volunteers to undertake the planting of troughs and planters in the town.

6830 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). *Details of East Cowes Town Council 'in house' Councillor core skills training.
- b). *Details of miscellaneous correspondence
- c). Possible meeting with the Deputy Leader of the I.W. Council regarding budget issues.
(* Copies circulated to all members)

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk arrange an informal meeting for members of the Town Council with the Deputy Leader of the I.W. Council.

6831 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

It was agreed that those persons attending councillor training sessions would give a short presentation regarding the training immediately prior to the next meeting.

(The proceedings terminated at 9.22pm)

CHAIRMAN