



Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Cowes on Thursday, 5th December 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

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

PRESENTATION – Training for Councillors.

Councillor Walters referred to recent training that he had attended with Councillors Cowan and Hall; the training had covered various subjects including the role of the Council and Councillors, procedures and the role of the Chairman.

Councillor Walters then made reference to a number of specific points of interest that he had learned at the training including:

- That the agenda and minutes were the sole responsibility of the Town Clerk
- That Councillors were summoned to meetings
- That no decisions should be taken unless the item is listed on the agenda – there should not therefore, be an item on the agenda 'Any other business' (although discussion on an item not on the agenda is permissible)
- That the Chairman should allow no further discussion on an item once he has accepted a proposal which has been seconded

The training had concluded with a 'role play' session when everyone took a turn as Chairman; the performances were analysed by the group!!!

Overall, all those attending had found the training to be both enjoyable and worthwhile; he would encourage other Councillors to attend future training courses.

6832 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Banks, Fuller, Hammond and Robinson.

6833 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.

6834 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this stage.

6835 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

6836 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

- a). That he had requested the Planning Committee determine the application in respect of roof terraces to 23,25,27 and 29 Cliff Road; he had also requested that consideration be given to the impact upon Egypt Reach (incl. loss of amenity, light and outlook) and he recommended Planning Committee members visit the site.
- b). That, to date 272 residents had commented on the planning application for 99 new homes on land between Tuttons Hill and Place Road. He had met with Planning Officers and the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services which gave the opportunity to understand precisely how extensive pre-application discussions had been between the applicant and planners.
- c). That Planning Officers were still in the process of determining the application for the new Range Store proposed for the former Readers site in Place Road. The delay was due to the agent acting on behalf of the third party and the consideration of alternative locations closer to the town centres of Cowes or Newport.
- d). That a public information evening had been held on 2nd December to discuss proposals to increase traffic restrictions in Baring Road and Woodvale Road; there was general agreement that the proposals would make it safer for children going to school although concerns were raised over the loss of parking. In respect of this point, every element of the proposal was opposed and therefore it was unlikely that the Traffic Order would be advertised in the current form.
- e). That the I.W. Council was likely to reveal proposals for its Car Parking Strategy early next year following details of the Local Government Finance Settlement. Concerns had also been expressed at the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel over the perceived PFI progress; he had requested six month progress reports be shared with Councillors.
- f). That tackling absenteeism in schools was a priority for the I.W. Council following details of local attendance rates being the lowest in the country.
- g). That Southern Vectis were consulting of the Cowes to Newport service 1 bus with a view to improving the service from next March.
- h). That he had been appointed to the Audit Committee which assessed the I.W. Councils risks and how these risks were managed.
- i). That Island Roads would be providing skips around the Island from 4th January 2014 for the disposal of Christmas trees; the skip for Cowes would be placed in the Somerton Park and Ride car park.
- j). That he had dealt with other miscellaneous incidents in the last month.

Councillor Nicholson's written report referred to the following;

- a). That documentation had now been provided confirming that security personnel engaged on The Parade during AAM Cowes Week were SIA registered; this had not been evident during the event as they had not been wearing their badges.
- b). That with the powerful intervention of the police ably backed up by Island Road, the nuisance cars had finally been removed from Place Side.
- c). That although it was generally accepted that the current form of Cabinet style governance for the I.W. Council was working well, a decision had been taken that, following further evaluation, they would move to develop a hybrid executive cabinet form of governance.
- d). That, while a motion to engage with the police regarding the drastic cuts they were facing had been deferred by the I.W. Council, it had been agreed that the motion would be reviewed and developed before their next full Council meeting.
- e). That one motion to receive unanimous support was for the recognition and support for the Island drink and food industry.
- f). That following lengthy representations and consultations with horse riders, Island Roads were about to test a trial road surface modification.

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

- a). That she had attended the Remembrance Parade and Service in Cowes along with approximately 500 local residents.
- b). That she had helped collate the responses to the Town Council questionnaire; one recurring theme had been the requirement for more social/affordable housing on brownfield sites.
- c). That, together with the Police, she had attended a Spectrum Residents Meeting; among the issues raised was a request for additional street lighting for the alleyways from Shamblers Road to Newport Road and between Maxted Close and Windmill Close.
- d). That she continued to work to strengthen the 'local connection' on the housing register; the I.W. Council were working up a model that would go to consultation. In the meantime she regularly received calls from constituents concerned by the limited social housing stock and she was working with social providers in an attempt to alleviate the problem.
- e). That she had responded to many issues including the Cowes DMO, untaxed cars on the highway, housing issues and overgrown gardens.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox reported that since the circulation of her written report she had been dealing with a problem of raw sewage leaking from a private property in Newport Road.

Councillor Walters asked a question to the three I.W. Councillors present regarding a notification of the closure of the Market Hill slipway to facilitate the Waterside redevelopment project; he did not consider that the developer offering to re-profile and resurface the slipway following the development constituted a good commercial deal for the I.W. Council.

Councillor Walters was advised to refer his question to Councillor Bertie, the ward councillor for the area.

Councillor Bertie had submitted a written report as follows:

- a). That a meeting was planned for 9th January regarding the application of the 'Cowes Week' trademark.
- b) That a portacabin had been installed at the Sun Hill Chapel site indicating that work had now started; he would continue to monitor the situation.
- c). That nothing appeared to be happening in respect of the Destination Cowes marketing initiative; the person who previously did the marketing for both York and Chester, and increased the visitor numbers considerably, was preparing a paper for him which he would share with the Town Council.
- d). That a reply in respect of the bus stop at 250 Park Road had been most unsatisfactory; the main resident concerned was now seeking an engineer's report regarding the problems caused by the vibrations of buses stopping at the bus stop.
- e). That the I.W. Council had passed a motion to change to a 'hybrid' system of governance.
- f). That the CBA were still waiting for final quotations in respect of the testing and refurbishment of High Street banner fixing points.
- g). That he had attended a meeting along with Cowes Town Councillors regarding the provision of additional toilet facilities on The Parade for Cowes Week. He was also now satisfied that security staff used on The Parade were correctly licenced; however, stewards were not licenced.
- h). That Sainsbury's would be playing a more active role with the CBA; he would wish to see the Co-op following suit.
- i). That Cowes was one of the main towns that did not have a Ferry Users Group; it had been decided to await the outcome of the I.W. Council Scrutiny Panel meeting with the three main ferry operators on 23rd January 2014 before any further moves in this regard.
- j). That there was talk of the prestigious Etchells Worlds event moving to Portland (Olympic sailing venue); a meeting with the organisers had been planned in January with the aim of keeping the event in Cowes.
- k). That the CBA would be judging their Christmas shop window competition during the next week but sadly, the erection of further Christmas lights could not proceed until all banner fixing points had been tested.

6837 REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

There was no police presence at the meeting.

However, a written report was subsequently received and circulated to all members. It referred to the following:

- a). That total crime was down for October from 46 crimes in 2012 to 42 crimes in 2013.
- b). That a main priority identified by the Local Action Group was cycling and cars using the High Street during times of prohibition. The police would continue to actively patrol the area to prevent incidents re-occurring.
- c). That the Cowes SNT could confirm that local beat surgeries would commence in December; the first would be held on 5th at Cowes Police Station between 6pm and 8pm.
- d). That future beat surgeries would be held on 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at Cowes Police Station between 6pm and 8pm when members of the public could speak with their local Safer neighbourhood Team on any matter that they feel the police could assist with.
- e). That there were no specific crimes of note to bring to the attention of the Town Council.

6838 MATTERS ARISING

a). Trademark 'Cowes Week' (Min. No. 6827d refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a response from Cowes Week Ltd. which confirmed their desire to establish a Working Group with representatives from the Town Council, CWL and the CBA to agree the way forward with regard to the application of the Cowes Week trademark; they were suggesting two representatives from each organisation. A subsequent email had confirmed that the first meeting for the representatives would be held on Thursday, 9th January 2014 at 12.30pm in Regatta House.

RESOLVED

That Councillors Corby and McNeill represent the Town Council in the negotiations regarding the Cowes Week trademark.

b). North Medina Community Development Trust (NMCDT) (Min. No. 6827c refers)

Notes of a meeting held on 12th November 2013 regarding the North Medina Community Development Trust (NMCDT) and in particular, the sale of Bridge House had been circulated to all members; the meeting had been attended by Councillor Walters the Town Council's appointed representative.

The notes confirmed that despite the initial insistence from Directors that the NMCDT administer the net proceeds from the sale of Bridge House for a period of 12 months, Councillor Walters had been equally insistent that the two Town Councils were best placed for the task as they were elected bodies for the two communities with established mechanisms in place for overseeing and distributing the funds. Graham Biss from Natural Enterprise Ltd. had stated that he would only release the charge on Bridge House when he was satisfied a robust system was in place to distribute the funds and he also questioned what better system there could be than the two Town Councils.

The three Directors of the NMCDT then went into a closed session holding an Extraordinary Meeting of the NMCDT Board of Directors to consider all the proposals and determine how any surplus funds following the sale of Bridge House should be distributed.

They finally confirmed on a majority vote that:

'On completion of the sale of Bridge House the remaining funds to be distributed equally between East Cowes and Cowes Town Councils, to administer for the benefit of the local community'.

It was then agreed by all that £3,000 could be retained by the NMCDT to be used to finally wind up the Trust; the residual funds after closure to be divided on 50/50 basis to the two Town Councils.

Members wished to record their thanks to Councillor Walters for undertaking such robust negotiations to achieve such a successful outcome on behalf of the Town Council.

c). Cowes ‘No Cold Calling’ zone (Min. No. 6229f refers).

The Town Clerk reported that following numerous complaints from local residents the Town Council took a decision in July 2009 to create a ‘No Cold Calling’ zone around the town; the zone had helped to reduce the fear of doorstep crime and given confidence to residents to deal with cold callers.

The Trading Standards Institute is now calling for ‘No Cold Calling’ zones to be strengthened after figures from around the country showed that some doorstep sellers were ignoring the signs. In view of this a new sticker had been designed aimed at making it clear that if the new sticker was displayed and ignored by a doorstep trader then it would constitute a criminal offence; the wording on the new stickers had had legal scrutiny.

The new stickers were available free of charge to Town and Parish Councils who had previously invested in a ‘No Cold Calling’ zone although Trading Standards would be unable to provide delivery of the stickers to individual homes.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Clerk orders sufficient of the new ‘No Cold Calling’ zone stickers to distribute to households in the town; and
- 2). That the new stickers be distributed with the next edition of the Town Councils newsletter which should include an article outlining the reasoning behind their issue.

6839 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a). Supporters of Cowes Library Group AGM

The Minutes of the AGM of the Supporters of Cowes Library Group held on 11th November 2013 were received.

b). Town Council/Taylor Events/I.W. Council Meeting

Notes of a Meeting regarding The Parade for AAM Cowes Week between the Town Council/Taylor Events/I.W. Council held on 14th November 2013 were received.

Taylor Events were seeking a contribution from the Town Council, I.W. Council and Cowes Week Ltd. towards the provision of additional temporary toilets on The Parade for the 2014 AAM Cowes Week event. It was agreed that Taylor Events should submit a grant application and a copy of their accounts to the Town Council for consideration in the normal way by the Finance Committee.

c). Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning & Licensing Committee held on 14th November 2013 were received.

d). Finance Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 21st November 2013 were received.

i). Budget and precept.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council defers any decision regarding the 2014/15 budget and precept until the January/February 2014 meeting of the Town Council.

ii). ‘Lights of Love’ annual carol service.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council gives a grant of £400 to the Earl Mountbatten Hospice; the Town Mayor to present the cheque at the ‘Lights of Love’ carol service on 20th December.

iii). Applications for grant.

Cowes Business Association (CBA) – towards the cost of refurbishing banner/bunting fixing points in the High Street.

Cowes Sports Football Club – towards the cost of replacing the floodlights at their football ground.

The Footprint Trust – towards their project ‘Warmer Cowes’; simple solutions to assist residents to keep warm.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Town Council offer the £1,880 'ring fenced' sum for Christmas lighting in the balances to the CBA towards the refurbishment of the fixing points in the High Street;
- 2) That a grant of £1,000 be awarded to the Cowes Sports Football Club towards the replacement costs of their floodlighting;
- 3) That Ray Harrington-Vail of the Footprint Trust be invited to address the next meeting of the Finance Committee regarding the 'Warmer Cowes' project prior to a decision on his grant application; and
- 4) That the balance in the grants budget of £5,400 be kept in reserve pending further applications which may be received.

(Councillors Corby and Jones declared non-prejudicial interests in the grant application from the Cowes Business Association on the grounds they were both members of the organisation).

(Councillor Brown declared a non-prejudicial interest in the grant application from Cowes Sports Football Club on the grounds that her daughter worked at the club).

e). I.W. Association of Local Councils Executive Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the I.W. Association of Local Councils Executive Committee held on 21st November 2013 were received.

f). Cowes Week Shoreside Committee

The Notes of a Meeting of the Cowes Week Shoreside Committee held on 21st November 2013 were received.

g). Town Improvement Committee

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Improvement Committee held on 25th November 2013 were received.

i). Port handbook.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council takes no further action in respect of the inclusion of four additional Town Council pages in the Port handbook.

ii). Outdoor gym equipment.

The I.W. Council had advised the Town Council that gaining the approval of residents local to Mornington Green was a prerequisite in obtaining I.W. Council consent for siting outdoor gym equipment at that location.

RESOLVED

That a leaflet outlining the proposals regarding the outdoor gym at Mornington Green is delivered to all neighbouring properties with the aim of gaining support for the project.

iii). Town Guide/residents handbook.

RESOLVED

1). That no further action be taken regarding the production of a Town Guide until the results of the Town Council residents survey are known.

iv). Shelter, Cowes seafront.

RESOLVED

That no further action be taken regarding the installation of a shelter on Cowes seafront until the results of the Town Council residents survey are known.

h). Informal Meeting with the Deputy Leader of the I.W. Council.

The Town Clerk reported on the Informal Meeting with Steve Stubbings, Deputy Leader of the I.W. Council held on 28th November 2013. Mr. Stubbings had reported that the I.W. Council cumulative budget gap for the next three years would total £28million; the savings would be required to be made from a very small base as the majority of their £225 million spend was essentially outside of their control (children's services, adult social care, public health, waste contract/fire etc.).

The savings would therefore, have to be made from the budget for discretionary services (toilets, open spaces and playgrounds, leisure, school crossing patrols, beaches and esplanades etc.) which totalled a mere £36million per year.

Some of these services would almost inevitably be lost to our community unless the Town Council/Voluntary Organisations/Churches etc. were willing to work with the I.W. Council and possibly assume much more responsibility for them.

Councillor Stubbings had agreed to furnish a list of the services that the Town Council might wish to assist in providing; at the time of the meeting no list had been received.

It was agreed that the Finance Committee would consider all options available to the Town Council as soon as the communication from Councillor Stubbings was received.

6840 TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Councillor Banks had submitted a paper regarding the Town Council newsletter; it stated that the new quarterly newsletters had been introduced to replace the monthly Town Mayors article in the Beacon magazine. The Beacon articles had historically been the sole responsibility of the Town Mayor and it had been agreed that this responsibility would continue with the quarterly newsletters.

However, at the November Town Council meeting several Councillors had challenged the content of the newsletter and some had requested that all Councillors have an input.

Having received these comments, the Town Mayor considered that either he should continue with sole responsibility for the newsletter or alternatively, the Town Council should take ownership through a Newsletter Steering Group.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Mayor be given the sole responsibility for the publication of the Town Council's quarterly newsletters; and
- 2). That the Town Council approves any future questionnaires to members of the public prior to their inclusion in a quarterly newsletter.

6841 PARADE VILLAGE, AAM COWES WEEK

Councillor Wardrop had submitted a paper regarding access to the bandstand and the removal of public seating along The Parade for a period of approximately three weeks; this was for AAM Cowes week including a time for installing and dismantling the Parade Village.

The I.W. Council had responded in respect of the bandstand; they had acknowledged that as a Village Green, it must be accessible to the public at all times. The matter had been raised with their contractor operating The Parade Village in order that alternative arrangements could be established in future to ensure that access was afforded at all times.

The removal of the bench seating was to enable easy access to the series of tents located along highway.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk writes to the I.W. Council requesting that all seating remain in situ during Cowes Week for future years or that the equivalent free of charge seating be provided for The parade.

6842 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). Renewal of the Town Clerk's membership subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks.
 - b). *Details of Christmas and New Year refuse collection arrangements.
 - c). *Details of miscellaneous correspondence.
- (* Copies circulated to all members)

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk's subscription for the renewal of his membership to the Society of Local Council Clerks be paid by the Town Council.

6843 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

It was agreed that the following items be included on a future agenda:

- a). Clarification concerning Standing Order 29.2 regarding the onward transmission of communications from Councillors (Councillor Walters).

(The proceedings terminated at 8.36pm)

CHAIRMAN