

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 5 September 2019 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Peacey Wilcox (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Adams, Bustin, Ellis, Fuller (7.03pm), Gilpin, Hammond, Jones, Nicholson, Oliver, Rafferty, Reynolds, Taylor & Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk; County Press Reporter; one representatives from Cowes Heritage and one representative from Cowes Week Ltd.

7990 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bertie & Brown.

7991 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 7996b6 as he has a great grandchild who attends Lanesend Primary School.

7992 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

The Local Safer Neighbourhood Officer sent his apologies for the meeting and no written report had been received.

7993 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18 July 2019 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7994 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A representative from Cowes Heritage raised the issue of the Egypt Point Light House which is currently the responsibility of the IW Council who are requesting that the Town Council take over responsibility for this iconic seafront structure. Cowes Heritage suggest that a 'Save our Egypt Light' appeal be launched and would like the Town Council to make a contribution and perhaps administer the fund with contributions to be raised from members of the public, Trinity House, the IW Council and Cowes Heritage. It was noted that this item is on the agenda for discussion later on in the meeting and it was agreed that these suggestions would be followed up and discussed at that later point on the agenda.

7995 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Written reports focussing on local matters were received from Councillors Fuller, Nicholson & Peacey Wilcox.

Councillor Fuller added that he is pressing for a public presentation from Island Roads and the IW Council on the forthcoming St Mary's roundabout scheme. He is also pursuing an additional 200 new parking places to be found in Cowes. A concern was raised in regard to the delay in the resurfacing in Crossfield Avenue – this is due to the downgrading of the priority and rating for the surfacing improvements. Traffic Orders in this area are being processed and it will take approximately 6 – 8 weeks to implement the new road markings. Questions were raised why Cross Street would be

a high priority when it is not well used – the machine used to identify priority areas highlighted this for resurfacing improvement. Granville Road was mentioned with regard to the poor road surface, yet the pavements have been replaced. Councillor Fuller has raised concerns with the IW Council’s Adult Services regarding the effect of Brexit on persons with long term medical needs – as yet no response has been received.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox referred to ‘Violence against Parents’ in her report which Councillors discussed. An email address and contact telephone number was provided for those in need of support.

7996 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meetings held on 31 July 2019 and 22 August 2019 were received and noted.

b) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meetings held on 23 July 2019 and 20 August 2019 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Financial Statement as at 30 June 2019 be noted and approved.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council provides one dressed Christmas tree to be located in Francki Place, at a cost of up to £800, with the cost to be met from the ‘Civic – Xmas trees / festive lights / bunting’ budget heading.**
- 3. That Cowes Town Council approves the installation, maintenance and subsequent removal of the festive lights at a cost of up to £14,500, with the cost to be met from the ‘Civic – Xmas trees / festive lights / bunting’ budget heading.**
- 4. That a grant be made to Cowes Cricket Club in the sum of £1,400.**
- 5. That a grant be made to Cowes Medina Bowling Club in the sum of £2,000.**
- 6. That a grant be made to Lanesend Primary School in the sum of £1,000 along with a request for Councillors to be invited to the official opening of the sensory garden.**
- 7. That a grant be made to BPRC Event Management Ltd in the sum of £1,000 with a request that the organisers of the event work with local schools for the 60th Annual Powerboat Race and look at ways to offset their carbon footprint.**
- 8. That Cowes Town Council renews the SLCC membership of the Town Clerk in the sum of £156.**

c) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 6 August 2019 were received and noted.

d) Parking Strategy Working Group

The Minutes of the Parking Strategy Working Group meeting held on 25 July 2019 were received and noted. Councillors raised concerns about the loss of parking spaces in Birmingham Road during Cowes Week due to this area becoming a taxi rank. Councillor Fuller explained that there had been a number of parking problems during Cowes Week. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. All Town Councillors to email Councillor Fuller with details of any known parking problems during Cowes Week by the deadline of 23 September 2019.
2. Councillor Fuller will collate the problems and present a report to the next Town Council meeting on 3 October 2019.

e) Land at Market Hill Working Group

The Minutes of the Land at Market Hill Working Group meeting held on 30 July 2019 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council does not purchase a parcel of land at Market Hill.

f) Visitor Cowes Working Group

The Minutes of the Visitor Cowes Working Group meeting held on 3 September 2019 were received and noted.

g) IWALC Executive Committee

The draft Minutes of the IWALC Executive Committee meeting held on 18 July 2019 were received and noted.

h) Supporters of Cowes Library

The Minutes of the Supporters of Cowes Library meeting held on 19 August 2019 were received and noted. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will write to thank the Supporters of Cowes Library for all their hard work.

7997 COWES WEEK UPDATE AND THE USE OF THE SEAFRONT FOR OTHER SAILING EVENTS

Councillors considered two reports from Town Councillors relating to the Fastnet race, the Sail GP event and Cowes Week events.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox advised that she had met informally with Cowes Week stakeholders to discuss the 2019 event with a view to having a further meeting to discuss the visitor experience during future Cowes Weeks.

Councillors discussed the 2019 events in Cowes and commented that the Town Council should be working with the stakeholders to represent the residents of Cowes. Several moans and groans had been received about Cowes Week 2019 from yachtsmen, residents and visitors. One complaint was that Cowes Week dates keep moving; the representative from Cowes Week Ltd explained that this is due to the tides, however it was agreed that Cowes Week was too late this year. Future Cowes Weeks, where possible, will go back to the first week in August. Comments were made about the shore side revenues being down this year and this may possibly be because events are split over several venues i.e. the Yacht Haven, the Parade, Shepards Wharf and Northwood House. The number of sailors staying in Cowes has reduced; electronic registration and sign off has added to the reduced number of sailors visiting Cowes. A number of sailors have second homes in the Hamble and return there after each sailing event. A question was made whether to shorten the event but this has already reduced from 8 days to 7 days and the organisers want to retain a full Cowes Week regatta. Questions were raised as to whether the number of entrants to the competitions was down. It was reported that there were 650

entrants this year as opposed to 750 last year. The ideal number of entrants is 825. It was felt that the town is missing opportunities to promote itself and the Island, and constructive dialogue is needed with the Town Council having input before and after the event as they represent the residents of Cowes, of which not all are sailors. It was also felt that the arrangements at the Parade need to be considered. Input from the IW Council is poor and therefore Cowes Town Council should take the lead to work with other stakeholders. It was agreed that a meeting with Cowes Week stakeholders would be beneficial but Councillors felt that the way forward would be to first have a meeting between interested Town Councillors to decide on the matters that should be raised with Cowes Week Ltd and Taylor Events. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will invite Town Councillors to attend a meeting to discuss matters to be raised with Cowes Week Ltd and Taylor Events.

7998 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY 2019 AND AUGUST 2019

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the months of July 2019 and August 2019. Cheque payments for July totalled £30,508.73; petty cash payments totalled £183.89. Cheque payments for August totalled £22,468.95; petty cash payments totalled £190.86. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments for July 2019 of £30,508.73 and petty cash payments for July 2019 of £183.89; and the cheque payments for August 2019 of £22,468.95 and petty cash payments for August 2019 of £190.86 be received, noted and approved.

7999 CONCLUSION OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

The Town Clerk reported that the conclusion of the external audit for the year ended 31 March 2019 had been received. The external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, have raised no matters of concern. Councillors thanked the Town Clerk for the successful conclusion of the External Audit. It was:

RESOLVED

That the conclusion of the external audit for the year ended 31 March 2019 be received, noted and approved.

8000 APPOINTMENT TO THE LAND AT MARKET HILL WORKING GROUP

As the Town Council have resolved not to purchase a parcel of land at Market Hill, a further appointment to the Working Group is not required.

8001 THE LIGHT HOUSE AT EGYPT POINT

Councillors referred to the earlier comments made by Cowes Heritage (Minute No. 7994) in relation to the Light House at Egypt Point. Councillors felt that this was another attempt at offloading by the IW Council and were concerned about the structural stability of the Light House given its close proximity to sea water and the elements. However as an iconic structure it was felt that consideration should be given to this as a new Town Council project. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Councillor Fuller will liaise with former councillor Geoff Banks to obtain some background information / history about the Light House.
2. Councillor Fuller will prepare a report to be taken to the Projects Committee for consideration.

8002 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

A spreadsheet outlining the activities of the Environment Officer in Cowes was circulated to all Town Councillors. Actions taken included playground inspections; toilet inspections; fly-tipping, stray dogs, dog fouling and litter in Cowes. Councillors acknowledged how busy the Environment Officer is and are appreciative of the work that she undertakes on behalf of the Town Council.

8003 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Details of miscellaneous publications and correspondence received were circulated to all Town Councillors.

8004 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Parking during Cowes Week – Councillor Fuller

The proceedings terminated at 8.12pm.

CHAIRMAN