

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 12 December 2019 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Peacey Wilcox (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Adams, Bertie, Brown, Bustin, Ellis, Fuller, Gilpin, Jones,
Nicholson, Oliver, Reynolds & Taylor.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; East Cowes Town Council representative;
one member of the public.

Prior to the start of the meeting Councillor Peacey Wilcox thanked her fellow IW Councillors who had helped to pick up her workload whilst she has been dealing with a family matter on the mainland. She also wished all Town Councillors a Merry Christmas.

8044 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hammond, Rafferty & Wardrop.

8045 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) Councillor Adams declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8054 as she owns a property in Alexandra Road.
- b) Written requests for dispensation were received, and granted, from Councillors Adams, Bertie, Brown, Ellis, Gilpin, Jones, Oliver, Reynolds & Taylor in respect of the draft budget and precept setting for 2020 / 2021. Minute No. 8050b1 refers.

8046 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

The Local Safer Neighbourhood Officer provided a written report which had been circulated to all Town Councillors. There were 46 crimes reported for November 2019 which, on this occasion, had not been broken down into the specific types of crime. The Town Clerk has requested further detailed information and will share this with Town Councillors when it becomes available. The current police priorities are: Speeding – working in partnership with external agencies; Op Sceptre – nationwide knife crime initiative; Youth related antisocial behaviour, Cowes night time economy in the town. The Cowes Neighbourhood team are working to reduce burglaries and shed breaks showing a high visibility presence where crime is taking place.

8047 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7 November 2019 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8048 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A written question had been received and was circulated to all Town Councillors. The question related to the view that the western end of the town had been forgotten with shops and The Globe pub closing down. Councillors discussed this matter and agreed that during the winter this part of the town is quiet but during the summer months it tends to be busier when coaches arrive at this end of the town. Town Councillors have no direct influence over who comes and goes in areas of the town

and some properties in this area have changed from business to residential. The Town Council, through the proposed 'Place Plan' will do everything that it can to help the High Street and address the concerns raised. The correspondent asked which Town Councillors were responsible for this area of the town. It was agreed:

ACTION

Those Town Councillors responsible for the western end of town will make contact and give their contact details to the correspondent.

The member of the public present raised the matter of cycling in Cowes. Due to the timings of the pedestrianised zone it has forced cyclists to look for alternate routes which are not in place. When cycling up from the Floating Bridge there is nowhere to go as Birmingham Road is one-way in the opposite direction and then there is no alternative other than to cycle through the High Street. The Chairman advised that cycling in Cowes is an agenda item for later in the meeting when this can be fully discussed.

The member of the public also asked the Town Council to protect the residents of Cowes from untested 5G frequencies. The Chairman advised that the Town Council will have very little influence in this matter.

8049 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

Councillor Fuller added that at a recent meeting of Town & Parish Councils with the IW Council, it is likely that further discretionary services will be handed down to Town and Parish Councils from April 2021. Councillor Fuller will be meeting with the Head of Planning at the IW Council in January should Town Councillors have any questions that they would like raised.

Councillor Bertie was thanked for helping to stop the resurfacing of the Cross Street car park in the run up to Christmas; he advised that he had not requested a stop to the resurfacing works at Brunswick Road car park.

Councillor Nicholson was asked about the proposed resurfacing works at the Somerton Park and Ride which did not appear to need any works. Some Councillors remarked that there was a large dip in the road at the bus stop area. If these works are necessary why does there need to be a four-way traffic light system put in place? The biggest issue being about the timing of these works just before Christmas. Councillors were advised that Island Roads' programme of works for 2020 had not yet been finalised.

ACTIONS

1. Councillor Nicholson will investigate whether a four-way traffic light system is necessary while the resurfacing works are undertaken at Somerton Park and Ride.
2. The Town Clerk will add the timings of programmed works to the Agenda for when the four IW Councillors meet with Island Roads, the date of the meeting to be arranged.

8050 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 13 November 2019 were received and noted.

b) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meetings held on 19 November 2019 and 3 December 2019 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

1. That Cowes Town Council approves the Budget for 2020 / 2021, as below, which will require the precept, including grant, to be £314,340.

<u>COWES TOWN COUNCIL APPROVED BUDGET FOR</u>	
<u>2020 - 2021</u>	
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	
Town Clerks' salaries / NIC/ Tax / Pension	£50,440
Office Rent	£8,100
Sundry Office Expenses	£350
Stationery & Office Supplies/Software	£350
Office Equipment / Photocopier	£1,000
Telephone/Broadband / Website	£1,500
Postage	£300
Travelling	£200
Conference fees	£500
Training	£500
Hire of Meeting Rooms	£200
Subscriptions	£2,100
Insurance	£2,300
Audit and Accountancy	£2,000
Mayor's Allowance	£2,000
Newsletter / Publicity	£4,000
Elections / Admin Contingency	£2,500
Civic Regalia	£1,000
Sub Total	£79,340
DISCRETIONARY SERVICES	
Northwood Rec Grounds Maintenance	£7,500
Northwood Rec - Skate Park /MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance	£6,000
Northwood Rec Toilets - Cleaning, electricity + other costs	£12,000
Northwood Park Grounds Maintenance	£10,200
Northwood Park Toilets - Cleaning Only	£3,100
Dog + Litter bin emptying	£5,500
Other grounds maintenance in Cowes	£6,500
4 Public Toilets - Cleaning + other costs	£46,500
Cowes Library	£22,400
Cowes In Bloom	£8,000
Environment Officer	£2,600
Warmer Cowes	£2,700
Park Road Crossing Patrol	£5,000
Discretionary Services Contingency	£8,000
Sub Total	£146,000

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS / GRANTS / SPECIAL EVENTS	
Street furniture maintenance	£2,500
Civic-Xmas trees/Festive lights/Bunting	£17,000
New Projects	£4,000
Grants	£22,000
The Big Lunch	£2,000
Remembrance Sunday & Charity Donations	£1,500
Public Toilet refurbishment	£40,000
	Sub Total
	£89,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£314,340

2. That a grant be made to the Isle of Wight Music, Dance and Drama Festival in the sum of £100.
3. That the Town Clerk's appraisal be received and noted.
4. That the Assistant Town Clerk's appraisal be received and noted.
5. That Cowes Town Council approves Island Roads' cost of the enhancement project at The Cut, including maintenance, to the end of the PFI contract, of £62,975.77, subject to the Isle of Wight Council releasing S.106 monies of £62,338.00, with the balance of £637.77 to be met from monies held by Cowes Town Council.
6. That Cowes Town Council approves a contingency sum of £2,000.00 for The Cut project, to be met from monies held by Cowes Town Council for The Cut project.
7. That Cowes Town Council approves the cost of up to £4,000.00 for the creation of a Place Plan for the Cowes area, with the cost to be met from the 'Discretionary Services Contingency' budget for 2020-2021.
8. That a grant be made to the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Day Committee 2020 in the sum of £350.00.

c) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 25 November 2019 were received and noted.

Councillor Nicholson left the meeting at 7.45pm.

d) Parking Strategy Working Group

The Minutes of the Parking Strategy Working Group meeting held on 14 November 2019 were received and noted. Prior to the WYG consultation with Cowes Town Council it was:

RESOLVED

1. That a minimum one hour's free parking is provided across IW Council managed town centre car parks.
2. That the IW Council's parking review should look at parking capacity in Cross Street car park and if there is demand for an additional layer to provide additional / long-stay parking.
3. That the IW Council's parking review should look into the feasibility of providing additional parking or a park and ride facility on land at the Parkhurst Prison estate.

- e) Visitor Cowes Working Group
The Minutes of the Visitor Cowes Working Group meeting held on 21 November 2019 were received and noted.
- f) Informal IW Council Cabinet Meeting with Town and Parish Councils
The Minutes of the Informal IW Council Cabinet Meeting with Town and Parish Councils held on 12 September 2019 were received and noted.
- g) IWALC Executive Committee
The draft Minutes of the IWALC Executive Committee meetings held on 26 September 2019 and 28 November 2019 were received and noted.
- h) IWALC Topic Meeting
The draft Minutes of the IWALC Topic Meeting held on 31 October 2019 were received and noted.
- i) Cowes Business Association
The Minutes of the Cowes Business Association Committee meeting held on 4 November 2019 were received and noted.
- j) Supporters of Cowes Library
The Minutes of the Supporters of Cowes Library AGM held on 11 November 2019 were received and noted. Councillors were pleased to see that new officers had come forward and thanked the supporters for all their efforts; the 'A Tale of Two Shipwrecks' talk, following the AGM, was said to be excellent.
- k) Cowes Picnic in the Park
The Notes of the Cowes Picnic in the Park meeting held on 21 November 2019 were received and noted.

Councillor Reynolds left the meeting at 7.53pm, during the Using Bicycles in Cowes discussion.

8051 USING BICYCLES IN COWES

Councillor Oliver presented a report regarding using bicycles in Cowes. Four important foundations underpinned the report:

1. Economic Activity – high streets are dying, empty shops, low footfall and reduced economic activity.
2. Climate crisis – the need to reduce the impact upon the environment.
3. Health – people are suffering from more long-term conditions, diabetes II, cardiac problems, breathing problems, obesity and poorer mental health.
4. Congestion & town planning – too much traffic on the road, bigger cars parked on narrow roads, narrow pavements, bollards and street furniture, acute risers from 'road' to pedestrianised paving.

Councillor Adams spoke on the issue of health – 10 minutes exercise a day can reverse diabetes; walking and cycling is great exercise for children and older people; the healthier people become reduces the pressure on the NHS.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox spoke regarding the current use of the High Street for cyclists and spoke in favour of shared footpaths for cyclists and pedestrians. She

commented that cyclists need to be conscientious and courteous, as do pedestrians. It was agreed that a few inconsiderate cyclists let the side down for the other responsible cyclists and set a negative precedent. It was suggested that, through the Projects Committee, the Town Council may be able to make available some funding for a youth cycling project including education about the rules of cycling and maintenance of bicycles. It was agreed that a cycling strategy for the town should be created and this could be done through the agreed 'Place Plan' for Cowes. The Chairman thanked Councillor Oliver for his excellent report. It was:

RESOLVED

That the following actions be included in the Place Plan for the Cowes area:

- 1. Commission a pedestrian / bicycle / traffic survey of Cowes.**
- 2. Undertake a survey in Cowes on how people travel to Cowes - walk, bicycle, mobility scooter, bus, Red Jet, car or coach.**
- 3. Develop a Town Plan to enhance our environment, especially in the High Street area with residents, business owners and visitors.**

Councillor Ellis left the meeting at 8.07pm during the VE Day 2020 discussion.

8052 VE DAY 2020

VE Day 2020 on the 8th May 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the end of World War 2. The Government has moved the early May Bank Holiday from Monday 4th May to Friday 8th May. East Cowes Town Council are organising celebratory events on the Friday and Saturday of the bank holiday weekend. It was suggested that Cowes could hold an event on Sunday 10th May. Combining the celebration with The Picnic in the Park 2020 and Blyskawica commemorations are not possible. Reverend Poppe is happy to perform a church service on the Sunday but Councillors were asked to consider what else could be done to celebrate VE Day 2020. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council form a VE Day 2020 Working Group to consider the arrangements for an event on Sunday 10th May 2020.**
- 2. That Councillors Adams, Bertie, Bustin, Fuller, Oliver & Peacey Wilcox be appointed to the VE Day 2020 Working Group.**
- 3. That Councillor Peacey Wilcox will ask the IW Council if they are providing free road closures for VE Day events.**
- 4. That Councillor Ellis be invited to join the VE Day 2020 Working Group.**
- 5. That East Cowes Town Councillor Michael Paler be invited to attend the Working Group meetings.**
- 6. That a representative from Cowes Business Association be invited to attend the Working Group meetings.**
- 7. That the Town Clerk will arrange a meeting of the VE Day 2020 Working Group to meet in January 2020.**

8053 ARMED FORCES COVENANT FOR COMMUNITIES

Councillor Peacey Wilcox presented Councillors with details of the Armed Forces Covenant for communities. Local authorities and the armed forces community are encouraged to work together to establish a covenant in their area in order to:

- Encourage local communities to support the armed forces community in their areas and to nurture public understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the armed forces community.

- Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the armed forces community.
- Encourage activities which help to integrate the armed forces community into local life.
- Encourage the armed forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement.

Councillors agreed that Cowes Town Council already shows support of the armed forces at Remembrance Sunday and the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Day. Signing up to this covenant formalises and confirms the Town Council's support of veterans and active members of the armed forces. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council supports the Armed Forces Covenant for communities.

8054 REDUCTION IN REFUSE COLLECTION TO UNMADE ROADS IN COWES

Councillor Adams reported that the Island's waste collection contractor are experiencing difficulties with the collection of refuse at Coronation Road and Alexandra Road, Cowes. The poor condition and uneven road surface of these unmade roads is a health and safety concern for the operatives working in these areas. The problems raised were uneven ground underfoot causing injury (broken foot) to operative at Coronation Road; difficulty moving wheelie bins; problems lifting bins onto the trucks due to the camber. Once health and safety concerns have been raised they have to be addressed. The roads themselves would cost thousands of pounds per household to make good. The roads have a mixture of homeowners, elderly residents requiring care in the home, rental properties and flats. A number of options to resolve the problem were discussed including: a centralised bin area, but this would cause a loss of parking; obstruction to traffic if at the end of the road; fly tipping and possible arson. The IW Council have suggested that a residents association is formed to discuss the concerns raised with residents and help to find a solution alongside the IW Council and the waste contractor. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Councillors Adams and Reynolds, as homeowners in the area, speak to residents and establish a Residents Association for Coronation Road and Alexandra Road.**
- 2. That all Cowes North Councillors take part in any future Residents Association meetings.**

8055 MEMBER REVIEW OF FINANCIAL RECORDS – QUARTER 2

Councillors Adams and Rafferty, as Cowes Town Council's Member Internal Financial Reviewers, undertook a review of the Town Council's financial records on 4 December 2019. The quarterly review covered the period 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019. The purpose of the review was to take a random sample of financial transactions during the period and review for accuracy and compliance with financial regulations. Documents reviewed included the Cash book; invoices; bank records; petty cash records; reporting & approval by members: agendas / minutes – list of cheque and petty cash payments. The review showed from the sample taken during the period that the standard of book-keeping continues to be very good. It was:

RESOLVED

That the Member Review of Financial Records for Quarter 2 be received, noted and approved.

8056 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2019

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of November 2019. Cheque payments totalled £13,986.95; petty cash payments totalled £45.50. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments of £13,986.95 and petty cash payments of £45.50 be received, noted and approved.

8057 APPOINTMENT TO THE FINANCE, ACQUISITIONS & STAFFING COMMITTEE

The Town Clerk reported that following the resignation of Councillor Hammond from the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee there is a vacancy on this Committee. It was:

RESOLVED

That Councillor Bustin be appointed to the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee.

8058 POLICY FOR THE ERECTION OF PUBLIC USE BENCHES / SEATS

A review of the Policy for the Erection of Public Use Benches / Seats was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Policy for the Erection of Public Use Benches / Seats.

8059 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

Due to staffing issues the Environment Officer had not had time to type up a report of her activities. Councillors agreed that they would rather the Environment Officer attended to her important duties in preference to the typing of a report. As ever the Town Council thank the Environment Officer for all her efforts in Cowes.

8060 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

8061 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

No items were raised for inclusion on a future agenda.

The proceedings terminated at 8.28pm.

CHAIRMAN