

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 5 March 2020 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Peacey Wilcox (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Brown, Bustin (7.05pm), Ellis, Fuller (7.04pm), Gilpin, Hammond, Jones, Nicholson, Oliver, Reynolds, Taylor & Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Jeremy Dale, Chairman, Cowes Town Waterfront Trust; Councillor Michael Paler, East Cowes Town Council; County Press reporter.

PRESENTATION FROM JEREMY DALE, CHAIRMAN OF COWES TOWN WATERFRONT TRUST, TO SHARE HIS VISION FOR COWES

Mr Dale, owner of Seasafe Systems and a former harbour commissioner, advised that having been on the Board of Cowes Town Waterfront Trust (CTWT) for six months he had accepted the role of Chairman following the resignation of Peter Kingston. Mr Dale wants to see all the regattas, events and stakeholders working together to move forward. CTWF and other stakeholders collectively look after £13 / £14m of assets in Cowes. Mr Dale believes that Cowes Week is the big challenge; the good days have gone and the event requires joined up thinking by Cowes Yacht Haven, CTWT, Cowes Harbour Commission, the sailing clubs, Cowes Business Association and Cowes Town Council. Nobody made any money from Cowes Week 2019 and this is why areas for change have to be considered for the sailing event and the shoreside activities. 2026 will see the 200 year anniversary of Cowes Week and now is the time to start looking at proposed changes to be ready for the 2026 event. However, one week a year will not save Cowes so other areas for improvement need to be considered i.e. a bus route stopping at Birmingham Road which would encourage visitors to walk all the way through the town. There needs to be more transparency and improved communication, including CTWT who have not communicated what they have given back to the town. Councillor Reynolds commented that the cost of mooring and online registration had led to less boats staying in Cowes and less support for the shoreside activities. Mr Dale advised that although the boats go back to Hamble, ribs are bringing the crews back into Cowes. More space for parking ribs needs to be found. Also overcharging in Cowes, not just mooring but in pubs and restaurants has led to a reduction in the number of sailors using Cowes and this has to change.

Councillor Ellis commented that Cowes Week needs to be more family orientated, as before. Mr Dale agreed that the event should go back to being a proper regatta but due to a lack of big sponsors the event would have to go back to basics, but to hold events on different evenings i.e. fireworks, red arrows etc.

Councillor Bustin commented that the weather for the 2019 event was awful and there is nothing that can be done about that other than to provide more areas of shelter for visitors. Mr Dale said that it would be a good to get everybody to buy into any ideas for Cowes e.g. when there is the 'Classic Week' why not bring the classic cars etc. to Cowes to make a whole event. Mr Dale will also be looking at ways to bring people up from the High Street to Northwood House for their events and back again.

The Mayor thanked Mr Dale for his presentation and for bringing a breath of fresh air; she also thanked him for all his hard work for charity.

8075 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Bertie & Rafferty.

8076 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Taylor declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8081a, regarding Planning Application 20/00048/HOU, as he lives next door but one to the property – 34 Crossfield Avenue.

Councillor Fuller declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8081b3 as he uses the Isle of Wight Community Club for his surgeries at no charge.

8077 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

The Local Safer Neighbourhood Officer provided a written report which had been circulated to all Town Councillors. The crime statistics for February 2020 showed 1 robbery; 2 criminal damage to motor vehicles; 4 public order; 2 malicious communications; 3 harassment; 2 burglary business / residential; 3 drug offences; 2 theft; 2 firearms / offensive weapons offences; 6 assaults. The current police priorities are: Op Sceptre – nationwide knife crime initiative; Domestic violence – signposting / referring to partner agencies; Drugs – gathering intelligence and taking appropriate action.

**8078 MINUTES
RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6 February 2020 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8079 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present, therefore no questions were raised.

8080 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Written reports focussing on local matters were received from Councillors Bertie, Fuller, Nicholson & Peacey Wilcox. Councillors Fuller, Nicholson & Peacey Wilcox were available for questions but none were raised.

8081 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 18 February 2020 were received and noted.

Councillor Fuller left the meeting for the whole of Minute No. 8081b.

b) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 25 February 2020 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

1. That a grant be made to Wessex Cancer Trust in the sum of £1,000 to be split equally to support the two daisy buses in Southampton and Portsmouth.

2. That a grant be made to St. Mary the Virgin Church, Cowes in the sum of £3,905.

3. That a grant be made to the Indoor Bowls Section, Isle of Wight Community Club in the sum of £1,000.

4. That the overspend of £1,405 in the 'Grants' budget heading be offset against other budget headings that are underspent.

- c) Projects Committee
The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 11 February 2020 were received and noted.
- d) Parking Strategy Working Group
The Minutes of the Parking Strategy Working Group meeting held on 19 February 2020 were received and noted.
A question was raised as to whether some roads could be made one way to allow for echelon parking. Councillors said that this had been requested before some years ago and refused by Island Roads. Echelon parking could also be considered in some car parks. It was agreed:
ACTION
One way roads and echelon parking be added to the Agenda for the next Parking Strategy Working Group meeting.
- e) Visitor Cowes Working Group
The Minutes of the Visitor Cowes Working Group meeting held on 20 February 2020 were received and noted.
- f) VE Day 2020 Working Group
The Minutes of the VE Day 2020 Working Group meeting held on 20 February 2020 were received and noted.
- g) Cowes Business Association
The Minutes of the Cowes Business Association meetings held on 15 January 2020 & 17 February 2020 were received and noted.
- h) Cowes Picnic in the Park
The Notes of the Cowes Picnic in the Park meeting held on 20 February 2020 were received and noted. It was:
RESOLVED
That Cowes Town Council holds the funds for the Picnic in the Park event on Sunday 7 June 2020.
- i) IWALC Executive Committee
The Draft Minutes of the IWALC Executive Committee meeting held on 30 January 2020 were received and noted.
- j) IW Council Environment & Sustainability Forum
The Minutes of the IW Council Environment & Sustainability Forum held on 16 January 2020 were received and noted.
- k) IWALC Meeting with the IW Council
The Minutes of the IWALC meeting with the IW Council held on 2 December 2019 were received and noted.

8082 MEMBER REVIEW OF FINANCIAL RECORDS – QUARTER 3

Councillors Adams and Rafferty, as Cowes Town Council's Member Internal Financial Reviewers, undertook a review of the Town Council's financial records on 20 February 2020. The quarterly review covered the period 1 October 2019 to 31 December 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 and VAT Return spreadsheet. 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 annual internal and external audit is due at the end of the next quarter; this will be done by auditors and not Councillors.

8083 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2020

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of February 2020. Cheque payments totalled £16,107.23; petty cash payments totalled £90.64. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments of £16,107.23 and petty cash payments of £90.64 be received, noted and approved.

8084 PLACE PLAN WORKING GROUP

Councillors were asked to consider the formation of a Place Plan Working Group and, if formed, to agree the Terms of Reference, the number of members on the Working Group and to appoint Members to the Working Group. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That the formation of a Place Plan Working Group be approved.**
- 2. That the Terms of Reference and number of members (8) for the Place Plan Working Group be approved and adopted.**
- 3. That Councillors Bertie, Bustin, Gilpin, Nicholson, Oliver, Peacey Wilcox, Reynolds & Taylor be appointed to the Place Plan Working Group.**
- 4. The Town Clerks will arrange a date for the first Place Plan Working Group meeting.**

8085 RESPONSES TO THE PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN FOR COWES (MINUTE NO. 8069 REFERS)

At the Town Council meeting on 6 February 2020 Councillors discussed a report regarding an article in the 13 December 2019 'The Observer' whereby Ryde Town Council resolved to call on the IW Council's Planning Department to prepare a comprehensive infrastructure plan for Ryde. Councillors discussed whether this request could be raised by Cowes too as it is a commuter terminal which makes parking an issue, along with other infrastructure concerns. It is understood that new Government legislation will be implemented regarding infrastructure to support any future planning applications. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would call upon the IW Council's Planning Department to prepare a comprehensive infrastructure plan for Cowes and ask when the new Government legislation will be implemented. In response the IW Council have stated that they expect these issues to be picked up as part of the forthcoming Place Plan for Cowes. However with regard to the issues of

parking, the Town Council have been asked for their views on what specific infrastructure issues need to be addressed in Cowes.

The issue of where S106 monies is going was also discussed at the Town Council meeting on 6 February 2020. S106 monies go into a central pot and each town has to bid for a share of that pot. Councillors felt that developer bonds are not being utilised where they could be by the IW Council's Planning Department. It was agreed that Councillor Nicholson will investigate developer Bonds in the local area and feedback any details to IWALC for raising with the IW Council. Councillor Nicholson has provided the Town Council with some information about bonds and how they work.

8086 MEMBERSHIP OF COWES BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Councillors discussed whether to renew Cowes Town Council's membership of Cowes Business Association for 2020 in the sum of £35. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council renews its membership of Cowes Business Association in the sum of £35.

8087 MEMBERSHIP OF IWALC (ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS)

Councillors discussed whether to renew Cowes Town Council's membership of IWALC for 2020 – 2021 in the sum of £1,657.59. Councillors felt that this amount was rather high and felt that the Town Council should be offered some reduction in the charge to make it a more affordable level. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will write to IWALC to request a reduction in the membership charge for Cowes Town Council for 2020 – 2021.

8088 IMPROVEMENT OF FOOTPATH CS57 AS PART OF THE 'PATHS FOR ALL' PROJECT

Councillors have been asked to give their support to Cylewight's proposal for the improvement of footpath CS57 which runs between Three Gates Road and Northwood Recreation Ground. Cylewight have obtained funding which would enable the footpath to be upgraded to a bridle path so as to permit wider use by cyclists and, in appropriate places, horses. It would also improve the surface to make it easier for people with mobility problems or those with young children to use them. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council supports the improvement of footpath CS57.

8089 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY'S MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME FOR COWES

Councillors received and noted details of the Environment Agency's 5 year maintenance programme for Cowes.

8090 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; cemetery inspections specifically in relation to replacing worn or outdated signage; beach inspections in view of the recent stormy weather; fly-tipping incidents at Cross Street car park and monitoring hot spots for dog fouling, including Fellows Road.

ACTION

The Town Clerk will ask the Environment Officer to investigate dogs off leads and dog fouling in Crossfield Avenue.

8091 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

8092 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items raised for inclusion on future agendas.

The proceedings terminated at 8.03pm.

CHAIRMAN