

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held virtually by Zoom on Thursday 3 September 2020 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Peacey Wilcox (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Adams, Bertie, Brown, Ellis, Fuller (7.01pm), Hammond, Jones, Nicholson, Oliver (7.02pm), Taylor & Wardrop (7.01pm).

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk.

8118 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gilpin & Rafferty.

8119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Fuller declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8136 as he is compiling representations from residents who are against the proposed parking charges in Cowes / Gurnard.

8120 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 August 2020 showed 1 criminal damage; 2 public order; 1 harassment; 2 drug offences; 5 assaults; 1 firearm offence; 2 shoplifting offences. 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.

8121 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 16 July 2020 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes.

8122 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

8123 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

Councillor Bertie gave a verbal report to Councillors. He advised that he has been meeting with Cowes stakeholders to develop ideas for Cowes (as he did before for Project Cowes). He is formulating a discussion paper which, when completed, he will send to the Town Clerk for circulation to all Town Councillors.

Councillor Nicholson advised that Arc Consulting, who are developing the Place Plan for Cowes, have been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic but they are promising an interim update in due course.

Councillor Nicholson was questioned about the Floating Bridge situation and was asked to make the strongest representations to the IW Council about the problems that have been ongoing for three years. Councillor Nicholson acknowledged the effect on Cowes and Northwood residents with regard to increased traffic flow.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox advised the Leader of the IW Council and the Cabinet Member for Schools that, with schools re-opening, there will be an additional 100 / 150 children who would normally use the bridge; the Jenny boats are currently only accepting 25 passengers per trip due to social distancing. The IW Council chose to put on an additional Jenny boat in the morning but there is still only one launch available in the afternoon. It was agreed that the Floating Bridge is not fit for purpose, however questions raised with the IW Council are stonewalled. Councillors feel that the Floating Bridge, along with other matters in Cowes, are not communicated to Town Councillors or Clerks. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Mayor and the Town Clerk will write a letter to the IW Council regarding the Floating Bridge and its associated problems.
2. Cowes Town Councillors, who are also IW Councillors, will raise the Floating Bridge problems with the IW Council's Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Nicholson was also asked why Cowes Medical Centre are not undertaking blood tests for their patients. Councillors were advised that the Medical Centre is not big enough to accommodate blood tests but other suitable buildings in Cowes are being investigated to accommodate blood tests. The question of the purpose built building not being large enough was raised, also the collapse of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) at the Medical Centre. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will write to Alison Smith at the Clinical Commissioning Group to express the Town Council's disappointment with regard to blood tests not being undertaken at Cowes Medical Centre, and to ask what is being done further to the collapse of the PPG.

Councillor Fuller was asked if Church Road, Gurnard could be opened to traffic during the 8 week closure for gas works. Island Roads have advised that it not safe to be open while these works are going ahead.

The meeting adjourned at 7.34pm and resumed at 7.40pm.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox was asked about the police initiative to engage with 14 – 25 year olds that she referred to in her report. She advised that links to take part in the process are available on the Hampshire Police website.

8124 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meetings held on 21 July 2020 and 18 August 2020 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council receive, note and approve the Financial Statement as at 30 June 2020.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council requests Island Roads to supply and install a new litter bin at the junction of Baring Road and Battery Road for the sum of £400 plus ongoing emptying costs of currently £331.50 per bin per annum, with the cost to be met from the 'Dog and litter bin emptying' budget heading.**

3. That Cowes Town Council monitors the usage of the new bin one year after installation.
4. That Cowes Town Council provides one dressed Christmas Tree to be located at 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.
5. 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.
6. That John Groves (IW) Ltd be engaged to relay a section of path and re-turf at the side entrance of the Skate Park and around the shelter for the sum of £335, with the cost to be met from the 'Northwood Rec- Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading.
7. That John Groves (IW) Ltd be engaged to redecorate the shelter at Northwood Recreation Ground for the sum of £590, with the cost to be met from the 'Northwood Rec- Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading.
8. That John Groves (IW) Ltd provides a scaffolding enclosure around the area (for resolutions 6 and 7) during the repairs for the sum of £200, with the cost to be met from the 'Northwood Rec- Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading.
9. That a grant be made to Victim Support in the sum of £150.
10. That Cowes Town Council renews the Town Clerk's membership of the SLCC for the sum of £161.
11. That Cowes Town Council authorises that the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk be awarded £6 per week for the period that home-working is required during the Covid-19 pandemic.
12. That the sum received from Northwood Parish Council from the Route 32 Bus Account of £704.00 be ring fenced against any future costs associated with the Route 32 Community Bus scheme.
13. That John Groves (IW) Ltd be engaged to level and re-turf at the side entrance to the MUGA for the sum of £130, with the cost to be met from the 'Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading.
14. That G. Filer Engineering Ltd be engaged to undertake various repairs at the Skate Park and MUGA for the sum of £1,905.40, with the cost to be met from the 'Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading.

It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Fuller will prepare a paper for future discussion in relation to the Route 32 Community Bus scheme.

b) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 5 August 2020 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

1. That Cowes Town Council requests to take over responsibility and liability for the triangular piece of land at Firs Close from Island Roads.

2. That Cowes Town Council allows the residents of Firs Close to maintain the triangular piece of land to an agreed standard.

c) Public Conveniences Working Group

The Minutes of the Public Conveniences Working Group meeting held on 1 September 2020 were received and noted. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. That the decision to undertake remedial works at The Parade public toilets for the cost of up to £2,979.65 be deferred until a future meeting.
2. That the Assistant Town Clerk meets with Councillors Brown and Nicholson to discuss the remedial works required at The Parade public conveniences.

It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council requests that Southern Water, for the sum of £86.57, produce a quote for increasing the size of the water main serving The Parade public conveniences, with the cost to be met from the balance of The Parade roof replacement approved costs.

Councillor Adams left the meeting at 8.02pm.

d) Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee

The Minutes of the Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee meeting held on 7 August 2020 were received and noted.

8125 COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S WEBSITE

Councillors considered a proposal to update the Town Council's website which has remained unchanged in its format for many years, the front page being the same today as in 2015; it is tired and needs re-vamping. The current programme being used does not allow for much variation therefore the website will require some investment to be modernised and updated. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerks will investigate modernisation of the website by contacting other Town & Parish Councils and local web providers. Costs involved will be discussed at a future meeting of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee.

8126 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST 2020

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the months of July and August 2020. Cheque payments for July totalled £13,674.69, petty cash payments for July totalled £10.00. Cheque payments for August totalled £15,553.76, petty cash payments for August totalled £52.15. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments for July of £13,674.69, petty cash payments for July of £10.00; cheque payments for August of £15,553.76, petty cash payments for August of £52.15, be received, noted and approved.

8127 STANDING ORDERS

A review of Standing Orders was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Standing Orders.

8128 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A review of Financial Regulations was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Financial Regulations.

8129 CODE OF CONDUCT

A review of the Code of Conduct was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Code of Conduct.

8130 RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

A review of the Risk Management Policy was carried out and one minor amendment was required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the amended Risk Management Policy.

8131 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

A review of the Health and Safety Policy was carried out. Councillors discussed whether a reference to the Health & Safety Executive's Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015 should be included in the Policy. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will investigate whether a reference to the Health & Safety Executive's Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015 should be included in the Town Council's Health and Safety Policy.

8132 RISK ASSESSMENT – INSURANCE

A review of the Risk Assessment - Insurance was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Risk Assessment - Insurance.

8133 REVIEW OF COUNCILLORS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors that it is good practice to periodically review their Register of Interest forms. Any amended Registers should be forwarded to the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

8134 APPOINTMENT TO THE PLANNING & LICENSING COMMITTEE

There is a long standing vacancy on the Planning & Licensing Committee which Councillors are asked to consider filling. It was:

RESOLVED

That the vacancy remains on the Planning & Licensing Committee.

8135 APPOINTMENT TO THE PUBLIC CONVENIENCES WORKING GROUP

There is a long standing vacancy on the Public Conveniences Working Group which Councillors are asked to consider filling. It was:

RESOLVED

That Councillor Nicholson be appointed to the Public Conveniences Working Group.

8136 IW COUNCIL'S (PARKING PLACES) (TRAFFIC REGULATION) ORDER NO 2 2020 – DRAFT NOTICES

The Town Council have received Notices, Orders and Plans that are included in the alteration to the Parking Places Traffic Order No 2 2020. The legal period where representation can be received by the IW Council is from 21 August 2020 until 18 September 2020.

Councillors discussed the IW Council's proposals to revoke the 'Pay and Display 1 March to 31 October' parking restriction and introduce 'Pay and Display' at Queens Road on the north side, from a point 4 metres east to a point 42 metres east of its junction with Egypt Hill and Queens Road on the north side, from a point 53.5 metres east to a point 221 metres east of its junction with Egypt Hill.

Councillors also discussed the proposal to introduce parking charges at: Egypt Esplanade on the north-west side for its entire length; Princes Esplanade, north-west side from its junction with Egypt Esplanade to a point 198 metres north of its junction with Woodvale Road; Princes Esplanade, west side from a point 188 metres north to a point 20 metres north of its junction with Woodvale Road.

Proposed charges being:

Between 10am and 6pm – Up to 1 hour £1.70; 1 – 2 hours £2.90; 2 – 4 hours £4.80; 4 – 6 hours £6.20; 6 – 8 hours £8.60.

All evenings – Between 6pm and 10am - £1.00 per visit.

And

Somerton Park & Ride Car Park: **24 hours** - £2.00.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Town Clerk will incorporate into the letter of objection Councillor Fuller's concerns regarding the imposing of parking charges in these areas.
2. The Town Clerk will seek advice from NALC (via IWALC) regarding the legality of imposing parking charges in these areas.
3. Councillor Jones will investigate the legality of imposing parking charges in these areas.
4. Councillor Hammond will provide information regarding the former use of parking meters in this area and their subsequent removal.

It was:

RESOLVED

That, subsequent to information received from Councillors, Cowes Town Council will write to the IW Council to object to the revocation and introduction of parking charges in the Cowes / Gurnard areas as detailed above.

Councillor Wardrop left the meeting at 8.18pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8.18pm and resumed at 8.25pm.

8137 JOINT RESPONSES FROM COWES TOWN COUNCIL AND EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL IN REGARD TO COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION'S STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Councillors discussed the stakeholder consultation to combine Cowes Harbour Commission and Cowes Town Waterfront Trust. Cowes Town Council and East Cowes Town Council provided a joint response to the consultation on 30 July 2020, prior to the deadline for responses of Monday 3 August 2020. The Town Council have since been advised that Cowes Harbour Commission have suspended the public consultation until 2021 to allow time for detailed consideration of the views that they have received.

8138 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

A spreadsheet outlining the activities of the Environment Officer in Cowes was circulated to all Town Councillors. Actions included playground inspections; toilet inspections; safety issues at Arctic Park; fly-tipping; stones on walkways; domestic waste issues.

8139 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

8140 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Pop up cycle lane in Beckford Road (Councillors had a brief discussion about this matter and were against this proposal).

The proceedings terminated at 8.48pm.

CHAIRMAN