

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Cowes Town Council held virtually by Zoom on Thursday 26 November 2020 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Peacey Wilcox (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Bertie, Brown, Ellis, Fuller (7.09pm), Gilpin, Jones, Nicholson, Rafferty, Reynolds (7.07pm), Taylor & Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk;
two members of the public.

8190 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams and Oliver.

8191 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

8192 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 5 November 2020 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes.

8193 CYCLING IN COWES HIGH STREET

Since the introduction of a pedestrianized zone in the High Street in excess of twenty years before, there are a number of cyclists who continue to cycle through the pedestrian zone. Councillors and Speedwatch Officers have repeatedly tried to educate cyclists to dismount and walk through the pedestrian zone, with little success. The Police do not have the manpower to maintain a continuous presence in the area.

Councillors discussed the safety issues of cycling in the High Street. Over the years there have been a number of incidents where pedestrians have come into contact with cyclists in the pedestrian zone and a number of injuries have been sustained. A number of examples were given of initiatives in other countries where pedestrians and cyclists are able to successfully coexist. Councillors felt that the Town Council needs to be involved in educating all users of the High Street to share the space safely. All users of the High Street have a duty to use the area in a safe way.

Cyclists want to take the most direct route between A and B; alternative routes to divert cyclists away from the High Street have failed. Our businesses need the passing trade of both pedestrians and cyclists and it is important for the High Street's survival to attract business to the town.

There are a number of Government initiatives which are providing funding for improved cycling and walking routes which the Town Council could potentially access to trial an experimental change to the current Traffic Order, to allow shared use of the High Street. The number of people who own a bike is on the increase and Councillors felt that we should be encouraging more walking and cycling, which will also improve the town's parking issues.

Councillors considered the implementation of a designated marked area, but felt that this would likely cause more confrontation when pedestrians are moving from

one side of the High Street to the other. A shared space is the preference, with appropriate signage.

The issue of large numbers of visitors during events, such as Cowes Week, was raised. In other areas where cyclists have encountered large numbers of pedestrians, they have been known to slow down or dismount.

Following a lengthy discussion Councillors felt that it was time to take a new approach in the High Street and look to access Government funding to introduce an experimental shared use for both pedestrians and cyclists, for a trial period of at least 18 months, with appropriate signage to advise of the changes. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council liaises with the IW Council to look to access Government funding to introduce an experimental change of use to the Traffic Order, for at least an 18 month trial period, to permit cyclists to use the High Street.

8194 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items raised for inclusion on future agendas.

The proceedings terminated at 7.52pm.

CHAIRMAN