

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Cowes Town Council held virtually by Zoom on Thursday 21 January 2021 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Peacey Wilcox (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Adams, Bertie, Brown, Ellis, Fuller, Gilpin, Jones, Oliver, Rafferty (7.11pm), Reynolds, Taylor and Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk.

8212 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hammond and Nicholson.

8213 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

8214 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 10 December 2020 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes.

8215 COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS CONSULTATION

Councillors discussed the Government's proposed changes to permitted development rights consultation, the deadline for responses being 28 January 2021. The consultation relates to the Change of Use Classes Order: September 2020 whereby previous use classes A1 (shops), A2 (Financial & Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants & Cafes), B1 (Offices), D2 (Indoor sport and recreation), D1 (Health centres and nurseries) now form a single Class E (Commercial, business and service uses). Any Class E property has the ability to be used for any uses mentioned without the need for a planning application. This does not apply to drinking establishments and hot food takeaways so a planning application will always be required to change to or from these uses.

The outcome of these changes could result in empty High Street businesses being converted into residential buildings without the need to go through a planning application process and could lead to High Streets becoming residential with the loss of local shops and businesses. Whilst Cowes Town Council acknowledges the need for affordable local housing, it could become a developers' free for all; planning should be controlled at a local level by planners who understand the areas involved. Loss of businesses in the High Street would result in job losses and a knock on effect to the local economy. Since the outbreak of Covid-19 a lot of shopping has gone online but this could reverse when shopping locally becomes possible again. Councillors agreed that everything that can be done should be done to make town centres sustainable as not everybody can drive and people want to shop locally. Councillors also expressed their fears for the future of industrial estates which could be turned into residential estates.

Councillor Ellis left the meeting at 7.16pm during the discussion.

Councillors reviewed NALC's response to the consultation and felt that it had raised some very good points that Cowes Town Council agreed with. It was:

RESOLVED

That the Town Mayor and Town Clerk will formulate a response to the consultation, on behalf of Cowes Town Council, to not support the Government's proposals, based on the discussion tonight and reviewing NALC's response to the consultation.

8216 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

No items were raised for inclusion on future agendas.

The proceedings terminated at 7.39pm.

CHAIRMAN