

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in The Community Hall, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 3 June 2021 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Bertie (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Adams, Brown, Ellis, Fuller, Hammond, Hollis, Jones, Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox, Slade, Walters and Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk;
IW Councillor R. Quigley; East Cowes Town Councillors M. Paler and C. Palin;
Laurence Mead, Regatta Director, Cowes Week Ltd; two members of the public.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Mayor, Councillor Bertie, presented Councillor Peacey Wilcox with a bouquet of flowers in thanks for her two years as Mayor; he also congratulated her on her recent appointment as Leader of the IW Council.

8298 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rafferty.

8299 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Fuller declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8314 as he is the IW Council's Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing.

8300 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

There was no report from the local Safer Neighbourhood Officer.

8301 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 20 May 2021 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8302 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions were raised by members of the public.

8303 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

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

IW Councillor Quigley was in attendance and advised that the seventeen appeals for attending Cowes Enterprise College had failed. It was agreed to discuss this matter further as a separate Agenda item later in the meeting.

8304 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Parking Strategy Working Group

The Notes of the Informal Parking Strategy Working Group meeting held on 1 June 2021 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the comments made in the Notes in response to the IW Council's formal consultation on the traffic regulation order review for District 1.

8305 SCHOOL TRANSITION PLACES AT COWES ENTERPRISE COLLEGE

Councillors discussed the situation at Cowes Enterprise College whereby places for students in September 2021 were reduced from 270 to 210. This had resulted in a number of children, mostly from Northwood, not being allocated places at their nearest school. Seventeen appeals to attend the College had failed and those students will now be placed at other High Schools. Ormiston Academy (OA) are expected to provide 210 places in the next school year so the difficulty will continue. OA have stated that they need £134k to accommodate an extra class, however a recent financial statement indicated that the OA had a £132k underspend in their last year's budget. Northwood Parish Council had also noted a typo in their entry criteria which may mean that decisions are being made under an incorrect policy. Those East Cowes Town Councillors present at the meeting reported that they had not had any concerns raised by East Cowes parents. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council is concerned at the results of the reduction of the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Cowes Enterprise College; how it has disadvantaged local children through exclusion from their local school and their natural peer group. Cowes Town Council are concerned at the way the consultation was carried out and that its effect was ill-considered and possibly misleading.**
- 2. Cowes Town Council resolves to request that the IW Council Children's Policy and Scrutiny Committee scrutinise this incidence and process to highlight any flaws it may find and to request fair resolution to the situation, if flaws are found, with an aim to ensure that children are not put in such a position in the future.**

8306 ISSUES AT COWES MEDICAL CENTRE

Ongoing and long standing concerns regarding the difficulty in gaining access to Cowes Medical Centre were brought to a head at the IW Council's Health Scrutiny Committee meeting in December 2020. One of the main concerns is trying to get through on the telephone which can keep callers waiting and waiting for a response only to then be disconnected. Concerns were also raised about the reinstatement of the Patient Participation Group (PPG). Councillors have now been advised, and welcomed the news, that Cowes Medical Centre will have a new telephone system installed by the end of June which will improve the patient experience when contacting the practice. Councillors also welcomed the news that, as from this summer, there will be a phlebotomy service at the practice which will run on a Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 12.30pm using an appointment system. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council continues to have concerns at accounts being expressed regarding access difficulties and the way some people are received in some instances by Cowes Medical Centre. However, it welcomes the positive moves being made by the Centre, now committing to a date to install an upgraded telephone system and to host phlebotomy services, and regards this as an encouraging step.**

- 2. Cowes Town Council would like to support Cowes Medical Centre in becoming one of the best services on the Island, and to that end ask when the PPG will be reformed and reinstated. Cowes Town Council would like to have direct or indirect liaison with the PPG, and the Medical Centre, especially in view of the development of the Cowes / Northwood peninsula Place Plan.**

8307 CONDITION OF ROADS IN COWES

Further to the discussion about the condition of some roads in Cowes at the 1 April Town Council meeting, it was agreed to wait for responses to an email sent by Councillor Peacey Wilcox to the Leader of the IW Council, the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport, the Director of Neighbourhoods and Island Roads. To date the only response received has been from Island Roads. The response stated that remedial works to Mill Hill Road are scheduled for 2021 / 2022, an 18 month window with the road continuing to deteriorate. It was felt that it is wrong for the contractor, Island Roads, responsible for the inferior work, to decide as and when the defects are rectified. It has been alleged by a resurfacing sub-contractor that they have been instructed to lay just 23mm (less than 1 inch) of tarmac when 40 to 50mm is normal. Councillors discussed that Island Roads follow an agreed schedule of works which in previous years had not been agreed; therefore it is the management of the PFI Contract that is failing. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council writes to IW Councillor Phil Jordan, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport, to express concerns about the conditions of the roads in Cowes and the management of the PFI Contract.**
- 2. Copies of the letter to be sent to the Leader and Chairman of the IW Council, the IW Council's Director of Neighbourhoods and IWALC.**

8308 COWES WEEK 2021

Several Town Councillors had expressed concerns that 'consultation' exercises that Cowes Town Council (CTC) and Cowes Business Association (CBA) are meant to have with Cowes Week Ltd (CWL) is more about being told what CWL intend to do rather than CTC and CBA having an input into what is required or not required for Cowes Week. Mr Mead advised the meeting that he had liaised with stakeholders as much as possible as everyone wants to see a successful Cowes Week even with the change in circumstances due to the pandemic.

Councillors discussed 'What is Cowes Week'? Councillors agreed that it is one of the most important and historic regattas in the world to which other 'local' activities can attach themselves. It is economically important to Cowes generating in the region of £2.2m.

Councillors discussed the Cowes Week Parade Village. Whilst some felt that the marquee on The Parade this year was unnecessary, others felt that to keep up the image and importance of the event it should remain. It will also enable additional space for the event to ensure that some social distancing can still take place through what will be a very busy town. Mr Mead advised that arrangements are about 50% organised so far. There could be 750 boats and the sailing clubs are at 100% capacity. The Parade Village does support the regatta as the sailing clubs do not get good attendance for trophy giving. The Parade Village will be used for all daily prize giving at 6.30pm and the final prizes will be awarded on the Friday night; music will start at 8pm each day. The water sign off cannot be avoided as the organisers must use up to date technology for the event.

The Parade Village is being managed this year by CWL and Joe Hall which will give more risk but hopefully will make more reward.

It was agreed that most residents are behind the event; traffic issues being the biggest problem. Mr Mead agreed to share the final Traffic Plan, asap, so that CTC can share this with the public.

Local businesses have been offered space on The Parade for a discounted price.

There is availability for 20 - 30 units, with just over half being sold so far. It was agreed to have some upmarket traders to provide the ambience of the event for people to enjoy and get the holiday feel but not to undermine local traders.

The sailing clubs support the event and meet six times a year to discuss the plans; they support the daily prize giving in the marquee.

There are no financial implications for the IW Council; CWL and the subcontractor pay for everything.

Councillors thanked Mr Mead for providing the event and his contribution to the meeting was very reassuring. CTC and CWL need to engage more to build on the regatta so that everyone can be involved.

The Mayor thanked Mr Mead for attending and wished him well in finding a sponsor.

It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council are happy with the information provided by Mr Mead and support the event of Cowes Week 2021.

Councillor Slade left the meeting at 8.23pm during the Cowes Week 2021 discussion.

8309 PROMOTION OF COWES

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

8310 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2021

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of May 2021. Cheque payments totalled £15,766.61; petty cash payments totalled £13.98. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments of £15,766.61 and petty cash payments of £13.98 be received, noted and approved.

8311 TWO VACANT TOWN COUNCIL SEATS

Councillors discussed whether to advertise the two vacant seats for co-option, one in Cowes South Ward and one in Cowes West Ward. It was:

RESOLVED

The Town Clerk will advertise the two vacant seats for co-option, asap.

Councillor Wardrop left the meeting at 8.52pm.

8312 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

Councillors discussed the updated Community Emergency Plan. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the updated Community Emergency Plan.

8313 OWNERSHIP OF MORNINGTON WOODS, JENNY'S WOOD AND THE GREEN AREA IN FRONT OF THE TOILETS AT MORNINGTON ROAD (MINUTE MO. 8251 REFERS)

At the Cowes Town Council meeting on 1 April 2021, the Town Council was asked to establish ownership of Mornington Woods, Jenny's Wood and the green area in front of the toilets at Mornington Road. It has been ascertained that all three areas are subject to Village Green status and are owned by the IW Council.

8314 HAMLET COURT, 6 QUEENS ROAD, COWES

A letter had been received from Hamlet Court Regeneration Ltd asking the Town Council to support efforts to replace Hamlet Court with two villas. Councillors are aware that planning permission for this building has previously been refused and Councillors felt that this historic, although not listed, building should be repaired and restored rather than replaced. Councillors expressed concern that the building has been left to deteriorate. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council will write to the IW Council's Planning Department to ask what action they will take to ensure that this building is preserved and restored and does not deteriorate further.

8315 BT PAYPHONE REMOVAL CONSULTATION

Councillors received details from BT about their proposal to remove the telephone box situated at the junction of Shooters Hill and the High Street (outside Sainsbury's). The telephone box having only been used 14 times in the last month. It was agreed that Cowes Town Council would make no comment on this consultation.

8316 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

A report outlining the activities of the Environment Officer in Cowes was circulated to all Town Councillors. Actions taken included dog warden services; play park inspections; public conveniences inspections; domestic waste issues; eScooter monitoring.

8317 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

There were no miscellaneous publications and correspondence received.

8318 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Review Committee and Working Group Structure and Programme after Councillor Co-options have been made – Councillor Nicholson

The proceedings terminated at 9.13pm.

CHAIRMAN