

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 12 October 2021 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Nicholson (Chair), Adams, Brown and Sanders

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk; East Cowes Town Councillor Paler; a representative from Moorgreen Road Allotment Society; a representative from Cowes Baptist Church; 1 member of the public

426. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bertie and Walters.

427. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were received.

428. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 14 September 2021 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

429. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **The Cut - Enhancements**

Martin Hayles, architect for the Cut project, was not in attendance but had provided an update. The project works are programmed to commence in February 2022. Island Roads will provide the Town Council with revised costings, taking into account increases in materials and lead times. Subject to the Town Council's agreement of any increase in cost, Island Roads will request consent from the IW Council's Contract Management Team to proceed with the scheme.

b) **Ark and Dove Commemorations**

The Clerks are liaising with several organisations in Maryland, USA to obtain permission to reproduce images on the Information Board.

c) **Active Travel**

The IW Council has received confirmation of funding from the Department for Transport to support the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and has invited town and parish councils across the Island to apply for funding. Up to £10,000 of match-funding is available for a single town or parish council boundary, or a collection of boundaries, to assist with the development of an LCWIP. LCWIPs enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, usually over a ten year period, and may lead to further funding opportunities to support the implementation of infrastructure prioritised in the LCWIP. Councillors were supportive of creating an LCWIP for Cowes and suggested inviting Northwood and Gurnard Parish Councils to work in partnership with the Town Council to create an area LCWIP.

There is limited local expertise available to assist with the creation of an LCWIP and a short timescale to apply to the IW Council for funding. It was

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers setting aside up to £10,000 of match-funding for the creation of an LCWIP, with the cost to be met from money held in Reserves.

ACTION

The Clerks will write to Gurnard and Northwood Parish Councils to invite them to work in partnership with the Town Council to create an area LCWIP.

d) **Cowes Fayre**

The Town Council has bid for funding of £3,000 from the Welcome Back Fund for a 'Cowes Fayre'. It is likely that the Fayre will be held in Spring 2022. Cowes Business Association (CBA) have advised that the best time for local businesses to be involved in the Fayre will be after the boatyards have cleared boats in storage over the Winter. Councillors are happy to support a date that the CBA suggest. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Adams will contact Cowes Yacht Haven to ask when their boatyard will be clear of boats following Winter storage.

e) **High Street Pedestrianisation and Bollards**

The Town Council has approached Island Roads to request the opportunity to look at possible solutions to the ongoing issues with vehicles in the pedestrian zone. Island Roads advised they are involved in discussions with Ryde Town Council regarding the use of a physical barrier to restrict access at the start of their pedestrian zone and the outcome of these discussions will inform what can be done in Cowes.

Upcoming changes in legislation could alter the way enforcement can be carried out. Information should be available towards the end of this year. This item will be removed from future agendas until an update is available.

f) **Approved Contractors List**

The Clerks were actioned to write to East Cowes and Ryde Town Councils and Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council to ask what procedures they use when engaging contractors. Responses received from East Cowes Town Council and Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and were discussed. The Chairman suggested creating a simple document for small contracts and agreed to create a summary of the procedure to be followed for Councillors' consideration. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Chairman will produce a draft procedure for engaging contractors in small contracts for consideration at a future meeting of the Projects Committee.

g) **Community Orchard**

Councillor Brown is liaising with the IW Council and Red Funnel regarding the planting of a number of trees and the formation of a small Community Orchard at Northwood Recreation Ground. The IW Council require the Community Orchard to be fenced off, with gated access, to protect the trees while they are young. They have offered to assist with planting the trees and will provide stakes and ties. Councillor Brown has requested a quotation for the fencing from an IW Council recommended contractor. The Town Council has approved £300 for the formation of a community orchard; any additional costs will require approval. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Councillor Brown will chase up the quotation for the fencing.
2. Councillor Brown will advise the Chairman of any costs over the £300 currently approved for this project.

h) **80th Anniversary of the Defence of Cowes**

There was no update on this item.

i) **Uffa Fox Regatta**

There was no update on this item.

j) **On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging**

Following a resident survey and requests from residents, the IW Council have committed to install one on-street electric vehicle charge point in Seaview Road in the 2021/22 financial year. This location meets the IW Council's criteria: there must be space for two vehicles to park adjacent to the charge point, sufficient pavement width for easy passage once the charge point is installed, and be near enough to a suitable power supply to make the installation cost-effective.

The IW Council have approached town and parish councils on the Island to see if they are interested in working together to install additional on-street charge points in areas where there is a lack of off-street parking.

Councillors felt unable to commit to purchasing additional chargers without knowing if there is a current demand for on-street charge points. They were concerned that the chargers will become out of date before there is sufficient demand. This project will not be pursued at this time and will be removed from future agendas.

430. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Park Road public toilets**

Councillors were asked to consider funding the re-opening of the public toilets by the Rosebed in Park Road. The building is owned by Northwood House Charitable Trust Company Ltd (NHCTCL). NHCTCL have been asked what their plans are for the building and advised they are currently undertaking a review of all of their buildings. Councillors felt that a needs survey should be undertaken before the Town Council could consider funding the re-opening of the facility as a public convenience. The current condition of the facility is unknown but it is expected that a significant amount of investment will be required to modernise and upgrade the facility to make it fit for purpose. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Clerks will request an update from NHCTCL on their plans for the former public toilet building by the Rosebed.

b) **Moorgreen Road Allotment Society and Woodland**

Representatives from Moorgreen Road Allotment Society (MRAS) and Cowes Baptist Church were in attendance and gave an update on the recent biodiversity event held in Moorgreen Reservoir and the grounds of the Baptist Church. The event was well received with 400 – 500 people through the gate. There appears to be a good level of local support for involvement in events in this area. The area could be developed further under the Place Plan, making better use of the green spaces in the town. The representatives asked what they can do to help the Town Council bring people in and get them involved.

The woodland area between Moorgreen Reservoir and Stones Close was discussed. The area is owned by the IW Council but is currently leased to MRAS, along with the allotments. Councillors felt the area would benefit from clearance of ivy and brambles, coppicing and removal of some self-set cherry trees to improve the remaining trees. MRAS have applied for funding to assist them with tidying the site. There may be an opportunity for a meandering walk to be formed through the woodland area, avoiding two badger setts. It was suggested that public opinion should be sought on possible uses for the area to encourage residents to use it.

Councillor Sanders had met with a local resident from Stones Close to look at the impact the overgrown trees, ivy and brambles from the woodland were having on neighbouring properties.

The Chairman welcomed the approach and dialogue with MRAS and the Baptist Church; there are many assets and opportunities to work in partnership under the Place Plan. He suggested MRAS initially discuss tidying the woodland with the IW Council before any partnership plans are made. It was suggested the area would benefit from a woodland management plan, providing short, medium and long-term goals and an arboriculturalist should be consulted to assist with the creation of a management plan. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. MRAS will obtain outline costs for the services of an arboriculturalist to assist with the creation of a management plan.
2. Councillor Sanders will liaise with MRAS on the Town Council's behalf.

431. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

Councillor Adams is awaiting quotations for the supply of BBQ stands.

A resident has requested the Town Council consider installing an additional litter bin along St Mary's Road, advising that a significant amount of litter is dropped along the length of the road. There is currently one litter bin and one dog bin located adjacent to St Mary's Road in Cross Street car park, and an additional litter bin at St Mary's park. Initial enquiries have been made with Island Roads to ask how well the existing bins in Cross Street car park are used and requesting they suggest suitable locations for an additional litter bin along St Mary's Road. Island Roads confirmed that the bins in Cross Street car park are well used but the footway widths in St Mary's Road are not ideal for an additional bin and may not be popular with residents affected. A litter bin could be placed on the verge at St Mary's park where there is already a dog bin, which will have no impact on a resident's property. The Clerks advised that costings for the supply and installation of an additional litter bin are estimated at £400, along with annual emptying costs of £331.50, subject to annual uplift. It was suggested that Island Roads be asked if a litter bin could be trialled on the verge at St Mary's park in the first instance, to see if it is well used.

Councillor Brown received a request at the recent Park Forum, asking the Town Council to consider installing an additional litter bin in the grounds of Northwood Park between the Tennis Courts and Baring Road entrance. Councillors suggested NHCTCL make a formal request to the Town Council for consideration.

The Assistant Town Clerk has completed an annual inspection of the Town Council's Assets. Of concern is the condition of the 'Jack' tree sculpture located at the junction of Newport Road with Arctic Road. The tree sculptor was requested to inspect the tree and he is of the opinion that it is not in a good condition and there is fungus present. He suggested a tree surgeon be engaged to carry out a full inspection.

It was agreed:

ACTION

1. The Clerks will ask Island Roads if a litter bin can be trialled on the verge adjacent to St Mary's park.
2. The Clerks will obtain a price for a tree surgeon to inspect the 'Jack' tree sculpture and report on its current condition.

b) **Northwood Recreation Ground**

Repairs to the Skatepark ramp run-offs have been completed.

The MUGA surface has been pressure-washed, following a request from a resident.

A quarterly inspection of the Town Council's facilities at Northwood Recreation was undertaken on 11 October 2021 by the Assistant Town Clerk.

Broken glass was cleared from the perimeter of the MUGA and Skatepark.

There is a considerable amount of graffiti at the Park Road end of the Skatepark, which the cleaner was asked to remove. The cleaner advised that they cleaned the graffiti on 12 October (and took photographic evidence), but it reoccurred later the same day. They have been requested to remove any offensive graffiti as soon as possible.

On the outdoor gym, the faulty Air Walker has been removed by the suppliers and will be fully inspected at their premises. They will provide the Town Council with a report on their findings.

Additional top soil is required to raise the ground level adjacent to some of the safety matting.

The IW Council have advised that there is an issue with the supply of the 'wet pour' and the cost is likely to increase. The woodchip has been topped up to ensure the safety of the apparatus in the interim.

Two of the Town Council's benches bordering the main field need cleaning to remove lichen.

432. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items raised for inclusion on a future agenda.

The Chairman asked Councillors if they felt the meeting was necessary and constructive, as it is important to only hold meetings that have sufficient business for consideration. Councillors felt that the meeting was necessary and constructive.

The proceedings terminated at 8.04pm

CHAIRMAN