

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Drawing Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 7 October 2021 at 7pm.

**Present:** Councillor Bertie (Town Mayor) (Chairman)  
Councillors Brown, Carter, Ellis, Fuller (7.13pm), Hammond, Hollis, Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox, Rafferty, Sanders, Walters & Wardrop.

**In attendance:** Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk; East Cowes Town Councillor Paler; Richard Mumford & Andy Webb, Southern Water.

### **PRESENTATION FROM SOUTHERN WATER REGARDING SEWAGE OUTFALLS**

Representatives from Southern Water attended to make a presentation on sewage outfalls. The pumping stations consist of a control room; a Wet Room which receives the incoming gravity flow and has three pumps which send the outflow to the treatment plant at Sandown. There is also a Storm Well which fills when the Wet Well becomes full, this also has three pumps which sends the outflow out to sea. This only happens at times of extreme water intake. All discharges via this route have to be reported to the Environment Agency. Discharges are made for one reason and are essential to prevent flooding of properties. The discharges do not affect bathing water quality.

### **Q & A**

**Q** Why is foul water not separated from storm water?

**A** In an ideal world this would happen but there would be a considerable cost involved and stakeholders in the company have not made this a priority.

**Q** What investment is being made to the infrastructure in Cowes?

**A** Pumping stations have been installed in Newport Road, Francki Place and St Mary's Road.

**Q** Admirals Wharf - do the tanks pump straight into the sea?

**A** The tanks at Admirals Wharf do not pump into the sea.

**Q** Could Cowes Town Council assist with funding to separate storm water from foul water?

**A** This is a national problem and where would the water go?

**Q** What are the biggest problems that Southern Water face in Cowes?

**A** When there is a breakdown at the pumping station, water collects in Cowes as it acts like a bowl. Due to the nature of the town it can be difficult to get to and can cause an operational challenge. Southern Water are confident that Cowes can cope in a storm. Southern Water are not responsible for surface water going into the drains, this is the responsibility of Island Roads.

**Q** Where does the processed sewage go?

**A** Sewage is used for Covid testing / monitoring; it is then treated and the grit, sanitary items and baby wipes are removed. The gas is used for a heat and power unit, the by-product of 25 – 28% is used as dry peat and fertiliser.

**Q** It has been recently publicised that valuable medical compounds can be extracted from the processed sewage. Who does this and could it happen on the Isle of Wight?

**A** This is still in its early developmental stage and Southern Water will advise in due course.

To summarise, discharges stop flooding. 96% of the sewage goes to the treatment plant. Water bathing quality is not affected; 12 beaches have the 'excellent' rating, two are 'good'. Councillors are invited to take a tour around Sandown Treatment Centre. Any additional questions should be sent to the Town Clerk for submission to Southern Water. Councillor Bertie thanked Richard and Andy for their interesting presentation.

Prior to the start of the meeting Councillor Bertie advised that Councillor Vanessa Slade has resigned from the Town Council with immediate effect.

**8359 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams & Jones.

**8360 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Walters declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8365c1 as he has been invited to join Cowes Medical Centre's Patient Participation Group as a member of the public.

Councillor Carter declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8365c1 as she works for the NHS at St Mary's Hospital.

Councillor Wardrop declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8368 as she is a resident of Granville Road.

**8361 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

The local Safer Neighbourhood Officer did not provide a written report and did not attend the meeting.

**8362 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 2 September 2021 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**8363 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

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

**8364 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS**

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

Councillor Fuller was asked about the local action taken against eScooters. This related to private eScooters being used on the roads (not Beryl eScooters) which resulted in four arrests and confiscation of the eScooters.

Councillor Fuller was asked about the Cowes Enterprise College consultation which may result in local children having difficulty in gaining a place at the college. It was agreed that this would be an Agenda item for the next Town Council meeting.

Councillors Peacey Wilcox and Nicholson were available for questions but none were raised. Councillor Quigley's report was taken as read.

**8365 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS**

a) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 22 September 2021 were received and noted.

b) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 14 September 2021 were received and noted.

c) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 28 September 2021 were received and noted. It was:

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That Cowes Town Council does not make a grant to the Friends of Cowes Medical Centre.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council sets aside a sum of up to £500 from the 'Discretionary Services Contingency' budget heading for 2021 / 2022 to support Mornington Woods Volunteer Group.**
- 3. That Cowes Town Council continues to set aside a sum of up to £500 every financial year from the 'Discretionary Services Contingency' budget heading to support Mornington Woods Volunteer Group.**
- 4. That Cowes Town Council renews its annual Zoom subscription for the sum of £119.90.**
- 5. That Cowes Town Council renews the Assistant Town Clerk's membership of the SLCC in the sum of £208.**

d) Working Group to Review Working Group and Committee structures, Schedule of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2021 – 2022 and Terms of Reference for Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Working Group to Review Working Group and Committee structures, Schedule of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2021 – 2022 and Terms of Reference for Projects Committee held on 21 September 2021 were received and noted. It was:

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That the Parking Strategy Working Group, Visitor Cowes Working Group and Public Conveniences Working Group be merged into the Projects Committee.**
- 2. That the Place Plan Working Group remains as this will require some in-depth discussions as the project progresses.**
- 3. That the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee will retain the scheduled dates for meetings but, in consultation with the Chairman, if there is no business to be discussed the meeting will be cancelled.**
- 4. That the Planning & Licensing Committee will only meet if a Planning Application or Licensing Application is called in by a Town Councillor.**
- 5. That the Projects Committee will retain the scheduled dates for meetings but, in consultation with the Chairman, if there is no business to be discussed the meeting will be cancelled.**
- 6. 'That all Committees must meet at least once in every quarter, providing there is sufficient or urgent business to warrant a meeting being called.' (Standing Order 15.7 refers).**
- 7. That the Projects Committee Terms of Reference are amended to delete point 9: 'Matters relating to financial implications which are over £1,000 or not to be funded from the 'New Projects' budget heading are referred to the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee, (as determined by the Financial Regulations), at the earliest stage.'**
- 8. That Financial Regulation 3.4 is amended to reflect this change.**
- 9. That Financial Regulations 3.5 and 3.6 are deleted.**

Councillor Peacey Wilcox left the meeting at 7.59pm.

- e) Public Conveniences Working Group  
The Minutes of the Public Conveniences Working Group meeting held on 23 September 2021 were received and noted. It was:  
**RESOLVED**  
**1. That Cowes Town Council accepts the architect's offer of £1,000.00 plus VAT towards future works at The Parade public conveniences.**  
**2. That Cowes Town Council suspends Financial Regulation 10.4 to consider one quotation to convert The Parade public conveniences facility to mains-fed water.**  
**3. That Cowes Town Council engages F.W. Marsh Ltd to decommission, drain and disconnect the existing cold water tanks at The Parade public conveniences and convert the existing pipework to mains-fed water for the cost of £4,260.00 plus VAT.**
- f) Supporters of Cowes Library  
The Minutes of the Supporters of Cowes Library meeting held on 13 September 2021 were received and noted. It was also noted that the Library are holding an Open Day on Saturday 9 October 2021 and it was suggested that all Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee members should attend as the Town Council financially supports the Library.
- g) Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee  
The Minutes of the Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee meeting held on 3 September 2021 were received and noted. Councillor Walters attended on behalf of Cowes Town Council. He advised that many matters discussed did not relate to Harbour business, including a Licensing Application for a Restaurant Boat for which Cowes Town Council had not been consulted. Councillor Bertie advised that he is following up on the Uffa Fox Regatta plans for 2022.
- h) IWALC Topic Meeting  
The Notes of the IWALC Topic meeting held on 26 August 2021 were received and noted.
- i) Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd – Park Forum  
The Notes of the Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd – Park Forum held on 22 September 2021 were received and noted.

#### **8366 MEMBER REVIEW OF FINANCIAL RECORDS – QUARTER 1**

Councillors Adams and Hammond, as Cowes Town Council's Member Internal Financial Reviewers, undertook a review of the Town Council's financial records on 2 September 2021. The quarterly review covered the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021. The purpose of the review was to take a random sample of financial transactions during the period and review for accuracy and compliance with Financial Regulations. Documents reviewed included the Cash book; invoices; bank records; petty cash records; reporting & approval by members: agendas / minutes – list of cheque and petty cash payments; and VAT Return spreadsheet. The review showed from the sample taken during the period that the standard of book-keeping continues to be very good. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That the Member Review of Financial Records for Quarter 1 be received, noted and approved.**

**8367 LOCAL AUTHORITY BYELAWS**

Councillors were advised that local authorities, under various Acts of Parliament, have the power to make their own byelaws to deal with local issues. The byelaw generally requires something to be done or not be done and can carry a sanction or penalty fine enforced through a Magistrates Court. Regulations changing the procedure for making byelaws in England were approved and became law in 2016 and must fall within a confirming authority's area of responsibility. There is a new seven step process now published. A byelaw must not duplicate or conflict with any other law.

The nuisance they address merits criminal sanctions and that to a reasonable person the penalty available is proportionate. They must directly address a genuine and specific local problem not to deal with essentially national issues. They do not conflict with government policy.

**Some of the subject matter for byelaws:**

Cycling, skateboarding, climbing, public bathing, use of the seashore and promenades, open spaces, markets and opening hours, amusement premises, pleasure fairs.

Councillors asked how enforcement of any byelaws could happen; possibly the new traffic wardens could enforce. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Town Clerk will send a copy of the 'House of Commons Library Briefing Paper Number 01817: Local Authority Byelaws' to all Town Councillors.

**8368 COWES ROADS**

Councillors discussed the poor condition of Granville Road and Denmark Road and the evidence of pot holes filling with water every time there is a downpour. Island Roads have no current plans to resurface these two roads even though the less well used Granville Bridge and various pavements in Cowes have been resurfaced. Along with Granville Road and Denmark Road, concerns were raised about Crossfield Avenue and Baring Road at the junction with Castle Hill. The Town Clerk had previously written to the IW Council regarding the PFI Contract and the management of such (Minute No 8307 refers); to date no response has been received. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

1. The Town Clerk will continue to press for a reply to the email sent to the IW Council on 8 June 2021.
2. The Town Clerk will also ask the IW Council for details of how the prioritisation of the roads to be resurfaced is identified, detailing the roads of concern to the Town Council.

**8369 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2021**

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of September 2021. Cheque payments totalled £15,338.35; petty cash payments totalled £91.24. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That the cheque payments of £15,338.35 and petty cash payments of £91.24 be received, noted and approved.**

**8370 APPOINTMENT TO THE FINANCE, ACQUISITIONS & STAFFING COMMITTEE**

Following the resignation of Councillor Peacey Wilcox from the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee, there is now a vacancy on this Committee. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Brown be appointed to the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee.**

**8371 WINTER BEDDING AND MAINTENANCE**

Councillors discussed a proposal for Care in the Garden to plant 18 troughs, 2 x 3-tiered planters and 2 tubs from Birmingham Road through the High Street to Market Hill. The quote, which has increased slightly due to the increased costs of compost, is to remove the existing plants, top up with fresh compost, under plant with daffodil bulbs and plant with variegated shrubs, cyclamen and violas for the sum of £726.00. Care in the Garden have also offered a maintenance schedule for watering when necessary, feeding, dead heading and replacing plants, at cost if necessary, at the cost of £18.00 per hour x 2 hours per week. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**1. That Cowes Town Council engage the services of Care in the Garden to plant the 22 troughs, planters and tubs for the sum of £726.00.**

**2. That Cowes Town Council engage Care in the Garden to perform a weekly maintenance schedule of the troughs, planters and tubs at a cost of £18.00 per hour x 2 hours per week.**

**8372 HIRE OF PA SYSTEM AND FLAG POLE FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**

The Town Clerk asked Councillors to consider the hire of a PA system in the sum of £225 and flag pole in the sum of £215 for the Remembrance Sunday event at Northwood Park on Sunday 14 November 2021. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That, should the Remembrance Sunday event proceed as usual, Cowes Town Council hires a PA system in the sum of £225 and flag pole in the sum of £215 for the Remembrance Sunday event at Northwood Park on Sunday 14 November 2021.**

**8373 DONATION TO ST MARY'S CHURCH**

The Town Clerk asked Councillors to consider making a donation of £100 to St Mary's Church for the production of the Remembrance Sunday programmes. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That, should the Remembrance Sunday event proceed as usual, Cowes Town Council makes a donation of £100 to St Mary's Church for the production of the Remembrance Sunday programmes.**

**8374 DONATION TO THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL**

The Town Clerk asked Councillors to consider making a donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal for the Remembrance Sunday wreath. Councillors discussed increasing this donation. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council makes a donation of £200 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal for the Remembrance Sunday wreath.**

**8375 DONATION TO COWES BRANCH OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

The Town Clerk asked Councillors to consider making a donation of £300 to the Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion for refreshments after the Remembrance Sunday event on 14 November 2021. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That, should the Remembrance Sunday event proceed as usual, Cowes Town Council makes a donation of £300 to the Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion for refreshments after the Remembrance Sunday event on 14 November 2021.**

**8376 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S POLICY ON DEBATE & VOTING AT MEETINGS**

A review of the Policy on Debate and Voting at Meetings was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the Policy on Debate and Voting at Meetings.**

**8377 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S CHILD, YOUNG PERSON AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY**

A review of the Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Policy.**

**8378 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S DIGNITY AT WORK – BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

A review of the Dignity at Work – Bullying and Harassment Policy was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the Dignity at Work – Bullying and Harassment Policy**

**8379 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYEES**

A review of the Grievance Procedure for Employees was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the Grievance Procedure for Employees.**

**8380 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYEES**

A review of the Disciplinary Procedure for Employees was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the Disciplinary Procedure for Employees.**

**8381 AGE FRIENDLY ISLAND CHARTER / DIGITAL FRIENDLY ISLAND PLEDGE**

Cowes Town Council adopted the Age Friendly Island Charter at their Annual Town Council Meeting on 17 May 2018 (Minute No. 7719h refers). The Town Council have been asked to support access to digital technology, to learn new skills to use online services and stay digitally connected with friends and family and add the 'Digital Friendly Island' logo to the Charter. The Town Council have also been asked to adopt the 'Digital Friendly Pledge' which confirms that the Town Council will design its digital services to be accessible and inclusive; will signpost residents / visitors to other Digital Friendly Island organisations who can provide further support and will display the Digital Friendly Island logo. The Town Council will also endeavour to make its website age friendly. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council adds the Digital Statement and 'Digital Friendly Island' logo to the Charter and adopts the Digital Friendly Pledge.**

**8382 END OF GRANT REPORT FROM ST MARY'S CHURCH**

As required by Cowes Town Council's Grant criteria, any grants over £2,000 require an end of grant report. St Mary's Church received a grant of £2,100 in October 2020 to reinstate gravestones which had developed a lean. Councillors received the end of grant report and observed photographs of the repaired gravestones; the total cost of the project was £2,766.

**8383 SIGNAGE OPTIONS FOR THE ENGLAND COAST PATH**

Councillors viewed the signage options for the England Coast Path which are due to be replaced next year. Councillors did not have any strong views on the options given and agreed not to make any comment.

**8384 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 convenience inspections; domestic and commercial waste issues; eScooter monitoring in pedestrian areas; reporting graffiti in the town.

**8385 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

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

**8386 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

- Cowes Enterprise College – Councillor Fuller
- Cowes Medical Centre – Councillor Nicholson

Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, Councillor Bertie thanked East Cowes Town Councillor Paler for his assistance in liaising with Red Funnel to obtain trees for planting in Cowes.

The proceedings terminated at 8.36pm

**CHAIRMAN**