

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Dining Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 3 March 2022 at 7pm.

**Present:** Councillor Bertie (Town Mayor) (Chairman)  
Councillors Adams, Brown, Carter, Ellis, Fuller, Hammond, Jones, Nicholson, Paler, Rafferty, Sanders, Walters & Wardrop.

**In attendance:** Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk; PCSO Lisa Paul; one member of the public.

### **8437 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hollis & Peacey Wilcox.

### **8438 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Walters declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8442a2 as he is a member of the Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club.

Councillor Walters declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8442a4 as he is the auditor for the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society.

Councillor Bertie declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8442a2 as he is a member of the Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club.

Councillor Bertie declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 8442a4 as he is Cowes Town Council's deputy representative on the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society Executive Committee.

### **8438 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

The local Safer Neighbourhood Officer did not provide a written report but attended the Town Council meeting. She advised that the details of the repeated damage to a shop window in Cowes High Street, reported to her at the last Town Council meeting, is currently being investigated. The picnic area in Cockleton Lane has suffered some damage; police are attending this area to prevent further damage. A Councillor reported a very loud car travelling along Newport Road at 11.30pm each evening; PCSO Paul will investigate this matter when their shift rotas change on the 1 April. PCSO Paul advised that PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings will be starting again with face to face meetings. A cross section of the community will be invited to attend including representatives from Pubwatch, schools, ethnic minorities, young people and the three local Councils.

The Mayor thanked PCSO Paul for attending the meeting and for the services that the Police provide to the town of Cowes.

### **8439 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3 February 2022 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

### **8440 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The member of the public raised the issue that the IW Council are considering the use of Glyphosate again to treat weeds and that Cowes Town Council had declared Cowes as a pesticide free town. The IW Council are aware that there are alternatives

to Glyphosate and this decision goes against the Isle of Wight being a Unesco Biosphere Reserve. It was advised that the current use of hand tools to remove weeds is not getting to the roots and the weeds are causing the pavement surfaces to break up. It was noted that there are 60 authorities nationwide who are not using Glyphosate and the IW Council are looking into this. The Royal Horticultural Society have offered advice on many suitable alternatives. Cowes Town Council previously came up with an alternative that was going to be trialled at Northwood Park; this didn't happen as Northwood Park remove any weeds with hand tools. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council writes to the IW Council to object to the use of Glyphosate as this is a retrograde step for the Isle of Wight and its 'Unesco Biosphere Reserve' status. Cowes Town Council strongly urges the trialling of suitable alternatives to solve the weed problem.**

ACTION

Councillors to feed back any known suitable alternatives to Glyphosate to Councillor Fuller for onward transmission to the IW Council's Cabinet Member Phil Jordan.

**8441 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS**

Written reports focussing on local matters were received from Councillors Fuller, Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox and Quigley. Councillors Peacey Wilcox & Quigley were not in attendance and therefore unavailable to answer any questions. No questions were asked of Councillor Nicholson.

Councillor Fuller referred to the clearance of the site at Princes Esplanade by Southern Gas Networks (SGN). The IW Council's tree officer has inspected the site as this land has a Woodland Tree Preservation Order as well as a Site of Nature Conservation (SINC) in place. This clearance was done without the permission of the IW Council and some of the land which is privately owned was also cleared without permission. The IW Council's Planning Enforcement Team are investigating; it is alleged that some damage has been done to badger setts and if this is the case this will also become a police matter. Councillor Fuller is requesting proof / evidence, from local residents, of wildlife using this area so that this can be presented in future proceedings. The more evidence received, the stronger the case will be against SGN. Councillor Nicholson referred to Councillor Quigley's report where he mentions Wight Tricks' request to extend their operating hours. Councillor Nicholson advised that the noise nuisance that this facility causes to local residents is considerable and is not suitable for a residential area. Councillor Nicholson has written to the IW Council's Regeneration Officer asking if another location can be found for this well used facility which will not have a detrimental effect on residents.

**8442 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS**

a) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 22 February 2022 were received and noted. It was:

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That Cowes Town Council receive, note and approve the Financial Statement as at 31 December 2021.**
- 2. That a grant be made to Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club in the sum of £2,000.**
- 3. That a grant be made to Cowes Sailability Club in the sum of £1,100.**

**4. That, in view of the value of this community event to Cowes, Cowes Town Council will underwrite the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event up to the sum of £5,000.**

**5. That Cowes Town Council does not make a grant to Storeroom 2010.**

**6. That a grant be made to the Uffa Fox 2022 (UF50) Celebration for the provision of forty parking spaces on The Parade for four days in the sum of £1,250.**

b) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 8 February 2022 were received and noted. Councillor Bertie advised that a successful informal meeting to discuss events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee took place on 1 March 2022 with other stakeholders; further meetings will follow. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**1. That Cowes Town Council approves the cost of £340 for Moss Hayman to repaint two 'Cowes' entry signs, located at Baring Road and the Park and Ride, with the cost to be met from the 'Street Furniture Maintenance' budget heading.**

**2. That Cowes Town Council approves the cost of £670 for Moss Hayman to re-stain 9 curved benches located on Cowes Parade with the cost to be met from the 'Street Furniture Maintenance' budget heading.**

**3. That Cowes Town Council approves the cost of £970 for Moss Hayman to repaint and re-stain 13 curved benches located on Princes Green, with the cost to be met from the 'Street Furniture Maintenance' budget heading.**

c) Place Plan Working Group

The Minutes of the Place Plan Working Group meeting held on 15 February 2022 were received and noted. It was noted that Councillor Brown had attended the meeting but her name had been omitted from the Minutes; this will be rectified.

d) Supporters of Cowes Library

The Minutes of the Supporters of Cowes Library meeting held on 31 January 2022 were received and noted.

e) Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee

The Minutes of the Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee meeting held on 14 January 2022 were received and noted.

**8443 COWES WEEK**

Councillors discussed the lack of contact with Cowes Week Ltd following the 2021 event and the plans for the 2022 event. The Licence that Cowes Week Ltd has with the IW Council states that Cowes Week Ltd should meet with other stakeholders three times a year; these meetings are not taking place. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Town Clerk will write to the IW Council to advise that Cowes Week Ltd are not complying with the terms of their Licence and to ask for their input to encourage these meetings with stakeholders to take place and to ask why there is a lack of engagement with stakeholders by Cowes Week Ltd.

2. The Town Mayor will speak to the new Chairman of the Cowes Combined Club to discuss plans for Cowes Week 2022.

#### **8444 YOUTH COUNCILS**

Councillors discussed a proposal to create a Youth Council in Cowes and looked at information provided which showed what other Town and Parish Councils, large and small, around the country have been doing in this regard. Councillors advised that some ten years ago there was a Youth Council in Cowes; Councillors are keen to reinstate this. Attendance from an appointed Youth Councillor for Cowes at Cowes Town Council's meeting would be a positive step. It was agreed to look for interested parties by putting items in the Town Council's newsletter, posters, IW Councillor Reports and Facebook etc. It is understood that Cowes Enterprise College already have a programme for students to become involved in local politics including a mock election last year. Other places where young people are in regular attendance and could be approached include the IW Community Club and UKSA. It was agreed:

##### ACTIONS

1. The Town Clerk will write to the IW Council to enquire if any of their Youth Councillors reside in Cowes and if yes, invite those Youth Councillors to future Town Council meetings.
2. Councillors Carter and Fuller will engage with Cowes Enterprise College to gather any interest for a Youth Council among their students.
3. Councillor Carter will work with the Clerks to identify areas for promotion of a Youth Council and provide her with administrative support for this project.

#### **8445 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2022**

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of February 2022. Cheque payments totalled £25,938.73; petty cash payments totalled £66.37. It was:

##### **RESOLVED**

**That the cheque payments of £25,938.73 and petty cash payments of £66.37 be received, noted and approved.**

#### **8446 APPOINTMENT TO THE PLACE PLAN WORKING GROUP**

Following the resignation of Councillor Peacey Wilcox from this Working Group, the Town Clerk advised that there is a vacancy on the Place Plan Working Group. It was:

##### **RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Paler be appointed to the Place Plan Working Group.**

#### **8447 IW COUNCIL'S LICENCE TO OCCUPY, RELATING TO PART OF THE ROSE BED, PARK ROAD, COWES**

Cowes Town Council have been liaising with the IW Council to install a memorial at the Rose Bed, Park Road, Cowes to those who have lost their lives or been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The 'Licence to Occupy' will allow the Town Council to install the memorial in this prominent area of Cowes which has seating close by for people to relax and reflect on the ongoing pandemic. It was:

##### **RESOLVED**

**That the Town Mayor and Town Clerk be authorised to sign the Licence to Occupy relating to part of the Rose Bed, Park Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight.**

**8448 IW COUNCIL'S RESPONSE IN RELATION TO THE CONDITION OF THE ROADS IN COWES AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PFI CONTRACT (MINUTE NO. 8307 REFERS).**

At the Town Council meeting on 3 June 2021, it was agreed to contact IW Councillor and Cabinet Member, Phil Jordan to express concerns about the condition of the roads in Cowes and the management of the PFI Contract. This was a result of a visual survey of Mill Hill Road, resurfaced by Island Roads as part of the PFI Contract, which has 9 sections within a 200 yard stretch where the road is sinking and breaking up. Questions were also raised about the depth of the top surface of the road with minimal preparation of the substructure. It was generally felt that much of the problems stem from the IW Council's failure to manage the PFI Contract.

The Town Clerk has regularly chased for a reply which was received on 15 February 2022. With regard to Mill Hill Road, the failure appears to be aligned to a water main that is installed below the road. Island Roads have commenced a programme of works to address these areas and it is understood that Mill Hill Road is part of the larger machine lay repair programme intended to be included for October 2022, subject to the normal external factors such as weather conditions that may require the dates to change. With regard to the thickness of the material laid by Island Roads, standard road construction includes a number of layers of different material with the lower layers providing the structural strength of the road and the top layer providing the wear and skid resistance, this layer makes minimal contribution to the strength of a road. Addressing the need to robustly manage the PFI Contract, the IW Council have also identified that there are some areas of treated network that are failing and the IW Council have placed an obligation on Island Roads to rectify these defects. To assist in providing confidence in the ongoing commitment from Island Roads, the IW Council are expecting to see 5 areas in Cowes addressed as part of the rectification works and a further 12 monitoring lengths treated as part of the ongoing investment in the network in 2022.

Town Councillors were underwhelmed by the response and felt that the IW Council have no control over Island Roads who have huge control over how the PFI Contract is run; the Contract, having been watered down over the years, is not fit for purpose. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council writes to IWALC to request that they ascertain whether other Town & Parish Councils are having the same problems and to ask for a discussion at a future IWALC meeting with representatives from the IW Council's PFI Contract Management Team and Island Roads.**

**8449 COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S SUBSCRIPTION WITH THE ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (IWALC)**

Councillors discussed the benefits of renewing their membership of IWALC for 2022 – 2023 in the sum of £1,674.19. Councillors agreed that this membership is important for the Town Council as Councillors will benefit from future training opportunities offered by IWALC. Councillors considered whether to join the Hampshire Association of Local Authorities (HALC) for the annual sum of £970, but Councillors agreed that there is strength in numbers by joining IWALC with its understanding of local Island issues. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council renews its membership of IWALC for 2022 – 2023 in the sum of £1,674.19.**

**8450 BEAVER INTRODUCTION CONSULTATION**

Councillors received information from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust regarding a consultation to consider reintroducing beavers to the Isle of Wight. Councillors discussed the possible benefits and shortcomings of reintroducing beavers to the Isle of Wight. The Project Officer is offering to come and give a talk to Town & Parish Councils and has offered this opportunity to Cowes Town Council along with a proposed site visit to illustrate the Trust's aspirations and benefits that a beaver release could bring to the local communities. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Town Clerk will invite the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's Project Officer to attend the Town Council meeting on Thursday 7 April 2022.

**8451 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER**

A report outlining the activities of the Environment Officers in Cowes was circulated to all Town Councillors. Actions taken included patrolling hot spot areas known for dog fouling, weekly playground inspections, weekly public convenience inspections, reporting of fly tipping, commercial waste issues, removal of fly posters and reporting of graffiti. The Environment Officers have offered to attend a future Town Council meeting. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Town Clerk will invite the Environment Officers to attend the Town Council meeting in June 2022.

**8452 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

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

**8453 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

- Isle of Wight Local Access Forum – Councillor Fuller
- Youth Council Progress – Councillor Carter
- The IW Council's one share in Cowes Town Waterfront Trust – Councillor Fuller

The proceedings terminated at 8.38pm

**CHAIRMAN**