



Minutes of the Thirty sixth Annual Town Meeting held in the Drawing Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 5 May 2022 at 6.15pm, convened under the provision of the section 99 and schedule 12 of the Local Government Act, 1972

Present: Councillor Bertie (Town Mayor) (Chairman)

Councillors Adams, Brown, Ellis, Paler, Rafferty and Walters

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Gibbs, Assistant Town Clerk

**238 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carter, Hammond, Hollis, Jones, Sanders and Wardrop.

**239 MINUTES  
RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Thirty fifth Annual Town Meeting held on 29 April 2021 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**240 REPORT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Mayor had provided a written report which was circulated to attendees. He thanked all Councillors for their support.

Despite the problems created by Covid-19 and having to conduct numerous meetings at the beginning of the year by Zoom, Cowes Town Council (CTC) has been very active and just some of its activities and achievements are listed below:

- 1. Cowes & Northwood Place Plan.** CTC has budgeted £12,000 to implement this very important plan which will effectively be the foundation of almost all future activities. Four key areas have already been identified to oversee the implementation of various aspects of the plan as follows:
  - a. North Medina Forum; to bring together industries in the Medina peninsula.
  - b. Resilience Group; to have strategic emergency plans in place.
  - c. Local Network Plans (e.g. LCWIP).
  - d. Marketing & Promotions Group; to bring various Cowes stakeholder groups together to promote the town. A sum of approximately £4,500 has been given back to CTC from the now disbanded Destination Cowes group to be ring-fenced for this purpose.
- 2. Queen's Platinum Jubilee.** Plans are well underway to celebrate this historic occasion in June including:
  - a. QPJ flags throughout town.
  - b. New Union Jack bunting along the High Street and other strategic places.
  - c. Beacon lighting ceremony on The Parade including a piper, bugler, etc.
  - d. Picnic in the Park; CTC has contributed to this family event on Sunday 5 June.

3. **Blyskawica 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.** CTC has underwritten £5,000 to enable many activities to take place on this weekend of activities in early May including the visit of a Polish navy ship. The town will have a very distinct Polish theme.
4. **Christmas Lights & Trees.** CTC continues to help brighten up the town at Christmas to the tune of approximately £14,000 per year. It is anticipated that new lights will be needed in the near future.
5. **Cowes in Bloom.** This Spring, CTC will be adding to the existing planters and hanging baskets along The Parade by also having baskets all along the High Street. My thanks to the Rosalies shop for volunteering to do all the planting work for these new baskets. The town will be a much prettier place!
6. **Cowes Harbour Commission.** CTC continues to work closely with CHC and its new Chief Executive Gary Hall.
7. **Parking.** We were happy to support residents' opposition to the implementation of parking charges along the seafront. CTC also paid for free parking for a late night shopping event prior to Christmas.
8. **Floating Bridge.** The problems continue and CTC continues to contribute its thoughts, but this is very much in the hands of the Isle of Wight Council.
9. **Cowes Medical Centre.** We continue to monitor the activities of CMC and engage with them on behalf of residents.
10. **CTC Newsletters.** We have distributed 2 in the past year, both full of useful information. My particular thanks to our Assistant Town Clerk, Kate, for being 'editor in chief'.
11. **Cycling.** Scooters and cycling continue to be a major problem in the High Street and CTC is continuously in touch with the Police to try and resolve the sometimes dangerous situation. A radical solution is needed. On a more positive note, CTC has looked at all aspects of cycling in and around the Cowes area under the LCWIP scheme.
12. **Remembrance Sunday.** As Mayor, I again laid a wreath on behalf of CTC at the Sunday ceremony and afterwards attended the church service, took a march-past salute on The Parade with our Vicar, and attended a lunchtime reception hosted by the Royal British Legion.
13. **Rev. Andrew Poppe.** Sadly, April saw the end of Andrew's 7 year tenure in Cowes and I made a presentation on behalf of CTC at his final service in St. Mary's Church just after Easter.
14. **Island Roads.** We continue to monitor their work in the Cowes area and engage when necessary.
15. **CTC Committees.** We have restructured our meetings schedule to cut out unnecessary meetings. My thanks to all of the hard-working Committee Chairmen for Planning, Projects, and Finance. A lot of very good work is being done.
16. **The Cut.** The project to improve The Cut has been ongoing for nearly 12 years but it finally looks as though work will commence in the very near future to improve this area. The project is estimated to cost around £70,000 but the majority will be funded by S106 monies and not CTC.
17. **Moorgreen Road Reservoir.** CTC granted £2,000 to volunteers who put on a well-attended bio-diversity exhibition last year. CTC will also be supporting plans to install a footpath through the woods in the area to the benefit of local residents.
18. **Cowes Open Bowls Tournament.** CTC again sponsored this event in the summer, and as Mayor, I was given the honour of throwing the first 2 woods. I kept them within the green!
19. **Cowes Week.** CTC has 2 representatives on the Shoreside Committee, but sadly, the feeling is that CTC is not consulted enough on giving input to this world-renowned event.

20. **St. Marys Church.** CTC has supported many improvements including:
  - a. Repairs to gravestones.
  - b. Repairs to clock.
  - c. General landscaping in the church area.
21. **Cowes Library.** Without CTC's support of £22,000 per year, this important facility would not exist. Gurnard Parish Council has recently contributed £1,000 towards running costs but sadly Northwood Parish Council decided they did not want to contribute anything.
22. **Northwood Park.** CTC continues to contribute approx. £12,000 per year towards grounds maintenance costs for this important green area in Cowes where many annual events are now being staged.
23. **Toilets.** CTC continues to fund the 5 toilet blocks in the Cowes area.
24. **Northwood Recreation Ground.** The skate park and other areas within the 'Rec' continue to be funded by CTC. This is a very important area for the youth of Cowes.
25. **Community Orchard.** A brand new orchard is about to be installed in a corner of the 'Rec'. Thanks go to Red Funnel for their financial contribution.
26. **Cowes Heritage & Community Group.** CTC has granted £10,000 to this group to improve the facilities at the Beckford Centre. After the pandemic lockdowns, this group is starting to become very active again.
27. **Uffa Fox Celebrations.** In August, there will be a celebration of the life of local inventor and character Uffa Fox. CTC will be paying for the closure of part of The Parade to site a display of Uffa designed boats which will be the start of the UF50 trail.  
As you can see from the above, CTC has been very active in the past year, and I thank all Councillors, the Town Clerks, other Cowes organisations, and all of Cowes residents for making Cowes a place I can be proud to live in.  
CTC is involved with many other activities and not just those listed above. Many of the activities that CTC started in the past year will start to come to fruition in 2022. It will be an exciting year!

#### 241 ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Copies of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 were circulated at the meeting. Ms Debbie Faulkner (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer) was available for any questions. Councillor Walters asked about depreciation values for items on the Asset Register. The Town Clerk advised that the Asset Register provided the purchase cost of each asset, in line with the external auditor's guidance. It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 be received and noted.**

#### 242 ANNUAL SUMMARY – SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. No members of the Safer Neighbourhood Team were in attendance.

#### 243 ANNUAL SUMMARY – IW COUNCILLORS

Written reports were received from Councillors Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox and Quigley.

#### **Councillor John Nicholson (Cowes South and Northwood)**

- Chairmanship of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Adult Social Care, coordinating and liaising between Health partners and other authorities, encouraging and supporting examples of good practice and case for change, giving constructive feedback in support of illustrations of real patient experience, attending Health Service partner's meetings, making introductions, constructive observations and suggestions.

- Supporting, representing and advising residents in various local and personal issues and concerns, from planning matters to parking issues social concerns.
- Advocating more streamlined working between Town and Parish Councils and also Isle of Wight Council.
- Negotiating and being actively engaged with Island Roads with regards to road works quality and impact mitigation. Campaigning against unnecessary disruption and inconvenience caused by poor consideration in Utility roadworks.
- Holding local police services to account for response rates to reported incidents and concerns.
- Defending and advocating the interests of local families in local secondary school placements.
- Acting as representative on Island Roads Health and Safety Forum.
- Liaising with community service providers, particularly in providing engagement with youth.
- Helping to promote awareness of local heritage and culture.
- Being outspoken, when needed, to represent and voice concerns that have caused local outrage.
- Being an actively involved member of Northwood Parish Council and Cowes Town Council and their committees.
- Being chairman of Cowes Town Council Projects Committee.
- Being Cowes Town Council Deputy Mayor.
- Advising and liaising in rectification works for Cowes Parade Toilets.
- Developing the joint Place Plan for Cowes and Northwood.

#### **Councillor Lora Peacey Wilcox (Cowes Medina)**

As always my years at the council can be found on the articles I write monthly, and have been for almost 23 years!

All business of the council can be found in my Leader's Update report attached to each [Full Council](#) agenda.

My reports <http://www.islandmagazines.co.uk/>

#### **Councillor Richard Quigley (Cowes North)**

I have supported residents on Market Hill take up the issue of unsightly development land.

Initiated a review of parking on upper Bellevue and Albert Street.

Taking up issues with Scooter issues.

Resolving issues with properties under housing association control.

Resolving issues with private rented accommodation.

Getting CEC floodlights switched off overnight.

I'm qualified as a CAB first aider.

Initiating the community wealth building project. This is a long-term fundamental change to the way we view our Island that aims to create secure and better paid work for Islanders by spending more of the Council's money in Island.

Meetings with the CEO's of both ferry companies to resolve users' issues, especially around accessing the NHS discount and get the users' forums reinstated.

Holding Southern Water to account over the release of sewage into our sea and challenging our MP to do more.

Pushing for the building of more social and affordable housing for Islander's. Working with Cllr Ian Stephens to get building underway and also start a private renters association. I will continue to challenge the "nimby" approach to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to have their own front door.

Challenging CEC on pupil intake numbers.

Part of the task and finish group for litter and fly tipping.

Convincing the council pension fund that investing money locally, in social impact projects is a good thing and is now part of the investment plan.

I am chair of Scrutiny for children's services and corporate scrutiny. I have restructured corporate scrutiny meetings so that they focus on the important issues to residents.

I am also championing the idea of county farms and food security.

Important contact numbers:

Citizens Advice

<https://smexctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=www.citizensadviceiw.org.uk&amid=fb017189-292d-4879-a629-b21f9e93844c&auth=b24ccf14420d556f6775a226761900e318ae6efe-3e2dbda1d8be3fee80a67b5575d6fda4393d139c> 08001448848

The Footprint Trust [www.footprint-trust.co.uk](http://www.footprint-trust.co.uk) for help with utility costs.

Questions were invited but none were asked.

#### **244 QUESTIONS FROM THE MEETING**

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

The proceedings terminated at 6.26pm.

**CHAIRMAN**