

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 13 June 2023 at 6.15pm

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

**In attendance:** Councillor Wardrop (Non-Voting) (6.33pm); Ross Edmunds, Regeneration Officer, IW Council; Martin Hayles (Architect for The Cut enhancements, Changing Places Toilet and Medina Road public conveniences projects); Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; 2 representatives from Cowes Port Handbook; 2 members of the public

### 518. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN

Councillor Adams was proposed as Chairman by Councillor Nicholson, the proposal was seconded by Councillor Brown, followed by a unanimous show of hands. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Adams be appointed as Chairman of the Projects Committee for the Municipal Year 2023 / 2024.**

### 519. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paler.

### 520. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

### 521. MINUTES

**RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 14 March 2023 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

### 522. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

#### a) **The Cut - Enhancements**

The IW Council's Contract Management Team provided an update on the delay in the works being scheduled. Island Roads are currently having to prioritise safety schemes and major strategic schemes and it was suggested that the Town Council seek alternative contractors to undertake the work. Tenders for the works were previously sought before discussions with Island Roads commenced. The cost saving by adding the enhancement works to Island Roads' planned works enabled this project to progress, without this saving the project would be unaffordable.

Martin Hayles expressed his concern that the current planning permission expires in March 2024. He suggested that Island roads be invited to a Projects Committee meeting to have face to face discussions to move this project forward. It was agreed:

#### ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will invite a representative from Island Roads to attend the next Projects Committee meeting.

#### b) **Public Conveniences Refurbishment - Medina Road**

The contract for the refurbishment works went out to tender to local contractors. Tenders that were returned were of an amount that necessitated the Town Council giving public notice for the return of tenders for three weeks, in accordance with Financial Regulation 10.5. The deadline for the return of tenders is 23 June 2023. The contractors who originally

tendered for the works are expected to re-tender, in accordance with the Town Council's Financial Regulations.

c) **Changing Places Facility – The Cut**

Martin Hayles has surveyed The Cut public toilets and surrounding area. The size of the new changing places facility will likely require the entrance to be located from the existing paved area of The Cut, as the current pavement is too narrow at this point for the door opening. Discussions with the IW Council's Planning Department indicate that the new structure will be allowed within permitted development rules, as the land is owned/maintained by the local authority. Martin advised that Building Regulation approval will be required. If the changing places facility is installed before The Cut enhancements works are undertaken, there will be alterations required to level the area to accommodate the new structure, along with improved access. It was agreed:

ACTION

Martin Hayles will continue to progress the changing places project to minimise delay in implementation.

d) **Ark and Dove Commemorations**

Island Roads have advised they have been unable to identify a location on The Parade that would not impact the Cowes Week Village due to their layout changing annually. They have advised the IW Council that the initially identified location remains the same and that the organisers of Cowes Week Village be asked to work round it, as they have in previous years with the existing display board. The other option is that the organisers be asked to cover the cost of its temporary removal and reinstatement should it be absolutely necessary to accommodate their stall layout.

Currently, no response has been received from the IW Council. Lee Matthews has offered to chase up a response on the Town Council's behalf.

e) **CCTV at Northwood Recreation Ground**

At the Town Council meeting on 2 March 2023, Councillors agreed the costs for a CCTV system at Northwood Recreation Ground. Before this progresses, permission to install the system will be required from the IW Council, as landowner. The Clerks have written to the IW Council's Lease & Licences Manager to request permission. To date no response has been received. Lee Matthews has offered to progress the IW Council's approval of the CCTV installation.

f) **Review of Access Audit for Cowes Town Centre**

Isle Access have completed a review of the Access Audit and the results were circulated to Councillors, along with a set of maps showing the location of each of the issues raised in the audit. It was agreed:

ACTION

Members of the Projects Committee will review the report's findings and report back to the next meeting of the Projects Committee.

g) **Review Notes from informal meetings with IW Council – 23 March, 27 April and 30 May 2023**

The Notes from the informal meetings were noted. No issues were raised.

h) **Priority List for S.106 Contributions**

A number of suggestions have been made by Councillors, including: a Pathway at the Northwood Recreation Ground; rebuilding the Bandstand; implementation from the Local

Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP); improvements to facilities at Northwood Recreation Ground and improvements to public spaces. Councillors felt this should be developed within the Place Plan Steering Group. It was agreed:

ACTION

This item will be referred to the new Place Plan Steering Group for development.

i) **Grass Verges – Upper Moorgreen Road**

Residents in Upper Moorgreen Road were surveyed by the Town Council in October 2022, following a request for assistance by a resident to protect the grass verges from being damaged by parked cars. The survey results found an even split between those who wanted the verges to remain, but add double yellow lines to stop parking, and those who wanted the verges removed, a pavement installed and parking allowed to continue. With no clear majority, no further action is recommended at this time and this item will be removed from the agenda.

**523. NEW PROJECTS**

a) **Place Plan Steering Group – Terms of Reference**

The Annual Town Council meeting on 11 May 2023 disbanded the current Place Plan Working Group and suggested the formation of a steering group, the terms of reference for which was referred to the Projects Committee to draw up.

Ross Edmunds, our Area Regeneration Officer, provided a draft template which will be combined with the former Place Plan Working Group terms of reference and considered by Councillors at the next Projects Committee meeting. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will incorporate Ross's template with the former Place Plan Working Group terms of reference and circulate as a background paper for the next Projects Committee meeting.

b) **Secrets of the Solent Mural - Perspex covering**

Councillors were asked to consider whether the Secrets of the Solent mural on Cowes seafront should be protected with Perspex sheeting. Due to its temporary nature, Councillors felt it was not beneficial to pursue at this time.

c) **Wishing Well, Shooters Hill**

At the Town Council meeting on 1 June 2023, this item was referred to the Projects Committee to consider the future of the Wishing Well.

Representatives from two local businesses were in attendance to raise their concerns and aspirations with regard to the Wishing Well and pump structure. This follows recent vandalism to the glass top of the Wishing Well, resulting in the glass being broken and the structure left unsafe. Island Roads have covered the structure and erected fencing, which itself has been targeted by vandalism.

A Building Control inspector has visited the site and advised a local business that the pump structure does not meet current regulations due to its low height and obstruction of a public access way. Island Roads advise that only the bench around the Wishing Well is on the asset register. The Wishing Well and pump were maintained by Cowes Carnival, which has subsequently been disbanded, meaning that the Wishing Well is not currently being maintained and ownership is unclear.

A number of local businesses are of the view that the area needs improving due to its poor aesthetics and they are willing to pay towards improvements. It was agreed:

ACTION

Cowes Town Council will contact the Highway Authority to ask for their advice on what is permissible at this location, as it sits on the public highway.

d) **Flags and Banners**

Councillors were advised that someone has been found to install/remove the flags and banners in the High Street. They have provided proof of public liability insurance and completed a Supplier Evaluation Form. It was suggested that the Town Council should look into employing a maintenance person who is trained appropriately. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will ask other local councils for sight of the job specification for their maintenance employees.

e) **Cowes Port Handbook**

Martin Nott, Editor of the Port Handbook, and Marco Dipinto, owner of Horizon Publishing, were in attendance and provided copies of the current Cowes Port Handbook. The successful publication has been supported by Cowes Harbour Commission for a number of years, but this support is likely to discontinue from 2024. Cowes Town Council are asked to support/endorse the 2024 edition of the Port Handbook, at no cost to the Town Council, including use of the Town Council's logo and input into the Handbook content (if we wish). Horizon Publishing undertake all the printing and distribution, with costs covered through advertising. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council endorse the 2024 edition of Cowes Port Handbook and agrees to the use of its logo in the publication.**

**524. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS**

a) **Street Furniture**

The two new WC directional signs have been installed at The Parade.

Councillor Sanders is concerned there is still not enough signage to direct visitors to the toilets, especially those disembarking coaches. He suggested a new sign be placed on The Parade, on the lamppost immediately to the right of the coach stop, pointing to the public conveniences. The Chairman offered to look at the current signage at the location.

The existing seagull feeding deterrent signs are displaying the Town Council's logo. The Town Clerk has asked the Environment Officer if larger signs are available. A response is awaited.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Chairman will look at the signage on The Parade, before further consideration by the Projects Committee.

b) **Public Conveniences**

The drinking tap at Northwood Recreation Ground has been turned off pending a replacement as the tap would not shut off automatically, wasting water.

The Parade drinking tap may need replacing if the spring doesn't respond to greasing. There have been a number of significant blockages at Medina Road, requiring Dares' attendance twice to clear.

Mornington Road and The Cut are being targeted with graffiti.

The Wallgate units are struggling due to age. Their annual service is due in July.

The Parade ceilings are very flaky. Councillor Nicholson advised that, following inspection, moisture in the roof void has reduced since the tanks were drained, however, the roof still

needs ventilating. In the short-term, the Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the internal ceilings to be decorated. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the internal ceilings to be decorated.

**525. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

- Maintenance role
- Cowes High Street events
- Signposts – Councillor Oliver

The proceedings terminated at 7.59pm

**CHAIRMAN**