

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 14 December 2023 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Ellis (Deputy Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Adams, Brown, Carter, Dodwell, Fuller, Hollis, Oliver, Peacey
Wilcox, Rafferty, Sanders and Wardrop.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; one member of the public.

In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor took the chair.

PRESENTATION FROM STEVE JOHNSON, ASPIRE RYDE, REGARDING THE MOBILE FOOD PANTRY COWES

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Steve Johnson was unable to attend the Town Council meeting; his presentation will be rescheduled in the New Year.

8840 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nicholson & Walters.

8841 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) No declarations of interest were received.

b) Written requests for dispensation were received, and granted, from Councillors Brown, Carter, Ellis, Hollis, Oliver, Rafferty, Sanders and Wardrop in respect of the draft budget and precept setting for 2024 / 2025. Min. No. 8846c1 refers.

8842 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

There was not a report from the Local Safer Neighbourhood Officer.

8843 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council Meeting held on 30 November 2023, be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8844 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions were raised by the member of the public present.

8845 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Written reports focussing on local matters were received from Councillors Fuller, Nicholson and Peacey Wilcox and were circulated to all Town Councillors.

Councillor Fuller advised of the sad passing of former IW Councillor George Brown. Councillor Peacey Wilcox advised that the Mobile Food Pantry is hoping to set up at Northwood Cemetery as from January 2024.

8846 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 7 November 2023 were received and noted.

b) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meetings held on 14 November 2023 and 5 December 2023 were received and noted.

c) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 21 November 2023 were received and noted. Councillors thanked the Town Clerk for her hard work in preparing the draft budget for 2024 / 2025. It was:

RESOLVED

1. That Cowes Town Council approves the Budget for 2024 / 2025, with an increase of £1,000 in the budget heading 'Picnic in the Park 2024', which will require the precept to be £355,900.

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	2024-2025
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	
Town Clerks' salaries / NIC/ Tax / Pension	£70,000
Office Rent	£8,900
Stationery / Sundry Office Expenses/Software	£1,200
Office Equipment / Photocopier	£1,000
Telephone / Broadband / Website	£1,000
Postage	£300
Conference fees & Travelling	£500
Training	£500
Hire of Meeting Rooms and / or Zoom	£400
Subscriptions	£2,200
Insurance	£2,600
Audit and Accountancy	£2,200
Mayor's Allowance	£2,000
Newsletter / Publicity	£4,000
Elections / Admin Contingency	£2,500
Civic Regalia	£500
Sub Total	£99,800
DISCRETIONARY SERVICES	
Northwood Rec Grounds Maintenance	£8,700
Northwood Rec - Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance	£6,000
Northwood Park Grounds Maintenance	£12,800
Northwood Park Toilets - Cleaning Only	£4,000
Dog + Litter bin emptying	£6,000
Other Grounds maintenance: St Mary's Park; Moorgreen Reservoir; Arctic Park; Mornington Green; Brunswick Road playground; Park Road Rose Bed; Egypt Point; Mornington Woods	£7,600
Princes Green (50% contribution for grounds maintenance)	£2,000
Beach cleaning (50% contribution for removal of sand / shingle along coastal path)	£1,500
5 Public Toilets - Cleaning + other costs (including Northwood Rec)	£52,000

Cowes Library	£26,500
Cowes In Bloom	£12,000
Environment Officer	£5,000
Warmer Cowes	£500
Park Road Crossing Patrol	£5,000
Discretionary Services Contingency	£8,000
Sub Total	£157,600
TOWN IMPROVEMENTS / GRANTS / SPECIAL EVENTS	
Street furniture maintenance	£3,500
Cowes & Northwood Place Plan Promotion	£12,000
Festive lights / Xmas Tree	£17,000
New Projects	£4,000
Grants	£15,000
Remembrance Sunday & Charity Donations	£2,000
Public Toilet refurbishment & Capital Projects	£40,000
Picnic in the Park 2024	£3,000
Flags, Banners and Bunting	£2,000
Sub Total	£98,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£355,900

2. That a grant be made to Isle of Wight Music, Dance & Drama Festival in the sum of £100.

3. That a grant is not made to Cowes Fringe Ltd. They can re-apply when the scoring matrix and Grant Application process has been reviewed and agreed.

4. That Cowes Town Council receives and notes the NJC pay award for 2023 / 2024.

d) Supporters of Cowes Library

The Minutes of the meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library held on 13 November 2023 were received and noted.

8847 MAYOR'S UPDATE

The Mayor updated Councillors on recent activities including the turning on of the Christmas lights; the Mountbatten Christmas Bazaar; Town Clerk update; Councillor update; apologies for the meeting and Merry Christmas wishes to all.

8848 POLICE PRESENCE

Councillors were advised that a visit from the Police to Cowes Library on 18 November 2023 came as a bit of a surprise. The attendance had not been well circulated / promoted. It was suggested that any future visits to the Library should be promoted as widely as possible throughout the Town. Councillors hope that when the new Police Station in Cowes is open that these Library drop-ins for residents will be better promoted.

8849 INCONSIDERATE PARKING ON NEWPORT ROAD

Councillors discussed the parking problems on Newport Road, opposite the reservoir, where Lanesend parents are blocking driveways on Newport Road when taking their children to and collecting from school; some parents are becoming quite rude and aggressive when challenged. Parents are parking on double yellow lines and on the white 'H' lines outside of residents' homes. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Councillor Ellis will forward to the Town Clerk for onward transmission to all Town Councillors, the parking regulations that apply to the white 'H' lines on the road.
2. Councillor Ellis will meet with the Head Teacher at Lanesend Primary School to discuss these parking issues.
3. The Town Clerk will check with the IW Council's Environment Officer as to whether she has any powers in this regard.

Councillor Adams left the meeting at 7.50pm.

8850 CHEQUE PAYMENTS AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2023

The Town Clerk had circulated details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of November 2023. Cheque payments totalled £31,638.67; petty cash payments totalled £88.48. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments of £31,638.67 and the petty cash payments of £88.48 be received, noted and approved.

8851 ALLOCATION OF FUNDS RECEIVED FROM COWES BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (CBA) (MIN NO 8737 REFERS)

The Town Clerk reported that the funds held by the CBA in the sum of £12,425.05 have now been transferred to the Town Council. The signed agreement stated that "The monies to be used specifically by the Council for the promotion of the town". It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That the funds of £12,425.05 received from Cowes Business Association be used specifically by the Council for the promotion of the Town.**
- 2. That any request for the use of these funds be discussed at a Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting with any decision to be ratified by the Town Council.**

8852 LEASE FOR OFFICE AND STOREROOM AT NORTHWOOD HOUSE

Councillors were asked to consider renewing the Town Council's Lease for its Office and Storeroom at Northwood House. The current lease expired on 30 November 2023. The terms offered for the new lease are a small rental increase of 2.5%, which includes all energy costs. The Lease would be for a fixed 2 year period, to 30 November 2025. It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. To agree to a further two year Lease for the Town Council Office and Storeroom at Northwood House.**
- 2. To review the terms of the Lease and subject to the satisfaction of the Town Council, the Mayor and the Town Clerk will sign the two year Lease.**

8853 PRINCES GREEN FLOWERBED PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The IW Council and Cowes Town Council propose to enter into a Partnership Agreement for the Town Council to manage and maintain the Princes Green flowerbeds and planters as from 1 January 2024 until 31 December 2028. To date, the Deputy Town Clerk has been maintaining this area on an informal basis. This agreement will formalise the arrangement. Councillors thanked the Deputy Town Clerk for undertaking these works to keep this area tidy and presentable. Following a show of hands, in which Councillors Fuller and Peacey Wilcox, as IW Council Cabinet members, abstained. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council enters into a partnership agreement with the IW Council to maintain the four planters on Princes Green for a period of five years.

8854 RESPONSE FROM ISLAND ROADS REGARDING THE ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF WORKS FOR COWES IN 2023 / 2024 (MIN NO 8825 REFERS)

At the Town Council meeting on 2 November 2023, Councillors were asked to advise the Town Clerk of priority roads in their Ward that require improvement and the Town Clerk will advise the Leader of the IW Council and the Director of Neighbourhoods, with a copy to Island Roads. The roads named were Arctic Road; Castle Hill / Baring Road; Denmark Road; Egypt Hill; Granville Road; Terminus Road; Union Road; York Street.

Island Roads have responded, following inspections on 10 November 2023:

Arctic Road: a job was raised for one pothole defect repair.

Castle Hill: no actionable safety defects identified.

Baring Road: no actionable safety defects identified.

Denmark Road: one actionable pothole identified.

Egypt Hill: one actionable defect identified.

Granville Road: not yet inspected.

Terminus Road: no actionable safety defects identified.

Union Road: no actionable safety defects identified.

York Street: one actionable safety defect identified.

Island Roads will continue to regularly inspect for actionable safety defects and raise jobs as and when necessary. Councillors were particularly concerned that Denmark Road is not being fully resurfaced other than just a pothole repair. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Town Clerk will write to Steve Ashman at Island Roads (c.c. Scott Headey & Colin Rowland, IW Council) asking why resurfacing Denmark Road, in its entirety, is not being undertaken as previously residents of Denmark Road had received notification of a complete resurface of the road.

2. The Town Clerk will request a meeting with Councillor Phil Jordan, Steve Ashman and Colin Rowland to discuss the condition of the roads in Cowes.

8855 CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY BILL DRAFT MOTION (MIN NO 8824 REFERS)

The Town Council has been asked by 'Zero Hour' to consider supporting the Climate and Ecology Bill draft motion. As this organisation is not known to Councillors, the Town Clerk asked Zero Hour what outcomes they are supporting. Zero Hour replied by saying the primary outcome is to demonstrate support for the Westminster view to demonstrate support for the bill to the constituency MP / MPs. The secondary objective is to have a common agreement amongst Councillors on the ambition and

science-led targets required to adequately take regional action on mitigating climate crisis and reversing nature loss. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council supports the Climate and Ecology Bill Draft Motion.

8856 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S MEMORIAL BENCH POLICY

A review of Cowes Town Council's Memorial Bench Policy was carried out and no amendments were required. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Memorial Bench Policy.

8857 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

A report outlining the activities of the Environment Officer in Cowes was circulated to all Town Councillors. Actions taken include dogs off leads, anti-social behaviour, litter, glass, graffiti and toilets.

8858 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

8859 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items raised for inclusion on future agendas.

Prior to the close of the meeting the Deputy Mayor thanked the Town Clerk for all her help in his roles of Councillor, Chair of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee and Deputy Mayor at what is her last Town Council meeting before retirement.

Councillors showed their appreciation by the clapping of hands.

The proceedings terminated at 8.11pm.

CHAIRMAN