

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Town Council's Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 9 January 2024 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Adams (Chair), Dodwell, Ellis, Nicholson (6.44pm), Oliver, Rafferty and Sanders

In attendance: Ross Edmunds, Regeneration Officer, IW Council; Martin Hayles (Architect for The Cut enhancements, Changing Places Toilet and Medina Road public conveniences projects); Claudine Russell, Town Clerk; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; a representative from Community Action IOW

561. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brown.

562. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

563. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 7 November 2023 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

564. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **The Cut - Enhancements**

The IW Council's Contract Management Team (CMT) have requested a meeting with Martin Hayles and a representative from Cowes Town Council to discuss this project; Martin has made several attempts to try to set a date for a meeting with the CMT. Ross Edmunds offered his assistance. It was agreed:

ACTION

Ross Edmunds will assist in the setting up of a meeting between Cowes Town Council and the IW Council's CMT.

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

The Town Council have entered into a Lease with the IW Council for the additional piece of land at The Cut for a period of 25 years, to site the Changing Places Toilet and ramp. Martin has engaged Danfo to manufacture and install the Changing Places Facility at The Cut, on the Town Council's behalf. Groundworks for the new 'pod' will be undertaken by A J Dempsey. Building Control have been in contact with Martin regarding the programmed works; Martin is assisting them with their enquiries.

The IW Council have advised that the grant funding allocated to Cowes Town Council for this project through the Changing Places Toilet Fund has been increased from £20,000 to £24,000; this is due to a number of other Changing Places Toilet projects on the Island not progressing. A draft Grant Agreement has been provided by the IW Council to agree terms for the release of the £24,000 grant funding. The deadline for completion of the project to comply with the funding criteria is 31 March 2024. Ross Edmunds offered to discuss any impact on the grant funding with relevant IW Council officers if our completion date is after 31 March 2024. The Deputy Town Clerk has requested a number of amendments to the draft Grant Agreement and, subject to the revisions being agreed, it was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council enters into a grant agreement with the IW Council to receive £24,000 grant funding towards the installation of a Changing Places Toilet Facility at The Cut, Cowes.

It was agreed:

ACTION:

Ross Edmunds will discuss any impact on the grant funding with relevant IW Council officers if our completion date is after 31 March 2024.

c) Public Conveniences Refurbishment - Medina Road

Work is progressing well, following a slight delay at the start due to the weather and in obtaining approval from Southern Water to move an internal pipe in their service area at the rear of the property. Doors and windows are yet to be fitted. An automatic door will be included as an addition to the original specification, for which there will be an additional cost above the contract agreed amount. It is not yet known if the contingency sum will cover the additional cost.

Martin advised the Committee that, inadvertently, the fitter applied the wrong colour scheme. Councillors expressed their disappointment at the error and wish to seek compensation from the contractor, along with alterations to ensure suitable colour contrasts are maintained throughout the facility, to assist those with a visual impairment. Following a lengthy discussion with Martin Hayles, Councillors agreed to the white wall panelling, grey cubicles and existing flooring colouring remaining as installed, but request the ceiling be painted Sky Blue and the cubicle doors be changed to Yellow with Dark Blue door furniture, to provide sufficient visual contrast, at no additional cost to the Town Council; and to ask the contractor for compensation of 10% of the contract value, which will be circa. £9,000. It was agreed:

ACTION

Martin will forward Councillors' request for compensation of 10% of the contract price and the colour changes, as specified above, to the contractor.

d) Ark and Dove Commemorations

The Deputy Town Clerk has submitted an application for Advertisement Consent to the IW Council's Planning Department. Subject to consent being received, final costs will be obtained before the Board is ordered.

e) CCTV at Northwood Recreation Ground

The Deputy Town Clerk attended a site visit with Lifeline Alarms on 3 January 2024. The roof space is not sufficient to mount a camera from the roof and connect to the electric supply in the service area. The engineer suggested a camera is installed on the Ladies' side of the public convenience building, mounted on a steel pole to monitor the Playbuilder area, while being at a sufficient height to reduce the risk of vandalism, with power being ducted under the existing MUGA supply ducting, into the service area.

For the two cameras to be installed on the Skatepark Floodlight pole, a switched spur on the live side of the electric supply in the floodlight pole is required. A quotation is being sought for installation costs for the switched spur.

Lifeline Alarms requested a copy of any asbestos report for the public toilets. The Deputy Town Clerk has obtained this from the IW Council (building owner) and forwarded it to Lifeline Alarms.

A revised schedule and final costs are awaited from Lifeline Alarms.

f) **Wishing Well, Shooters Hill**

The Mayor met with contractors to discuss removal of the pump and adding a steel cap to the Wishing Well to cover the existing broken glass surface. A quote has been received from a contractor accredited to work on the public highway, to manufacture steel to: fit the Wishing Well; install to cover existing glass using angled cleats and resin anchors; cover with terram and fill with top soil ready for planting; removal of the pump and delivery to nominated address; make good the area, for a total cost of £1,960.00 plus VAT. A perforated metal base with a geotextile blanket inside will be used, to provide drainage to the new flowerbed.

Before the Town Council can do any work to the Wishing Well, an Attachment Licence will need to be put in place between Cowes Town Council and the IW Council to establish responsibility for the structure. For the Attachment Licence to be processed, the following information will need to be provided to the IW Council: size, material and design of attachment; method of fixing; plan showing exact location of attachment; maintenance arrangements; inspection regime and frequency; risk assessment and mission statement covering installation and maintenance; Out of Hours contact details if there were to be any issues with the attachment; copy of £10million public liability insurance; copy of accreditation to work on the highway of those undertaking works; and length of time proposed to be in-situ (if temporary). The only associated cost is a £1 payment as part of the Licence. It was:

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council enter into an Attachment Licence with the IW Council to take responsibility for the Wishing Well.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council considers suspending Financial Regulation 10.4 to allow consideration of one quotation for the works described above at the Wishing Well and pump.**
- 3. That, subject to the Attachment Licence being agreed, Cowes Town Council appoints Contractor A to cover the Wishing Well with a steel structure, creating a new flowerbed; and removal of the pump, for the cost of £1,960, with the cost to be met from the 'New Projects' budget heading.**

g) **Cowes High Street Events**

The Mayor and Chairman did not attend the last meeting of Cowes Traders' Group due to miscommunication regarding a change to the meeting venue. They hope to attend the next meeting on 25 January (venue to be confirmed).

h) **D-day 80th Anniversary – 6 June 2024**

The Deputy Town Clerk has submitted the hoarding licence application for the Heras fencing to form an enclosure around the beacon. A risk assessment has been submitted to support the application.

The Deputy Mayor has been approached by Cowes Cadet Force (CCF) to discuss cadets taking part in commemorations for the 80th Anniversary of D-Day on 6 June 2024. The Deputy Mayor will continue discussions with Michael Paler and CCF and report back to a future meeting.

Councillor Ellis left the meeting at 7.10pm.

i) **Parade and Bandstand Risk Report**

Following reports of youths gaining unlawful access onto the roof of the Parade public conveniences, the railings around the rear flowerbed on Bath Road have been removed,

along with the hanging basket bracket, which were being used to assist in accessing the roof of the public toilets.

At the last meeting, Councillors requested clarification on the size and species of the plants proposed to be installed, to further deter unauthorised access onto the roof. The Deputy Town Clerk met with contractors to discuss removal of the existing planting and replacement with spikey-leaved plants. A revised quotation has been received to: remove all existing planting from the Bath Road flowerbed and replace with ten 4 feet high Ilex Aquifolium (Holly) along the rear of the flowerbed and fifteen 30/50cm high Berberis Ottawnsis to be planted in front of the Holly, including labour costs, for the total cost of £1,350 plus VAT.

Councillors agreed the flowerbed on the Bandstand had a number of mature plants which could remain. The contractor recommended planting one large (4 – 5 feet high) Ilex Aquifolium (Holly) adjacent to the highest part of the wall leading onto the roof of the Bandstand, and one 3 feet high Berberis in the gap between existing mature shrubs, at a cost of £140 and £20 respectively, plus labour cost of £30, meaning a total cost of £190 plus VAT. It was:

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council engages Contractor A to remove the existing planting in the Bath Road flowerbed and replace with the planting as detailed above, at a cost of £1,350, with the cost to be met from the ‘Cowes in Bloom’ budget heading.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council engages Contractor A to supply and install in the Bandstand flowerbed, two new plants as detailed above, at a cost of £190, with the cost to be met from the ‘Cowes in Bloom’ budget heading.**

j) Solar-powered LED Lights

At the last meeting of the Projects Committee, Councillors agreed to research solar-powered LED lighting for further discussion. Enquiries with a number of decorative lighting suppliers have not identified any suitable solar powered decorative products being currently available. As the request had been raised by Cowes Traders’ Group, the Chairman will update the Group on the outcome of our enquiries. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Chairman will report the findings of enquiries into solar-powered LED lights to Cowes Traders’ Group.

k) Review Notes from informal meeting with IW Council – 9 November 2023

The Notes from the above meeting were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the damaged bench on Town Quay is under the ownership of the IW Council. The Chairman requested any questions for the next Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee be sent to her. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will follow up on our request for a meeting date with the IW Council.

l) Residents’ Newsletter/Flyer

A four-sided A4 colour newsletter was delivered to 5,000 residents in December. An additional 500 copies were distributed to local businesses and residential areas missed off the delivery route. Feedback received has been positive. The next edition is expected around Easter 2024.

m) Additional CCTV

Councillor Rafferty carried out research into the provision of CCTV cameras in public conveniences. His findings were circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillors

discussed whether the cameras would be a sufficient deterrent for those insistent on causing damage, and whether the Police would take action when presented with footage of criminal damage. Councillors felt that further investigation and costings should be looked at. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Mayor will raise Councillors' concerns with the Police and Crime Commissioner and provide an update on her response.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will make initial enquiries for costings for additional CCTV in our public conveniences.

565. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Cleanliness of Cowes' Streets**

A member of the public has written to the Town Council to express their disappointment at the level of chewing gum deposits on our pavements and pedestrian areas, making the town unattractive. They suggested a 'clean up Cowes' day where residents are asked to volunteer their time to help out. Councillors felt that removal of chewing gum deposits required specialist chemicals and machinery, which would not be suitable for volunteers to come into contact with, however, Island Roads should be using their specialist equipment to clean the town of both chewing gum deposits and graffiti. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will contact Island Roads to request removal of chewing gum and graffiti throughout the town before the Easter holidays.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will reply to the resident.

566. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

Councillor Sanders and the Deputy Town Clerk & Facilities Manager inspected the Seafront flagpole and are of the opinion that there is no immediate evidence of the flagpole's footings being loose or cracking. Located next to the flagpole is a concrete plinth which is slightly cracking, believed to have been the location of a former litter bin. The flag is removed from the flagpole from 1 October for the winter period and will be re-hoisted for Easter 2024, following a further inspection of the flagpole's footings.

A quotation to install a permanent flagpole by the War Memorial in Northwood Park has been received, however, the Chief Operating Officer of Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd. (NHCTCL) advised that NHCTCL are looking into the possibility of relocating the War Memorial to a better site (with better drainage) within the Park.

Redecoration of a number of our assets is scheduled for Spring 2024.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will write to NHCTCL for an update on the relocation of the War Memorial.

b) **Public Conveniences**

The padlocks have been changed on our facilities at Northwood Recreation Ground, Mornington Road and The Parade to a single uniform padlock. The Cut facilities have no padlocks fitted. Medina Road is closed for refurbishment and the padlocks will be changed once the facilities are reopened. Northwood Park toilets are owned by NHCTCL and they provide their own padlocks.

Monthly inspections were carried out by the Deputy Town Clerk & Facilities Manager on 2 January 2024 and minor issues were raised with the cleaning contractor. One of the door

handles at The Cut was vandalised on New Year's Eve, resulting in a snapped spindle and missing handle. A replacement handle and spindle will be fitted shortly.

c) **Northwood Recreation Ground**

IW Council permission has been received to install two concrete posts to restrict the gate openings on the Skate Park, to remove the risk of finger entrapment, as requested by the RoSPA safety inspector. The works were completed 3 January 2024. The Deputy Town Clerk has padlocked the right-hand inward opening gate to the side fencing, to stop it swinging freely, thus removing the risk of finger entrapment.

The Coned Climber is closed off awaiting a repair, arranged by the IW Council. The Zip Wire launch pad has been resurfaced by the IW Council.

The IW Council have advised that approximately £3,000 of surfacing works are required to the area surrounding the slide mound. They have asked the Town Council to consider making a contribution towards the repair costs. The Town Council own the Playbuilder equipment and have a service level agreement with the IW Council to cover routine maintenance costs. Following discussion, it was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Town Clerk will advise what the balance of the 'Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget is, for discussion at the next meeting of the Projects Committee.
2. The Town Clerks will check the Service Level Agreement for clarification on maintenance responsibilities of the Playbuilder equipment.
3. The Deputy Town Clerk will write to the IW Council to ask what their timescale and proposed materials are for the repair.

567. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Parade Toilets Refurbishment
- Matrix for future projects – Councillor Adams.

The proceedings terminated at 8.09pm.

CHAIRMAN