

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Town Council's Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 6.15pm

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

In attendance: 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

575. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barney, Ellis and Nicholson.

576. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

577. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 13 February 2024 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

578. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) The Cut - Enhancements

There has been no response from IW Council's Contract Management Team to progress this project. The Mayor wrote to the Director of Neighbourhoods and has followed this up with a request to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration, Culture & Leisure, that this matter be considered by the Regeneration Board.

The Deputy Town Clerk raised the approaching expiration of the current planning permission for the enhancement scheme. Due to the continued delay in progressing this project, Councillors agreed that an extension to the planning permission should be requested.

Martin Hayles will be reducing his working hours in the run-up to his retirement and confirmed he will provide the Town Council with all drawings in CAD format for this project. Should the project not proceed, the allocated S.106 monies held by the IW Council for this project will go back into a central pot, for projects Island-wide. Routine highway works at The Cut are scheduled as part of the PFI Contract.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Martin Hayles will request an extension to the current planning permission for the enhancement scheme at The Cut.
2. Martin Hayles will provide CAD files of his drawings that relate to this project before his retirement.

b) The Cut - Changing Places Facility

Groundworks for the new Changing Places Facility have commenced on site and the concrete base has been poured. The 'pod' is due to be delivered to site at the end of this week, following which it will be connected to the existing public conveniences' services. Martin advised that the new tactile paved crossings will be carried out at a later date, by contractors accredited to work on the highway.

The depth of the concrete base has been set to provide level access at the entrance to the new pod, removing the need for ramped access. Councillors discussed the impact of not

having the ramp and associated railings. They felt it was important to provide a safety barrier behind the powered door as a control to reduce the risk of users approaching the facility coming into contact with the outward-opening powered door; yellow and black chevrons on the ground outside the door opening will create a safe zone. The costs for the additional safety features are expected to fall within the agreed contingency sum for this project. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Martin Hayles will obtain costs to install a safety barrier and a painted safety zone outside of the pod entrance.
2. The Clerks will arrange an official opening of the Changing Places facility, when complete.

c) **Medina Road - Public Conveniences Refurbishment**

The refurbishment works have been signed off by Building Control. The Mayor and Deputy Town Clerk and Facilities Manager met with Martin Hayles and the contract manager on site to sign off the Ladies and Gents facilities. These facilities can be opened to the public once the specialist floor cleaning product, which is a requirement to conform with the manufacturer's warranty, has been received and the facility stocked with soap and toilet paper.

There are ongoing discussions with the contractor regarding the powered automatic door on the accessible facility. Commissioning of the powered door mechanism and the carrying out of a site-specific risk assessment is being undertaken on 23 March 2024. Once this risk assessment has been received, Martin Hayles will write to Island Roads to request their approval for any additional safety features identified in the risk assessment that relate to the public highway, sending them the risk assessment and any relevant drawings. In the meantime, the accessible facility will remain locked until any safety issues identified in the risk assessment have been addressed.

The Deputy Town Clerk and Martin Hayles advised Councillors of a number of variations to the original contract specification, which included: a requirement to replace 3 drain cover frames, lids and gullies to suit the vinyl flooring; the addition of 2 valves in the public conveniences to enable isolation of the water to the facilities for future maintenance; a new sink for the cleaner; an increase in electrical contractors' cost; a new heater; tarmac improvements to the door thresholds; the supply and fitting of toilet roll dispensers and an upgrade to the security bolts, which will remove the risk of occupants being locked in the facility. The cost for the variations have been met by the 10% discount on the original contract price. A 2.5% retention figure will be held back for three months and will not be released until any snagging issues identified in the three month inspection have been resolved.

The additional costs to upgrade to a powered automatic door on the accessible toilet are expected to be met from the contingency sum agreed for this project. This upgrade is outside of the original contract specification and has been installed to improve accessibility. Councillors discussed methods of public engagement with regard to the re-opening of the public conveniences, including the issuing of a press release and updates on our website, Facebook page and Noticeboard.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Martin Hayles will obtain costs to install safety barriers and a painted safety zone outside of the accessible entrance.
2. On receipt of the risk assessment, Martin Hayles will ask Island Roads for their permission to install any identified additional safety features on the highway.

3. The Clerks will prepare a press release to update members of the public on the re-opening of the public conveniences.

d) **Ark and Dove Information Board**

The Advertisement Consent is going through the standard planning process timescale for public comments. The Town Council has agreed to enter into an Attachment Licence with the IW Council. Once advertisement consent is granted and the Attachment Licence is complete, final costs will be obtained before the Board is ordered.

e) **Northwood Recreation Ground – CCTV**

The installation of the CCTV system has been scheduled for 25, 26 and 28 March 2024, with an expected handover to the Town Council on Tuesday 3 April. The Clerks will meet Lifeline on site to receive instructions on using the system and set up the iPad to retrieve the camera footage.

f) **Wishing Well, Shooters Hill**

At the Town Council meeting on 1 February 2024, Councillors gave approval to enter into an Attachment Licence to take responsibility for the Wishing Well and also approved the cost to cap the Well and remove the pump, once the Attachment Licence is completed. The Deputy Town Clerk has asked the contractor (Crown Park) to provide the information requested by Island Roads that relate to the capping of the Well, their accreditation to work on the highway, completion of our Supplier Evaluation Form and their Risk Assessment and Method Statement for the works.

g) **Cowes High Street Events**

The Chairman asked Cowes Traders' Group for their thoughts on a community noticeboard, following a request from a local resident. A suitable location will need to be identified, someone who agrees to monitor it, and permission from the landowner granted. Councillor Dodwell offered to make enquiries regarding the displaying of community information.

The Mayor attended the Traders' meeting on 29 February 2024. Clarification of the amount and method of accessing the monies passed to the Town Council by Cowes Business Association was requested and has since been provided. The Traders will provide examples of signposts and solar-powered lighting that they would like to be considered for the town. An Island-wide Biosphere Festival is planned for the weekend of 29 and 30 June 2024; organisers are looking for volunteers to help run events and for town and parish councils to become involved. Councillors questioned if there is potential to schedule an event at Moorgreen Reservoir to tie in with the Biosphere Festival.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Councillor Dodwell will make enquiries regarding the displaying of community information.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will contact Moorgreen Road Allotment Society to ask if they have any plans to run a festival this year.

h) **D-Day 80th Anniversary**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided Island Roads with the information they requested for permission to site the beacon and fenced enclosure. Island Roads' approval has now been received.

Permission will be required from the IW Council to cone off the ten parking spaces to the east of the Bus/Coach bay for the day of the event, with the cost to be met from the money set aside for the D-Day event. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will request a parking restriction for the parking spaces adjacent to the Beacon site, for the duration of the event.

i) Parade and Bandstand Risk Report

At the Town Council meeting on 1 February 2024, Councillors agreed costs to replace the planting in the Bath Road flowerbed and purchase two plants for the Bandstand flowerbed, to discourage youths gaining entry to the roof of the Bandstand and Parade public conveniences. The planting has now been completed. This item will be removed from future agendas.

j) Review Notes from informal meeting with IW Council – 7 March 2024

The Notes from the above meeting were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillor Oliver is liaising with the IW Council's Parks Officer, who has agreed to revise the ramps on the roadway to provide a flat surface for those with mobility issues, wheelchairs, buggies etc.

There is a priority identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to create a footpath on the Northwood Recreation Ground to link Place Road with Seaview Road.

Councillor Sanders has inspected and photographed the wall outside of Cowes Library; he will provide photos for forwarding to the IW Council.

k) Additional CCTV

Lifeline Alarms have assessed the public conveniences at Medina Road, The Parade and Mornington Road for new CCTV systems. To proceed quickly and hopefully protect the Town Council's investment into the facility at Medina Road, the quotation for a CCTV system at this location was considered and agreed at the Town Council meeting on 7 March 2024. Southern Water's permission will be required to add external cameras, as owners of the building. The Deputy Town Clerk has written to Southern Water, requesting their permission.

Costs for CCTV systems at Mornington Road and The Parade were tabled at the meeting. Until these facilities are refurbished, CCTV will not be prioritised for these locations.

l) Parade Toilets - Refurbishment

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

m) Post Office Support

The Deputy Town Clerk wrote to Post Office Ltd on 20 February 2024 to ask how they were supporting post office services, nationwide. A response was received on 7 March 2024, which was shared with Councillors prior to the meeting. Post Office Ltd are looking for an alternative venue to locate a High Street Post Office and requested anyone interested to make contact with them. A suggestion was made to have mobile post office units, visiting various locations across the Island, similar to the mobile banks. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Clerks will write to Post Office Ltd to ask if they will consider looking to provide a mobile post office service.

579. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Heritage Boards**

Councillor Oliver asked Councillors to consider supporting a new project for the design of one or two information boards to celebrate our maritime history. He provided photographs of various sites which have the potential to mount a display unit.

The proposal will be measured against the New Projects Matrix for further consideration by the Projects Committee. It was agreed:

ACTION

Members of the Projects Committee will score the proposal against the New Projects Matrix, for discussion at the next meeting.

580. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

A number of items of street furniture are due to be painted by Community Payback. A commencement date is awaited.

The seafront flagpole will be checked by the Facilities Manager prior to the flag being hoisted around Easter.

b) **Public Conveniences**

Graffiti has been removed at The Cut and is in progress at Mornington Road public conveniences.

The sensor lights in The Parade facilities have been adjusted to stay on for a longer time. Monthly inspections of the public conveniences were carried out and routine issues raised with the cleaning contractor. There have been issues at The Cut toilets regarding blockages, a broken loo roll holder and a broken door handle; and issues with the soap dispensers at Northwood Recreation Ground.

c) **Northwood Recreation Ground**

The Town Council has approved £1,500 towards the cost of repairs around the slide mound. The IW Council are managing the repair works.

Councillor Brown is struggling to find a replacement Nectarine tree for the Community Orchard; another variety of fruit tree may be required.

Some of the bonded paint has lifted on the mobile gym equipment, resulting in rust damage. Repairs were carried out by FreshAir Fitness, but rust continues to be present, which will be monitored.

Councillor Brown requested a review of the Outdoor Gym signage. Councillors felt the sign for the static gym equipment could be revised/updated. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Chairman will draw up suggestions for revised signage for further consideration.

581. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Cowes Week Bicentenary
- Biosphere Festival

The proceedings terminated at 7.50pm.

CHAIRMAN