

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 12 December 2024 at 7pm

**Present:** Councillor Nicholson (Town Mayor) (Chairman)  
Councillors Adams, Dodwell, Ellis, Fuller, Oliver, Sanders, Wardrop & White.

**In attendance:** Debbie Faulkner, Locum Town Clerk; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; one representative from Community Action Isle of Wight.

### **COWES FRINGE 2024 PRESENTATION FROM SARA BLACKWELL (MIN NO 8979 REFERS)**

Unfortunately, due to ill health, the presentation has been deferred to the 6 February 2025 Town Council meeting.

#### **9063 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barney, Brown, Carter, Hollis, Peacey Wilcox, Rafferty & Walters.

#### **9064 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- a) No declarations of interest were received.
- b) Written requests for dispensation were received, and granted, from Councillors Ellis, Oliver, Sanders, Wardrop & White in respect of the draft budget and precept setting for 2025 / 2026. Min. No. 9069c refers.

#### **9065 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

The Local Safer Neighbourhood Officer did not provide a report. Councillors Nicholson and Sanders are meeting Chief Inspector McDonald and Inspector Hercock on 17 December 2024. It was agreed:

##### ACTION

Town Councillors will send a list of issues to be raised, to the Town Clerk, for collation prior to the meeting.

#### **9066 MINUTES**

##### **RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 7 November 2024 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

#### **9067 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

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

#### **9068 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS**

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

Councillor Fuller added that he had received opposition to the proposal to allow cycling through Cowes High Street. This proposal is included in the IW Council's consultation on the LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan). Any comments should be made online to the IW Council's consultation by the deadline of 17 January 2025.

Councillor Fuller also advised that he did not attend the IW Council’s Cabinet meeting regarding the possible school closures as he has been supporting Cowes Primary School to stay open and felt his attendance would cause him a conflict of interest.

Councillor Nicholson was available for questions but none were raised.

## 9069 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

### a) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 12 November 2024 were received and noted. It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council supports, in principle, the installation of additional seating and planters / plants, to include ongoing maintenance and watering costs, in the area outside of Sainsbury’s, subject to the necessary permissions being granted.**

### b) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meetings held on 13 November 2024 and 4 December 2024 were received and noted. It was agreed:

#### ACTIONS

1. Councillor Fuller will take up the delay in granting Clare Lallow’s planning application with the IW Council’s Planning Department.
2. The Town Clerk will forward all correspondence regarding the Clare Lallow planning application to Councillor Fuller.

### c) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 26 November 2024 were received and noted. It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the budget, as below, which will mean that the Cowes Town Council precept for 2025 – 2026 will be £531,214.**

<b>COWES TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2025-2026</b>	
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>	
<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>	
Town Clerks' salaries / NIC/ Tax / Pension	£ 140,000
Office Rent	£ 8,900
Stationery / Sundry Office Expenses/Software	£ 1,200
Office Equipment / Photocopier / Computers	£ 9,000
Telephone / Broadband / Website	£ 1,100
Postage	£ 300
Conference fees & Travelling	£ 500
Training	£ 1,000
Hire of Meeting Rooms and / or Zoom	£ 800
Subscriptions	£ 2,500
Insurance	£ 3,300
Audit and Accountancy	£ 2,500

Mayor's Allowance	£	2,000
Newsletter / Publicity	£	4,000
Elections / Admin Contingency	£	16,000
Civic Regalia	£	500
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>193,600</b>
<b>DISCRETIONARY SERVICES</b>		
Grounds Maintenance: Northwood Rec; St Mary's Park; Moorgreen Reservoir; Arctic Park; Mornington Green; Brunswick Road playground; Park Road Rose Bed; Egypt Point; Mornington Woods	£	16,582
Northwood Rec - Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance	£	7,500
Northwood Park Grounds Maintenance	£	12,800
Northwood Park Toilets - Cleaning Only	£	5,200
Dog + Litter bin emptying	£	7,000
5 Public Toilets - Cleaning + other costs	£	56,500
Facilities Management	£	70,000
Cowes Library	£	26,500
Cowes In Bloom	£	12,000
Environment Officer	£	10,032
Warmer Cowes	£	500
Park Road Crossing Patrol	£	6,000
Discretionary Services Contingency	£	8,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>238,614</b>
<b>TOWN IMPROVEMENTS / GRANTS / SPECIAL EVENTS</b>		
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 2025	£	3,500
Flags, Banners and Bunting	£	2,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>99,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>531,214</b>

d) Cowes Week Bicentenary Working Group

The Minutes of the Cowes Week Bicentenary Working Group meeting held on 21 November 2024 were received and noted. Councillor Nicholson advised that a 'Cowes 200' stakeholder group had been established. Those stakeholders being Cowes Week Ltd, Royal Yacht Squadron, Cowes Harbour Commission, Cowes Yacht Haven, Cowes Combined Clubs, the Lord Lieutenant's office and Cowes Town Council. A proposal has been made for each stakeholder to contribute £15,000 towards the event. Councillors agreed that such a commitment cannot be made without knowing where the

funds would be spent. Cowes Town Council would only consider supporting shore based events.

Councillor White left the meeting at 7.44pm.

e) Supporters of Cowes Library

The Minutes of the meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library held on 4 November 2024 were received and noted.

**9070 MAYOR'S UPDATE**

The Mayor reported on 'Cowes 200 and beyond'; 'Responsibilities and Duties assumed in Council posts'; 'Securing Beneficial Changes for Future Councils'.

**9071 CHEQUE PAYMENTS AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2024**

The Town Clerk had circulated details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of November 2024. Cheque payments totalled £63,764.44; petty cash payments totalled £31.68. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That the cheque payments for November of £63,764.44 and petty cash payments of £31.68 be received, noted and approved.**

**9072 APPOINTMENT TO THE PROJECTS COMMITTEE**

Following the resignation of Councillor Brown from the Projects Committee, Councillors were asked to consider filling the vacancy. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That the vacancy remains unfilled until the Annual Town Council meeting in May 2025.**

**9073 TO CONSIDER PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO NORTHWOOD HOUSE CHARITABLE TRUST CO LTD (NHCTCL) TO ADDRESS SAFETY ISSUES IN NORTHWOOD PARK (MIN NO 9039 REFERS)**

Further to a member of the public's attendance at the Town Council meeting on 7 November, a written request to assist NHCTCL has now been received. The safety issues in question relate to the Rotunda car park steps that do not have any handrails; Nunnery steps which does have a handrail but it falls short of the top tread; the footpath junction adjacent to the tennis court, herbaceous border and bowling green where a cast iron stop cock box is proud of the gravel path by some 50mm, which although is now covered with a cone does still cause an obstruction. Cowes Town Council have been asked to work with NHCTCL to address / financially support any safety improvements. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Cowes Town Council will advise NHCTCL of the safety assessor used for the inspection of the public toilets so that they can consider requesting a safety assessment be undertaken on the areas identified by the member of the public.
2. The Town Clerk will advise the member of the public of the agreed action and ask them to encourage other Park users to write to NHCTCL if they have any safety concerns.

**9074 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.**

**9075 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER**

The Environment Officer provided a report of her activities in Cowes which included dog fouling patrols; litter bin checks; playground inspections and general inspections.

**9076 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

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

**9077 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

There were no items raised for inclusion on a future agenda.

The proceedings terminated at 8.04pm.

**CHAIRMAN**