

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 14 January 2025 at 6.15pm

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

In attendance: Councillors Carter (6.17pm) and Wardrop (6.25pm) (Non-voting); Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk

631. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peacey Wilcox.

632. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

633. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 12 November 2024 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

634. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **The Cut - Enhancements**

There has been no progress with this project. We are awaiting an update from the IW Council's Contracts Management Team.

b) **Medina Road Public Conveniences – Accessible Door**

Island Roads have advised that they and the IW Council will not support installation of a barrier or footway markings on the Project Network outside the public conveniences at Medina Road. They have requested further consideration is given to the accessible toilet door being recessed, or the use of a sliding door, to prevent it restricting the footway and reducing the risk of pedestrians being impacted by the opening door. The Chairman felt a site meeting with the local authority / Island Roads would be beneficial to discuss options to resolve this issue. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested Councillors approach A1 Garage Doors to look at options for alternative doors. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will set up a site meeting with A1 Garage Doors to discuss options for the accessible door.
2. Councillor Rafferty will request a site meeting with the IW Council to discuss the issues with the accessible door.

c) **Cowes High Street Events and Improvements**

Ross Edmunds has been establishing ownership of the area of land outside of Sainsbury's and the various structures mounted thereon. He is discussing improvements to the area with Jasmine (project architect), following a request from traders to improve the area. Improvements being considered are the installation of planters, bicycle parking and additional seating. Permission will be required from the Highway Authority to add/remove any structure on the site.

The Town Council has agreed to support, in principle, the installation of additional seating and planters/plants, to include ongoing maintenance and watering costs.

The Chairman advised that the project has been scored using the Place Plan matrix under the theme of 'Built and natural environment, connectivity and transport'. The project meets the values to a strong degree.

A member of the public has requested the Town Council consider installing a permanent string of lights along the length of the High Street. Councillors felt that this would improve the appearance of the High Street, but acknowledged that projects of this size take a lot of time and work to implement.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Mayor will ask Ross Edmunds to source and cost the new seating, planters and plants for consideration by the Town Council.
2. On completion of the above action, approval will be sought from the Highway Authority for any changes to the area prior to commencement of any works.
3. The Deputy Town Clerk will ask the member of the public to complete and return the project matrix with their ideas for a permanent string of lights in the High Street, for further consideration.
4. The Deputy Town Clerk will contact other Town and Parish Councils to ask if they have installed similar lighting.
5. The Deputy Town Clerk will contact a local electrical contractor for advice / outline costs.

d) **Notes from informal meeting with IW Council held on 7 November 2024**

The Notes from the above meeting were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. These meetings are no longer being supported by the IW Council and this item will be removed from future agendas. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will refer any ongoing matters to the Projects Committee to manage.

e) **Public Toilets Refurbishment - Forward Plan**

There was no update regarding the refurbishment of The Parade public conveniences. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Mayor will arrange a meeting with an architect to discuss plans for the refurbishment.

f) **The Cut Mural Wall**

The Town Council has been awarded funding of £3,000 through Southern Water's IW Community SuDS Fund for the installation of a living wall to replace the mural. Southern Water wish to create a case study of our project. Councillors were asked to assist with this project. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Sanders offered his assistance with this project.

g) **Litter Bin Audit**

A location list of the litter bins has been provided by Island Roads. Volunteers were sought to photograph each bin, suggesting whether (a) it should be moved to another location, (b) it should be removed altogether (eg if there is another bin close by), or (c) recommend no change. Island Roads have information on the usage of every bin. Councillors were asked to assist with this project. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Oliver offered his assistance with this project.

h) **Public Conveniences Accessibility Audit**

Councillor Rafferty and the Deputy Town Clerk have prioritised the key actions identified in the Accessibility Audit and these are being worked through.

Only one quotation has been received for the provision of an Out of Hours Call-out Service for the public conveniences, at a cost of £35 plus VAT per call-out, and a monthly charge of £40 plus VAT for key holding (for 5 sets). It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council engages Contractor A for the provision of an Out of hours Call-out Service for our public conveniences at a cost of £35 plus VAT per call-out, and a monthly charge of £40 plus VAT for key holding, with the cost to be met from the '5 Public Toilets – Cleaning and other costs' budget heading.

i) **Parcel of Land, top of Upper Moorgreen Road**

The Town Council have been asked to consider the long-term maintenance of this small parcel of land, which is currently maintained voluntarily by a resident of Upper Moorgreen Road. The IW Council have been requested to provide a cost to add this small parcel of land to the existing Grounds Maintenance contract. The IW Council Parks Officer has asked their contractor to look at the area and provide a cost to cut the grass every three weeks during the summer and trim the hedge once per year. A cost is awaited.

j) **VE Day 80th Anniversary – 8 May 2025**

The Town Council agreed to set aside a budget of up to £2,500 for costs associated with VE Day 2025 at its meeting on 7 November 2024.

Councillor Ellis has made several attempts to speak to Island Roads regarding road closures for an event on The Parade. Hire of the Bandstand, including the suspension of a number of parking spaces needs to be booked, along with permission for the Beacon and barriers. 'Double Take' are currently available to perform, but their booking needs securing. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Councillor Ellis will continue to engage with Island Roads over the road closures.
2. Councillor Ellis will confirm the booking with Double Take.
3. Councillor Ellis will compile a draft programme for Councillors' consideration.

Councillor Ellis left the meeting at 7.22pm.

k) **Mornington Road Car Park**

At the Town Council meeting on 5 September 2024, the Projects Committee were actioned to consider making a bid to the IW Council to take ownership of Mornington Road Car Park. The Deputy Town Clerk wrote to the IW Council's Strategic Director of Corporate Services on 11 September 2024, to request her initial thoughts on whether the IW Council would consider relinquishing control of this car park, before the Town Council discusses this further. The email has been passed to the Service Director for Highways and Community Protection. There has been no update received from the IW Council and a response has been requested.

l) **Installation of a permanent Flagpole in Northwood Park**

Councillors are keen to install a permanent Flagpole at the War Memorial, to reduce the annual cost for the installation of a temporary flagpole. Councillor Sanders has offered to contact Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd to discuss. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Sanders will contact Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd to request permission to install a permanent flagpole by the War Memorial.

635. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Management of the Town Council's facilities**

Councillors further discussed ways to manage the Town Council's facilities. Discussions with interested parties are ongoing and an update will be provided at the next meeting.

b) **Replacement of the Town Maps**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that a number of our town maps in the display cases are starting to wrinkle. These were installed in September 2020. Councillors suggested possible updates, including: the Changing Places facility; the Place Road development; the Covid-19 memorial; The Dottens; removal of the Methodist Church. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillors will look at the map and advise of any further updates at the next meeting.

636. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

Community Payback will conclude the painting/staining of the benches on The Parade shortly, and paint the Parade toilets' ceilings with a second coat of emulsion.

The annual servicing of both flagpoles has been carried out. The contractor has provided a video of the movement in the concrete base, requiring the footings and flagpole to be replaced. The Deputy Town Clerk and Facilities Manager has requested the contractor's Risk Assessment and Method Statement, before permission can be sought from the IW Council, as landowner, to replace the flagpole. Councillor Sanders suggested a new flagpole could be bolted to the former litter bin's concrete base, located adjacent to the flagpole on the seafront.

The Perspex has been replaced on the Noticeboard at Carvel Lane.

It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Sanders will inspect the seafront flagpole area and advise if the adjacent concrete base is suitable to support a new flagpole.

b) **Public Conveniences and CCTV**

Two replacement baby changing units are required, to replace the vandalised units at The Cut and Medina Road public conveniences. As the Accessibility Audit Consultant commented on the suitability of having baby changing units in accessible toilets, Councillors were asked to approve the removal of the baby changing unit from the accessible toilet at The Cut; and moving the baby changing unit from the accessible toilet at Medina Road to replace the broken unit in the Gents' facility at this location.

Two toilet roll holders have been vandalised; the Deputy Town Clerk is in the process of arranging their replacement.

New drinking taps are required at Northwood Recreation Ground and The Parade; the Deputy Town Clerk is in the process of arranging their replacement.

Lifeline Alarms have been asked for costs to provide an additional camera at Northwood Recreation Ground and to supply and install cages to protect all the CCTV cameras.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the broken Baby Changing Unit at The Cut to be removed and not replaced.

2. The Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the Baby Changing Unit in the Accessible facility at Medina Road to be moved into the Gents' facility, to replace the broken unit.
3. The Deputy Town Clerk will follow up a response from Lifeline Alarms.

c) **Northwood Recreation Ground**

Outstanding actions from the annual RoSPA inspection are ongoing. A repair to the Skatepark has been arranged.

The Community Orchard sign has been removed for refurbishment and will be refitted in the Spring.

d) **Asset Complaints / Concerns Log**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Councillors there were no entries in the Log since the last meeting.

637. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

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

The proceedings terminated at 7.59pm.

CHAIRMAN