

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Library, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 11 February 2025 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Rafferty (Chair), Adams, Nicholson, Oliver, Peacey Wilcox and Sanders

In attendance: Councillor Wardrop (Non-voting); Ross Edmunds, IW Council Regeneration Officer; Jasmine Hayden, JH Architecture; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; one representative from Community Action IOW

638. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dodwell.

639. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Oliver declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 642.b, as he knows the member of the public who made the request.

640. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 14 January 2025 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

641. 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. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Peacey Wilcox will follow up with the Service Director.

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

In an attempt to resolve the disabled door issue, the Chairman has requested a meeting with the IW Council's Contract Management Team. To date no response has been received. Councillors discussed alternatives to enable the facility to be opened for use. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Chairman and Deputy Town Clerk will identify and cost additional safety measures for further consideration, that do not require attachment to the pavement.

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

Following a request from Cowes' Traders to improve the High Street area with additional seating and planters, Ross Edmunds and Jasmine Hayden (JH Architecture) walked the High Street area to look at suitable areas for improvement. They initially looked at the area outside of Sainsbury's, which the Town Council has agreed to support, in principle, ongoing maintenance and watering costs for any new seating, plants and planters. With the complexities of current structures outside Sainsbury's, it was decided to look at other areas that would be able to implemented in a timely manner. Ross focussed on the recessed area of the High Street outside of 'Salt', and has been engaging with local businesses and statutory bodies to seek support and permission to improve the area. Ross presented plans of two options for Councillors to consider:

Option 1 – Remove current benches; add three new large contemporary planters; add one double-sided bench with integrated planters at either end; add one single-sided bench with integrated planters at each end and cycle racking for two bikes; relocate bin.

Option 2 – Reposition current benches; add two large contemporary planters; add four new large square contemporary planters at either end of the existing benches; add one ‘plant lock’ bike planter; relocate bin.

Ross felt that Option 2 was easier to achieve in a short period of time. He offered to liaise with Island Roads, seeking their support to advise the IW Council to issue a Section 115 licence for permission to add street furniture on the highway. He requests permission from the Town Council to access £6,000 of ring-fenced funds being held for improvements to the High Street and additional plants.

Councillors discussed the plans and suggested we look to have a theme for the new planters; they considered it appropriate to make them similar to the galvanised benches and Watchhouse Shelter on The Parade, which were made by a local contractor. This would keep maintenance costs down and complement the existing structures on The Parade.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers approving Option 2, detailed above, with the costs to be met from the ring-fenced money for High Street improvements and plants.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Subject to the agreement of the above recommendation, Ross Edmunds will seek permission from Island Roads for the new planters.
2. Ross Edmunds will ask the IW Council’s Tree Officer for recommendations regarding the species of trees suitable for the planters.

A member of the public has requested the Town Council consider installing a permanent string of lights along the length of the High Street. They have submitted a project proposal form, which the Mayor and Chairman of the Projects Committee have been asked to score. Councillor Ellis is investigating outline costs.

d) Public Toilets Refurbishment - Forward Plan

Jasmine Hayden, JH Architecture, presented her proposal for the refurbishment of The Parade public conveniences. She suggested there could be an opportunity to also upgrade the Bandstand area, to make the area more attractive and encourage further use of the area. The public conveniences are generous in size, with a lot of wasted floor space. They could be condensed, leaving potential for a space large enough to facilitate a concession stand. An upgrade of the Bandstand, incorporating new seating, plants and the supply of refreshments, would encourage people to use the area and stay in the town. A feasibility study would investigate whether Island Roads and the IW Council would be open to making better use of the Bandstand area. Income from a concession stand could be used to offset the cost of running the public conveniences.

Councillors discussed Jasmine’s proposal and raised a number of aspects for consideration, including grant funding opportunities and the Village Green status of the Bandstand. Subject to the Town Council’s approval of the fee proposal, Jasmine will be able to provide relevant guidance throughout the project.

Jasmin presented her fee proposal and outlined the stages and costs:

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|-----------|---|
| Stage 0-1 | Preparation, brief and survey - £500 (fixed) Architect Fee, plus £1,000 (estimated) Surveyor Fee. |
| Stage 2 | Concept Design - £1,350 (fixed) Architect Fee. |
| Stage 3 | Spacial Coordination - £1,350 (fixed) Architect Fee. |
| Stage 4 | Technical Design - £2,700 (estimated) Architect Fee. |

Stage 5 Construction, Contract Administration and Defects Inspection - £2,000 (estimated), being £50/hour for the Chartered Architect; £30/hour for the Architectural Assistant.

Jasmine requested Councillor's support and approval of the costs relating to Stages 1 – 3 above. Following discussion, it was:

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council considers suspending Financial Regulation 5.8 to allow consideration of one quotation.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council approves the costs of Stages 1 – 3 detailed above, for the cost of £4,200, with the cost to be met from the 'Public Toilet Refurbishment & Capital Projects' budget heading.**

e) **The Cut Mural Wall**

Councillor Peacey Wilcox advised Councillors of a suitable system to install a living wall at The Cut, to cover the existing mural and utilise water run-off from the public conveniences. A caged framework will protect the plants, with troughs containing the plants installed at the top and bottom of the framework. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillors Adams and Peacey Wilcox will further develop this project.

f) **Litter Bin Audit**

Councillor Oliver is photographing all the litter bins in Cowes and identifying their What3Words location.

g) **Public Conveniences Accessibility Audit**

The key actions identified in the Accessibility Audit are being worked through. A specific audit is due to be carried out on The Parade accessible facility.

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

A cost is still awaited from the IW Council to cut the grass every three weeks during the summer and trim the hedge once per year.

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

Councillor Ellis has been engaging with the appropriate authorities in relation to having a parade through the High Street to The Parade. He will compile a draft plan for Councillors' consideration.

j) **Mornington Road Car Park**

There has been no update from the IW Council and this item will be removed from the Agenda.

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

There is no update on this item.

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

The advert for a full-time Facilities and Town Manager is being advertised in the local press for two weeks, with a closing date of 28 February 2025.

m) **Updating the Town Maps**

Councillors discussed updates to the town map. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the cost for the revisions to the map is estimated at £100; printing and installation costs will be

additional. Councillors were in agreement to the costs to update the town maps being taken from the 'Street Furniture Maintenance' budget heading, authorised by the Town Clerk.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the map to be updated.
2. The Town Clerk will authorise the costs relating to the map.

642. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Visit of the Spanish Galleon 'Nao Santa Maria'**

The Mayor advised that the Spanish Galleon, Nao Santa Maria, will be visiting Cowes in May 2025. This coincides with the 1575 pre-armada reconnaissance visit based at Cowes. He has requested the Royal Yacht Squadron give a gun salute for the ship's arrival, as it was in 1575. The Mayor hoped to get local schools involved. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Mayor will enquire if visits for local school children can be arranged, including any restrictions on numbers and the costs involved.

b) **Installation of a Community Noticeboard**

Councillor Oliver requested Councillors consider installing a community noticeboard in the town centre, following a request from a member of the public. A suitable location will need to be identified in the town centre that has a high footfall. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Oliver will identify suitable locations for a community noticeboard and provide an update at the next Projects Committee meeting.

643. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

Councillor Wardrop advised that the Covid-19 memorial plaque needs revarnishing.

The Town Clock is currently not working. The batteries have been changed, but the clock still remains out of service. The Deputy Town Clerk is investigating a repair.

It was agreed:

ACTION

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the Covid-19 memorial plaque to be revarnished.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain repair costs for the town clock.

b) **Public Conveniences and CCTV**

A contractor has been engaged to remove the baby changing unit from the accessible toilet at The Cut; move the baby changing unit from the accessible toilet at Medina Road to replace the broken unit in the Gents' facility at this location; and install additional grab rails in the ambulant disables facilities at Medina Road.

c) **Asset Complaints / Concerns Log**

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

644. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Smart CCTV cameras – Councillor Rafferty.
- Cowes 200 – referred from the Town Council meeting on 6 February 2025.

- Park Road Toilet Block – referred from the Town Council meeting on 6 February 2025.
- New town maps & displays – referred from the Town Council meeting on 6 February 2025.

The proceedings terminated at 7.42pm.

CHAIRMAN