

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Drawing Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 6 March 2025 at 7pm

**Present:** Councillor Nicholson (Town Mayor) (Chairman)  
Councillors Carter, Dodwell, Ellis, Fuller, Hollis, Oliver, Rafferty, Sanders, Walters & Wardrop.

**In attendance:** Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; one representative from Community Action IW; two representatives from Cowes Fringe.

### **PRESENTATION REGARDING COWES FRINGE 2024**

Cowes Fringe 2024 was the second event, it exceeded expectations and received great feedback. The use of a ticket scanner had been successful. This was a community event with diverse artistes from the mainland and the Island. 12% of ticket sales were from mainland customers; Red Funnel had given promotional offers to attend the event. The organisers were disappointed that not many children took part but are hoping to find ways to get information into the schools for the 2025 Fringe; they will be putting on shows and workshops for children. There was a noticeable buzz at the event, and they are already receiving enquiries for the 2025 event from mainland and Island artistes. Cowes Fringe is now firmly on the map for its culture and art. The 2025 event will run from 23 May – 25 May and a request to display banners will be made to the Town Council in advance of the event. A drinks reception will be held on 22 May and all Councillors are welcome. The Mayor thanked Sara for her presentation and wished her success for the 2025 event.

### **9103 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Brown, Peacey Wilcox & White.

### **9104 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **9105 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

The Local Safer Neighbourhood Officer did not attend the meeting and did not provide a report.

### **9106 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 6 February 2025 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

### **9107 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

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

### **9108 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS**

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

Councillor Fuller advised that the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) had not been approved by the IW Council's Cabinet due to the large number of people complaining about cyclists using the High Street. Councillor Fuller is planning to get representatives from various businesses and residents around the table to discuss the issues raised. A cycle count will be undertaken during the times of the prohibition of vehicles. Councillor Fuller requested additional Town Councillors to attend; Councillors Oliver, Rafferty and Sanders agreed to take part. Councillor Sanders is already working on appropriate signage in the High Street. Councillor Fuller was asked for his position regarding the proposed school closures. He advised that the IW Council's Cabinet have postponed making a decision until 20 March 2025 as there are perceived flaws in the School Place Planning Team's documentation.

## 9109 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

### a) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 11 February 2025 were received and noted. It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That in relation to the recessed area outside of the 'Salt' shop, Cowes Town Council approves Option 2, i.e. reposition current benches; add two large contemporary planters; add four new square contemporary planters at either end of the existing benches; add one 'plant lock' bike planter; relocate bin.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council suspends Financial Regulation 5.8 to allow one quotation from J H Architecture's proposal for the refurbishment of The Parade public conveniences.**
- 3. That Cowes Town Council approves the costs of Stages 1 to 3 i.e. 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: Special coordination - £1,350 (fixed) Architect Fee; for the total cost of £4,200 with the cost to be met from the 'Public Toilet Refurbishment & Capital Projects' budget heading.**

### b) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 27 February 2025 were received and noted.

### c) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meetings held on 19 February 2025 and 25 February 2025 were received and noted. It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That Top Mops be appointed as the Town Council's cleaning contractor from 1 April 2025 initially for a period of one year, for the sum of £48,687.53.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council makes a grant to Cowes Fringe in the sum of £1,500.**
- 3. That Cowes Town Council donates £75 to Isle of Wight Pantries CIC.**

- d) Supporters of Cowes Library  
The Minutes of the meeting of the Supporters of Cowes Library held on 27 January 2025 were received and noted. Councillors were advised that works to the Library will be starting on 24 March 2025. Staff will be temporarily based across the road at the Beckford Centre. Monday and Saturday 1.30pm to 4.30pm; Tuesday and Friday 10am – 1pm.
- e) IW Council’s Public Realm and Coastal meeting  
The Minutes of the meetings of the IW Council’s Public Realm and Coastal meetings held on 3 February 2025 and 24 February 2025 were received and noted.

**9110 MAYOR’S UPDATE**

The Mayor reported on his activities; gave a Place Plan update; referred to a Place Plan Improvement Strategy and Cowes 200.

**9111 ADVISORY GROUPS**

Councillors discussed the possibility of setting up five Advisory Groups: Health and Wellbeing; Youth Opportunities; Climate and Environment; Place and Identity; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The members of the advisory groups would be citizens of, and ambassadors for, Cowes in their field of expertise and interest. The Town Clerk advised that as we are approaching the pre-election period it would be wise to hold this proposal over until the new Town Council is in place after the 1 May 2025 election.

**9112 NORTHWOOD HOUSE**

Councillors discussed Northwood House and claims made by Councillors that large reserves are held by the Trust. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk will invite Darren Cool, Chief Operating Officer for Northwood House to attend the April Town Council meeting to give an update on works completed, planned improvements and their finances.

**9113 CHEQUE PAYMENTS AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2025**

The Town Clerk had circulated details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of February 2025. Cheque payments totalled £17,414.04; petty cash payments totalled £14.78. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That the cheque payments of £17,414.04 and petty cash payments of £14.78 be received, noted and approved.**

**9114 TO CONSIDER WHETHER COWES TOWN COUNCIL WOULD SUPPORT THE INVESTIGATION TO INSTALL A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON PARK ROAD (MIN NO 9093 REFERS)**

Councillors discussed a suggestion from a local resident to place a pedestrian crossing on Park Road near to the junction with Parklands Avenue. The resident has contacted Island Roads and will also be contacting the IW Council. The Town Clerk wrote to Island Roads for statistics of any accidents in this area; their response was that there have been no reported injury collisions in the last five years. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council will take no further action in consideration of placing a crossing at the junction of Parklands Avenue and Park Road.**

It was agreed:

**ACTION**

Councillors Fuller and Nicholson will, via their newsletters, ask residents if they are aware of any collisions / injuries at this junction and relay any information back to the Town Council.

**9115 TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO RENEW COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (IWALC)**

Councillors were asked to consider whether to renew the Town Council's subscription for 2025 – 2026 in the sum of £1,810.17. After a long discussion it was felt that as this is an election year, the training that IWALC provide will be invaluable to new and returning Councillors. It was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council renews its membership of IWALC for 2025 - 2026 in the sum of £1,810.17.**

**9116 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER**

The Environment Officer did not provide a report of her activities in Cowes.

**9117 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no miscellaneous publications and correspondence to circulate.

**9118 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

- To consider the future use of Cowes Methodist Church – Councillor Oliver
- Empty properties in Cowes – Councillor Oliver

The proceedings terminated at 8.19pm.

**CHAIRMAN**