

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Dining Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 8 July 2025 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Rafferty (Chair), Dodwell, Ellis, Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox, Sanders and White

In attendance: Councillor Wardrop (Non-Voting); David Gordon, Facilities and Town Manager; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk

667. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Adams and Walters.

668. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

669. MINUTES

Councillors felt that the wording of the recommendation for Min No 663e did not accurately reflect the outcome of discussions and needed expanding, as the Town Council cannot give approval for anything outside its remit. The Deputy Town Clerk advised Councillors that the recommendation can be amended or not supported by the Town Council. It was:

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 10 June 2025 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

670. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **The Cut - Enhancements**

Councillor Peacey Wilcox has received clarification on the restrictions for the S.106 monies allocated to improvement works at The Cut. The monies can only be used for transport infrastructure, transport facilities or sustainable transport. It can be considered for other highway schemes in Cowes. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Facilities and Town Manager and Deputy Town Clerk will provide Councillor Peacey Wilcox with details of the improvement scheme at The Cut.

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

The IW Council have given their permission for the disabled door to open outwards onto the pavement. The Facilities and Town Manager has requested Island Roads provide a quotation to supply and install safety barriers on either side of the doorway. Additional signage will be installed on the powered door, to comply with the appropriate standards, and a vertical grabrail will be installed on the outside of the door, to be used in the event of power failure. Once the barriers are installed, the door can be commissioned and the facility open for use.

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

The amended S.115 licence for the new planters and relocation of the existing bin was considered. The term of the Licence is for 5 years (clause 5.1.2 refers). The Facilities and Town Manager is seeking a quotation from Island Roads for the relocation of the existing litter bin, and seeking quotations from local companies for the planters.

Discussions relating to reinvigoration of the High Street were discussed. Three/four projects had been raised at the Future Towns Innovation Hub, based at Southampton University, with Cowes High Street being a project that is being progressed.

The creation of a local planning strategy for Cowes was raised, which would need the support of both local councils involved in the creation of the Place Plan for Cowes and Northwood. This idea will be scored by the Place Plan Advisory Group.

The Mayor advised he had met with Cowes Week Ltd. They discussed ways to increase interest in the High Street and suggested reintroducing street entertainment, such as buskers. The cost would need to be met by the Town Council. It was:

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council enters into a Licence with the IW Council for the provision of additional planters in the High Street.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council allocate £2,000 for the provision of busking in the town.**

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Councillor White will submit a report to the Town Council, asking for approval to seek residents' views and ideas to reinvigorate the High Street.
2. The Mayor will make further enquiries on the process for High Street buskers.

d) Public Toilets Refurbishment - Forward Plan

Councillors felt a project implementation timeline would be useful, to keep this project on track.

Councillors discussed the Bandstand and Parade car park, and whether the Town Council could take over the control of these areas. It is unlikely that the IW Council will give up the car park area.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will ask the architect to provide a timeline for the refurbishment of The Parade public conveniences.
2. The Town Clerk will write to the IW Council to enquire about the possibility of the Town Council taking on the Bandstand as a community asset transfer.

e) Living Wall

The Facilities and Town Manager is seeking costs to prepare and paint the wall in The Cut, provide and install planters and plants, and install a water retention system for the living wall.

f) Litter Bin Audit

The Deputy Town Clerk wrote to Island Roads to enquire on the usage of the litter bins by Cowes Library and at the bottom of Market Hill. Island Roads have advised that the best (i.e. least used) bin to move is one at the junction of Newport Road / Bellevue Road. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council request the relocation of the litter bin from the junction of Newport Road / Bellevue Road to Arctic Park.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will ask Island Roads if any cost will be incurred to relocate the litter bin from Bellevue Road to Arctic Park.

g) Public Conveniences Accessibility Audit

The key actions identified in the Accessibility Audit continue to be worked through.

The Facilities and Town Manager is writing a fire risk assessment for the public conveniences. Any alarm system installed will need to be connected to a monitored phone number via a GSM system. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Facilities and Town Manager will research GSM system costs for Councillors' consideration.

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

Councillor Sanders has requested a meeting with Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd to discuss installing a permanent flagpole in Northwood Park, using the existing footings by the War Memorial.

i) **Updating the Town Map Display Boards**

Costs have been obtained for printing and fitting the maps, which have been approved by the Town Clerk.

j) **Smart CCTV cameras**

At the last meeting, Councillor Rafferty was actioned to look into utilising existing CCTV cameras in private ownership in the High Street area. He advised that it may not be suitable for the Town Council to access or control in a secure manner. Councillors felt the Town Council should purchase and manage its own system and were supportive of installing one smart CCTV camera at the top of Shooters Hill. Subject to Town Council approval, further enquiries can be made to identify a suitable location for the camera. It was:

RECOMMENDED

1. That Cowes Town Council agree in principle to install and manage a smart CCTV camera system at the top of Shooters Hill.

2. That Cowes Town Council set aside a budget of up to £9,000 for this project.

k) **Cowes200 Events**

Representatives from Cowes200 will be giving a presentation on their draft business plan to the Town Council meeting on 17 July.

l) **Town Map Handouts and Display Units**

The Admin Assistant compiled a list of suggestions for the reverse side of the map leaflet, which were circulated as a separate background paper. Councillors suggested bold headings and a link to Cowes Heritage and Community Group. They felt that all Councillors' views should be sought on the content. Design costs are estimated to be £200. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council approve £200 for the design of the map, with the cost to be met from the 'New Projects' budget heading.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Admin Assistant will amend the list and circulate to all Councillors for their thoughts.

m) **Former Methodist Church site, Birmingham Road**

The application for a Project Viability Grant from the Heritage Revival Fund has revealed that any application would not be considered unless the Town Council owned, or is in the process of purchasing, the building. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor White will provide a report to the next Town Council meeting.

n) **Vacant High Street site (former 'World Leisurewear')**

The Trustees of Cowes Yacht Haven are seeking professional advice on the future use of this property and will update the Town Council once this work has been completed.

o) **Town Council's Website**

Councillors are considering updating the Town Council's website. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Facilities and Town Manager will obtain budget costings for a new website.

671. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

Confirmation of the date for the replacement flagpole footings on Princes Green is awaited. A pressure wash of the oak seafront shelter has been booked; the delivery date is awaited. Two new mechanisms for the Town Clock on Shooters Hill have been delivered. A contractor is being sought to fit the mechanisms and paint the clock.

A quotation is being sought to refresh the Horizon plaque on The Parade. The lettering and images were originally laser cut and etched. The stainless steel plaque surface is tarnished in places and needs polishing. The signwriter has suggested painting a small area initially, to ensure a hand painted finish is satisfactory.

The broken bench at the bottom of Market Hill has not been replaced, following significant damage by a vehicle. Island Roads will be asked when it will be replaced.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will request a quotation for hand painting and polishing the Horizon plaque, with a small area to be hand painted initially, once costs are approved.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will write to Island Roads to ask when the bench at the bottom of Market Hill will be replaced.

b) **Public Conveniences and CCTV**

The Facilities and Town Manager carried out monthly inspections on 30 June and raised a number of issues with the cleaning contractor. He has requested a meeting with the contract manager to discuss the standard of cleaning.

Following antisocial behaviour in the Changing Places facility, the Police advised that they were able to identify all the youths seen in the footage provided by the Town Council; they have issued anti-social behaviour warning letters and the parents have been visited.

Councillors requested this be included in the next Newsletter.

A new CCTV camera has been installed in The Cut to cover the entrance to the Changing Places facility.

An additional CCTV camera will be installed at Northwood Recreation Ground, to protect the cameras located on the floodlight pole.

The damaged roof, fascia and guttering at The Cut public conveniences will be repaired shortly. An insurance claim is in progress.

The hard drive for the CCTV system at The Cut has been replaced. The system has been upgraded to include a 4G router, to enable the cameras to be monitored and footage retrieved from the office.

Councillors would like an update from Cowes Week Parade Village organisers on the provision of public conveniences for Cowes Week.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Admin Assistant will include an article on the antisocial behaviour in the Changing Places facility in the next Newsletter.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will write to Cowes Week Parade Village organisers to request an update on the provision of public conveniences for Cowes Week.

Councillor Wardrop left at 7.45pm.

c) **Northwood Recreation Ground**

Annual RoSPA inspections were carried out on the Town Council's facilities at Northwood Recreation Ground. The inspector's reports were circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Repairs identified in the report have been logged according to priority and repairs are being arranged.

The Facilities and Town Manager carried out quarterly inspections at Northwood Recreation Ground. Regular watering of the Community Orchard is being undertaken in dry weather. The cleaner has been requested to remove weeds from the perimeter of the Skate Park.

d) **Asset Complaints / Concerns Log**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Councillors that one complaint had been received via a Councillor, relating to the condition of The Cut public conveniences. This is being raised with the cleaning contract manager.

672. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Festive Lights
- Christmas Trees

The proceedings terminated at 7.53pm.

CHAIRMAN