

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held at the Isle of Wight Community Club, Park Road, Cowes on Tuesday 12 August 2025 at 6.15pm

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

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

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Ellis took the Chair.

673. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rafferty and Walters.

674. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

675. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 8 July 2025 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

676. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) The Cut - Enhancements

Councillor Peacey Wilcox wrote to the IW Council to request an update on the project; no response has been received. It was agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Peacey Wilcox will write to the Chief Executive, IW Council, copying in the local MP, to request an update on this project.

b) Medina Road Public Conveniences – Disabled Door

We are waiting for Island Roads to fit the safety barriers; once installed, the door can be commissioned and the facility opened for use.

c) Cowes High Street Events and Improvements

The Facilities and Town Manager has obtained a quotation from Island Roads for the relocation of the litter bin, however, Island Roads advise that the permission of the adjacent landowner is required before the bin can be moved. The Facilities and Town Manager is endeavouring to make contact with the landowner.

d) Public Toilets Refurbishment - Forward Plan

The surveys will be undertaken at The Parade public conveniences on 22 August. The architect has compiled a draft timeline of the refurbishment for Councillors.

A site meeting took place at The Parade with the previous roofing contractor, to examine the current condition of the roof. The contractor will provide a quotation for air vents to be installed, to assist with ventilation of the roof void. The roof will need to be surveyed as part of the public conveniences refurbishment.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will send Councillors a copy of the draft timeline.

2. The Deputy Town Clerk will write to the architect, to request the surveyor examines the roof on 22 August.
- e) **Living Wall**
The Facilities and Town Manager is seeking costs to prepare the wall, revise the guttering system and install a water retention system for the living wall, and seeking final quotations for planting. The planters are on order. He advised Councillors on a fencing structure, which will provide support for the plants.
- f) **Public Conveniences Accessibility Audit**
The Facilities and Town Manager is obtaining Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) system costs and requested Councillors consider allocating a budget of £5,000 for the surveying and installation of a GSM system in each of our public conveniences, with an additional £1,800 per annum for ongoing maintenance and monitoring costs. He will write Fire Risk Assessments for our public conveniences. It was:
RECOMMENDED
1. That Cowes Town Council agrees a budget of £5,000 for the provision of a GSM system in our public conveniences.
 2. That Cowes Town Council agrees a budget of £1,800 per annum for maintenance and monitoring of the GSM systems.
- g) **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, the location of the War Memorial and the trees in Northwood Park.
- h) **Smart CCTV cameras**
Councillors felt that trialling a mobile CCTV camera in the High Street and obtaining data from it should be carried out before pursuing the purchase of our own smart CCTV camera. It was agreed:
ACTION
The Facilities and Town Manager will ask Councillor Fuller to follow up costings for the mobile CCTV camera and data analysis with the IW Council and Island Roads.
- i) **Cowes200 Events**
This item will be renamed 'Cowes200'.
Representatives from Cowes200 attended the Town Council meeting on 17 July 2025 to update Councillors on their outline business plan, constitution and governance, financial projections, 2026 on-water event dates and suggestions of shoreside collaboration events. Councillors discussed Cowes200's plans for an App and website – linking to all events through the Cowes200 season, and East Cowes Town Council's plans to run their own shoreside activities. It was agreed:
ACTION
The Town Clerk will invite representatives from East Cowes Town Council to our next Cowes Week Bicentenary Working Group meeting, to discuss shoreside activities for 2026.
- j) **Town Map Handouts and Display Units**
Councillors discussed the list of possible inclusions for the map handout. It was agreed:
ACTIONS
1. The Deputy Town Clerk will send the Mayor the final list.
 2. The Mayor will contact the map designer.

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

The updated Agency Particulars were circulated prior to the meeting. The Facilities and Town Manager is seeking quotations for a structural engineer's report. Councillors advised we would need to receive the report before progressing with any plans to purchase the building. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That, subject to a satisfactory structural survey, Cowes Town Council agree to look into purchasing the former Methodist Church.

l) **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.

Councillors discussed other locations for potential future use.

m) **Town Council's Website**

The Mayor and the Facilities and Town Manager met with a web designer to discuss a new website for the Town Council. One quotation has been received; further quotations are being sought.

677. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Festive Lights**

Councillors felt that no changes are required to the festive lights, which are displayed from Birmingham Road, Shooters Hill, the High Street to Bath Road throughout the festive season. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers approving up to £16,000 for all costs associated with installing the festive lights for the 2025 festive season, with the cost to be met from the 'Festive lights/Xmas tree' budget heading.

b) **Christmas Trees**

A request had been received from a local trader, asking Councillors to consider installing a small Christmas tree in the Wishing Well flowerbed on Shooters Hill. Councillors agreed that the flowerbed is not deep enough to support a small Christmas tree, however, winter planting can be reviewed, with maybe a central feature.

Councillors discussed the number and location of Christmas trees in the town for 2025. They felt that one dressed Christmas tree should be provided by the Town Council and sited in Francki Place, at a cost of up to £1,000. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers providing one dressed Christmas Tree to be located in Francki Place, at a cost of up to £1,000, with the cost to be met from the 'Festive lights/Xmas tree' budget heading.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will discuss winter planting in the Wishing Well with the winter planting contractor at the appropriate time.

678. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

The seafront shelter has been pressure-washed.

The seafront flagpole's footings have been replaced. Councillor Sanders requested a base cover be added, to protect the bolts from the elements.
The updated town maps have been printed and the display boards will be updated shortly. Quotations are being sought for the fitting of the town clock mechanisms and redecoration. Island Roads have advised that the IW Council will need to instruct them to replace the missing bench at the bottom of Market Hill, however, they are informed this will be resolved in the near future.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will make an enquiry for a flagpole base cover.

b) Public Conveniences and CCTV

The graffiti has been removed from the public conveniences' external walls at Mornington Road and Northwood Recreation Ground.

The Wallgate units at Mornington Road and Northwood Recreation Ground have been replaced.

The Facilities and Town Manager carried out monthly inspections on 30 July and raised a number of issues with the cleaning contractor. Councillors discussed the standard of cleaning.

c) Northwood Recreation Ground

The Playbuilder basket swing has been damaged. The IW Council have been asked to remove it immediately and arrange to repair or replace it.

Councillors wished to thank DMR Engineering and John Groves (IW) Ltd for recent works at the Skate Park. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will write to DMR Engineering and John Groves (IW) Ltd, thanking them for the recent repair / improvement works at the Skate Park.

d) Asset Complaints / Concerns Log

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Councillors that three concerns had been received, relating to a faulty Radar lock at Mornington Road, excessive water temperature from the Gents' Wallgate at The Parade, and issues locking The Cut public conveniences. All issues had been promptly resolved.

679. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Pump Track
- Northwood Recreation Ground Survey

The proceedings terminated at 7.57pm.

CHAIRMAN