

## COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Place Plan Working Group Meeting held in the Dining Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 2 September 2025 at 6.15pm

**Present:** Councillors White (Chair), Marriott and Rafferty

**In attendance:** Ross Edmunds, IW Council Regeneration Officer, Cowes Area; David Gordon, Facilities and Town Manager; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk

### 79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carter, Ellis, Nicholson and Peacey Wilcox.

### 80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

### 81. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

**That the Minutes of the Place Plan Working Group meeting held on 26 June 2025 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

### 82. COWES WEEK PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Chair thanked Ross for collating the feedback from the Town Council's public engagement gazebo on The Parade throughout Cowes Week. A number of themes emerged from the responses:

- Support for a community space, with suggested uses including: space for youths, a banking hub, post office, co-worker space, creative clubs, performing arts and games clubs.
- Cycling in the High Street received significant opposition; data to provide evidence of cycling in the High Street is being looked into by the Town Council.
- Requests for more events and activities, including: a Christmas market, regular buskers, better use of the Bandstand, free-of-charge events.
- Increase in opportunities for physical fitness, including: a circular all-weather smooth pathway around Northwood Recreation Ground.
- Environmental concerns, including: how to reduce the town's flood risk and sewage levels in the sea; more or larger bins to reduce littering on Town Quay.
- More / better use of green spaces; space for activities such as Pétanque.
- More for youths to do.
- Better public toilets.
- For Cowes Week, improved shoreside activities for children and a commentary of on-the-water movements were suggested. Ross will share this information with Cowes Week Ltd.

Those who gave up their time to cover the stand enjoyed the positive feedback with the public and were in support of doing the same for Cowes Week 2026.

Councillors discussed how to consider, prioritise and progress the suggestions received. They felt it would be beneficial to score new projects against this feedback, and produce a 'You said, We did' update on the suggestions received.

Ideas were suggested to attract more people to the town's Christmas late night shopping / festive light switch on event, including: a lantern parade, chestnut roasters, carol singers.

It was agreed:

#### ACTIONS

1. Ross will share the feedback relating to Cowes Week shoreside activities with Cowes Week Ltd.
2. Councillor White offered to compile a 'You said, We did' update.
3. The Facilities and Town Manager will make enquiries into organising a Christmas lantern parade.

**83. COMMUNICATION LINES BETWEEN THE TOWN COUNCIL AND PLACE PLAN GROUPS**

The 'Bridging the Gap' document, outlining communication lines between the Town Council, the Place Plan Advisory Group and the Place Plan Working Group, had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors discussed the process for members of the community to raise projects. Project proposals will be scored by the Place Plan Advisory Group, who meet quarterly. If the proposal supports the objectives of the Place Plan, the Place Plan Working Group will consider the proposal in full, making a recommendation to the Town Council for support. Ross offered scoring training to Members of the Advisory Group.

It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council approves the 'Bridging the Gap' document.**

It was agreed:

**ACTION**

Ross will provide scoring training for Members of the Place Plan Advisory Group.

**84. REBRANDING THE PLACE PLAN**

The Place Plan brand was discussed, as the current title was not considered to be attracting the interest of residents, businesses or visitors. Councillors felt it would be beneficial to engage with branding specialists for ideas. It was:

**RECOMMENDED**

**That Cowes Town Council supports a rebranding of the Place Plan for Cowes and Northwood.**

It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Facilities and Town Manager will seek quotations from branding specialists, to suggest ideas for rebranding the Place Plan.

**85. YOUTH VOICE EVENT UPDATE**

The first Youth Voice event, with the aim of finding out what the young people think of Cowes and what they'd like to see going forward, had been held on 26 June 2025. The feedback from the event had been circulated to Councillors. Seventeen young people had attended the event. Ideas made were linked to the Place Plan and Biosphere principles for positive change. The young people expressed a wish to meet with Councillors to discuss their ideas. The Place Plan Advisory Group will meet with Together for Mission Zero to discuss scheduling a meeting of Councillors and the young people.

**86. 'PENRITH' STYLE SIGNS**

Councillors discussed the project proposal form for 'Penrith' type signs around Cowes. This proposal had been discussed by the Projects Committee previously and not identified as a priority project. Councillors felt it should be scored by the Place Plan Advisory Group, against the Place Plan objectives. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Place Plan Advisory Group will score the 'Penrith' type signs project proposal form.

**87. MULTI-USE PATHWAY AT NORTHWOOD RECREATION GROUND**

Councillors discussed the project proposal form for a multi-use path across Northwood Recreation Ground. This proposed project could potentially be considered for S.106 funding. Councillors felt it should be scored by the Place Plan Advisory Group, against the Place Plan objectives. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Place Plan Advisory Group will score the multi-use path across Northwood Recreation Ground project proposal form.

**88. ACTIV-FEST**

Councillors discussed the project proposal form for 'Activ-fest' – a half / full day of activities along the Cowes / Gurnard seafront. Councillors considered this did not have to be a project of the Town Council, but could be set up and run by other organisations. Councillors felt it should be scored by the Place Plan Advisory Group, against the Place Plan objectives. It was agreed:

**ACTION**

The Place Plan Advisory Group will score the 'Activ-fest' project proposal form.

**89. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

- Review of Key Service Objectives and Statement of Purpose – Councillor White.

The proceedings terminated at 7.55pm.

**CHAIR**