

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Town Council held in The Dining Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 2 October 2025 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Ellis (Town Mayor) (Chairman).
Councillors Adams, Barney, Carter, Dodwell, Fuller (7.30pm), Hollis, Marriott, Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox, Rafferty, Sanders, Swallow, Wardrop & White.

In attendance: Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk; David Gordon, Facilities and Town Manager; two Police Officers.

9240 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Walters.

9241 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ellis declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 9246a2 as he knows members of the Vectis Corps of Drums.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 9246a4 as she is a Vice President of the Friends of Northwood Cemetery.

9242 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Two local Police Officers attended the meeting to talk about local issues. The subject of electric scooters and bikes riding through the pedestrianised High Street was discussed. If the offender is caught they are given a warning at first, if caught again the bike or scooter will be seized and destroyed. The signage to deter this type of offence needs to be improved so that enforcement action can be taken. It may be helpful to increase signage around the Red Jet area and Floating Bridge to tell cyclists to dismount.

The local Beat Officer was unaware of Island Roads monitoring of CCTV in the High Street and will pay their offices a visit to understand their monitoring processes.

Councillors also wished to thank PCSOs Lisa Paul and Poppy Yeo who have now left the Police service, they did a fantastic job of patrolling the streets in Cowes over many years.

Councillors asked to receive separate statistics for violent crime and sexual offences. This data is not available to the general public but sexual offences are said to be very low in Cowes.

The local Beat Officer will endeavour to attend future Town Council meetings, duties permitting.

It was agreed:

ACTION

Cowes Town Council's Admin Assistant will circulate and promote the Police weekly Facebook update via the Town Council's social media outlets.

The two Police Officers left the meeting at 7.28pm.

9243 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 4 September 2025, be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9244 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

9245 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 Nicholson was asked why so few planning applications go before the IW Council 's Planning Committee, specifically the Somerton Reservoir development.

Councillor Nicholson advised that he felt that it was a worthwhile development and the IW Council would receive \$106 monies.

Councillor Fuller was asked about the difficulty of parking at Gurnard Primary School and the resulting traffic problems in that area. This problem has increased due to the rise in pupil numbers. Some parking tickets have been issued; the school is considering staggering start and finish times to reduce the volume of traffic at the same time. Councillor Fuller is working closely with the Chair of Governors and Headteacher at the School.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox advised that if residents are having problems with blocked drains to contact Island Roads who usually respond very quickly; they are all cleared twice a year as a rule.

9246 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 23 September 2025 were received and noted.

It was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That Cowes Town Council makes a grant of £200 to Cowes Men's Shed.**
- 2. That Cowes Town Council makes a grant of £500 to Vectis Corps of Drums.**
- 3. That Cowes Town Council makes a grant of £1,500 to the Isle of Wight Literary Festival. Councillors would like this grant to be focussed on the youth element of the festival.**
- 4. That Cowes Town Council makes a grant of £1,500 to the Friends of Northwood Cemetery.**
- 5. That Cowes Town Council reinvests the funds held in the Nationwide Savings Account into another Business 1 Year Saver Account with an annual interest rate of 3.60%.**
- 6. That Cowes Town Council sets aside a sum of up to £5,000 from Reserves for a number of Christmas events in the town.**
- 7. That Cowes Town Council sets aside a sum of £6,000 from Reserves for a new Town Council website.**
- 8. That Cowes Town Council engages Care in the Garden for winter planting in Cowes for the sum of £1,124.**

b) Planning & Licensing Committee

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 16 September 2025 were received and noted. The planning application for Westwood Close is being heard by the IW Council's Planning Committee on 7 October 2025; Cowes Town Council, having objected to the plans, will be sending a representative to speak on this application.

c) Projects Committee

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meetings held on 9 September 2025 and 24 September 2025 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

1. **That Cowes Town Council writes to Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd to request permission to install a permanent flagpole by the war memorial.**
2. **That Cowes Town Council does not yet engage a contractor to design and implement a new website.**
3. **That Cowes Town Council authorises Jasmine Hayden to submit a pre-planning advice application for The Parade public conveniences refurbishment.**

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Facilities and Town Manager will establish a Website Working Group, asap, to reconsider all of the specifications received for the proposed new website; all Town Councillors will be invited to attend.
2. The Facilities and Town Manager will contact the IW Council for an update regarding a smart CCTV camera trial at the bottom of Shooters Hill.

d) Place Plan Working Group

The Minutes of the Place Plan Working Group held on 2 September 2025 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

1. **That Cowes Town Council approves the 'Bridging the Gap' document.**
2. **That Cowes Town Council supports a rebranding of the Place Plan for Cowes and Northwood.**

e) Christmas 2025

The Minutes of the Christmas 2025 informal meeting held on 24 September 2025 were received and noted. Events are being considered and will be discussed further as we approach the Christmas season. The proposal to do the light 'switch on' on a Saturday is hoped to bring more people into the town.

f) Cowes Week Bicentenary Working Group

The Minutes of the Cowes Week Bicentenary Working Group held on 25 September 2025 were received and noted. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council supports, in principle, a Youth Zone for Cowes Week's bicentenary in 2026.

g) Cowes200

The Minutes of the Cowes200 meeting held on 5 September 2025 were received and noted. It has been noted that Cowes200 has changed its name to 'Experience Cowes'. Cowes Town Council will have input to the shoreside activities.

- h) IW Council Public Realm and Coastal Meeting – West Wight
The Minutes of the IW Council Public Realm and Coastal Meeting – West Wight held on 4 September 2025 were received and noted.
- i) Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee
The draft Minutes of the Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee meeting held on 10 September 2025 were received and noted.

9247 MAYOR'S REPORT

Councillor Ellis provided a written report regarding his attendance at various meetings, including Cowes Week 2026 and Christmas 2025. The Mayor has also circulated his first newsletter which has been well received.

9248 SIGNAGE AT THE JUNCTION OF BATTERY ROAD AND BRAMBLES LANE

As discussed under Minute No 9245, parking around Gurnard Primary School is becoming an increasing problem for local residents. The Town Council has been asked to support a 'Private Road, No Parking' sign at the Battery Road / Brambles Lane junction with Baring Road. The IW Council's Children's Services department have agreed to fund any works. After a discussion, it was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council supports the installation of a 'Private Road, No Parking' sign at the Battery Road / Brambles Lane junction with Baring Road.

9249 CHEQUE PAYMENTS AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2025

The Town Clerk presented Councillors with details of cheque and petty cash payments for the month of September 2025. Cheque payments totalled £44,056.25; petty cash payments totalled £140.79. It was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments for September of £44,056.25 and the petty cash payments of £140.79 are received, noted and approved.

9250 CONCLUSION OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Councillors received details of the conclusion of the External Audit for the year ended 31 March 2025 and noted the following matters arising:

- Box 6 should have been answered 'No'.
- The exercise of public rights was one working day short in July, the start date was 2 June 2025, close date 11 July 2025, it should have closed on 14 July 2025.
- The Council's reserves appear excessive as, after accounting for the earmarked reserves, general reserves are greater than annual expenditure.
- In approving the annual budget the Council did not consider the level of general reserves.

It was agreed to consider the points raised and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was announced on 29 September 2025. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council, receives, notes and approves the conclusion of the External Audit for the year ended 31 March 2025 and notes the matters arising.

9251 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2025

Councillors were asked to consider funding the following for Remembrance Sunday on 9 November 2025:

- Hire of PA System and Flagpole
- Donation to St Mary's Church for the Remembrance Sunday programmes.
- Donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council funds:

- 1. The hire of a PA System and Flagpole up to £550.**
- 2. A donation to St Mary's Church in the sum of £100.**
- 3. A donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in the sum of £200.**

9252 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S POLICY ON DEBATE AND VOTING AT MEETINGS

A review of Cowes Town Council's Policy on Debate and Voting at Meetings was undertaken, with a minor amendment it was:

RESOLVED

That, subject to one minor amendment, Cowes Town Council approves the Policy on Debate and Voting at Meetings

9253 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S CHILD, YOUNG PERSON AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY

A review of Cowes Town Council's Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Policy was undertaken. To bring the Policy in line with changes to the Local Authority's Safeguarding Policy several amendments are required. It was:

RESOLVED

That, subject to several amendments, Cowes Town Council approves the Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Policy.

9254 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

A review of Cowes Town Council's Equality and Diversity Policy was undertaken and found to not need any amendments. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Councillor Wardrop left the meeting at 8.59pm.

9255 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL'S DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYEES

A review of Cowes Town Council's Disciplinary Procedure for Employees was undertaken and found not to need any amendments. It was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council approves the Disciplinary Procedure for Employees.

9256 UPDATE FROM THE FACILITIES AND TOWN MANAGER

The Facilities and Town Manager gave a report of his activities during September 2025. He has attended various meetings; the Living Wall is ongoing. He has carried out monthly toilet inspections and has arranged another meeting with the cleaning supervisor to address several issues that he has found. Councillors thanked the Facilities and Town Manager for his comprehensive report. Councillors were advised that the survey for the Methodist Church had been received on the day of this meeting. It was a very full report which Councillors felt would need to be considered before making any further decisions. After an exchange of opinions it was agreed:

ACTION

1. The Facilities and Town Manager establish a Methodist Church Working Group, asap, to review the survey and consider future steps; all Town Councillors will be invited to attend.
2. The Facilities and Town Manager will circulate the survey to all Town Councillors with a reminder that this document is confidential.

Councillor Ellis left the meeting at 9.10pm.

9257 UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

The Environment Officer provided a report of her activities in Cowes which included dog fouling patrols, unauthorised positioning of A boards and flyposting and general inspections of play parks and the beaches.

9258 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Details of miscellaneous publications and correspondence were circulated to all Town Councillors.

9259 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- To receive feedback from the Website Working Group.
- DBS Checks for Councillors – Councillor White.
- To receive feedback from the Methodist Church Working Group.

The proceedings terminated at 9.12pm

CHAIRMAN