

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Dining Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 13 January 2026 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Rafferty (Chair), Adams, Ellis and, Nicholson

In attendance: David Gordon, Facilities and Town Manager; Jasmine Hayden, JH Architecture; Patrick Jolin, Town Clerk; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk

712. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dodwell, Peacey Wilcox, Sanders, Walters and White.

713. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

714. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 2 December 2025 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

715. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) The Cut - Enhancements

Island Roads had been asked to provide accurate costings to undertake further detailed design work including a full topographical survey, site visits, detailed design and drawings, issue statutory notices and complete CDM documentation. Some of the costs for the design works were estimated. Councillor Nicholson met with the Director of Island Roads and advised that the costs provided for the detailed design works were deemed an accurate reflection of the work involved. Councillors discussed the costs and length of time this project has taken so far and questioned whether the area remained suitable to provide a level area for a market square, as the available space had been reduced since the installation of the Changing Places Toilet. Councillors felt that alternative venues and use of the allocated S.106 funding could be explored. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk would write to the IW Council to enquire about the re-allocation of S.106 funds for other projects in Cowes.

b) Medina Road Public Conveniences – Disabled Door

Island Roads have installed the safety barriers. The powered door specialist has been booked for later this week to attend and commission the door.

c) Cowes High Street Events and Improvements

Jasmine Hayden, JH Architecture, presented her design for improving the area outside of Sainsbury's, installing three new planters with inbuilt seating. The design would require removal of the capstan and relocation of the existing litter bin and bike rail, and be subject to relevant permissions and Island Roads' approval. Jasmine would be meeting with a tree specialist to discuss suitable species of tree to provide useful shade in the summer and provide a feature during the winter. The current area for delivery lorries would remain unaltered. Jasmine would be meeting with a local contractor to discuss custom-built planters, taking into account the gradient of the location. The planters would be movable if

required. Councillors asked Jasmine to discuss the plans with the Manager of Sainsbury's, Cowes. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Jasmine would contact the Manager of Sainsbury's, Cowes to advise them of the planned improvements.
2. Jasmine would provide costings for the improvements for Councillors' consideration.

d) Public Conveniences - Refurbishment Forward Plan

The Town Council appointed Jasmine Hayden, JH Architecture, for Stage 4 – Technical Design and Stage 5 – 6 – Construction, Contract Administration and Defects Inspection for The Parade public conveniences refurbishment.

Jasmine provided an update on the tender documentation. The Town Council would be required to advertise the invitation to tender on the national Contracts Finder website and advertise for three consecutive weeks in a local newspaper, on our Noticeboard and website. Councillors discussed the timeframe for the completion of the project, taking into account the requirement to comply with current legislation. The contract would be advertised for three weeks, with a closing date of 12 Noon on Monday 9 February 2026. Tenders would be opened and discussed at a meeting on the afternoon of Monday 9 February 2026. An additional Town Council meeting would be convened on Tuesday 10 February 2026, replacing the scheduled Projects Committee, to open and consider the tender returns. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. Jasmine would prepare the tender documentation for advertisement.
2. Jasmine would assist the Town Council staff to advertise the contract documentation on the Contracts Finder website.

e) Living Wall

The Facilities and Town Manager had purchased the paint and support structure for the living wall at The Cut. This would be completed during appropriate weather conditions.

f) Public Conveniences Accessibility Audit

Installation of GSM call-out systems for the accessible toilets is awaited.

The Chairman and Facilities & Town Manager have completed Fire Risk Assessments on our public conveniences. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Chairman and Facilities & Town Manager would review the findings of the Accessibility Audit and update the status of the recommended improvements.

g) Installation of a permanent Flagpole in Northwood Park

The Town Council would write to Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd to request permission to install a permanent flagpole by the War Memorial. It was previously agreed:

ACTION

Councillor Sanders would provide the Clerks with a draft email to send to the administrators of Northwood House.

h) **Smart CCTV cameras**

The Town Council requested costs from Island Roads for a trial smart CCTV camera and data analysis exercise in the High Street. To enable processing of the data from the CCTV system, Island Roads advised that an upgrade to an existing camera would be required to generate imagery compatible with the analysis software, for which a quotation was provided. Alternative options had been evaluated by Island Roads, however, due to the specific site conditions, installing a temporary camera was not deemed feasible. They advised that upgrading of an existing camera presented the most cost-effective solution for the exercise. Councillors felt that purchasing our own smart CCTV camera should be pursued. It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Chairman would make enquiries with a local business to site a smart CCTV camera on their premises; this would require their permission and use of a power source.
2. The Chairman would bring updated costs for the supply and installation of a smart CCTV camera to the next meeting of the Projects Committee.

i) **Northwood Recreation Ground Users' Survey**

The results of the Youth Voice engagement exercise with Cowes Enterprise College were awaited; the results would be incorporated into the survey questions.

j) **Christmas Events**

A review of the Christmas 2025 event would take place and a report be compiled with detailed costings and statistics. Councillors wished to keep this item on the agenda to enable early commencement of plans for any event for Christmas 2026. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Facilities and Town Manager would provide a report for the next meeting of the Projects Committee.

k) **The Cut Public Conveniences**

A request was raised at the previous Projects Committee meeting for Councillors to consider altering the facilities at The Cut Public Conveniences to provide segregated facilities for Ladies and Gents. Councillors felt this would be impractical and problematic at this location with the current configuration. They felt an improved standard of cleaning would be a practical solution. It was agreed:

ACTION

This item will be removed from future agendas.

716. NEW PROJECTS

a) **CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE (CAMRA) October Fest**

Councillors were advised of how successful the former Beer and Buses annual event was. The annual event had been replaced by the CAMRA October Fest, which focused on eight areas of the Island accessed by public transport links. Each area had a co-ordinator who liaised with other traders to showcase food and drink in their town during the October Fest event. Ideas for how the Town Council could raise awareness of the event in the Cowes area were sought. It was agreed:

ACTION

This item will be considered by the Projects Committee under the 'Cowes High Street Events and Improvements' agenda item.

b) **Cowes Armada Board**

Councillors had been provided with background information on the gathering of secret armadas off Cowes in the 1500's and were asked to consider creating a commemorative information board to promote the history in our town. It was agreed:

ACTION

This project will be considered at the next meeting of the Projects Committee.

c) **Livestreaming of Meetings**

The Projects Committee had been asked by the Town Council to look at methods and costs for live streaming and recording of its public meetings. The Town Clerk advised he would be undertaking a review of our IT Policy initially. It was agreed:

ACTION

The IT Policy and livestreaming of meetings will be referred to the Website and IT Working Group.

d) **Link and Place Model**

This item was included to raise Councillors' awareness of a future opportunity to consider creating a Link and Place model for the Cowes peninsula. To apply the Link and Place model to local streets in the Cowes Peninsula, the primary step is to classify each street based on its function as a movement conduit (Link) and a destination in its own right (Place), then use this classification to balance design priorities through stakeholder engagement. By mapping all local streets onto a matrix, local planners and the community can develop context sensitive solutions for the entire peninsula, moving away from uniform road engineering standards. It would align with the Island Transport Plan and link to further plans and strategies in the future, including the Active Travel Strategy, local Place Plans, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and the Island Planning Strategy.

e) **Mornington Road Public Conveniences**

At the last meeting of the Projects Committee, visual enhancement of the external walls at Mornington Road Public Conveniences was raised for further consideration. Suggestions included painting a mural or installing a living wall.

Councillors felt that our priority should be improving the quality and accessibility of the facilities before discussing visual enhancements.

f) **Display Poster Frames for Public Conveniences**

The Town Council had been approached by an organisation requesting to display informative posters in the public conveniences on the backs of toilet doors. Councillors discussed the benefits for installing display frames in the public conveniences as a form of promotion / information sharing and acknowledged there was a risk of vandalism. Councillors felt this should be included alongside future refurbishment plans.

717. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

The Facilities and Town Manager was seeking quotations for contractors to inspect and carry out strain testing of the flags and banners' fixings in the High Street. He stressed the importance of undertaking these tests and wished to alert Councillors that the results of these tests may result in considerable maintenance costs to continue to provide flags and banners. He requested a budget of £10,000 for the testing of the flags and banner fixings and advised that there would be further ongoing costs to repair / replace flagpoles and banner fixings. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That the Finance, Acquisitions and Staffing Committee consider allocating a budget of £10,000 for inspections and strain testing of flags and banners' fixings.

b) Public Conveniences and CCTV

Recent operational issues which saw the temporary closure of our public conveniences were resolved and the facilities were due to reopen on Thursday 15 January 2026.

The current cleaning contract expires on 31 March 2026. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Town Clerk and Facilities and Town Manager would review the cleaning contract and specification.

c) Northwood Recreation Ground

Routine ROSPA inspections had been undertaken at Northwood Recreation Ground. No new issued had been raised.

d) Asset Complaints / Concerns Log

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that no formal complaints had been received since the last meeting of the Projects Committee, however, a small number of phone calls and social media comments had been received in regard to the closed status of the Public Conveniences.

718. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

- Public Convenience refurbishment programme
- Operational costs analysis
- Lamp Light of Peace

The proceedings terminated at 8.23pm.

CHAIRMAN