

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cowes Town Council held in the Dining Room at Northwood House, Cowes on Thursday 05 March 2026 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor Ellis (Town Mayor - Chairman).
Councillors Adams, Dodwell, Fuller, Hollis, Marriott, Peacey Wilcox, Rafferty, Walters & White.

In attendance: Patrick Jolin (Town Clerk), Kate Scragg (Deputy Town Clerk), Richard Shaul (RFO), David Gordon (Facilities & Town Manager), one representative from Experience Cowes, PC Manning.

9331 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barney, Carter, Nicholson, Sanders, Swallow and Wardrop.

9332 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

9333 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

The local Safer Neighbourhood Officer attended the meeting and gave a verbal update on the crime situation in Cowes Town and issued a flyer to be distributed regarding traffic regulations for the Cowes Town pedestrianised areas. Electronic versions of the verbal report and traffic regulations flyer were also received and made available to all Town Councillors.

Town Councillors thanked the local Safer Neighbourhood Officer for both his report and traffic regulations flyer.

Town Councillors raised the following questions with the answers given being as shown:

- **Question:** Why had the police not raised residents' concerns about the Northwood House (NWH) license renewal and lack of police patrols during NWH events.
Answer: The local Safer Neighbourhood Officer stated that the licensing question would be raised with the appropriate official licensing representative and that local police administration would look at the feasibility of increasing police patrols during NWH events.
- **Question:** What is the best mechanism for Cowes' residents to contact local Cowes police representatives.
Answer: All local police representative contact details are published on the Cowes Police website and should be directly consulted as needed.
- **Question:** Is there still a dog warden service in Cowes.
Answer: Yes, this is now undertaken by the Cowes Public Realm Officer and administered by the Isle of Wight Council.

The following **ACTIONS** were also agreed:

1. For the Town Council to put on social media to alert businesses who have flares to be extra vigilant, following recent thefts of flares.
2. Cllr Peacey Wilcox offered to contact Red Funnel and the Floating Bridge to promote the leaflet re traffic regulations in the pedestrianised areas.

9334 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 17 February 2026 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9335 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public in attendance, so no questions were asked.

9336 REPORTS FROM ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Written reports focussing on local matters and Isle of Wight Council activities were received from Councillors Fuller, Nicholson and Peacey Wilcox and were circulated to all Town Councillors.

A question-and-answer session between Town Councillors followed, with the main topics of discussion being as follows:

- Councillor Peacey Wilcox was asked to give a status update on the Isle of Wight Council project to replace the Cowes-East Cowes floating bridge and confirmed that there remains no update on this matter.

9337 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 24 February 2026 were received and noted. Following discussions, the following outcomes were recorded:

1. Regarding minute 1128 (Applications for Grants). It was:
RESOLVED
That as there are insufficient funds available in the current year grants budget that the decision regarding the grant for Cowes Fringe be deferred until the April-2026 Finance, Acquisitions and Staffing Committee meeting.
2. Regarding minute 1129 (Updated Business Plan from Experience Cowes). It was:
RESOLVED
That of the £15,000 budget for Experience Cowes, £5,000 is allocated to sponsorship of the proposed Family Zone. The remaining £10,000 to be ring fenced for Experience Cowes and for future drawdown to be equally matched by other sponsors.

3. Regarding minute 1132 (Review of the Current Office Staffing Structure).
It was:
RESOLVED
That Cowes Town Council approves the proposed staffing structure.
4. Regarding minute 1133 (Team Building and Alignment Plan). It was:
RESOLVED
That further work on the team building and alignment plan be deferred pending the implementation of the proposed office staffing structure.

b) Deauville Twinning Working Group

The Minutes of the Deauville Twinning Working Group meeting held on 12 February 2026 were received and noted.

c) Northwood House Review Working Group

The Minutes of the Northwood House Review Working Group meeting held on 26 February 2026 were received and noted. Following discussions, the following outcomes were recorded:

1. Regarding minute 4 (Draft Terms of Reference). It was:
RESOLVED
 - i) **That the Terms of Reference for the Northwood House Review Working Group are accepted as presented.**
 - ii) **That the following member be appointed to serve on the Northwood House Review Working Group until the Annual Town Council meeting in 2026: Councillor Adams. There remains three vacancies on this Working Group.**

d) IWC Public Realm and Coastal (West) Meeting

The Minutes of the IWC Public Realm and Coastal (West) meeting held on 03 February 2026 were received and noted.

e) Supporters of Cowes Library AGM and Ordinary Meeting

The Minutes of the Supporters of Cowes Library AGM and Ordinary meeting held on 31 January 2026 were received and noted. The following **ACTION** was agreed:

1. That The Town Clerk would send a letter of thanks to the Supporters of Cowes Library.

f) IWALC Executive

The Minutes of the IWALC Executive meeting held on 29 January 2026 were received and noted.

9338 MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor provided a written report detailing various events and Committees attended in February including a memorial concert in honour of Roy Jackson where the Vectis Corps of Drums and Wight Diamonds marching bands performed in aid of raising money for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance; attending a concert of the Band of HM Royal Marines plus attending discussions on the Cowes-East Cowes floating bridge.

The Mayor also expressed, on behalf of the Town Council, everyone's thanks to the outgoing CTC Town Office Administration Assistant Andrea Young for all her efforts and professional support to all during her employment with Cowes Town Council.

9339 CONNECTING COWES

Councillor Nicholson's report was presented by Councillor Marriott and was received and noted. Following discussions, it was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council adopts Connecting Cowes as its strategic framework for place-based engagement, cross-parish collaboration and aligned project delivery and that the Place Plan Working Group be renamed to the Connecting Cowes Working Group.

9340 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2026

The Responsible Financial Officer's cheque and petty cash report for February 2026 was received and noted. Following discussions, it was:

RESOLVED

That the cheque payments for February 2026 of £53,190.90 and petty cash payments of £111.98 were received, noted and approved.

9341 IWC-CTC PLAYGROUND AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES

The IWC playground and grounds maintenance services for the period 2026/27 was received and noted. Following discussions, it was confirmed that CTC will pay a contribution of £18,817.93 in the next financial year.

9342 IWC-CTC UPDATED ENHANCED PUBLIC REALM OFFICER SERVICE INVOICE

An update to the existing agreed Enhanced Public Realm Officer service costs for 2026/27 were received and noted. To maintain the current level of enhanced service, for a Public Realm Officer for one day a week, the cost will be £11,021.40. Following discussions, it was:

RESOLVED

- i) That Cowes Town Council agrees to pay the Enhanced Public Realm Officer cost of £11,021.40 for the 2026/27 financial year.
- ii) That the balance of the 'Environment Officer' budget heading for 2025/26 be ringfenced to cover the shortfall in this budget heading for 2026/27.

9343 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY
A review of CTC's Training and Development Policy was undertaken. Following discussions, it was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council defers review of this policy until after the implementation of the proposed office staffing re-structure agreed under the previous minute 9337-a-3 above.

9344 CTC TOWN OFFICE LEASE RENEWAL

An update on the status of the CTC-Northwood House Town Office lease renewal was received and noted.

9345 ALTERNATIVE CTC OPERATIONS AND OFFICE LOCATION

Following discussions regarding possible alternatives and financial considerations for the current CTC operations and office location, and specifically regarding the current opportunity to potentially explore the options relating to a specific premises in Cowes Town, the following **ACTION** was agreed:

1. That The Town Clerk would contact the estate agent to express an interest only on behalf of CTC to allow for further financial analysis and operational investigations to be progressed by the CTC Office.

9346 OFFER OF A COMPLIMENTARY PITCH AT THE IOW ROYAL COUNTY SHOW

Following discussions regarding the offer of a complimentary pitch at the IOW Royal County Show being held 11-12 July 2026, the following **ACTIONS** were agreed:

1. That The Town Clerk would discuss with Councillor Peacey Wilcox the actions necessary for CTC to be represented at the event e.g. pitch size, siting and access, parking permits, manning requirements etc.
2. Based on these discussions, that the Town Clerk contacts the event organisers to confirm acceptance based on all requirements identified being supported.

9347 RENEWAL OF IWALC SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2026-27

Following discussions regarding the renewal of the CTC subscription to the Isle of Wight Local Councils (IWALC) for 2026/27, it was:

RESOLVED

That Cowes Town Council renews its membership of IWALC for 2026 / 27 in the sum of £1,791.47.

9348 UPDATE FROM THE TOWN CLERK

A report on the CTC Town Office achievements for February 2026 was received from the Town Clerk and noted.

9349 UPDATE FROM THE PUBLIC REALM OFFICER

A report on the Public Realm Officer activities for February 2026 was received and noted.

9350 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

9351 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

1. That the RFO, working with the Town Clerk, produces a discretionary expenditure summary report for inclusion as an RFO reported agenda item at future Town Council meetings.

The proceedings terminated at 8.18pm.

CHAIRMAN