

## **COWES TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of Cowes Town Council held at the Isle of Wight Community Club, Park Road, Cowes on Thursday 02 April 2026 at 7pm.

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

**In attendance:** Patrick Jolin (Town Clerk), Kate Scragg (Deputy Town Clerk), Richard Shaul (RFO) and 5 members of the public.

### **9353 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Barney, Carter, Dodwell, Nicholson and Swallow.

### **9354 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 9359a2, 9362 and 9367 as an Isle of Wight Councillor.

Councillor Fuller declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 9367 as an Isle of Wight Councillor.

Councillor Walters declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 9359b as a member of St. Mary's Church PCC.

### **9355 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER**

A report from the local Safer Neighbourhood Officer was received.

### **9356 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 05 March 2026 and the inquorate Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 12 March 2026 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

### **9357 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Representations were received from the members of public in attendance regarding the Bath House licensing application. The Councillors confirmed that the Bath House application had been raised and discussed at the recent CTC Planning & Licensing committee meeting and that concerns and objections raised at that meeting had been communicated to the IWC Planning department as a formal objection to the licensing application and as per the defined CTC Planning & Licensing process.

### **9358 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.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox further updated Councillors with some additional information regarding Cowes' area specific parking permit requests that had been received by the IWC from some Cowes residents and stated that the requests had fallen due to objections from Island Roads.

Councillor Peacey Wilcox was also requested for an update on the current McDonalds planning application being processed by the IWC and stated that to date no decision had been reached.

Councillor Walters requested an update about a current fire and safety specific planning application that has been submitted for premises in his Ward. Councillor Fuller updated, stating that the application was currently being reviewed by the Fire Brigade.

The Town Councillors present took the opportunity to wish Councillor Nicholson well and a speedy recovery regarding his current health issues.

## **9359 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS**

### **a) Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee**

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

1. Regarding minute 1141 (Review Ring Fenced and Earmarked Balances from 2025-26 Budget). It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the proposed list of ring-fenced and earmarked balances are approved.**

2. Regarding minute 1142 (Review of Future Funding Arrangements for Cowes Library). It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the currently agreed future amounts of £28,223 for 2027-28 and £29,126 for 2028-29 be included in future budgets but with no formal commitment to Cowes Library and on the understanding that the agreed amounts are not used for salaries or operational costs.**

3. Regarding minute 1143 (Review of Town Clerk's Expenditure Limits). It was:

#### **RESOLVED**

**To defer the review recommendation until the next Town Council meeting.**

### **b) Planning & Licensing Committee**

The Minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee meetings held on 11 March 2026 and 01 April 2026 were received and noted.

Specifically addressing the points raised by members of the public, following discussions, it was:

#### **CONFIRMED**

**That the concerns raised by the members of the public in attendance at this meeting had been accurately represented in the formal Cowes Town Council Planning & Licensing Committee license application objection**

**statement that had been agreed and communicated to the IWC Planning department.**

**c) Projects Committee**

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 10 March 2026 were received and noted. Following discussions, the following outcomes were recorded:

1. Regarding minute 722a (Update on Existing Projects – The Cut Enhancements). It was:

**RESOLVED**

- i. **That Cowes Town Council discontinues with The Cut enhancement project.**
- ii. **That Cowes Town Council reallocate the balance of funds from the North Medina Community Development Trust towards the public conveniences’ refurbishment programme.**
- iii. **That Cowes Town Council requests the IWC reallocates the S.106 funding for The Cut to future highways / transport projects in Cowes.**

**d) Events Working Group**

The Notes of the inquorate Events Working Group meeting held on 31 March 2026 were received and noted.

**e) Connecting Cowes Advisory Group**

The Minutes of the Connecting Cowes Advisory Group meeting held on 16 March 2026 were received and noted.

**f) IWC Public Realm and Coastal (West) Meeting**

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

**9360 MAYOR’S REPORT**

The Mayor provided a written report detailing various events and Committees attended in March including a meeting with Cowes Week Ltd to meet the new operations team.

The Mayor gave an update on the Town Clock informing that all repair parts have now been sourced and the Town Office is currently attempting to identify a contractor who could affect the repairs, along with identifying a contractor to repaint the clock casing and supporting structure.

The Mayor also took the opportunity to request Councillors allocate some time to assist with a tidy-up exercise for Francki Place and the Bandstand, to be organised by the Town Office.

**9361 CHEQUE AND PETTY CASH PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2026**

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

**RESOLVED**

**That the cheque payments for March 2026 of £39,495.21 and petty cash payments of £18.96 were received, noted and approved.**

**9362 IWC-CTC NON-DOMESTIC (BUSINESS) RATES INVOICE 2026-27**

The IWC-CTC non-domestic (business) rates invoice for 2026-27 was received and noted. Following discussions, it was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council agrees to pay the invoiced amount of £1,545.65 for the 2026/27 financial year.**

**9363 SUMMER PLANTING QUOTATION 2026-27**

The summer planting quotation from Care In The Garden for 2026-27 was received and noted. Following discussions, it was:

**RESOLVED**

- i) That Cowes Town Council agrees to pay the quoted amount of £5,268.00 to Care In The Garden for summer planting for the 2026-27 financial year.**
- ii) To suspend CTC Financial Regulations section 5.8 to allow for consideration of one quotation only.**

**9364 RNLI GRANT APPLICATION**

An RNLI grant application to suspend parking charges for the 2026 999 Support Day event was received and noted. Following discussions, it was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council agrees to pay a grant of £75.00 for the cost to suspend parking charges on The Parade for the 999 Day event.**

**9365 REVIEW OF COWES TOWN COUNCIL FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY**

A review of Cowes Town Council Flexible Working Policy was undertaken. Following discussions, it was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council adopt the Flexible Working Policy.**

**9366 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES CLEANING AND LITTER PICKING CONTRACT**

An update confirming the award of the Cowes Town Council Public Conveniences Cleaning and Litter Picking contract to Top Mops Limited for the 2026-27 contract period and for the amount of £51,318.82 (ex VAT) was received and noted.

**9367 PARADE TOILETS REFURBISHMENT PROJECT**

Documents detailing the Architect, funding and project implementation options for the refurbishment of the Parade Toilets were received.

During discussions, the following questions from Councillors were received and answered as shown:

**Q:** To confirm the exact condition of the current Parade Toilet building and facilities?

**A:** The Town Clerk confirmed discussions with both the Architect and the Town Office Facilities & Town Manager that the current condition of critical elements of the building and facilities were beyond end-of-life and unless a comprehensive refurbishment programme was immediately undertaken, there was a severe risk of the facilities breaching current Safety, Health and Environment legal requirements to such a level that would mandate their closure.

**Q:** As CTC are tenants of the IWC owned premises, did CTC have the required permissions from IWC to complete the renovations proposed?

**A:** An email from the Strategic Head of IWC Asset Management and Property Services was presented confirming that IWC fully support all proposed refurbishment works CTC are planning and will prioritise within the IWC Property Services department any assistance CTC may need to complete the Parade Toilets refurbishment. This email is supplementary to the already received verbal confirmations of support obtained during the initial meetings between IWC and the Architect.

**Q:** As the buildings are an IWC asset, what legal protections will CTC have that the renovations would not just advantage the IWC asset register?

**A:** CTC took on total operational control from IWC of a number of public toilet facilities in 2016. A stipulation of that transfer of control was that CTC maintain all toilet facilities in a fully operational and SHE compliant manner. If this was not possible then only two options could be considered a) release the facilities back to IWC, who had stated on transfer that should this happen, due to financial constraints, the facility would be closed by IWC; and b) CTC themselves would close the facilities. Neither of these options would serve the needs and expectations of the Cowes Town residents and visitors and would be viewed as causing major reputation to damage to all parties involved. To mitigate the low risk associated with the legal ownership of the buildings, the following **ACTION** was agreed:

- That the Town Clerk explores the possibility of transferring full title for all Cowes toilet buildings under the control of CTC from IWC to CTC and as a Community asset.

**Q:** How can CTC afford the proposed costs?

**A:** The presented RFO report confirmed that this project is fully funded and as a long-standing planned project, has funds secured from previous budgeted amounts unspent and earmarked directly to this project along with the current 2026-27 budget monies allocated. The report also confirmed that this project spend would have a minimal effect on CTC general reserves (approximately a 3% reduction and well within all agreed CTC financial governance and expenditure regulations).

**Q:** How will the refurbishment project be communicated to Cowes Town Residents?

**A:** An announcement and regular status updates will be published on the Town Council website and social media with the additional **ACTION** being agreed:

- Once exact refurbishment dates and timescales have been received by the Architect from the contractor, the Town Office will write and distribute a letter to residents in the immediate vicinity of the proposed works giving details of the project being undertaken and expected completion timelines.

Following discussions, it was:

**RESOLVED**

**That Cowes Town Council formally approves and accepts the project facilities Architect design BR.01 REV-C Design Option 3 (Optimised Costs Layout 2) and that Cowes Town Council formally instructs the Architect to proceed to contract with the agreed preferred contractor and as per the agreed negotiated contract price; namely Stella Developments Southern Ltd for the sum of £126,114.45 (ex VAT).**

**9368 UPDATE FROM THE TOWN CLERK**

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

**9369 UPDATE FROM THE PUBLIC REALM OFFICER**

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

**9370 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

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

**9371 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS**

No items were received for a future agenda.

The proceedings terminated at 8.16pm.

**CHAIRMAN**