

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Dining Room, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 14 April 2026 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Rafferty (Chair), Adams, Ellis, Peacey Wilcox and White.

In attendance: Councillors Marriott and Wardrop (Non-Voting); David Gordon, Facilities and Town Manager; Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk; one member of the public

726. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dodwell, Nicholson and Walters.

727. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

728. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 10 March 2026 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

729. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) The Cut - Enhancements

At the Town Council meeting on 2 April 2026, Councillors agreed to discontinue with The Cut enhancement project, to reallocate the balance of funds from the North Medina Community Development Trust towards the public conveniences' refurbishment programme, and to request that the IW Council reallocates the S.106 funding for The Cut to a future highways / transport project in Cowes. This item will be removed from future Projects Committee agendas.

Councillor Wardrop drew the Committee's attention to a notice being displayed in The Cut under Section 115e, Highways Act 1980. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that this would be an agenda item for the next Planning and Licensing Committee.

b) Cowes High Street Events and Improvements

The Deputy Town Clerk had requested the IW Council release the funding for the plants and planters outside of Sainsbury's. The architect had been asked to provide a location plan of the planters for inclusion in the S.115 attachment licence / maintenance agreement.

Regarding the Campaign For Real Ale (CAMRA) October Fest, the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed she had contacted the Cowes area co-ordinators and offered to promote the event via our social media and website. The Cowes area co-ordinators are awaiting an update from CAMRA.

The local neighbourhood Police team had recently produced a flyer, which they were issuing to cyclists seen to be contravening the Traffic Regulation Order in the High Street area. The flyer was designed to simplify the on-street signage and assist with the enforcement of the current vehicle restrictions. The flyer was also being displayed on the Town Council's noticeboard and website. The Town Council would seek permission to display the flyer on the Floating Bridge.

- c) **Parade Public Conveniences Refurbishment**
The architect has produced the JCT Minor Works Contract. The refurbishment works are expected to commence in the last week of April and last approximately 8 – 12 weeks.
- d) **Living Wall**
The wall had been painted. The planters would be positioned on site and filled with compost, with the plants installed shortly thereafter. The water storage system was being developed.
- e) **Public Conveniences Accessibility Audit**
The installation of GSM call-out systems for the accessible toilets was scheduled to commence with the facility at Medina Road on 20 April.
- f) **Installation of a permanent Flagpole in Northwood Park**
The Town Clerk would contact Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd. to request permission to site a permanent flagpole near the War Memorial.
- g) **Smart CCTV cameras**
The Smart CCTV system would be installed in the next month on Shooters Hill, for a two-month trial initially. The installation cost would be £750; the server and connections for the trial would be provided free of charge. The cost for a server and 2 cameras as a monthly ongoing rental would be £300 - 350 / month. The server would accommodate up to 8 cameras; larger servers were available should we want to include the cameras at our public conveniences at a later date. Costs for additional cameras could be obtained if required.
- h) **Northwood Recreation Ground Users' Survey**
This item would be referred to the Connecting Cowes' 'Northwood Rec Development Group' for development. This item will be removed from future Projects Committee agendas.
- i) **Cowes Armada Board**
There was no update on this project. Project costs and identification of a suitable location would be required to progress this project.
- j) **Public Conveniences Refurbishment Programme**
The Facilities and Town Manager had been actioned to look at the life expectancy of our facilities and create a risk management plan for Councillors' consideration. Discussions had taken place with two contractors to discuss costs for planned preventative maintenance and repair / replacement of items. A full risk management plan would be produced once costs become available.

730. NEW PROJECTS

- a) **Cowes Skatepark**
The Skate park was felt to have a remaining estimated lifespan of approximately 2 – 3 years and the Town Council should be considering its future replacement and other facilities at Northwood Recreation Ground. The member of the public present, who had experience in this area, suggested the Town Council consider installing a facility suitable for BMX bikes, scooters and skateboards. Pump tracks were being installed elsewhere and appeared to be well supported. Councillors acknowledged that sources of external funding would be required for a project of this size.

The Connecting Cows Advisory Group were looking at projects at Northwood Recreation Ground. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Mayor would liaise with the Connecting Cows Advisory Group to discuss the current and future facilities at Northwood Recreation Ground.

b) **BT Street Hubs**

The IW Council were keen to work with the Town Council to look at providing communication hubs in our town. The street hubs supplied by BT would be free; BT would sell advertising of the digital displays. The hubs would provide free phone calls in the UK, USB ports for device charging, free WiFi and access to local information via touch-screen. Councillors supported the Town Council considering this as a project. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Facilities and Town Manager would undertake research and provide more detail to Councillors for their further consideration.

731. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

The Facilities and Town Manager had undertaken an inspection of assets on 8 April 2026 and identified a number of repairs and redecoration required, including the Town Clock and removal of graffiti at the Skate Park and MUGA.

The flagpoles would be tested shortly to ensure they are in full working order. The banner sites hire costs would need to be reviewed, to allow for future maintenance costs.

b) **Public Conveniences and CCTV**

The cleanliness of the entrance doors at The Cut was raised as previous signage had left a residue on a number of doors.

The public conveniences in Northwood Park had reopened for the Summer season.

The lighting at The Cut had been upgraded to LED. The lighting at Mornington Road would be upgraded to LED shortly.

A new CCTV camera and protective cage had been installed at Northwood Recreation Ground.

It was agreed:

ACTION

The Facilities and Town Manager would ensure The Cut doors are cleaned.

c) **Northwood Recreation Ground**

The Facilities and Town Manager had undertaken an inspection of our facilities on 8 April 2026. The Playbuilder inspection report recommended a new ground surface covering around the Outdoor Gym.

Annual RoSPA inspections were booked for May.

d) **Asset Complaints / Concerns Log**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that no formal written complaints had been received since the last meeting of the Projects Committee. A voicemail had been left over the previous weekend, advising that all Ladies' toilets were blocked at The Parade. The cleaner had found no evidence of this on his daily clean the following day.

732. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items raised for a future agenda.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Town Clerk for her service to the Projects Committee, as this was her last committee meeting before her retirement.

The proceedings terminated at 7.17pm.

CHAIRMAN