



MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

HELD ON FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2026 ON ZOOM FROM RYS

Present: Dr Jonathan Nainby-Luxmoore DL (Chair)
Gary Hall Esq (CHC)
Charlie Egerton-Warburton Esq (Commercial Lead)
Graham Barnetson Esq (Finance)
Shelley Jory-Leigh (Powerboats)

Apologies: Mike Greville Esq (CTWT)

Observers present

Stuart Ellis Esq (CTC, Mayor)
Lora Peacey – Wilcox (CTC Deputy Mayor)
Peter Ball Esq (ECSC)
Sarah Preston (CTC Comms)
Trisha Lewington (RYS)

Meeting summary

Charlie reported on the growth of social media, particularly Instagram, and the ongoing efforts to gain more subscribers for the website. Graham provided a financial update, noting a healthy balance and upcoming payments. The board discussed the need for better curation of social media content to align with the website's goals. Plans for Christmas events in Cowes were shared, with a Dickensian-themed day planned for December 5th.

Graham Barnetson proposed and Charlie Egerton-Warburton seconded an amendment to the articles to allow the Lord Lieutenant to nominate a voting board representative (deails attached). The board approved this unanimously. (It was noted that the chair had spoken to Mike Greville prior to the meeting and he had no objections to this amendment)

Jonathan N-L proposed and Gary Hall seconded the nomination of Peter Ball , Commodore of East Cowes Sailing Club, as the new chair for a three year term, which was unanimously approved. (It was noted that the chair had spoken to Mike Greville prior to the meeting and he had no views as Peter was not known to him, but having an East Cowes based chair was a good idea.)

Peter shared his background in fire rescue and youth engagement, expressing his commitment to breaking down barriers between East and West Cowes sailing communities and increasing involvement from East Cowes.

The **next in-person meeting was scheduled for Monday October 19th 12.30 at CHC offices.**

The conversation ended with Jonathan handing over the chairmanship to Peter.

Next steps

Charlie

- [Get a quote for window decals \(sticker\) for Experience Cowes subscribers and circulate it to the board for approval.](#)
- [Work with Sarah \(Comms\) on the wording and design of the window decal, including adding a QR code or website link.](#)
- [Follow up on the BAE Systems partnership agreement to finalize and receive payment.](#)

Graham

- [Update the financials for the presentation to East Cowes Town Council on 17th September.](#)
- [Settle the outstanding costs for the Dar M and associated Cowes Week expenses over the weekend.](#)
- [Raise further invoices for Experience Cowes during his leave next week.](#)
- [Deal with outstanding invoices for Pinnacle Suites, Island Sailing Club, and Southern Vectis.](#)

Jonathan

- [Ensure that Zoe's social media report is sent to all board members after the meeting.](#)
- [Add Carl Russell's \(Hursts\) web listing to the Experience Cowes website and inform Graham when done.](#)
- [Send the artwork for the window decal to Charlie.](#)

Peter

- [Find a person to take minutes for future in-person board meetings.](#)
- [**Arrange the next board meeting for Monday, 19th October, at 12:30, Cowes Harbour Commission offices.**](#)

Sarah (Comms)

- [Submit the listings for the Beach Clean \(27th September\) and Dickensian Christmas event \(5th December\) to the Experience Cowes website.](#)

Stuart

- [Inform the board once the flood resilience container is operational.](#)

Summary

Public Toilet Closure Discussion

Stuart informed the group that full council had resolved to close all public toilets at night due to ongoing repair issues caused by vandalism. The participants expressed frustration about mindless vandalism being done by young children, with Trisha and Lora sharing concerns about disrespectful behaviour they had observed at local facilities.

Board Meeting Agenda Discussion

Jonathan welcomed attendees and noted that Mike Greville and Daniel Jehan from the Waterfront Trust had sent apologies, though they were briefed on the board meeting matters. The group discussed agenda distribution, with RYS acknowledging that sending the agenda separately from the invitation may have caused some attendees to struggle finding the agenda.

Social Media Growth and Optimization

The meeting focused on social media progress reports, with Charlie reporting that Instagram growth increased from 160 to over 220 followers while Facebook growth was slower. Graham noted that while the social media efforts were a good start, there was a need to optimize content by ensuring posts promoting events that are through business establishments already listed on the website. Some recent posts appeared to be for events whose mother businesses are not on the site. Jonathan committed to ensuring the social media report would be shared with all board members after the meeting.

Experience Cowes Website Discussion

Charlie discussed the motivation for clubs to be featured on the Experience Cows website, noting that while some clubs like the Island Sailing Club and Cowes Corinthian are interested in gaining new members through the site, others may be reluctant to actively advertise themselves due to not wanting casual visitors. Jonathan mentioned receiving a web listing from Carl Russell at Hursts that needs to be added to the site. Charlie emphasized the importance of increasing website subscribers to help cover fixed overhead costs, and encouraged board members to act as ambassadors to generate interest in the site.

Business Development and Promotions Strategy

Charlie discussed the importance of warm introductions for business development and reported having 30 promising potential cases, with a goal of reaching 50-100.

Experience Cowes Branding Updates

The group discussed creating promotional "Experience Cowes" decals for high street businesses shop windows with Graham and others supporting this idea. Charlie agreed to obtain quotes and circulate them for approval. The group agreed the decals should include a website link or QR code, Sarah Preston (CTC Comms) could help with the design. Jonathan to send Charlie the Logos etc.

Financial Update

Graham provided a financial update, reporting £22,476.16 currently in their account after receiving a VAT refund of £930.66, with outstanding invoices to pay for £15+k to be processed and incoming ones including one from Stephen Tewksbury at Pinnacle Suites. Charlie noted progress on the BAE partnership agreement, indicating they are in the final stages of negotiations with minor grammatical and typographical issues to be addressed.

Local Council Updates Meeting

The meeting discussed updates from various local councils and organizations. Peter reported that East Cowes Town Council enquired about next year's fireworks, and Jonathan indicated that while funding is secured through a three-year sponsorship, specific events cannot be confirmed yet. Charlie mentioned presenting to East Cowes Town Council about Experience Cowes on September 17th, with Graham providing financial updates. Stuart reported that West Cowes Town Council meeting on 3rd September had been very positive about the family numbers present. He reminded those present of the upcoming arrival of the new flood resilience container with equipment for flooding emergencies. Stuart also updated that public toilets will be closed overnight except for those in the cut area, as a measure to address vandalism issues.

New Marina Update

Gary reported that dredging continued, but otherwise no further progress had been made with the various agencies involved in the planning process.

Cowes Events Planning Meeting

The meeting discussed upcoming events in Cowes, including a Beach Clean on September 27th and a Dickensian Victorian themed Christmas event on December 5th. Stuart announced plans for the Christmas event, which will include a booklet for traders, a treasure hunt, and a parade with the grand switch-on of the Cowes Christmas lights. The group also discussed potentially involving the Trinity Theatre Victorian troupe in the Christmas celebrations, with Stuart mentioning he would be fitted for Victorian attire. The next traders meeting was scheduled for September 23rd, and the next board meeting was planned for Monday October 19th 12.30 at CHC Offices.

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