

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COWES TOWN COUNCIL held at Northwood House, Cowes on Wednesday, 4th November, 2009 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Wells (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Banks, Birch, Deacon, Giffard, Hammond, Jones, McGregor, Matthews, Mazillius, Peacey-Wilcox, Sanderson, Thwaites, Walters and Wilcox.

6259 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Slade.

An apology for late attendance owing to a conflicting I.W. Council meeting had been received from Councillor Mazillius.

6260 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked the following question:

Q. Cycling in the High Street remained a problem; notices on the Floating Bridge warned cyclists that 'it is an offence to cycle the wrong way along a one way street and on the pavement which is punishable by a fine of £30. The Hampshire Constabulary are actively prosecuting offenders in this area'. It appeared that no action was being taken to address this issue; what was being done?

A. Sgt. Cocks responded to the question. She stated that dealing with cycling offences was not a police priority; tackling anti-social behaviour was. The majority of cyclists did ride responsibly; however, when the police did observe cyclists riding through the High Street they were asked to dismount which invariably they did. The police were not actively ticketing offenders; they were merely requesting they comply with the cycling restrictions.

The Town Mayor stated that the I.W. Council had intended to introduce dedicated cycle lanes through the town which may have helped to alleviate the problem; the Town Council would endeavour to establish the current position regarding such a scheme.

6261 REPORTS BY ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Mazillius had submitted a written report in his absence which referred to:

- a). The major planning application for detailed permission for an Aldi Supermarket store with related parking for 128 vehicles on the BAE Systems site off Newport/Three Gates Road; the application also sought outline permission for office and light industrial units with the development footprint covering part of the existing car park and much of the green field fronting Three Gates Road. Although the site was in the Northwood Parish Council area, he considered that the Town Council should comment on the proposals because of the importance of the application to, and its potential effect on the town.
- b). Underage drinking and the problems that this had caused. Councillor Mazillius also reported initiatives that were being taken to address the issue including:
 - i) Trading Standards arranged test purchases by under 18's – No purchases were successful.
 - ii) A series of theatre productions at local schools using young actors to realistically show the effects of getting drunk and the possible consequences that might include unwanted pregnancies. He had attended a production at Cowes High School and had been most impressed by the message put over to 13/15 year olds and by the positive feedback from the question and answer session which followed.
- c). Ongoing road works including the gas pipe installation at Parkhurst which was ahead of schedule and the completion of the new pavement in Park Road. He also referred to the general filling of potholes in various parts of the town and reminded members that the I.W. Council Call Centre – 821000 would log all reporting of potholes with an appropriate audit trail to ensure continuity of repair.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox reported as follows:

- a). That Birmingham Road was at last subject to a 2 hour limited waiting period.
- b). That a mobile CCTV camera had been installed for a limited period adjacent to the Health Centre and bus stop in Newport Road.
- c). That she had received a number of requests that Arctic Park be designated a ‘dog free’ area.
- d). That she had received a number of enquiries regarding the latest home insulation scheme which had been referred to at the last meeting of the Town Council.
- e). That she was communicating with a number of constituents regarding local planning applications.

Councillor Brown referred to the following:

- a). That there were serious concerns regarding bad littering in the Princes Street area; he had arranged spot patrols and additional litter picks although that in itself would not get to the root of the problem.
- b). There was also concern regarding dog fouling – similar measures were being taken.
- c). That he had attended a meeting of concerned residents regarding planning issues and in particular the design characteristics of Cowes and the necessity to ensure that proposals within the Conservation Area reflected a known plan.
- d). That there were very real concerns for the future prosperity of Cowes as a yacht racing and sailing centre; it had been recognised that competition to Cowes was growing from other ports along the south coast.
- e). That he had responded to a number of residents from his ward in respect of wind turbine applications and attitudes to wind turbines.
- f). That enforcement action had been taken in respect of a house in Denmark Road; subsequently a re-application had been approved for a complete rebuild of the front elevation of the house. There had been some serious inaccuracies recounting the saga in the local press; he hoped that this would be corrected in future editions of the I.W. County Press.
- g). That he was trying to ensure the action of I.W. Council Officers was entirely helpful to the Northwood House Trustees; this help must not create false props and the officers must not take on board activities that did not properly belong to the I.W. Council but were the province of the Trustees. He hoped that this action would create worthwhile benefits to the Trustees in the longer term.
- h). That he could give an assurance that the bus shelter on the corner of Granville/Park Roads would not be removed until a replacement had been installed.
- i). That there was significant I.W. Council ‘behind the scenes’ activity to try to ensure that good technology businesses didn’t leave the Island for reasons that local Councils might be able to assist with.

Councillor Fuller circulated a detailed written report referring to the following:

- a). That there were only minor changes to the revised Southern Vectis timetable that would be implemented on 20th December and that affected Cowes.
- b). That he was trying to arrange a site meeting with Highways regarding the extension of a footpath in Baring Road.
- c). That there were no planning applications considered by the Planning Committee for his Cowes West and Gurnard ward in the last month although a number of significant applications were imminent.
- d) That he had attended a meeting of local residents that he hoped would evolve into an inclusive and effective organisation that would both challenge and compliment the efforts of local councils.
- e). An I.W. Council consultation on Dog Orders; the Order would prohibit dogs from the beach to the east of Egypt Hill Public Slipway as far as Princes Green and from a variety of other beaches around the Island during the summer months.
- f). That he had tabled a question to the Cabinet member for Transport regarding the disruption to traffic caused by road works on the Cowes to Newport Road.

6262 REPORT FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

Sgt. Julie Cocks reported as follows:

- a). Following complaints from a number of shops and restaurants in the town about the activities in a private flat on the High Street they had concentrated their efforts on the individuals who lived in, and frequented the flat; on 14th October one person was arrested, on 23rd October a second was arrested and charged with the possession of cannabis and on 27th October a third person was arrested and charged with

shoplifting. As a consequence of these arrests it had been reported at the last meeting of Shopwatch that there had been a significant reduction in incidents of shoplifting in the town and also complaints about activities emanating from the flat.

b). That the police were concentrating their efforts on issues of anti social behaviour and underage drinking. Test purchases had been carried out by Trading Standards at two off licences in Cowes and both had passed. However, it appeared that drink was being purchased by older people on behalf of the youngsters and therefore the police intended to adopt the Challenge 21 scheme. In joining this scheme, off licence owners would agree not to sell alcohol to any person under the age of 21 on Friday and Saturday evenings between 6pm and closing; it had proven very successful in Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin.

c). That the police were establishing a Park Court Residents Group; PCSO Steve Oatley would work with concerned residents on incidents of anti social behaviour and underage drinking occurring in Northwood Park.

d). That members of her team had attended a Trading Standards organised theatre production at Cowes High School on 21st October; this was an educational production concentrating on the effects of underage drinking and the damage it could do.

e). That fuel had been illegally siphoned from a number of vehicles around the Island; at present this had not been a problem that affected Cowes.

6263 REPORT FROM THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER

Jacqui Darby had apologised for her absence but had submitted a written report referring to the following, a copy of which had been circulated to each member:

- a). That she had continued her litter patrols around the Cowes High School area. The school had been very co-operative; she hoped to visit and join their environmental programmes regarding littering.
- b). That there had been regular patrols at Northwood Park and Northwood Recreation Ground in respect of dog fouling but no offending owner had been caught during the month.
- c). That there had been anti social behaviour and vandalism in Northwood Park on Friday and Saturday nights; on weekend of 24th October a memorial tree had been broken off.
- d). That the rear door of the Recreation Ground toilets had been repaired following vandalism and graffiti had been removed from the underside of the skate park ramps; she had requested additional cleaning around the Recreation Ground area.
- e). That she had requested additional white lines and a 'Give Way' sign at a junction in Debourne Close.
- f). That the maximum 2 hours parking restriction had now been implemented in Birmingham Road.
- g). That her request for an additional litter bin at the entrance to the cycle track had been refused; could the Town Council fund this? A request for a replacement larger dog bin should be approved.
- f). That she had been successful with her bid for a re-deployable CCTV camera to be installed near the Health Centre in Newport Road.
- g). That tree foliage obstructing street lights at the rear of Arctic Road and Fraser Close had been removed giving additional light to the roads.
- h). That there had been further reports of anti social behaviour around the St. Faiths Church area; she had suggested measures to deter offenders although funding had been the drawback.
- i). That she had been removing fly posting and other notices from street furniture around the town.

6264 MINUTES

The Town Mayor expressed concern that an article in the I.W. County Press in respect of the Town Council discussion at the last meeting regarding a Christmas reception gave the impression that the reception would be funded from public funds; this had not been the intention. Minute 6253c clearly stated that any Christmas reception would have been funded by individual members of the Town Council.

RESOLVED

That subject to the third line of Min. No. 6253c being amended to read 'could be linked to the imminent launch of the Northwood House Trustees Vision Statement in respect of Northwood House', the Minutes of the Meetings held on 7th October, 2009 be taken as read, approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

6265 MATTERS ARISING

a). CCTV for Cowes (Min. No. 6254h refers)

Councillor Wilcox explained that following a survey of the town involving the police and consultants appointed by the I.W. Council the following priority locations for CCTV had been identified:

Five Priority One cameras would be positioned at:

Junction of Beckford Road and Birmingham Road
Junction Shooters Hill, High Street and Cross Street
Rear of the Painters Arms Public House and Cross Street
High Street opposite The Cut
Junction of Carvel Lane and the High Street

Four Priority Two cameras would be positioned at:

The Royal British Legion premises on the High Street
Junction of Market Hill and the High Street
Junction of Mill Hill Road, Birmingham Road and Medina Road
High Street, north side of the Arcade

One Priority Three camera would be positioned at:

Medina Road

The Cowes CCTV scheme would operate using a wireless connection which was a much cheaper alternative to the fibre optic fixed links that had been used historically. Wireless CCTV was recognised by the CCTV industry as the way forward and it would enable additional cameras to be added to the network at competitive prices. However, there would be an annual licence fee for wireless cameras which at present totalled £8,760.99 in a full year; this would be shared by other towns operating a similar system. Shanklin Town Council had already agreed to the expansion of wireless CCTV to their town and Ventnor would be making a decision later in the month although it appeared unlikely they would participate in the scheme. Ryde, Newport and Sandown would also share the cost of the licence if they upgraded from their existing fibre optic to a wireless system.

Following much discussion both for and against the installation of CCTV in the town, it was

RESOLVED

- 1). That Cowes Town Council proceeds with the installation of priority one and two cameras in the current financial year at a cost of £73,794.18;
- 2). That the Town Council utilises the £58,000 'ring fenced' for CCTV and £10,000 in the budget for 2009/10 with the remaining £5,794.18 being paid from balances; and
- 3)). That the Town Council proceeds with the installation of the priority three camera at a cost of £5,046.09 in the financial year 2010/11.

b). Web site (Min. No. 6254i refers)

Councillor Matthews reported progress regarding the design of a new Town Council web site; the existing site had been deleted and a holding page installed which stated that the new site would be available from the end of November. Beken Maritime Photographers had kindly agreed that photographs from their depository could be used to enhance the web site; Ken Beken had subsequently gone on holiday causing a slight delay. It was also intended that Councillors would have individual email addresses. Councillor Matthews hoped to report further progress to the next meeting.

c). Adventure play area, Northwood Recreation Ground (Min. No.6216b refers)

Councillor McGregor stated that the Town Council had been successful in obtaining an additional £10,000 funding towards the adventure play equipment in Northwood Recreation Ground from the Youth Opportunities Fund; this would be added to the £50,000 Play Builder funding that had already been secured. Copies of the report of the second stage consultation exercise that had taken place on 5th August together with details of the Groundwork final sketch designs that had been developed following the consultation process had been circulated to all members. Until Groundwork had completed the tendering and procurement elements it would be impossible to determine whether the additional £10,000 would enable further items of play equipment to be added to the scheme; it should certainly ensure that the Town Council was not forced to scale back on their existing plans. The I.W. Council lead officer in respect of Play Builder funding had been happy with the designs subject to the approval of the Parks Officer; the Parks Officer had registered some concern mainly centred on planting issues and the ease of ongoing

maintenance. A final meeting would be arranged with the Groundwork design team and the Parks Officer to iron out these concerns.

Councillor McGregor then gave a pictorial presentation of the features that would be incorporated and she outlined how these features would fit with the existing landscape.

Following much discussion and comment it was

RESOLVED

That the Town Council approves the final designs for the adventure play equipment for Northwood Recreation Ground that had been prepared by Groundwork although they accepted that the designs would also be subject to approval by the I.W. Council Parks Officer.

(Councillor Sanderson left the meeting at 8.35p.m.) (Councillor Mazillius entered the meeting at 8.40p.m.)

d). St. Andrews Community Hall (Min. No. 6229h refers)

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the I.W. Council which outlined the latest position in respect of the long term lease of St. Andrews Hall under the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy; it stated that two expressions of interest had originally been received although only one was now proceeding to a full application following the withdrawal of the second party. The sole applicants were the current licence holders for the building, The Community Church (IW); if successful a long lease would give the Community Church sufficient security to ensure the long-term viability of the community hall. As well as financial and governance requirements the I.W. Council demanded that potential lease holders had to demonstrate an enduring commitment to community use and local support for the proposal. Applicants had to gather evidence of this local support; in particular they had to have an indication from the local Town or Parish Council that it supported the application.

The Town Clerk reminded members that in July they had opted not to align themselves with any particular group seeking to obtain a long lease on the St. Andrews Hall as it was not known at that time exactly how much interest there might be; that situation had now been clarified by the I.W. Council notification of only one applicant.

Mr. Hancock, a representative from the Community Church (IW), was invited by the Town Mayor to outline the improvements that had been made to St. Andrews Hall in the last year by the Community Church and to explain their proposals and clarify a number of other points.

RESOLVED

That on the basis that the St. Andrews Hall was maintained for community use and bearing in mind that the Community Church (IW) were the only applicants for the acquisition of a long term lease for the Hall, the Town Council now wished to confirm its support for their bid.

(Councillor Wells declared a personal interest in the above item as he attended the IW Community Church)

(Councillor McGregor declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the above item on the grounds that her husband was a member of the Management Committee of the Community Church and she left the room for this item only)

e). 'Lights of Love' carol service (Min. No. 6254f refers)

The Town Clerk reported that the 'Lights of Love' carol service in aid of the Earl Mountbatten Hospice would be held this year around the Christmas tree in The Cut on Friday 18th December commencing at 7p.m. He had arranged for the Cowes Concert Band to provide the musical accompaniment.

f). Southern Water Wastewater Flood Protection Scheme (Min. No. 6253f refers)

The Town Clerk reported that the wastewater flood protection works in Francki Place were progressing to schedule. It had been agreed that a sleeve fitment suitable for the erection of a town Christmas tree would be installed by Southern Water in The Cut by the middle of November.

Southern Water had also indicated that they wished to work with children from local schools regarding the painting of a festive mural on the hoarding fronting Francki Place and they questioned whether the Town Council would support that initiative,

RESOLVED

That the Town Council supports the idea that Southern Water works with local schools regarding the painting of the hoarding fronting Francki Place with a festive mural.

g) Public realm works, Cowes (Mi. No. 6253a refers)

Councillor Banks reported that the I.W. Council were re-tendering the work to the lion statues; that would inevitably lead to delays in the repairs.

6266 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

a). Parish Task Group

The Town Clerk reported on a meeting of the Parish Task Group held on 15th October, 2009 that he had attended with Councillor Thwaites. He stated that this had been the first meeting of the re-formed Parish Task Group and that it had been attended by a mixture of about 50 Councillors and Clerks from a variety of Town & Parish Councils. It had been agreed by those present that meetings would largely remain informal and that they would concentrate on issues that were of concern to member Councils. There would be no more than 3 – 4 meetings each year; they would provide members with the ideal opportunity for networking with others. This first meeting concentrated largely on the I.W. Council decision to give notice of the cancellation of their Tripartite Agreement with IWALC and the SLCC and what action could be taken to persuade them to reverse that decision.

b). Northwood House Trustees

Councillor Thwaites gave a verbal report regarding Northwood House.

She referred to repairs that were required above the bar area but was of the opinion that the I.W. Council remained responsible for the repairs. Potential interested parties were continuing to come forward following the issue of the Trustees Vision Statement and Northwood House was due for discussion at the I.W. Council Cabinet meeting in January. Finally, she had news of a potential new Trustee who could offer good and relevant experience to the position.

c). Cowes Community Partnership

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cowes Community Partnership held on 15th September 2009 were received.

d). Cowes/Deauville Twinning Association

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cowes Deauville Twinning Association held on 26th September 2009 were received.

6267 MATTERS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN CLERK

- a). *An application for funding towards a Growing Spaces Project in Cowes for the 2011 and 2012 seasons.
- b). *An application from Lion Aid who were rolling out a scheme across the UK aimed at highlighting the significant reduction of the African lion; they wished to cover the four lion monuments on Cowes Esplanade with black cloth for a few days in February to alert members of the public to the reality of a world without lions.
- c). Invitation to the East Cowes Heritage Group celebration of the 150th anniversary of a mechanised chain ferry between Cowes and East Cowes on Saturday 21st November at East Cowes Town Hall between 10am and 5pm.
- d). Premises Licence in respect of 55 Cross Street.
- e). Request from the I.W. Society to meet with members of the Town Council regarding the production of a Town Design Statement.
- f). *Details of miscellaneous correspondence.

(* copies circulated to all members)

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Clerk obtains a detailed budget for the Growing Spaces project in Cowes and then presents the application for funding to the Finance Committee for consideration;
- 2). That the Town Council supports Lion Aid's action to highlight the plight of the African lion;
- 3). That the Town Council has no objection to the application for a Premises Licence in respect of 55 Cross Street; and
- 4). That the Town Clerk makes an arrangement to meet with members of the I.W. Society regarding the production of a Town Design Statement.

6268 REMEMBRANCE DAY

The Town Clerk submitted a letter from the Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion requesting a contribution of £500 towards the cost of refreshments for those taking part in the Remembrance Day Service and Parade on 8th November. He also stated that he had requested that Brighstone Landscaping lay and then remove after the service, the matting walkway to the War Memorial.

RESOLVED

- 1). That the Town Council contributes £500 to the Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion to enable them to provide refreshments for those taking part in the Remembrance Day Service and Parade on 8th November; and
- 2). That the action taken by the Town Clerk of employing Brighstone Landscaping to lay and remove the matting walkway to the War Memorial on 8th November be noted and approved.

(Councillor Giffard declared a personal and prejudicial interest on the grounds that he was Chairman of the Cowes Branch of the Royal British Legion and he left the room for this item only).

6269 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED

That in accordance with sections 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded having regard to the confidential nature of the business.

6270 SALARY OF TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk left the Council Chamber whilst this item was being discussed.

RESOLVED

That in accordance with the recommendations of the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks the salary of the Town Clerk be increased from 1st April 2009 to £13,548.

(The proceedings terminated at 9.34pm)

CHAIRMAN