

# EAST COWES ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2015

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at East Cowes Town Hall.

**Present:** Cllr Mike Lloyd Town Mayor

Tina Bailey Town Clerk

Cllrs: P. Lloyd, Rann, Hendry, Hillard, Barton O.B.E. with apologies received from Cllrs Hooper and Webster and 11 members of the public.

1. The Mayor welcomed those present.
2. **To accept the minutes of the 2014 Annual Town Meeting,**  
The minutes of the previous year were accepted.

### **3. To receive the Annual Report of the Town Council from the Mayor**

Over the year the East Cowes Town Council has made significant investment in our infrastructure.

Following serious vandalism to the toilets on the Esplanade we were obliged to close them whilst we awaited the installation of vandal resistant metal doors. This has proved effective with no further incidents being reported.

A Health and Safety Audit of the Town Hall highlighted a number of defects. These included faulty Fire Exit doors, sub-standard electrics - including lighting in the main hall – and the kitchen failing to meet statutory requirements. All these items have been addressed. The Town Hall roof requires replacement and we anticipate that this work will be undertaken in the summer along with essential building work to the rear of the building.

We have invested in the children's play-area on the Esplanade, improving the equipment and refurbishing the paddling pool. Sadly, some dog owners continue to ignore the signs asking them not to allow their dogs into the play-area. We are therefore considering fencing-off the whole area. A recent ROSPA report has highlighted a number of defects in the Jubilee Recreation Ground play-area and the Victoria Recreation Ground skate-park. For some bizarre reason the electrical supply to the floodlighting for the skate-park was connected to the Pavilion. Following the financial collapse of the Pavilion a dedicated power supply for the skate-park is now required. We shall be addressing all these issues over the next few months.

Over the year the Isle of Wight Council has been devolving maintenance of public spaces and recreation areas to Town and Parish Councils. We have agreed to contribute 50% of the cost of mowing the grass etc. and have therefore been, reluctantly, obliged to increase the town's precept on your Council Tax.

We have recently appointed a Facilities Manager, Mick Collis, who has responsibility for ensuring that all our assets are well maintained and regulations complied with. Mick has proved to be an invaluable asset. The Town Hall continues to attract numerous groups and individuals wishing to hire our facilities. The acoustics in the hall generally, and particularly with the use of the stage for live performances, is an issue we are actively attempting to resolve.

The Town Council, vigorously supported by many local residents, attempted to get the IWC to change its mind on charging pedestrians to use the Floating Bridge. Despite our best efforts the decision was passed by full council. We shall have to wait to see if our

prediction that the IWC will fail to achieve their anticipated increased income comes to fruition.

The proposed Solent Gateway Project has caused considerable interest and concern for many local residents, not least the residents of Dover Road. We are also very concerned as to where the main access to Red Funnel's new marshalling yard will be sited and the impact this will have on traffic flows in the town. Regeneration of the current marshalling yards is also of major concern.

The Town Council is concerned by the lack of long-term parking within the town and the apparent "indiscriminate" installation of parking meters.

The Mayor thanked the Town Councillors and Town Clerk and staff.

#### **4. To receive an Annual Summary from IW Ward Councillors**

IW Councillor Luisa Hillard presented her summary.

#### **5. Public forum**

The following matters were raised.

- Replacement shelter on the seafront-S106 funding?
- Landslip
- Sewage
- Planning and Town Plan
- Area Action Plans
- Bridge House funds
- Red Funnel development
- Lack of parking
- GKN site (Whippingham Parish)
- Saunders Link/ Enforcement of planning conditions ( Whippingham Parish)
- Allotments
- Grants
- Marina and proposed developments
- Old Rd –traffic flow concerns
- Waitrose Energy Centre

A financial summary was presented.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 20.00

Signed: .....

Date: .....