

East Cowes Town Council



Minutes of the Meeting of East Cowes Town Council held on Thursday 17th July 2014 at 7pm in the Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes.

Present:

Mayor: Cllr M Lloyd
Cllrs: Barton O.B.E, Hooper, Hillard, P. Lloyd, Hendry, Rann and Webster
Town Clerk: Tina Bailey
In attendance: Sgnt Knight.
Members of the public and press: Six

Public Forum:

- What is current situation regarding Saunders Way? – another planning application is being submitted.
- Any news on the landslip? – the land is still moving and no work can be undertaken until the movement stabilises.
- Paddling Pool - why is there algae? Explanation in full as minute 4450d
- What is being done to improve communication with the community which is poor? – this is earmarked for review along with all other areas of the Town Council's business over the next few months.

Police report:

Sergeant Knight presented a report and confirmed that re-deployable CCTV has been installed along the Esplanade and the range of site will cover the toilets.

4445/14 APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence
None

4446/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

- (i) To receive declarations of pecuniary and non pecuniary interests
Cllr Hendry declared an interest as a trustee of the Pavilion.
- (ii) To receive and consider granting any written requests for dispensations.
None

4447/14 IWC ALEX MINS, LEE MATTHEWS AND SEAN NEWTON ATTENDED TO DISCUSS DEVOLUTION OF IW SERVICES - PARKS, RECREATION AND BEACHES

Cllr Hillard declared an interest as an executive member of the public realm
Cllr Barton OBE declared an interest as a member of Island 2000

There will be no changes to Cemeteries and Rights of Way at present but the two areas under discussion for transfer to T & P Councils' are grounds maintenance of parks & countryside and beach cleaning.

Unless funding can be found from elsewhere, beach cleaning will cease on the Island from 1 April next year. As well as beach cleaning the current contract includes emptying litter bins, cleaning of slipways and sweeping of beach steps with an annual cost of approximately £160,000. The beach (from the Breakwater to Castle Point) is cleaned before 10 am - daily in the summer and once a week during the winter. Four options were presented

- a) Town and Parish Councils buy into a contract for the whole island at a total cost of £160,000. An idea being mooted through IWALC is for cost to be shared between councils – possibly split between those who have a beach in their area paying more.
- b) Let the contract but at a reduced schedule of work.
- c) Do nothing – this would mean no beach cleaning would take place at all with the resultant impact on tourism, beach awards etc.
- d) Town and Parish Councils make individual arrangements.

With reference to a) above, Town and Parish Councils need to let IWC know what their intentions are by October and would need approximately 80% agreement from councils for this to be viable.

Grounds maintenance

The main areas in East Cowes are the Esplanade (principal park status) Jubilee recreation ground and Victoria recreation ground; Well Rd and Green Rd.

Esplanade –the play area equipment has a 5 year contribution towards repairs but does not include the grounds maintenance. The contract includes cutting and collecting of the grass in principal parks.

Litter - Most bins are cleared by Island Roads but exclude bins in parks which come under grounds maintenance.

The number of Environment Officers will be reduced to just one and T &P Councils will be asked to contribute to maintain a service with a contribution relative to population.

Full details of proposals will be provided to all Town and Parish Councils within the next three weeks.

Other matters raised

Landslip – the Town Council requested that more advice be provided to pedestrians regarding access.

MUGA – IWC confirmed that there are no proposals for the MUGA to be managed in any different way.

4448/14 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19th JUNE 2014

Amendment: that hydro plant should read hydro refuller

RESOLVED

The minutes of the previous meeting, which had been circulated, were approved with the amendment that the words hydro plant be replaced to hydro refuller. This was duly changed and initialled as an amendment by the Mayor and the minutes then signed.

4449/14 MATTERS ARISING

1. Youth bid application

The Clerk distributed copies of the prospectus and application form as proof that the Town Council did not meet any of the criteria and was, therefore, unable to submit any form of bid which had been strongly recommended and agreed at the previous meeting.

2. Meeting with IWC regarding the Pavilion

Cllr Barton reported on his meeting with Cllr J Baker-Smith and Richard Priest to discuss youth provision at the pavilion. The whole building needs attention and has been earmarked for s106 money. The management needs review and reorganisation with a new Committee and Trust to make a fresh start again.

3. Request for meeting with HCA

HCA declined.

4450/14 TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT

a Skatepark and Jubilee park – update

The immediate safety repairs on the skatepark have been undertaken. The hedge needs trimming and the repairs needed in the playground are still pending, as there are only limited maintenance contractors on the Island and many parish and town councils playgrounds requiring attention. The Clerk suggested forming a working party to review the current facilities provided in these areas. Cllrs Webster and Barton volunteered.

b. Town Hall update

The poor state of the fire doors contributed to a break in, which, fortunately did not result in any damage to the building or property. The building insurance for the Town Hall is provided by IWC as part of the terms of the lease and costs the Town Council nearly £2000 a year but does not cover vandalism.

The Mayor asked for the minutes to record Town Council appreciation to the community minded resident who, spotting the break in, promptly contacted the police.

H & S report - The flooring in the kitchen area and both toilets have to be replaced with non slip commercial flooring after a (recorded) accident due to the very porous state of the existing domestic standard flooring.

c. Esplanade Toilets vandalism

Two toilet doors were kicked in and the Ladies and Gents toilets are now boarded up and non-operational. A quote for £3500 for replacement steel doors and frames for three doors was presented. As with the Town Hall, the building insurance is provided by IWC as part of the lease and does not cover vandalism.

Porta loos – in the interim period, the hire of porta loos is currently being pursued. Quote received at £85 per unit per week including servicing but subject to availability, which is proving to be limited.

RESOLVED

- That the quote for three steel doors is agreed plus the additional costs for a fourth steel door for the storage cupboard at the rear of the building.
- That the provision of two portaloos is agreed and the IWC will be asked to provide an additional free unit for Cowes week if possible

d. Paddling pool update

Edge of pool - The contractor had examined the edges around the pool and agreed to put mastic on a small area.

Algae – The Clerk explained that as the pumps had not been operating overnight, algae had formed and was being treated and very closely monitored. If necessary the pool would be drained, treated and refilled. There is also a blockage in the pipe which drains the water into the sea, which may require professional assistance to clear it.

e Website progress update

The website is progressing well and will be launched in 3 or 4 phases. The first phase will include contacts, minutes and agendas, policies and procedures and the Town Hall booking diary, which will allow provisional hire of the hall.

f Suggested review of committees

The Clerk suggested that the committee structure should be reviewed in September as the current set up did not fully support the council's activities.

4451/14 TO AGREE TO RECEIVE FUTURE SUMMONS BY EMAIL

In accordance with current changes in legislation and to save money, the Clerk proposed that the Town Council authorise service of the summons and agenda by electronic means subject to inclusion of the electronic signature and title by the Proper Officer and that any member can request to continue to receive a summons and agenda by post. Photocopies of agendas and reports will be provided at the meeting

RESOLVED

That the Town Council authorise service of the summons and agenda by electronic means subject to inclusion of the electronic signature and title by the Proper Officer and that any member can request to continue to receive a summons and agenda by post.

Cllr Barton requested that the agenda and summons continue to be posted to him.

4452/14 FLOATING BRIDGE CONSULTATION

To agree the following motion from Cllr Hendy

- a) That before going to public consultation, that the accounts of the floating bridge for the last years are published. The floating bridge is profitable to the IWC which covers the cost for non motorist use. This should be included with the consultation.
- b) If charging non motorists goes to public consultation, that any projected numbers included how those numbers were derived should be included.
- c) Can the IWC confirm that any profit from the floating bridge is now being ring fenced to help pay for a replacement. If any additional money is made from charging non motorists then the money should also be ring fenced. If they are confident that the changes will increase the profitability of the floating bridge, will they agree to pay for any upfront costs centrally. Only after normal profits are made, that they can begin recouping costs.

After 15 minutes of discussion the revised motion is:

- a) That before going to public consultation, the accounts of the floating bridge for the last four years are published. The floating bridge is profitable to the IWC which covers the cost for non motorist use. This should be included with the consultation.

RESOLVED

Agreed

- b) If charging non motorists goes to public consultation, that any projected numbers included how those numbers were derived should be included.

RESOLVED

Agreed

- c) Can the IWC confirm amortisation of profit from the floating bridge is set aside if they are confident that the changes will increase the profitability of the floating bridge?

Proposal

To vote for the substantive motive

RESOLVED.

Agreed.

To arrange a public meeting

The proposed date of 31st July was deferred to allow the opportunity for Cowes TC to be invited to join with East Cowes to hold a joint meeting after Cowes week, to which the leader and deputy leader of the IWC will be invited to attend. Date to be arranged. A letter of support from EC Business Association was received and noted.

4453/14 DOWN HOUSE - TO DISCUSS THE SUBMISSION OF BID AND ANY FUTURE ACTION

Cllr Hooper stated that the council shouldn't be discussing Down House. The Clerk stated that the agenda item - discussion of the submission of the bid was on the agenda at the request of Cllr Webster, following advice Cllr Webster had received from Davina Fiore and then handed the matter over to Cllr Webster who read a statement. This statement is reported in full and appended at the end of these minutes. (*Appendix A*)

The Mayor, Cllr Mike Lloyd, said these were serious allegations and immediately requested the Deputy Mayor take the chair. Cllr Hillard refuted any allegations of any wrong doing. The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Peter Lloyd, took the Chair. The Clerk said that advice from a Monitoring Officer could be needed as if any complaint was made against a councillor they might not be able to participate in any discussion relating to it. Another meeting was demanded as a decision on Down House was time limited.

Proposed

That another meeting be called asap to discuss any 'future action regarding Down House'

RESOLVED

That another meeting is called to discuss any future action regarding Down House. The Clerk confirmed that the date of the meeting would be 24th July and notice would be served accordingly.

The Mayor, Cllr M Lloyd returned as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

4454/14 FINANCES

1) Grant applications – to receive applications and allocate grants.

Three applications had been received within the time limit in accordance with the grants policy adopted by the Town Council in April 2014.

- Amy White Theatre Group – towards theatre improvements
- Angel Radio - towards building improvements to increase capacity
- EC Heritage Centre – towards IT equipment

Declarations of interest received relating to this agenda item

EC Heritage Centre – Cllr. Peter Lloyd

A W Theatre – Cllrs: Rann, Webster and Hooper

RESOLVED

That the Town Council in accordance with its powers under s137 of Local Government Act 1972, agree the following expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or inhabitants.

- Amy White Theatre Group £350
- Angel Radio £300
- EC Heritage Centre £300

2) To agree to move to the Unity Trust Bank.

Discussed at the previous meeting. The Clerk advised that Whippingham PC is transferring to this bank which has been trialled and endorsed by the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) as tailor made for dealing with the business of Town and Parish Councils.

RESOLVED

The Council approve moving from Lloyds Bank to the Unity Trust Bank

3) To approve the schedule of payments

RESOLVED

The schedule of payments was approved.

4) To receive the bank reconciliation to the end of June and the expenditure against budget.

RESOLVED

Noted.

4455/14 The Clerk recommended that the meeting close and to defer the remaining agenda items for the meeting to be held on 24th July 2014.

9. To discuss any future action regarding Down House.
11. To receive any reports or matters raised by the Mayor, Town Councillors and IW councillors.
12. Staffing matters.

RESOLVED

That the Council agreed deferment of the following items for the meeting to be held on 24th July 2014.

- 9. To discuss any future action regarding Down House.
- 11. To receive any reports or matters raised from the Mayor, Town Councillors and IW Councillors.
- 12. Staffing matters.

The meeting closed at 21.17

Appendix One

Statement from Cllr Webster

Mr Mayor, I wish to bring a few facts to your attention as a TC, The issue of Down House, the bid put in by you and the County Councillor was in fact unauthorised and possibly illegal. Anyone person of the TC are not permitted to act on their own by going forward with a project without a resolution from this Council, and especially not without the Clerks knowledge and signatory. This is a possible code of conduct issue and is in fact 'Disrespect of the Clerk'

I, not being happy with the June meeting and comments made during it, have reread all the last few months minutes, Minute No: 4424/14 May minutes.

'(i) The Library/Down House.

It was reported that Down house would not be available as the NHS were proceeding The auction and as the site has planning consent for 2 houses, a purchase price of around £300K would be expected which exceeds the funds available for purchase and the required refurbishment.'

Next we are informed as a TC by the media (in my case), that a bid had been submitted although we had stated this was not what we had wished to do.

After a great deal of thought and soul searching and because I was concerned of this extra cost to this council; I spoke to the Monitoring Officer Davina Fiore. Whilst speaking to her she advised that this item be put on the next agenda and she agreed that there could be some issues here that are breach of the Code of Conduct and our standing orders which are statutory, and we have all signed up to them. i.e

- 1. Disrespectful of the Town Clerk.
- 2. Disrespect to this Council.
- 3. Bringing the Council into disrepute.

And several others. ,

Having had this discussion I think we all need to be thinking about the training we had last year and how it has not adhered to. We should be aware that on this council we are a group of 8 who should be working together, not doing our own thing, standing orders!!!

End of statement.

Mayor.....

Date.....

