

## East Cowes Town Council

### MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL AT THE TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 24<sup>th</sup> JULY 2014 AT 7.00PM

**Members present:** Mayor: Cllr. M Lloyd

Cllrs: Barton O.B.E., Hendry, Hillard, Hooper, P Lloyd, Rann and Webster.

**Locum Clerk:** Bob Blezzard

**Members of public;** Fourteen

#### Public Forum

1. Why has the slip on the Esplanade has still not been cleared? County officers believe it is still moving and until they are sure it has stopped it will not be cleared away. They promised to send a report and this will be chased up through the County Councillors and the Town Clerk.
2. There have been suggestions that a multi storey car park is to be built in the town. Is this correct? There is no knowledge of this. It is not in the Town Plan although some local people have suggested modifications.
3. Could we have a Park and Ride facility like West Cowes, say at Whippingham? This can be given consideration.
4. Has a new Town Plan being produced? There is no new Town Plan although some very nice drawings have been produced by local residents and the Isle of Wight Society and these have been shown at a meeting with Red Funnel. East Cowes Town Council has had no input. These plans do show a multi storey car park.
5. When will the meeting be held to discuss pedestrian charging on the floating bridge? 31<sup>st</sup> July was planned but unfortunately it was not convenient to West Cowes Town Council so we are now looking for a mutually convenient date after Cowes Week. East Cowes Town Council has already objected to pedestrians being charged on the floating bridge and there is nothing to stop members of the public calling a meeting.
6. Where are we with the Down House? It will be dealt with tonight. This meeting is being held because the last one went on beyond 9.30pm. We have six weeks to decide whether we want to go forward and then six months to get the finances together. We are not committing the Town Council to buying the Down House. Certain issues cannot be discussed tonight as they are sub judice.

#### 4456/14 APOLOGIES

None.

#### **4457/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

- (i) To receive declarations of pecuniary and non pecuniary interests. Councillor Hillard declared a non pecuniary interest by reason of being an Isle of Wight Councillor.
- (ii) To receive and consider granting any written requests for dispensations. None.

#### **4458/14 DOWN HOUSE TO DISCUSS ANY FURTHER ACTION**

Members had a full and frank discussion about whether to proceed with a Community Right to Bid application for the Down House. The six week period for submitting expressions of interest expires within the next week. This will not commit the Town Council to buy the Down House or to spend any money. A paper drawn up by the Town Clerk on the subject was before members. Estimates of the purchase price range from £200,000 to £300,000. It was noted that there is outline planning permission for three houses to be built on the site and it was understood that s 106 money will be available towards the purchase price. Concern was expressed that it may be necessary to employ a further member of staff to undertake the consultation exercise and also that the council already has substantial commitments to meet at the Town Hall and elsewhere. It was noted that at the Council's Annual Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014 the view had been expressed and minuted that the council was not in a financial position to proceed.

Councillor Barton moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Hillard:

“In principle to support a community purchase of the Down House site and undertake a public consultation and investigate a joint venture purchase of the site and the Isle of Wight Council be informed of the decision.”

On being put to the vote the motion was carried by 4 votes to 2 with 2 abstentions. It was therefore:

#### **RESOLVED**

In principle to support a community purchase of the Down House site and undertake a public consultation and investigate a joint venture purchase of the site and the Isle of Wight Council to be informed of this decision.

#### **4459/14 TO RECEIVE ANY REPORTS OR MATTERS RAISED FROM:**

(i) **The Mayor**

**East Cowes in Bloom:** The Mayor reported that he had recently presented the awards to the winners of East Cowes in Bloom. Lynne Kemp and her team are standing down after five years of organising the competition and the Mayor has a successor in mind.

**Public Toilets on the Esplanade:** The meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July had authorised vandal proof metal doors being fitted to the public toilets at the Esplanade. This work has now been completed. The siting of two portaloos on the esplanade has been approved and the work was completed earlier in the day. The provision of a third portaloos for Cowes Week is being investigated and the Cowes Week sponsor will be asked to provide the funding.

**Quotes for Non-Slip Flooring:** The Town Clerk had circulated quotes for the provision of non-slip flooring for the Town Hall and one quote was very competitive.

**RESOLVED**

That the lowest quote be accepted.

(ii) **Town Councillors**

**Town Council Grants Scheme:** Councillor Barton reported that at least two bids for grants had not been considered by the Town Council. It was noted that two dates have now being set for consideration of grants, July and January/February. The Mayor confirmed that the matter would be investigated.

**Allotments:** Councillor P Lloyd reported on a meeting of the Allotment Association where he had reported on the proposal for the Town Council to take over responsibility for the allotments and to appoint a part time member of staff. The meeting had endorsed the proposal. Councillor Barton reported that two allotment holders had been threatened with eviction. The Town Clerk will be asked to deal with this matter on her return from holiday.

**Spring Hill Woods Project:** Councillor Barton declared a personal interest in this item by reason of being a member of Natural Enterprise and took no part in the discussion or the vote. Councillor P Lloyd moved “that East Cowes Town Council is in principle supportive of the Springhill Woods Project.” On being put to the vote the motion was carried and it was therefore:

**RESOLVED:** That East Cowes Town Council is in principle supportive of the Springhill Woods project.

**Isle of Wight Ferry User Group:** Councillor Barton reported that a meeting was currently being held in Newport, called by Isle of Wight Councillor Dave Stewart to form an All Island Ferry User Group. Invitations had been sent to Ryde Town Council, Fishbourne Parish Council and to West Wight councils but not to east Cowes Town Council. It was understood also that Isle of

Wight councillors had not been invited.. Members agreed that enquiries should be made through Councillor Hillard to ascertain why East Cowes Town Council had not been invited.

(iii) **Isle of Wight Councillors**

Councillor Hillard reported that £14.9M Government funding has been secured for Southampton and East Cowes. £4M of this will be spent on a new floating bridge. In August the Executive will be voting to start the procurement process for improvements to the town centre to make it more attractive. Other funding in partnership with the Isle of Wight College and GKN will finance the training of young people and adults in high skilled jobs and composites.

**4460/14 STAFFING MATTERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw. *Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act (1960 s1(2))*

**Mayor**.....

**Date**.....

