

East Cowes Town Council

Mayor's Report 23rd July 2020

Welcome to a very different meeting than we are used to. Thank you, Councillors, for your patience when activating ZOOM, during the last couple of weeks. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk have been most helpful.

During COVID-19. I must thank, on behalf of us all, the sterling work undertaken by Cllr Michael Paler and Ward Councillor Karl Love and the team of volunteers who have so tirelessly given their time to help the needy, vulnerable and disabled and the many residents shielding during the last four months. This group of volunteers will still help and support those in need until at least September, and maybe even longer. Thank you and very well done everybody!

I have been keeping in touch with various residents in our community by phone and email. It has been good to talk and getting to know people a little better. I have managed to walk most days, weather permitting like many others. It has been fantastic to see residents out and about, taking time to exercise, whilst respecting social distancing. East Cowes is absolutely the best in observing and taking all necessary precautions in my opinion. Everyone deserves a huge hug and pats on the back.

It really makes me happy, seeing families having fun together along the seafront, interacting, giggling, and enjoying themselves now that some of the restrictions have now been lifted or relaxed. However, **we all still need to stay alert and take care**, so that we can continue in our efforts to get back to normality.

The toilets are operating but still restricted to numbers entering and the tennis courts are now available for matches. The play parks, outside gym, skate part and MUGA are up and running.

The East Cowes Town Council have had good news regarding the Community Hub/Library in receiving the requested public works loan, so we can now look forward to the build. Our first meeting since lock down has taken place with Sue Atkinson our Architect. We are now moving forward and at the July Town Council meeting we shall be hearing updates.

The Clerk and Library Co-ordinator are working on how the library service can be offered to users in a safe and controlled manner and we look forward to this report.

Extra litter bins and dog bins are to be located round the town very soon, now that Island Roads can begin works once more. Further signs requesting residents **not to feed the birds** will be posted along the Esplanade.

East Cowes Town Council are in discussion with Isle of Wight Council (IWC) regarding the Venture Quay site. IWC's Cllr Dave Stewart, Chris Ashman, Regeneration, Cllr Wayne Whittle and Cllr Barry Abraham will be meeting with us to discuss our concerns and issues regarding this purchase. Chris Ashman recently confirmed in writing that the Town Council will be given the opportunity for full consultation and input throughout the planning and development process of all these sites, will be fully consulted in the development of the refresh of the former SEEDA Masterplan for East Cowes and will be fully consulted in the redrafting, due to Covid -19 pandemic, of the IWC Housing Strategy. This will ensure that the East Cowes residents' representatives are heard every step of the way by working together.

Discussions will be taking place between East Cowes and Cowes Town Councils regarding Cowes Harbour Commission (CHC) and Cowes Town Waterfront Trust (CTWT), which will include Cowes Yacht Haven (CYH) merging. This will enable us to develop a collective response to the public consultation which has a 3rd August deadline.

The Floating Bridge (FB) has been undergoing various essential works. During the pandemic, the FB has maintained a service without the usual breakdowns. Hopefully, all will remain well over the August rush, when holiday makers return to enjoy our wonderful Island.

Since March, East Cowes Town Council staff, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk have been working from home, with one member of staff shielding. Obviously, it has been very different for everyone, in maintaining and working within the government guideline restrictions. The ECTC staff have been marvellous, all working extremely hard to get us back up and running as quickly as possible safely. THANKS to Sue, Claire, Colin, Alan, Jan and Gary by working together as a team, our wonderful employees soldiered on in keeping us all safe and within the law. We are very lucky to have this team of brilliance. Finally, thanks to all the Town Councillors for their continuing hard work, especially those working behind the scenes.

Jane

Cllr Michael Paler Report 27th June 2020

I.W.A.L.C - Zoom meeting with Bob Seely M.P

- Informed for future phase of action for the island. There may be the option to have a local lockdown if an area has a hotspot of infection of Coronavirus when the island is open to visitors from 4th July. If a visitor to the island becomes infected, they will have to return to their home for 14 days isolation.
- Speeding motorbikes and cars seem to be a problem on the island which is being followed up by police authority.
- Fly tipping has also been on the increase.
- Future plans for homes to be built will most probably be put on hold until IWC elections in May 2021. The government will be announcing a change to planning and building regulations in the next 2 weeks.

Volunteer Community Support Hub Forum - Zoom meeting Coordinators

- Shielding patients will pause from 1st August
- Medication and shopping to carry on till 31st July
- 7 Retailers will continue to give priority to shielding patients, who will have to contact if they are already registered to re-register to carry on after these dates.
- An outbreak plan is being put together if there is another spike or lockdown.
- Bus travel restrictions on travel for concessions will be put back in place on 29th June.
- Due to the number of requests that are being received, it has been suggested that some of the hubs join up to help if there is a shortfall of volunteers in their area. East Cowes and Whippingham had 139 requests last week. We also have 466 shielded patients.
- The local community of East Cowes and Whippingham still have a large amount of people who are very anxious and apprehensive about the pandemic and the future.
- Mental health will be a big issue going forward this could also include some volunteers