

# Councillor Reports

December 2019

## MAYOR'S REPORT - DECEMBER 2019

The town is looking festive with additional lights now highlighting the Town Hall.

Thank you to ECBA for arranging Christmas in the Town on 7<sup>th</sup> December. East Cowes Town Council was pleased to be able to finance this annual occasion and are happy that the community enjoyed it once again. I especially wish to thank the many people who got together making various decorations and those placing the decorations on various buildings etc. The Christmas tree at the back of the Co-op was a very good idea and looks splendid.

The pantomime is over for another year. Snow White was obviously a very popular choice as the tickets sold out very quickly. I gather from those who attended, that it was great; especially having people from the community taking part and the atmosphere was wonderful. Well done Amy White Theatre on another great success and to all those taking part!

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December, Cllr Paler and I visited Peter Morton, owner of Wight Shipyard upon his invitation. We had a good meeting, with the chance to look round the site and marvel at the many boats which the shipyard is turning out. The boats we saw will be sent to Malta on completion. The shipyard employs over a hundred people and several apprentices, who are undertaking a 5-year qualification. Wight Shipyard has a full order book and must be congratulated for creating local jobs and opportunities for young people to learn a trade. Mr Morton is undertaking some modifications to working practices to minimise noise levels. He has also employed a litter picker to keep the area around the site in a clean and litter free condition.

I attended the Planning Committee meeting re Crossways. After much deliberation the committee felt they did not have enough information regarding the housing development. The Planners architects have been asked to draw up plans which show how many houses, road widths, green spaces, school capacity and amenities etc. before it can be properly considered.

Martha James spoke on behalf of ECTC, against the outline planning application. Other parties were also against it and had time to speak. The ECTC will be keeping abreast of developments on this application and may consult DEFRA as the last time the Crossways field was rated by them it was deemed as grassland or arable, and not grazing land.

Thank you to my fellow Councillors for the work you have undertaken during the year. I thank all the staff for their hard work. I feel as a council we are most fortunate in having

such a good team. I wish everyone a very happy Christmas. I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead 2020.

Best wishes

*Jane Rann*

## Cllr Stephen Hendry Whippingham & Osborne December Report

### Crossways

As the ward councillor, I spoke up for local residents at the planning meeting. I am glad that the Councillors of the Isle of Wight Council planning Committee have voted unanimously to defer the Crossways application.

I will continue to represent the views of the town and will endeavour to try and keep our field a field. The fight is not over, and more work will be needed in trying to secure the will of the people.

More work is needed to convince the committee that East Cowes has already taken more than its fair share of housing. It also is premature for the site to be considered for planning consent whilst the Isle of Wight Council is reviewing overall housing numbers.

The speech I gave at the meeting is attached to this report

### Getting in contact

The best way to get in contact with me regarding Isle of Wight Council business is by emailing me on:

[Stephen.hendry@iow.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.hendry@iow.gov.uk)

### Merry Christmas

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2020. It seems every year gets busier than the last and 2020 does not look to be an exception!

### IWC Planning Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – Crossways Objection Cllr Stephen Hendry

As the Isle of Wight Councillor for Whippingham & Osborne, my role is to represent the views of residents.

This afternoon we have heard from East Cowes Town Council, Queensgate primary school and residents, all opposing the scheme. During my campaign to be elected, Crossways was the main issue raised. Every person I spoke to about it, was opposed to. I concur with what has been said so far.

East Cowes has taken more than its fair share of housing.

We are at capacity. Our infrastructure is being pushed to its limits.

I don't believe the Council should be bringing forward its own development scheme, without looking at the future developments in the area first. We need to take a holistic view.

Proposed development schemes in East Cowes include Norris Castle, Millfield Avenue and more than likely the current Red Funnel marshalling yards, not to mention Hawthorne meadows which is still under development, and still not being filled! Whippingham has the Folly Reach development where planning permission has been granted.

This should be ample housing to fulfil any additional need in the area. This scheme conflicts with SP2 of Island Plan Core Strategy.

It's time we said enough is enough.

In a week where the Island re-elected Bob Seely to be our MP, with an increased majority, taking over 56% of the vote, we should listen to what he has said on the issue surrounding Crossways.

"We are seeing these unwanted, ill-suited and unsustainable developments"

"New houses must be built to benefit not developers, but Island people. Patently unsuitable development should not be encouraged by arbitrary housing targets."

End quote.

Are you in the first few days of Bob's second term to pass a scheme which benefits the Isle of Wight Council and not the people of the Isle of Wight?

Clearly it is entirely the prerogative of the Isle of Wight Council to remove such a site from its Local Plan, and it is important that such a decision is made in its capacity as the local planning authority, with no regard for its position in respect of this site as both the landowner and its partnership with PSP / iWight Developments.

When the Isle of Wight Council brings forward a planning application it should be exemplary to others. The gold standard that becomes a template to other developers. The indicative scheme included with this application is not this. I have spoken with planners and one of the comments I have received was as follows:

"I have had to justify many a bad planning application in my time, but I would struggle with this. It is just rubbish. There isn't a single redeeming quality."

The people of East Cowes who I have spoken to want the field to remain a field. If the Council feels they must develop the site, then it must benefit the community. Just housing does not bring any benefit to the area.

Since the Independent administration highlighted this green space for development it has gone through numerous iterations. Each one becoming progressively worse. Removing mixed development that provided jobs and housing, to low density housing, to the indicative plan 165 home monstrosity.

The housing target has now been removed. However, without a maximum number I fear even more homes could be built here because, the density at the neighbouring site Hawthorne meadows is greater.

Without this upper band for the housing target it does not allow you, the members, to make an informed decision. On that basis the principle of the development should be rejected until such time as the scale of development is clear. You should not consent for the whole area which would allow for unlimited sprawl or depth.

I do understand that you need valid planning reasons to reject the scheme and thankfully there are plenty. For example:

- AAP1 – this application fails on numerous points including preventing coalescence, and infrastructure requirements.

- DM21 – East Cowes continues to expand whilst being restricted by a single road and a chain ferry. The town does not have the capacity within the current road infrastructure to cope now. As the operations of Red Funnel increase together with the developments that already benefit from planning permission, it is a genuine concern that there are simply too many people trying to get in and out of the town.
- DM11 – there is no more than lip service paid to the neighbouring heritage asset of Osborne House. This proposal certainly does not enhance the setting!
- SP1 – The site is non-developed land within the defined settlement boundary, but clearly fails to “... clearly demonstrate how it will enhance the character and context of the local area ....” Therefore, this application is contrary to SP1

I could go on.

In conclusion, I urge you, the Isle of Wight Councils Planning Committee to refuse this planning application. It is clear from what I have outlined above that there are strong material grounds – based on existing national and local planning policies – on which this application can be refused, and successfully defended at appeal.