

EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL

MAYOR'S REPORT

THURSDAY 18 March 2021

On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March I attended an Adult Mental Health Aware Half Day training session via a Zoom meeting. This course provides an introduction to mental health and the factors that can affect people's wellbeing. Twenty people attended from various walks of life, working in groups of four, when necessary. We discussed various mental health issues and types. This was a very enlightening and interesting topic. "MHFA England" is a social enterprise with a vision to improve mental health of the nation. Through our training, campaigning, and reinvesting, we equip people with the skills to support their own and others' wellbeing. We believe in zero stigma around mental health. We want mental health to be openly discussed and supported. Together, let's create a society where everyone can thrive." I would recommend this training, which is FREE, to all who have an interest in mental health.

During the last few weeks, I have been working with Michael Paler, Cllr Karl Love and other outside agencies in helping families and residents who are in difficulties providing food and paying their utility bills. As you are aware the council applied for CONNECT4COMMUNITIES grant from the IWC and were successful. The criterion for consideration is that the recipient is not in receipt of any other benefits. I am pleased to report that so far 11 families have been helped. This last lockdown has been very hard on residents, some being on furlough for a year now, hours of work cut, even losing their jobs and income stream.

Councillors should you be aware of anyone who may need support from this fund, please advise Michael Paler, Cllr Karl Love or me, as a referral form will need completing. All applications remain confidential. Thank you.

I met with the Facilities Officer to discuss the placing of the flower boat at the bottom of Cambridge Road on the shelter side of the road. This will be in place shortly, with spring flowers and an interpretation board for all to learn more about our seafront.

The building work for the new Community Hub will hopefully be starting very soon – exciting times! The tenders will be opened and decided upon very soon.

I hope Councillors, you will all pop down and take a look at the beautiful new stage curtains, as sadly the picture in the Town Crier did not do the curtains justice.

I thank the staff, on your behalf, for their hard work during this pandemic and hope that it will not be too long before we shall be back to some kind of 'normal'. It will be lovely to see the Town Hall open again, staff returned to their offices, and various activities happening in the hall.

*Jane Rann*

## **Councillor Palin**

### Report

Over the last month I have once again been reporting more fly-tipping and litter along Saunders Way, this is of course a great shame as it is becoming a regular occurrence. However, it has been positive to see the local media pick up on this and pushed the council to make a statement and pledge to clear up the fly-tipping on their land which I am pleased to say has been done.

Following my report to Island Roads back in January about the potentially abandoned caravan along Kingston Road, I am now pleased to say that this has been dealt with and at my last visit it was no longer there. This hopefully means we will not have it reappear in this area again.

On Thursday 4th March, I attended an IWALC organised meeting with the MP. There was a really fascinating discussion about potentially reintroducing beavers to the Isle of Wight, it is the Isle of Wight and Hampshire Wild life trust which are leading on this. Whilst they won't be reintroduced in our area, it could really benefit islanders on the Bay side of the Island to help manage the rivers and flooding.

Over the last month I have also been working with Isle of Wight Councillors, especially Cllr Peacey-Wilcox, on pressuring the council over the floating bridge and giving guidance to others to demand the questions that need answering. I also submitted a question to Scrutiny Committee last week asking the council for the predicted whole life cost of FB6 including current overspend. However, this question was not answered supposedly due to the on-going 'legal case'.

Finally, I would like to show my support for the move Island Roads has had over choice to no longer use herbicides and instead to remove them by hand and with traditional tools rather than toxic chemicals.