



## East Cowes Town Council

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Minutes of a meeting of **East Cowes Town Council** held at East Cowes Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes **Thursday 16th June 2022 at 6pm**

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### Present

**Chair:** Cllr Reardon (Mayor)

**Councillors:** Packham, Lake, Hendry, Love, Walker, Webster

**Clerk:** S Chilton, **Assistant Clerk:** C Gale

**Also present:** 2 members of the public, Cllr Michael Paler (Cowes Town Council), Martha and Daniel James (Plan Research Ltd), Chris Ashman (IWC Director of Regeneration)

### Public Forum

- A member of the public congratulated the Town Council on the inclusive and accessible Platinum Jubilee celebrations organised in the town over the 4-day bank holiday weekend.

Meeting opened at 6.05pm

77/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Cllr Palin.

78/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2.1 Cllr Hendry declared a non-pecuniary interest as IW Ward Councillor. Cllr Love declared a non-pecuniary interest as IW Ward Councillor and as a member of the East Cowes Community Partnership and East Cowes Business Association. Cllr Reardon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the East Cowes Community Partnership and East Cowes Business Association.

2.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

79/22 MINUTES

The minutes of a meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were approved and signed.

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

80/22 FLOATING BRIDGE

The Clerk presented figures from the Isle of Wight Council for the operation of the Floating Bridge from January to May 2022. Cllr Love stated that Cllr Palin had asked a question at the IWC Scrutiny Committee about the current position with the Floating Bridge. Arbitration is ongoing and there is no timescale set.

81/22 INTERNAL AUDIT 21/22

The Clerk presented the Internal Audit Report and checklist. The findings were noted, and no recommendations were made by the Internal Auditor. Cllr Reardon asked why no staff were in the pension scheme. The Clerk confirmed that everyone had been given the opportunity to join but declined.

**Resolved:** To note and approve the Internal Audit Report.

## 82/22 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 21/22

The Clerk presented the Annual Governance Statement 21/22 (Section 1). It was signed by the Chair.

**Resolved:** To approve the Annual Governance Statement 21/22.

## 83/22 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 21/22

The Clerk presented the Accounting Statements 21/22 (Section 2) and explained the variances. It was signed by the Chair.

**Resolved:** To approve the Accounting Statements 21/22.

## 84/22 EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS 21/22

The dates for the Exercise of Public Rights were set for Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July. This will be displayed on the Town Council noticeboard and on the website.

**Resolved:** To confirm the start date for the Exercise of Public Rights as Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

## 85/22 FINANCE

9.1 The Council considered payments made including by Direct Debit and BACS as presented for May.

9.2 The Council noted the bank reconciliations for April and May.

**Resolved:** To approve and ratify payments including Direct Debit and BACS and to note the bank reconciliations.

## 86/22 COUNCIL POLICIES

10.1 The Council considered the Internal Audit Policy.

10.2 The Council considered an amendment to Standing order 5J to limit the Mayor and Deputy Mayor term of office to no longer than 2 years in a 4-year term and for part years, falling prior to an annual meeting, not to count in this calculation. Cllr Love abstained from the vote due to his current position as Deputy Mayor.

**Resolved:** To approve the Internal Audit Policy and to amend Standing Order 5J which currently states:

“The first item of business at the Annual meeting shall be the election of the Mayor, who shall serve for a period of no longer than 2 years and will not be eligible for office for two years after. The re-election of the Mayor will take place annually. Following the election of the Mayor of the Council and Deputy Mayor of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:” to be amended to read “The first item of business at the Annual meeting shall be the election of the Mayor, who can serve for a period of no longer than 2 years in a 4 year period. The 4-year period to begin from the date of the first term of office elected as Mayor at the Annual meeting. The re-election of the Mayor will take place annually. The second item of business at the Annual meeting shall be the election of the Deputy Mayor, who can serve for a period of no longer than 2 years in a 4-year period. The 4-year period to begin from the date of the first term of office elected as Deputy Mayor at the Annual meeting. The re-election of the Deputy Mayor will take place annually. Following the election of the Mayor of the Council and Deputy Mayor of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:”

## 87/22 HALL HIRE DISPENSATION

11.1 The Council considered a request for dispensation of hall hire and keyholder charges amounting to £407.50 for the Indonesian Independence Day celebrations to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August 2022. Cllr Love noted that this had been a wonderful occasion last year and this year there will be more opportunities to involve the local community in the event. The Clerk confirmed the event does fall within the Town Council Dispensation Policy.

11.2 **Resolved:** To grant the request for dispensation.

## 88/22 THE EAST SIDE CURVE

12.1 The Council considered whether signage should be displayed on the exterior of the East Side Curve. The Clerk advised that the IWC Tree Officer has recommended the species of replacement trees along the Osborne Rd side of the building should be Dawyck Beech.

12.2 **Resolved:** To display exterior signage in a visible position.

## 89/22 REPORTS

13.1 Clerks report

The Clerk presented a report from The Footprint Trust. They have helped 2328 people over the last year to save £280k, and conducted 446 home visits or telephone appointments. They continue to work with other local organisations such as the Foodbank and Home Start.

The Clerk shared the annual report from Gift to Nature on Castle Copse.

Many thanks and some photos have been received from members of the public who attended the Jubilee celebrations organised by the Town Council. The staff were thanked at the staff meeting today.

Congratulations were passed on to Cllr Lake for the completion of phase 1 of the landslip project.

### 13.2 Mayors report

The Mayor's report was noted.

### 13.3 IW Ward Councillors reports

Cllr Love noted the great turnout in East Cowes for the Jubilee events. There is no news on when the Norris Castle planning application will be considered by the Isle of Wight Council. The Maresfield car parking charges decision will be made by IWC Cabinet next week. The new Food Pantry is doing good work but there is a difficult time ahead. New funding from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government has been announced for community assets. The manager of the caravan park has approached Cllr Love about having some fireworks during Cowes week.

Cllr Hendry stated that Stage 5 was beginning at Saunders Way

### 13.4 Town Councillors reports

Cllr Webster stated that the old doctor's surgery, which is now derelict, would be a good location for a much-needed car park. Cllr Love offered to contact IWC for further information about these premises.

Cllr Packham attended a Teams Meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Forum and received updates on climate change, food security and the island landscape. 23 schools have joined the Eco Schools Programme. 9 new electrical vehicle charging points have been agreed. Further progress is being made with the relaunch of the Green Impact Programme, seagrass restoration, solar panels, tree planting, e-cargo bike trial and the de-carbonisation of IWC buildings.

## 90/22 TOWN PLAN REVIEW

Martha James noted her concerns about how the Waterfront Regeneration Steering Group is functioning as no papers are received in advance of meetings and few of the other stakeholders attend the meetings. No final plan for the waterfront has been presented. Martha presented a review of the Town Plan noting the progress on each policy and what the Town Council might wish to consider going forward. In summary policies H, I, L and M are easily achievable.

In regard to the LCWIP Daniel James stated that he had attended a useful Zoom meeting with the transport consultants employed on the Levelling Up project. It may be possible to access funding if the East Cowes section from the Red Funnel exit to the Chain Ferry can be added to the National Cycle Network to achieve a continuous route from Reading to the west bank of the Medina and on to Shide, Sandown and Shanklin. It would be best to focus on the 1-way system in Castle Street to achieve this. There are 3 options for getting from East Cowes to Newport. The first to make a tree lined route along the east bank of the Medina which would only be possible with the support of the landowners and could be very costly due to having to purchase private land. The second via the racecourse roundabout is unpopular and considered less safe. The third option is a new river crossing for pedestrians and cyclists. This would be the most feasible option and could tie in with an architectural competition. A crossing that is dependable and easy to use would be preferable and aid the visitor economy and regeneration. A road bridge in a location further up the river has been considered before but would be too damaging to conservation as well as being very expensive. There is possibly scope for a crossing for cycling, walking and emergency vehicles to replace the Floating Bridge. As regards the coastal path, he had met with Natural England and the Rights of Way Team. The section through East Cowes is still under consideration. The coastal path is aimed at recreational use and giving access to the countryside and would most likely have a gravel path not the smooth tarmac surface for full accessibility required for the Department for Transport and LCWIP.

Chris Ashman arrived at the meeting and was advised that the Town Plan had been reviewed. He stated that the scoping study was completed in September and there are 2 zones. Consultation has taken place on the Levelling Up Project; transport consultants have been appointed and are due to provide an interim report next week and a full report at the end of September. Property Investment Plan funding has been sourced to employ additional regeneration team managers from September. They will be responsible for Communities and Place, Support for Business and People and Skills.

Chris Ashman stated the works to the southern elevation of the Columbine Building will be completed in the next few weeks, the marine engineering works at Wight Shipyard were completed at the end of February and further works on the land side will be completed by the end of the year. UKSA is the match funder for the Barracks with works expected to commence in the spring. 5 expressions of interest have been received for the housing schemes on the Maresfield Road and Albany Factory sites.

Councillors reiterated concerns raised by Martha James about the lack of attendance by other stakeholders and no papers being sent out before the Waterfront Steering Group meetings. Councillors also felt it would be useful to have the WRP as a standing item on Full Council agendas and for the council to receive minutes of the meetings. Cllr Lake stated that for the Town Council to make a meaningful contribution the dates for the WRP meetings need to tie in with Council meetings.

**Resolved:** That:

- WRP to be a standing item on Town Council agendas
- Information to be discussed at the WRP meetings to be sent through from you to the Town Council, by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month, to enable it to be discussed at Town Council meetings
- WRP meetings to be scheduled after the date of the Town Council meetings, which take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month, to enable feedback from councillors
- Minutes of the WRP meetings to be shared with the Town Council
- Venture Quays meeting will be rescheduled to take place by Zoom after the WRP meetings

91/22            EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that it is in the public interest that the press and public are excluded. (1960 Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act s1 (2)).

**Resolved:** To approve the confidential minutes from the Full Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed:

Dated: