



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 29th September 2022 at 6pm**

Present

Chair: Cllr Reardon (Mayor)

Councillors: Packham, Lake, Hendry, Love, Webster, Palin

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

Also present: 4 members of the public, Inspector Andy McDonald

Public Forum

- In relation to item 5 on the agenda a member of the public thanked the Town Council for the support provided so far and read out a request for the continuation of independent bathing water testing when it is not monitored by the Environment Agency who test from May to September. A question was raised about whether the DEFRA noticeboard will be in place for the 2023 bathing season. The Clerk has persistently been chasing the IWC for new about the noticeboard.
- A beach clean will be taking place on 23rd October at 3pm.

Meeting opened at 6.10pm

101/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Cllr Walker.

102/22 HAMPSHIRE POLICE

The Mayor welcomed Andy McDonald Neighbourhood Inspector for the East Cowes Area to the meeting. The Inspector was a local beat officer in East Cowes from 2004-8 and knows the area well. His role is to support the community and make the area inhospitable for criminals. Priorities are to deal with anti-social behaviour in and around the town and residential areas, traffic issues, education and working with partners such as Housing Associations and children's services. The East Side Curve will be a very good venue for surgeries and outreach. Some work needs to be done to coordinate with policing provision in Cowes to engage with Medina and Cowes High Schools as they serve both communities.

In response to a question from Cllr Packham the Inspector responded that the number of patrols is dictated by the resources available and the only officers that take home police vehicles at night are the dog handlers as they are responsible for the dogs outside working hours.

Cllr Love stated that there is a problem with shoplifting in the town, anti-social gatherings including near the floating bridge late at night and drivers in residential areas with loud car exhausts.

The Inspector stated his team consists of 1 sergeant, 7 constables and 5 PCSOs and the designated PCSO for East Cowes is PC Katie Berry. He will ask her to call in. When responding to incidents they have to prioritise the most

serious cases. Compared to 10 years ago there are more frequent reports of knives and other weapons. It is important that all incidents are reported as they will be dealt with and this will ensure more effective long term problem solving. The Inspector agreed to send contact details to the Clerk for circulation to Councillors to enable direct reporting given the difficulties sometimes experienced in reporting through the 101 number.

Cllr Webster asked about provision of Neighbourhood Watch. The Inspector advised this is a community led scheme and will provide details of how to instigate a scheme. He will also look into Community Speedwatch as the Town Council has previously been advised that York Avenue is the only road in the town that may qualify for the scheme but it is problematic due to parking issues.

A member of the public who is a representative on the Independent Advisory Group for Hampshire and the IW, an organisation that can raise complaints with the police, stated that they want to form a youth IAG. They need to raise their profile and would be willing to go into schools.

103/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

3.1 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.

3.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

104/22 MINUTES

The minutes of a meeting held on 21st July 2022 were approved and signed.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of 21st July 2022.

105/22 BATHING WATER TESTING

The Clerk read out an email received from the group who have been collecting the bathing water samples requesting the Town Council continue to fund testing until at least February 2023 and apply again for the Solent Bathing Water Quality Award for 2023. The Clerk advised that £350 had originally been allocated. £120 from this is still available would cover 2 more tests. An additional £240 would be needed to enable testing through to March 2023. Cllr Love declared a non-pecuniary interest as his partner is a regular sea swimmer. Cllr Lake also declared a non-pecuniary interest as a sea swimmer.

Resolved: To fund the additional bathing water testing until March 2023 at a cost of £240.

106/22 FLOATING BRIDGE

Operating statistics were provided by IWC to the end of August. Cllr Palin stated that the floating bridge was out of service again over the last 2 days due to problems with the hydraulics. It was confirmed by IWC and Cllr Love that the mediation process has ended but no information can be published due to legal constraints.

107/22 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME CONSULTATION

The Council considered the information about the Council Tax reduction Scheme. As they are IW Councillors Cllrs Love and Hendry did not take part in voting. The Clerk advised that an extension to the deadline for responding to the consultation had been agreed due to the national mourning period.

Resolved: To respond to the consultation supporting an increase in the level of support to 70%, raising the current earning disregard to £30, decreasing the non-dependent disregard to £1 per week, adding a local welfare payment disregard to mirror housing benefit regulations and reserving the right to disregard any increase as thought necessary to protect entitlement and not to support alternatives one to four.

108/22 FINANCES

8.1 The Council approved and agreed payments as presented for September.

8.2 The Council considered payments made including by Direct Debit and BACS as presented for September.

8.3 The Council noted the bank reconciliations for July and August.

8.4 The Council considered opting out of the SAAA central auditor appointment arrangements for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27.

8.5 Resolved: To approve and ratify payments including Direct Debit and BACS and to note the bank reconciliations and to continue as part of the SAAA sector led auditor appointment regime.

109/22 WATERFRONT REGENERATION

The Clerk referred to the report from Martha James from the last meeting. Once again no papers had been received prior to the meeting. The Clerk will write to Chris Ashman (IWC Director of Regeneration) to restate that information is needed in advance and the Town Council need to be involved. Cllr Love and Cllr Reardon met with Vicky Sampson of the Environment Agency who would like to attend a Council meeting to present the latest information on flood prevention in East Cowes. Architects ERMCo have suggested that the site would include 1 accessible toilet and not 3 as previously put forward. Some funding from Isle Access may be available towards this. Cllr Lake stated that the public realm on the Esplanade needed to provide a multi-functional space. Cllr Love stated the design with costings needed to be presented to the Full Council. Cllr Reardon stated that this needs to happen before the next Waterfront meeting on 25th October.

110/22 GRANT APPLICATIONS

10.1 The clerk confirmed that £5230 is still available for grants this financial year. Cllr Love declared an interest in the VCSE application due this application was put forward by Adult Social Care at IWC. The Council considered grant applications and requests for donations from Victim Support, East Cowes Crafters, East Cowes Business Association (ECBA), IW Games Association, the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Network at IWC. The VCSE application letter did not contain enough detail. The network can submit a new application in April 2023. Community Spirited withdrew their application as the project has now been completed.

10.2 Resolved: To award grants of £300 to Victim Support, £250 to East Cowes Crafters, £500 to IW Games Association, and a donation of £1250 to ECBA towards Christmas events.

111/22 COMMUNITY ORCHARD

11.1 The council considered naming the recently planted community orchard after the late queen and placement of a wooden plaque.

11.2 **Resolved:** To agree to the placement of a Queen Elizabeth II plaque at the community orchard.

112/22 REPORTS

12.1 Clerks report

The Clerk reported that several staff and councillors have now completed the Citizens Advice Bureau Advice First Aider signposting course. The external audit had been completed and the required notices and information has been displayed on the noticeboard and website. The report on the Platinum Jubilee Trail has been received. 102 players took part. A website called "The Daily Moos" has requested that they are added to the Town Council press release circulation list. Early footfall figures for The East Side curve show that around 250 per week are visiting.

12.2 Mayors report

The Mayors report was noted. Cllr Reardon added that East Cowes Sailing Club and UKSA had expressed an interest in the laying of matting in the area near the tennis courts for wheelchair user access and launching dinghies.

12.3 IW Ward Councillors reports

Cllr Love had met with Cowes Harbour Commission over safety issues. There was particular concern over jet ski incidents over the summer. Plans have been drawn up for proposals for extending the slipway at Albany Green. The Environment Agency are continuing with funding household flood defences. Cllr Love has requested support from the legal team at IWC following continued approaches from the Norris Castle developers. IWC will be voting on the Draft Island Planning Strategy next week. Long queues were noted for covid boosters at the fire station today. Cllr Hendry has been dealing with local issues including flooding, speeding and rats at Vectis Gardens.

12.4 Town Councillors reports

Cllr Lake attended a meeting with ERMCo and the Waterfront Regeneration Meeting. The Esplanade and Landslip Community group have received an initial report from Geotech relating to possible future works on the landslip area, more detailed reports may be needed.

Cllr Palin advised that local charity MadAid will be holding a 10th anniversary event in the Town Hall. Cllr Palin has assisted with recent events at the town hall including the market and screening of the state funeral. Traffic

Consultants Markides continue to work on the traffic plan for the town. The Town Council display at the IWALC showcase event generated a lot of interest in The East Side Curve. Aspire are keen to set up a wellbeing group in the Town. Cllr Palin contacted Barratts about overgrown vegetation. It was confirmed that Saunders Way will be signed off by December 2023.

Cllr Webster had observed a camper van regularly parked on the Esplanade car park. The clerk advised that the owner has been contacted. Now the Town Council is responsible for the car park the old IWC signage will be replaced.

113/22 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 exclude the press and public.

Meeting closed at 8.43pm

Signed:

Dated: