



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S HALL

7PM

20 FEBRUARY 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Steve Stubbings (Mayor), David George, Debby Robinson, Harry Rees, Jim Morgan, Jim Toogood, Mark Robertson-Walker, Jason Mack, Simon Haytack.

NO. SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

- a) The Mayor opened the Public Forum with 11 members of the public present. County Councillor Susan Scoccia was also present.
- b) A member of the public said that the Central Car Park bus shelter needed cleaning

The meeting started at 7.03pm

14/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carol Jones.

15/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Harry Rees declared a personal interest as Chair of the Ventnor Social Club.
Councillor Jim Morgan declared a personal interest in Ventnor Community Bus CIC

16/12 CO-OPTION OF TOWN COUNCILLOR

Following a report from the Mayor of the meeting seven Members had with Leigh Geddes in response to her expression of interest in the advertised vacancy for St Lawrence it was:

unanimously resolved that:

Leigh Geddes be co-opted to the Town Council in the current vacancy for the St Lawrence Ward.
At the invitation of the Mayor, and having signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form, Councillor Leigh Geddes joined the Town Councillors at the table.

17/12 ISLE OF ARTS PRESENTATION

- a) At the invitation of the Mayor, Chris Bonney from the Isle of Arts team gave a short presentation on the programme for their second Festival, on 20-22 April 2012.
- b) He outlined the development and purpose of Isle of Arts to bring money and optimism to the town and reminded the meeting of the success of last year's inaugural event.
- c) He listed the main acts already booked for this year's event from 20-22 April with an eye to attracting people from off the Island and well as residents of it. Extensive publicity was already in operation including close links with Island schools through its outreach programme.
- d) He stressed that the Community Interest Company responsible for the event was a not-for-profit organisation and was planning to register as a charity as the Isle of Arts Foundation.
- e) He asked for the endorsement of the Town Council's support where it was needed.
- f) Councillor Debby Robinson thanked the organisers for a very impressive line-up and the Mayor expressed the appreciation of the whole Town Council for the work that had already gone into the event and the significance it would have for the town.

18/12 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The minutes of the Town Council meeting of 9 January 2012, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings of 9 January and 9 February 2012 were received.

19/12 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 January 2012 and a list of payments made during January 2012.
- b) An accompanying paper set out the related expenditure in relation to the Budget lines for the year to 31 January 2012 with variances from year-to-date budget provision.

20/12 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2012/13

The Mayor introduced the Budget for 2012/13 and the Precept needed to fund it and briefly outlined the background to it.

It was resolved with one abstention:

That the Budget for 2012/13 as presented be formally adopted, the Precept for 2012/13 be set at £135,000 and the Isle of Wight Council be informed accordingly.

21/12 ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT FUND APPLICATION

Having considered the project set out in the Economic Development paper for this meeting:

it was unanimously resolved:

that the Economic Development project as set out in the accompanying paper be submitted to the Isle of Wight Council as an application for grant funding in a total of £12,477 from their Environmental Improvement Fund.

22/12 GREEN VENTNOR

- a) Councillor David George introduced this item outlining four developments proposed by the Green Group for immediate implementation, as follows:
- b) *Sculpture trail*: the introduction of a trail of sculptures by a local artist from recycled beach and other materials between Wheelers Bay and Bonchurch Bay including three workshops.
It was unanimously resolved:
that the proposal be funded up to a total of £500 from the Green Ventnor current year budget following agreement from the Isle of Wight Council to the placement of the elements.
- c) *Beanstalks Project*: the project was described by Councillor Leigh Geddes as prompted by work in the West Yorkshire town of Todmorden; one application of that is the use of black boxes as planters based on the redundant recycling black boxes that the Botanic Gardens would fill with compost.
It was unanimously resolved:
that the proposal be funded up to a total of £500 from next year's Green Ventnor Budget subject to permissions as required from the Isle of Wight Council.
- d) *Botanic Garden project*: discussions with the Botanic Gardens have already resulted in practical proposals for working together including a scheme for providing shopkeepers with a hanging basket for just £10, an offer to plant up the areas around the Ventnor gateway signs after the addition of a board to them stating *home of the Botanic Gardens*, and further discussions about planning in other areas of the town using semi-arid plants of South African or Mediterranean origin.

Councillor Debby Robinson stressed the importance of providing water butts as part of the scheme.

It was unanimously resolved that:

- i) these proposals be welcomed and supported.
 - ii) the cost of adding signposting boards to the current Ventnor gateway signs be established and reported to the next Town Council meeting; and
 - iii) discussions be continued around the proposals for an approach to flower decorations in the town more reflective of the presence of and partnership with the Botanic Gardens;
 - iv) encouragement be given to sustainable watering such as water butts;
 - v) Ventnor Town Council's financial contribution will be up to a maximum of the £1,500 allocated in previous budgets for flower decorations in the town now included in the Green Ventnor allocation for 2012/13.
- e) *Dog Nuisance*: the proposal for the removal of dog excrement from the most polluted areas on the basis of four hours paid work a week.

Councillor Mark Robertson-Walker argued against the proposal on the grounds that it might actually encourage dog owners not to clear up after their animals and enforcement should be effective.

Councillor Debby Robinson apologised that she had not completed her poster/sticker campaign and said that she would do so as soon as she was assured that they would not be removed.

It was resolved with two abstentions that:

- i) the Town Council employs an individual for four hours a week and provides appropriate equipment and jacket at the earliest opportunity funded from the 2012/13 budget provision of £2,000;
- ii) the issue of enforcement be raised at IWALC by Councillor Harry Rees; and
- iii) the Town Clerk is asked to inform the Isle of Wight Council of this decision and remind them that it has been necessary due to the failure of their enforcement action.

23/12 TOWN COUNCIL STRUCTURES

- a) A paper detailing the reasons for an amendment to the Staffing Committee's Terms of Reference had been previously circulated to Members together with a proposed redrafting of them.
- b) The paper also included proposals for the establishment of Working Groups to support the new Community Capacity building and Economic Development projects.

It was unanimously resolved that:

- i) the revised Terms of Reference for the Staffing Committee as presented to this meeting be formally adopted with immediate effect and increase its membership to four by the appointment to it of Councillor Jim Toogood;
- ii) the informal group of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Jason Mack and Carol Jones that has been working with the Town Clerk in the planning and preparation of the programme of meetings be formally recognised as a Town Council Working Group to advise and support the Town Clerk in the development and delivery of the Community Capacity Building project; and
- iii) a Town Council and Economic Development Working Group to include advice to the Town Clerk on the planning and progress of the Economic Development project be established with a membership of Councillors Debby Robinson, Jason Mack, Harry Rees, Simon Haytack and Jim Morgan.

24/12 SIGNAGE PROJECT

- a) Councillor David George introduced this item, describing the arrangements for the project following his discussions with the Head of Business and Charity at St Catherine's School.
 - b) Students will photograph and map every sign in the town's central area and report to the Town Council's May meeting.
 - c) The project was welcomed by Members.
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25/12 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Town Clerk's report on the initial programme of four meetings in connection with its emerging Community Engagement Strategy had been previously circulated to Members together with summaries of the outcomes from them.

26/12 WAR MEMORIAL

- a) The Town Clerk's report on the restoration of the War Memorial requested by the December meeting of the Town Council had been previously circulated to Members.
- b) It was noted that the bore hole work had been completed, the Expression of Interest in funding from the War Memorials Trust had been positively received and the anticipated cost of the complete restoration including underpinning was of the order of £30,000.
- c) Councillor Jim Toogood assured the Town Council that the estimates were based on detailed paperwork. Councillor Harry Rees commented that the restoration work could not be completed in time for this November.

It was unanimously resolved:

that the cost of engaging the required Conservation Architect to prepare a schedule of works as part of any grant application to the War Memorials Trust be established and reported to the next meeting of the Town Council.

27/12 IWALC REPORT

- a) Councillor Harry Rees reported on the latest developments in meetings of the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils.
 - b) He reported that he had asked the Isle of Wight Council how many town and parish councils had not taken up the offer of funding from the Economic Improvement Fund.
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28/12 OUR ISLAND, OUR FUTURE

- a) Councillor Harry Rees introduced his report that had been previously circulated to Members.
 - b) He said that it had been prompted by the Minister's statement on his visit that the Island's situation did not reflect the statistics on its condition. He had arranged a meeting with the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce and had circulated the document to political leaders and the media.
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29/12 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- a) The Town Clerks' report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members.
 - b) The detail referred to Grit Bins, Quality Council re-accreditation, the lease of the Outfit land, sale of Winter Gardens items and management of the Putting Green.
 - c) It was suggested that the Isle of Wight Council be asked to donate the licences.
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PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum

- a) A member of the public welcomed the proposed developments with the Botanic Gardens while expressing the hope that strong colours would be retained.
 - b) Councillor Susan Scoccia urged the meeting to make full use of her and Councillor Chris Welsford in representing local matters to the Isle of Wight Council.
 - c) She went on to ask about the progress of the planned use of Hawk flying as a pigeon deterrent.
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The Meeting closed at 9.10pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE