



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S HALL

7PM

10 NOVEMBER 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Jason Mack (Mayor), Leigh Geddes, Steve Stubbings, Brian Lucas, Tony Marvin, Harry Rees, Ken Knapman, Ed Gouge, Stewart Blackmore, Jim Toogood.

NO. SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions or comments at this time.

151/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence as all Members were present.

152/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Steve Stubbings declared an interest as a County Councillor.

Councillor Harry Rees declared an interest as Chair of Ventnor Social Club.

153/14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 13 October 2014, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council's Planning Committee meeting of 14 October were received.

154/14 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting (88/14) had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 October 2014 and a list of payments made during October 2014.
- b) An accompanying paper set out expenditure in relation to the Budget lines for the 2014/15 financial year to date with variances from year-to-date budget provision showing an underspend over the first seven months of the year of £7,231 against Budget.
- c) It was noted that the October of expenditure of £66,527 reflected the payment of the fifth invoice from D N Associates Ltd for their work on Salisbury Gardens in a total of £40,355 including £6,726 of reclaimable VAT,
- d) It was also noted that the Town Council was holding a total of £68,050 on behalf of the group working to retain the Methodist Church as a venue for the Boxing Club that is not included in the bank account totals above.
- e) Councillor Stewart Blackmore asked if interest was being earned on the boxing club funds and the Clerk replied that those funds, along with the majority of the Town Council's funds were held in a deposit account with the latter being transferred to the current account as required.
- f) Councillor Steve Stubbings requested that a report on progress with the venue for the boxing club be included on next month's Agenda.

It was unanimously resolved that:
the Finance Report be accepted.

155/14 CO-OPTION TO VACANCY

- a) Report 89/14 recorded progress with the Co-option process to fill the current vacancy for the St Lawrence Ward as agreed at the last meeting.
- b) It was noted that just one valid Expression of Interest had been received, from St Lawrence resident Delian Backhouse-Fry, and that following their meeting with her the informal group of Members unanimously recommended to the Town Council that she be appointed.

It was resolved that:

Delian Backhouse-Fry be appointed as a Member for the St Lawrence Ward.

156/14 OUR PLACE DRAFT OPERATIONAL PLAN

- a) A copy of the current draft (version 1.2) of the Draft Operational Plan due to be submitted to Locality by 21 November had been previously circulated to Members.
- b) The Clerk reported that copies had also been supplied for comment to both the Vision Group Co-ordinators and the participating Agencies with a request to all that comments be received by Friday 14 November.
- c) Councillor Ken Knapman commented how much work had gone into it and how well it reflects the process that has gone into its development; he particularly welcomed the description of the proposed uses of the lower ground floor area of Salisbury Gardens.
- d) Councillor Steve Stubbings endorsed those comments and said he wanted to record his appreciation of the quality of the document and his thanks to the team responsible for it.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

- i) notes the content of the document and the Draft status of the circulated copy;
 - ii) agrees the process and next steps for its completion identified in Report 90/14; and
 - iii) asks that comments on it by Members be passed to the team responsible for the document for its final drafting - the Mayor, Nicky Cox and David Bartlett - by Friday 14 November.
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157/14 SALISBURY GARDENS

- a) Report 91/14 summarised the latest developments with the renovation and refurbishment of Salisbury Gardens including a statement of the anticipated cost of the works at their expected completion within the next three weeks.
 - b) It also identified the five businesses that had already taken up residence and the three more that would be in occupancy by the end of the year.
 - c) Arrangements for a celebration event of the completion of the works and the building's return to the service of the town on 17 January were welcomed.
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158/14 VENTNOR CENTRAL

- a) Councillor Stewart Blackmore welcomed the Town Clerk's report on the early stages of the Town Council's management of the building previously known as Ventnor Youth Centre and supported the proposal for the funding of its operational costs until the 31 March 2015.
- b) Councillor Jim Toogood underlined the importance of the ongoing assessment of the fire risk the building presented.
- c) Report 92/14 for this meeting made the case for funding the anticipated half year operational costs of £5,000 from the ring-fenced provision in the current budget for taking on services discontinued by the Isle of Wight Council.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

- i) agrees to an allocation of £5,000 from the ring-fenced funding in the current budget to meet the operational costs of Ventnor Central to 31 March 2015; and
 - ii) asks its Clerk to prepare more detailed financial projections for its operation in 2015/16 as part of the Town Council's Budget process.
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159/14 YOUTH OFFER

- a) Report 93/14 summarised the first five weeks of the Youth Offer programme funded by the Isle of Wight Council to enable the growth of additional opportunities for young people in the town.
- b) The Town Council's new staff to lead and support the programme – Youth Opportunities Officer Laura Reid and Youth Worker Charlotte Denness - had already established strong foundations for their work.
- c) Attached to the Report were the Clerk's proposals for the management of the funding for the project and its allocations to the Town Council's three partner organisations in it and Councillor Harry Rees said that he had every confidence in them.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

adopts the proposed financial processes as set out in the Report.

160/14 PUTTING GREEN

- a) Report 94/14 identified the current stage of negotiations with the Isle of Wight Council about the future management of the Putting Green.
- b) Councillor Steve Stubbings made it clear that he would not be voting on this item.
- c) Councillor Stewart Blackmore commented on the quality of the current operator's service as he had experienced it personally recently.
- d) Councillor Brian Lucas also referred to the excellent service Jacky Tiller and her team had provided through this season and said that she was very keen to continue with it.

It was resolved that the Town Council:

is willing to take on a lease from the Isle of Wight Council for the management of the Ventnor Park toilets in exchange for that Council's willingness to match the term with the Town Council's right to continue the management of the Putting Green.

161/14 MINISTER'S LETTER

- a) The reply from Coastal Communities Minister Penny Mordaunt to the Mayor's letter to her requesting that similar government assistance for resolving the issues following from the recent Undercliff landslip to that provided to Eastbourne following the fire damage to its pier was attached to Report 95/14
- b) Councillor Harry Rees said it was important to ask her to clarify her comments about the potential for assistance within the current PFI Contract since that would not be possible.
- c) Councillor Stewart Blackmore said that he saw no point in continuing the correspondence as equally bland responses would be received.
- d) Councillor Stubbings supported Councillor Harry Rees's stance on the matter, arguing that the Mayor should write to her again to give her more detail of the damage along with an invitation to her to view it personally. He said he failed to see how she could possibly suggest that this was a straightforward highways issue.
- e) Council Ken Knapman agreed and asked that the support of the Island's MP, Andrew Turner, be requested for the second letter.

It was resolved that the Town Council:

asks the Mayor to reflect these expressed concerns in a further letter to the Minister.

162/14 ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (IWALC)

- a) Councillor Harry Rees reported that he had met with representatives of the Isle of Wight Council to discuss the response from the Solent Local Economic Partnership on the Assisted Area Status designation for the Island and now proposed to refer the issue back to Business Secretary Vince Cable.
 - b) He went on to remind the meeting that in the South East Plan the whole Island was
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designated for Assisted Area status.

163/14 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

- a) The Town Clerk's report – 98/14 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions.
 - b) It included the successful start of Florence Barrett to the Admin Support apprenticeship post and her attendance at this meeting was welcomed.
 - c) Initial discussions about the future of the No. 31 Bus service after the end of the current financial year were also reported and Councillor Steve Stubbings commented that he felt there would be likely to be room for negotiation with the Isle of Wight Council about future funding and that the Town Council's track record in collaborative working would be a positive in those discussions.
 - d) Councillor Harry Rees asked that the Town Council monitors the impact of the changes to the emergency grant funding currently provided from central government to the Isle of Wight Council.
 - e) The Report also included details of the recruitment process for the successor Community Development Officer post.
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PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum but there were no questions or comments from the public at this stage.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.10PM

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE