



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S HALL

7PM

14 APRIL 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

NO. SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

- a) The Mayor opened the Public Forum with 6 members of the public present.
- b) A member of the public referred to concern about the absence of sufficient signage of the Undercliff Road closure. The Mayor responded that the matter was under active consideration. Councillor Terry Gibbs said that he received complaints on a daily basis about the chaos being caused by the lack of sufficient detail on the signs. The Mayor asked Councillor Terry Gibbs to contact Island Roads directly.
- c) Maureen Cawley announced that Ventnor Enhancement Fund now had two very large planters ready to be set up in the town with suitable plantings by the Botanic Gardens. Councillor Ken Knapman congratulated Ventnor Enhancement Fund on this initiative.
- d) Richard Downing announced the publication of *I Spy Ventnor*, the first publication from the Ventnor Heritage Partnership. He also said that the Partnership expected to hear the outcome of their Lottery Bid for a Heritage Trail on 22 April.

40/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harry Rees.

41/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor declared an interest in general as a County Councillor and specifically in relation to Agenda item 17.

42/14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 10 March 2014, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council's Planning Committee meetings of 8 April 2014 were received.

43/14 VENTNOR HAVEN

- a) The Mayor invited Sean Strevens of Cheetah Marine and Harbour Master for the Haven to give a presentation to the meeting on the issues for the town resulting from the Haven's capture of seaweed.
- b) Sean Streven's started his presentation by reminding the meeting that accumulations used to take two to three weeks to clear by the old digging and dumping methods. Southern Water were engaged for advice on the levels of Hydrogen Sulphide production given its potential danger to the public as well as the unpleasant smell.
- c) The first seaweed removal boat was introduced in May 2009; that was replaced by another in June 2010 but neither proved sufficiently effective.
- d) Experiments began with a Hydraulic power pack on a hire basis attached to a pump as a trial over a period of weeks from which the need for the pump to be movable around the Haven emerged as the most likely solution. This came into operation in September 2012.

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- e) Maintenance requirements for the pump are high: broken impellers cost £5,000 each to replace, he said. The pump boat weighs about 7 tonnes and between 40,000 and 60,000 tonnes of seaweed are being removed each year.
 - f) Sean showed cost figures indicating a loss to Cheetah Marine of £13,048 and said that the current contract from the Isle of Wight Council for the management of the Haven and its seaweed accumulations ends in March 2015 and is renewed in two year periods.
 - g) After some questions from Members, the Mayor thanked Sean Strevens for his presentation and the important work he was undertaking.
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44/14 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting (24/14) had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 March 2014 and a list of payments made during March 2014.
- b) An accompanying paper set out expenditure in relation to the Budget lines for the 2013/14 financial year with variances from year-to-date budget provision showing an underspend for the year of £14,403 against Budget.
- c) It was noted that the receipt of the Our Place! Getting Started Grant of £3,000 brought the total external funding secured during the financial year to £123,100.

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

45/14 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

- a) The Annual Accounts for the financial year 2013/14 were summarised in Report 25/14 and attached to it.
- b) The total payments of £152,528 from a receipts total of £180,581 left a surplus for the year of £28,053 and a year-end balance of £58,823. After allowing for ring fenced elements, the General Reserve at year end amounted to £39,161.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:
formally adopts the Annual Accounts as presented.

46/14 FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

- a) The basis for an annual review of the Financial Risk Assessment by the Town Council was set out in Report 26/14 for this meeting.
- b) The current arrangements for the management of financial risks had been previously circulated to Members in advance of the meeting for comment and amendment.

It was unanimously resolved:
that the Town Council adopts the circulated list of arrangements for the management of financial risk.

47/14 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT & ASSESSMENT

- a) The Annual Report from the Town Council's Internal Auditor Gareth Hughes had been previously circulated to Members for consideration with Report 27/14.
- b) The basis for an annual review of Internal Audit arrangements by the Town Council was attached to the Report and had been previously circulated to Members in advance of the meeting for comment and amendment.
- c) The Report confirmed the willingness of Gareth Hughes to be appointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2013/14.

It was unanimously resolved that:
i) the report of the Internal Auditor be accepted and Gareth Hughes thanked for his work on the Town Council's behalf;

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- ii) the Town Council accepts the arrangements for the Internal Audit as appropriate for the discharge of its responsibilities in this regard; and
 - iii) Gareth Hughes be appointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2014/15.
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48/14 SALISBURY GARDENS

- a) Report 28/14 summarised developments since the last meeting in the handover arrangements for the building following the confirmation by the Cabinet meeting of 11 March 2014 that it and the adjacent land would be leased to the Town Council for 26 years.
 - b) The Report also provided updates on progress with the programme of works for the refurbishment of the building and the early marketing of the Ventnor Enterprise Centre within it.
 - c) The Town Clerk was asked to write to Neil Geddes to express its appreciation of the very substantial pro bono contribution he had made to the project through the production of the essential plans documentation.
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49/14 OUR PLACE!

- a) Developments in the Town Council's participation in the Department for Communities and Local Government's Our Place! programme were set out in Report 29/14 for this meeting.
 - b) The requirement now is to produce a Development Strategy document, for which the guidance has only recently been made available, by 31 May 2014 in order to qualify for the next stage and the additional funding that comes with it was noted.
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50/14 ANNUAL MEETING DATES

- a) Report 30/14 recommended Members to adopt the same arrangements for the Annual Town Council and Town meetings as in 2013.
- b) That involved setting the date and time for the Annual Town Council meeting at 6pm on Monday 12 May 2014 at 6pm with the Annual Town Meeting immediately following its conclusion and moving the routine monthly meeting to 7pm on Monday 19 May 2014.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

- i) holds its Annual Town Council Meeting at 6pm on Monday 12 May to be immediately followed at its conclusion by the Annual Town Meeting; and
 - ii) agrees to move the routine May Meeting of the Town Council to Monday 19 May at its usual time of 7pm.
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51/14 No. 31 Bus

- a) The decision of the Isle of Wight Council to extend the funding of the No. 31 Community Bus service through the financial year 2014/15 was welcomed.
- b) The reported recent decision of Southern Vectis to halve the number of stops at Shanklin Station in its new timetables was regretted and the Deputy Mayor said he would investigate this further and report back.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

agrees to take on responsibility for the operation of the no. 31 Bus to 31 March 2015 on the basis of the arrangements currently in place as identified in Report 31/14.

52/14 IWALC REPORT

- a) Councillor Ken Knapman deputised for Councillor Harry Rees in reporting on attendance at the recent Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils.
 - b) He summarised the presentation the meeting had received from Healthwatch and referred
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to the discussion of the new protocol for consultation with the Isle of Wight Council.

- c) Councillor Terry Gibbs shared his disappointment at the recent Island Roads meeting he had attended as the Town Council's representative that had not provided a for a much needed question and answer session.
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53/14 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

The report from the Town Clerks – 32/14 – provided information about the seasonal services of Putting Green, Paddling Pool and Beach Safety project, funding for improvements to the War Memorial, repairs to the Esplanade Clock and the Clerk's participation again in this year's NALC Conference in London.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum.

There were no further questions or comments at this time.

54/14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

In view of the confidential nature of the following items:

it was resolved under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings (1960) Act: to exclude the Public and Press whilst the next items are under discussion as they are of a confidential nature.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.15 PM

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE
