



# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S HALL

7PM

12 AUGUST 2013

## MEMBERS PRESENT

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

## NO. SUBJECT

### PUBLIC FORUM

- a) The Mayor opened the Public Forum with 11 members of the public present.
- b) A member of the public asked if there was any truth in the rumour that dogs would be banned all year from Ventnor Beach and the Mayor assured everyone that was not the case.
- c) Another member of the public expressed concern about the cleaning of the seafront toilets and the Mayor said that this would be raised with the Isle of Wight Council.
- d) Concerns about the footpath in front of the Winter Gardens were raised and the condition of the seating along it. The matter will be referred to the Isle of Wight Council.

### 105/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jason Mack.

### 106/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor declared an interest as a County Councillor.

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

### 107/13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 15 July 2013, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council's Planning Committee meeting of 24 July 2013 were received.

### 108/13 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 July 2013 and a list of payments made during June 2013.
- b) An accompanying paper set out expenditure in relation to the Budget lines for the year to 31 July 2013 with variances from year-to-date budget provision.

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

### 109/13 ANNUAL RETURN

- a) The completed Annual Return for the financial year 2012/13 had been previously circulated to Members.
- b) It was noted that the External Auditor had signed off the Annual Return without qualification, comment or identifying any matters requiring Members' attention.

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### 110/13 SALISBURY GARDENS

- a) Report 58/13 for this meeting provided Members with an update on developments since the last meeting in respect of the future management of Salisbury Gardens and the Town Council's role in it.
- b) The inclusion of *The Possible Disposal of Salisbury Gardens Under Special Purchaser Arrangements* on the Isle of Wight Council's latest Forward Plan and its listing for decision at the meeting of the Cabinet on 10 September was noted.
- c) The expectation that the proposed disposal would take the form of the Town Council being granted a 25-year lease for the building with an option to renew was welcomed.

**It was unanimously resolved that, subject to confirmation by Cabinet decision the Town Council:**

- i) authorises the Town Clerk and Deputy Mayor, supported by the Public Buildings Working Group, to progress negotiations with the Isle of Wight Council as the basis for recommendations to subsequent meetings of the Town Council for final decisions;
  - ii) appoints Anthony Collins Solicitors as the Town Council's advisors on matters related to the lease, funded from the Legal & Professional Fees line of the Budget; and
  - iii) refers discussion and decisions on the commercially sensitive aspects of the project, identified in confidential report 65/13, to the private Agenda.
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### 111/13 REW VALLEY SPORTS CENTRE

- a) Report 59/13 provided details of the latest stage of discussions with the Isle of Wight Council about the future management of the Rew Valley Sports Centre beyond the end of its current funding on 31 March 2014.
- b) It was noted that the Isle of Wight Council's Strategic Manager, Recreation, Leisure and Public Spaces had agreed to make a Project Manager available during August to provide both Councils with detailed operational financials for the past two years and projections of income and expenditure for the next three as the basis for the Town Council to convene a meeting of interested parties.
- c) Councillor Harry Rees said he felt that the Town Council needed to have the opportunity to consider the information provided by the Project Manager prior to convening the wider meeting.

**It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:**

- i) welcomes the commitment of staff time from the Recreation, Leisure and Public Spaces Service to collate the relevant information which it sees as an essential first stage;
  - ii) agrees to consider the information provided at its meeting of 9 September as part of proposals from the Public Buildings Working Group for a stakeholder meeting; and
  - iii) asks the Isle of Wight Council to consider including the adjacent Sports Field in the facilities available to any new organisation taking over responsibility for the facility.
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### 112/13 PUTTING GREEN

- a) A proposed change in the operators of the Putting Green for the 2014 season was set out in Report 60/13.
- b) In the discussion that followed it was proposed that the Putting Green be nominated as an asset of Community Value under the Community Right to Bid.

**It was unanimously resolved that:**

- i) Richard and Jackie Tiller be appointed operators of the Putting Green for the 2014 season;
  - ii) Chris and Sue Cooper be thanked for their dedicated commitment to the maintenance, operation and development of the facility for many years; and
  - iii) the Putting Green be nominated as an Asset of Community Value.
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### 113/13 CONNECTED LOCALISM

- a) Report 61/13 recorded the positive responses to the Mayor's letter of invitation to residents who had supported the Town Council's proposals for retaining the Coastal Centre and members of the town's voluntary groups to join an ongoing conversation with the Town Council about future developments.
- b) Over 100 residents to date have provided email addresses in response to the invitation that has since been extended to other residents through this week's Chronicle.
- c) Examples of the responses were attached to the report together with copies of the Mayor's invitation letters.
- d) Councillor Brian Lucas asked how residents without an email address could be accommodated and the Clerk replied that anyone contacting us to say they would like to be included but didn't have an email address were being added to a mailing list.

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### 114/13 ESPLANADE LOADING BAY

- a) Councillor Jim Toogood introduced this item, pointing out that abuse of the Esplanade Loading Bay continued and proposing that the Isle of Wight Council be asked to withdraw the facility.
- b) The Mayor read the letter received from the Isle of Wight Council following the Town Council's previous expression of concern.
- c) After further discussion, the Mayor said that he would take this matter up directly with the Isle of Wight Council.

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### 115/13 No. 31 Bus

- a) The future of this service, currently funded the Isle of Wight Council and operated by Ventnor Community Bus CiC, is under threat due to the requirement for its driver to have a period of three months' absence. More detail was provided in Report 62/13.
- b) The Mayor invited Jim Morgan to address the meeting on this matter. He commented that user numbers had increased significantly and the service was clearly appreciated.
- c) He asked that the Town Council consider expressing continued support for the service by appointing a Member as the main contact

**It was unanimously resolved that:**

a Working Group be established including Councillors Ken Knapman, Brian Lucas, Tony Marvin and Jason Mack and the Town Clerks to consider the matter in more detail.

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### 116/13 VENTNOR BEACH

- a) Two issues about the beach that had been raised in recent weeks – the function of the Beach Safety project and access by dogs to the western end of the beach – were detailed in Report 63/13.
  - b) Councillor Harry Rees informed the meeting that he had been invited to the public meeting of the dog owners and reported that they were unanimous in having no wish to prejudice the Blue Flag status of the beach.
  - c) He further reported that the signage that had caused the problem had now been corrected and the Isle of Wight Council had apologised for its previously misleading signage.
  - d) Councillor Jim Toogood reported on the continuing success of the Beach Safety project and stressed the importance of staff and volunteers not entering the water as there was no insurance cover beyond the waterline.
  - e) Councillor Chris Welsford said he remained convinced of the importance of the securing the reinstatement of a full Lifeguard service and hoped that pressure would continue to be applied to this end.
  - f) Councillor Harry Rees stressed the fact that the Beach Safety project is not a substitute
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Lifeguard service and must refer to the emergency services for action beyond the waterline. He said that he would take up the matter of restoring a Lifeguard Service through the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils.

- g) Councillors Ken Knapman and Tony Marvin added their support for the need to restore a full Lifeguard service.
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#### 117/13 IWALC REPORT

- a) Councillor Harry Rees reported on the latest developments in the business of the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils (IWALC) and his contribution to it.
- b) He reported on the continuing attempt to secure Assisted Area Status for European Funding and the recent meeting of a delegation of which he was part with the relevant government Minister, following which a further letter had been sent to the Minister.
- c) Councillor Ed Gouge asked if IWALC had considered the recent decision of the government not to include the Isle of Wight in the national Coastal Path and Councillor Harry Rees responded that IWALC were aware of the issue.
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#### 118/13 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

The report from the Town Clerks – 64/13 – provided information about the latest monitoring of the War Memorial, the visit of a member of the Office for Civil Society within the Cabinet Office, progress with the Expression of Interest for the local management of car parks and discussions with the Hambrough Group.

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#### PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum.

- a) Stuart George asked that the Bus User Group be kept informed about the Working Group's discussions of the future of the 31 Bus.
- b) Wendy Marshall said that Blue Flag requirements would be stricter in 2015.
- c) Jim Morgan asked about the possibility of providing a taxi rank on the Esplanade.
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#### 119/13 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of the following item:

**It was resolved under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings (1960) Act:** to exclude the Public and Press whilst the next item is under discussion as it is of a confidential nature.

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**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.05PM**

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SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE
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