



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST LAWRENCE VILLAGE HALL

7PM

18 MARCH 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Steve Stubbings (Mayor), David George, Debby Robinson, Jim Morgan, Harry Rees, Jason Mack, Jim Toogood.

NO. SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

- a) The Mayor opened the Public Forum with six members of the public present,
- b) The meeting was informed that Beach Cleaners are returning to work next week with regular visits to Ventnor's beaches.
- c) A member of the public commented on the campaign by a Ventnor resident to have the Market Street toilets re-opened. Councillor Jim Toogood said that the sale of the site is now almost complete. Councillor Harry Rees reminded the meeting that the Isle of Wight Council had declared the facility surplus to requirements and progressed it rapidly to sale. The Mayor made it clear that the Town Council shared the concern about the disabled access to toilets in the town. Councillor Jim Morgan argued that further pressure should be put on the Isle of Wight Council to remedy the serious lack of provision.

30/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Leigh Geddes, Mark Robertson-Walker and Carol Jones.
- b) Apologies were received from County Councillors Susan Scoccia. County Councillor Chris Welsford was present.

31/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

32/13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The minutes of the Town Council meeting of 18 February 2013, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council's Planning Committee meetings of 20 February 2013 and 14 March 2013 were received.

33/13 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 28 February 2013 and a list of payments made during February 2013.
- b) An accompanying paper set out expenditure in relation to the Budget lines for the year to date to 28 February 2013 with variances from year-to-date budget provision.

34/13 MANAGEMENT OF FINANCIAL RISK REVIEW

- a) The basis for an annual review by the Town Council was set out in Report 17/13 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.

35/13 INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW

- a) The basis for an annual review of Internal Audit arrangements by the Town Council was set out in Report 18/13 for this meeting.
- b) The current arrangements for Internal Audit had been previously circulated to Members in advance of the meeting for comment and amendment.

It was unanimously resolved:

that the Town Council accepts the arrangements for the Internal Audit as appropriate for the discharge of its responsibilities in this regard.

36/13 COASTAL CENTRE

- a) Report 19/13 for this meeting provided an update on two significant developments in respect of the future of the Coastal Centre.
 - b) The Town Council welcomed the substantial support for its commitment to retain the building for the benefit of the town evidenced in the encouraging numbers – almost 30% of the town's electorate - of residents and others who had signed up to that aim.
 - c) It was noted that the Town Council's nomination of the building for inclusion of the Isle of Wight Council's list of Assets of Community Value had been rejected and that this matter would be considered in the private agenda at item 15.
 - d) Councillor Harry Rees reminded the meeting of his earlier concern about the absence of any right of appeal or involvement of people external to the Council.
 - e) Councillor Debby Robinson drew attention to the high levels of support registered by Ventnor residents in the recent consultation.
 - f) Councillor David George said that it appeared that the IoWC could not possibly have read what was in the Nomination about the potential future uses of the building. He reported on the strong feelings of support that had been expressed to him in the course of collecting signatures on the petition.
 - g) At the invitation of the Mayor to the town's County Councillors to share their views with the meeting, Chris Welsford said that he was flabbergasted at the rejection of the nomination and shared Councillor David George's view that the submission could not have been read. He reported on the reaction of SCOPAC to the Isle of Wight Council's plans for both the Coastal Centre and the Coastal Management Team. He went on to say that in his view the Panel was being led by the Cabinet Member.
 - h) The Mayor clarified for press and public the content of the Nomination document and stressed how impossible he felt it was for anyone to then argue that there was no realistic possibility of ongoing community value.
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37/13 PADDLING POOL

- a) The Town Clerk reported that staffing arrangements for the operation of the Pool are now in place and recommended an opening date of 2 May to run until 30 September for this season.
- b) Councillor Jim Toogood reported on his ongoing conversations with SPAR about the signage at the pool to acknowledge their sponsorship of it.
- c) A draft lease issued by the Isle of Wight Council had been previously circulated to Members and was attached to Report 20/13. The Town Clerk commented that it had been agreed that a break clause would be included in the next version of the lease and that the insurance cover required by it was ready for implementation by our insurers.

It was unanimously resolved that:

- i) the Paddling Pool will be open from 2 May to 30 September this year;
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- ii) the Mayor and Town Clerk be authorized to sign the lease as circulated subject to the inclusion of a break clause.
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38/13 PUTTING GREEN

- a) In accordance the Minute 23/13 of the Town Council's meeting of 18 February the Town Clerk reported that the enhancement of the facility by the installation of a decking area and new chairs and tables to go on it would cost less than £4,000.
- b) It was noted that a decision from the Isle of Wight Council, requested by County Councillor Susan Scoccia, on their willingness to extend the Town Council's right to manage the Green for a further three years with no charge was awaited.

It was unanimously resolved that:

subject to the Isle of Wight Council's agreement to the extension of the present arrangements for the management of the Green for the years 2014-16 inclusive, £4,000 be vired from this year's contingency provision and the Town Clerk be authorised to proceed with the purchases identified in Report 21/13 for this meeting.

39/13 TOURISM MEETINGS FEEDBACK

- a) Councillor Debby Robinson reported on two recent tourism-related meetings she had attended stressing the importance of tourism to the survival of both Ventnor and the Island.
 - b) At the beginning of February a meeting of accommodation providers was addressed by the Chief Officer of the recently established Destination Management Organisation (DMO). He had also addressed a meeting organised by the Chamber of Commerce.
 - c) She described the structure of the DMO and its Advisory Board, chaired by John Allen, and outlined its immediate priorities and activities.
 - d) The Mayor thanked Councillor Debby Robinson for her feedback.
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40/13 ISLAND ROADS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

In preparation for the passing of responsibility for elements of highways furniture to Island Roads for 25 years from 1 April 2013, the Isle of Wight Council have issued a series of maps showing the Ventnor items of benches, bus shelters, dog bins and festive lights that it is proposing to include in the handover.

It was unanimously resolved that:

The Town Clerk and Mayor be authorised to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on the satisfactory conclusion of the Assistant Town Clerk's discussions with the Isle of Wight Council about the items to be included in the handover.

41/13 IWALC REPORT

- a) Councillor Harry Rees reported on the latest developments within the business of the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils (IWALC).
 - b) He reported that IWALC had written to the Island's MP to ask him to attend an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Local Democracy discussion of the importance to Town & Parish Councils of ensuring the element of funding from central government in relation to Council Tax Benefit that is to compensate Town and Parish Councils for changes to the tax base be actually passed on to them by their principal authorities.
 - c) An open letter has also gone to the Leader of the Council and all County Councillors to ensure engagement with the review of Assisted Area status and resultant funding.
 - d) The Mayor thanked Councillor Harry Rees on behalf of the Town Council for his work on these important issues.
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42/13 QUALITY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

The current consultation by the National Association of Local Councils about the future of the

Quality Council scheme was discussed.

It was unanimously resolved that:

The Mayor be authorised to complete the consultation questionnaire on behalf of the Town Council.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum.

- a) A member of the public said he was shocked by the decision to reject the nomination of the Coastal Centre and the fact that the views of the County Councillors had not been taken into account. He read from an email from Susan Scoccia stating that she fully supported the nomination of the building as an Asset of Community Value.
 - b) Another member of the public commented on the way County Councillor Susan Scoccia had distanced herself from support of the Town Council's proposals for the future of the Coastal Centre.
 - c) It was suggested that legal advice be sought on the Town Council's options.
 - d) A question was asked about the opening date of the Winter Gardens given the apparent delay in starting works. County Councillor Chris Welsford informed the meeting that the Hambrough Group had to open by mid July 2014 or face the prospect of the building's return to the Isle of Wight Council.
 - e) The possibility of the Hambrough Group using the noticeboard to inform the public of progress was raised.
 - f) A member of the public asked about the possibility of development of the Coastal Centre as a private hotel.
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43/13 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 items are under discussion they are of a confidential nature.

The Meeting closed at 8.55pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE
