



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST FRANCIS SCHOOL

7PM

12 NOVEMBER 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

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 why the Town Council was looking to retain the Coastal Centre when St Francis School was available. The Mayor responded that discussions were still ongoing and the School building is not of sufficient scale to accommodate the project the Town Council had developed for the Coastal Centre.

146/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark Robertson-Walker and Carol Jones. County Councillors Susan Scoccia and Chris Welsford had sent their apologies.

147/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

148/12 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The minutes of the Town Council meeting of 8 October 2012, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings of 18 October and 5 November 2012 were received.

149/12 FINANCE REPORT

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

150/12 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

The Town Clerk's Report 62/12 for this meeting summarised the new General Power of Competence and the qualifications for its exercise.

It was unanimously resolved that:

Ventnor Town Council meets the conditions of eligibility required to exercise the General Power of Competence as set out in the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 with immediate effect.

151/12 COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Report 63/12 for this meeting included summaries of the work during the first six months of both the Community Development Worker and the Economic Development Worker that had been considered by the relevant Working Group for each project in the week commencing 5 November 2012.

It was unanimously resolved that:

- i) a consultation event be arranged with the town's voluntary and community organisations early in the new year to report back on progress since the meetings of January and February this year and look for guidance on priorities for 2013; and
 - ii) the 12 Commitments for working with the town's traders be formally adopted as set out in the paper for this item and staff be asked to report back with detailed objectives for each of them no later than the January meeting.
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152/12 COASTAL CENTRE

- a) The Town Council noted from Report 64/12 for this meeting that the letter to Communities Secretary Eric Pickles expressing concerns about the Isle of Wight Council's decision on the future of the Coastal Centre in the light of the Localism Act 2011 had been sent, in line with Minute 138/12 of the October meeting.
 - b) It also noted the outcomes from the meeting the Mayor and Town Clerk had with the Isle of Wight Council's Chief Executive Steve Beynon and Deputy Director Economy, Leisure and Tourism John Metcalfe on 5 November as detailed in the Report.
 - c) Councillor Harry Rees said that the tone of the response from the Isle of Wight Council's Leader was unacceptable.
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153/12 PADDLING POOL

- a) The Town Clerk's Report 65/12 on the consequences of the Isle of Wight Council's decision to cease funding the Paddling Pools in Ryde, East Cowes and Ventnor was considered.
- b) Councillor Debby Robinson said that this was another example of the Isle of Wight Council offloading its responsibilities, leaving the Town Council had no option but to take on the Pool in view of its significance for the town.
- c) Councillor David George said that their action in cutting funding of Paddling Pools was both mean spirited and unnecessary.
- d) Councillor Jim Morgan wondered what exactly the Isle of Wight Council is providing back to towns like Ventnor in exchange for their Council taxes given the number of facilities that were either being closed or passed to Town and Parish Councils.

It was unanimously resolved that:

- i) Ventnor Town Council agrees to take on the management and funding of the Paddling Pool and asks its Clerk to discuss with the Isle of Wight Council the appropriate management structure for its future; and
 - ii) authorises its Clerk to make the necessary arrangements to have the Paddling Pool in operation from Easter 2013 to 30 September 2013.
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154/12 HIGH STREET LAYBY

- a) The recommendations of the Town Council's Working Group established to look in more detail at the background to the revised Traffic Order for the establishment of a new loading only layby in the High Street near the new Tesco store were set out in Report 66/12.
- b) Councillor Harry Rees outlined the lengthy process since the presentation of the original planning application in 2007 when the Town Council objected to it, but the Isle of Wight Council approved it. He said that he remains convinced that the changes are dangerous.

It was unanimously resolved that Ventnor Town Council:

- i) regards the proposals as unsafe and re-iterates the concerns of its 2007 predecessor Town Council about them;
 - ii) proposes that if the scheme proceeds as planned, a 20mph limit be implemented throughout the town's central areas; and
 - iii) asks that it be made clear that the use of the layby is open to vehicles delivering to all High Street shops and premises.
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155/12 MARLBOROUGH ROAD TOILET CLOSURE

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- a) The Mayor reported that the current refurbishment schedule involved the closure of the toilet from 25 January to 15 March.
 - b) He further reported that the Isle of Wight Council had agreed to install temporary toilet facilities for the duration of the refurbishment.
 - c) The failure of the Isle of Wight Council to provide adequate and accessible town centre toilets was again condemned.

It was unanimously resolved that:

The Isle of Wight Council be asked to consider and respond to the needs of residents and visitors with disabilities in the town centre.

156/12 TRAILER PARKING PROPOSAL

- a) The Town Council has been given the opportunity, until 13 November, to comment on the proposal to create a trailer park on the Eastern Esplanade with the consequent loss of 7 car parking spaces.
 - b) The Town Clerk was asked to request additional information on location before a response could be made.
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157/12 SEA BREEZE PLAY AREA

- a) Correspondence between Ventnor Enhancement Fund (VEF) and the Isle of Wight Council on the matter of completing fencing at the Sea Breeze play area has been passed to the Town Council for consideration and is summarised in Report 67/12 for this meeting.
- b) The fencing would require an additional £1,156 in addition to the £2,050 VEF still hold from the original grant to meet the cost of the work on the quotation supplied by their preferred contractor.
- c) The Isle of Wight Council had repeated their original view that in line with modern good practice for play areas they did not believe the fencing was necessary and could not therefore consider any request for funding it.

It was resolved that

the Town Clerk be asked to discuss the situation further with Ventnor Enhancement fund and report back to a future meeting of the Town Council.

158/12 COUNCIL TAX CONSULTATION

- a) The Town Council returned to this matter on the basis of the Report on it received at the October Meeting with additional figures provided by the Isle of Wight Council's Revenue and Benefits Service showing that 855 Ventnor residents rely on Council Tax Benefit.
- b) It was also reported that 596 of these are also dependent on Housing Tax Benefit.

It was resolved that:

Whilst the Town Council understands the difficulties facing the Isle of Wight Council it condemns any proposals that reduce the income available to the poorest in society.

159/12 HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

- a) The Mayor stated that it in his opinion, and that of the health professionals he had consulted, this was one of the most inadequate strategy documents that they had ever seen.
- b) That view was supported by other Members who had read the document.

It was unanimously resolved that:

The Town Clerk be asked to prepare an appropriate response and circulate it to Members for comment and approval.

160/12 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

- a) The Town Clerks' report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members.
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- b) The detail referred to Memorial Benches, Christmas in Ventnor event, Christmas tree in Spring Gardens, the Esplanade Clock and the Ventnor Music for Fun festival.
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PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum.

161/12 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.

162/12 COMMUNITY RIGHTS

- a) The Clerk introduced the paper, Report 71/12, at the invitation of the Mayor.
- b) Councillor Harry Rees expressed his concerns about provisions within the Policy for the implementation of the Community Right to Bid by the Isle of Wight Council.
- c) Attention turned to the sections of the Report identifying actions the Town Council might wish to consider in the context of the Community Right to Bid and the Community Right to Challenge and detailed discussion took place of them.

It was unanimously resolved that

- i) the Coastal Centre be nominated by Ventnor Town Council as an asset of community value;
 - ii) the Town Council also nominate as assets of community value: Ventnor Library, the Youth Centre, Rew Valley Sports Centre, the Children's Centre and both school buildings previously known as St Boniface and St Wilfrid's Primary School;
 - iii) the Town Clerk be authorised to make a membership application to Locality, the government funded charity charged with progressing the Localism agenda;
 - iv) the Town Clerk be authorised to complete and submit a pre-feasibility grant application;
 - v) all 40 Members of the Isle of Wight Council be written to expressing this Council's concerns about the implications for local democracy of a decision significantly affecting Ventnor being made by just two Members.
 - vi) a budget allocation of £2,000 be vired from the contingency provision to support the work involved in progressing this resolution.
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The Meeting closed at 9.20pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE
