

MINUTES OF THE VENTNOR TOWN ANNUAL MEETING

ST FRANCIS SCHOOL

7PM

16 MAY 2011

ATTENDANCE

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

County Councillor Susan Scoccia

Apologies were received from Councillor Carol Jones and County Councillor Chris Welsford

ITEM SUBJECT

The meeting was opened by the Mayor with 24 members of the public present.

1) MAYOR'S REPORT OF 2010/11

The Mayor opened the Town Meeting with her report for 2010/11:

- a) Ventnor Town Council's new web-site went live in December 2010. Information relating to the Town Council and individual Councillors, local areas and events, visitor services and general information can be found at www.ventnortowncouncil.org.uk.
 - b) Ventnor now officially has Green Town status, with Cllr David George taking the lead role together with a Steering Group in place to help improve the environment in and around the Town. Recycling, composting, water-saving, allotments and tree planting are but a few of the projects to be considered for the future.
 - c) With regard to the issue of rotting seaweed at The Haven, Cllr Jim Toogood has been liaising with the Isle of Wight Council and their contractors, resulting in over 1000 tonnes of rotting seaweed/debris being removed from the area.
 - d) Cllr Jim Toogood has also been working hard to secure the original lifeguard hut as a First Aid Point.
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2) REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

County Councillor for Ventnor West, Susan Scoccia, reported that:

- a) With Ventnor Library threatened with closure, this has, in fact, been kept open (albeit with a small reduction in opening hours). This is excellent news and things are progressing well.
- b) £25,000k has been allocated in the budget for the 4 beaches that previously had lifeguards.
- c) Toilets at the Botanic Gardens and Marlborough Road were under threat and Cllr Scoccia campaigned for these facilities to remain open. Steephill toilets also remain open, taken on by the owners themselves.
- d) Cllr Scoccia is the Ventnor Youth & Community Centre Chair, and she states that the Youth Centre and Cafe are important for young people.
- e) The clock on Pier Street was replaced in August 2010, in association with the Ventnor Community Partnership.

The County Councillor for Ventnor East, Chris Welsford, had requested the Mayor to read his report in his absence. It included:

- a) Cllr Welsford commended the current Town Council in taking the difficult decision to close the Winter Gardens at the end of January this year.
 - b) He expressed frustration at the Isle of Wight Council's Budget decisions, saying all the cuts are damaging to Ventnor and its residents. Budget proposals from him and the Independent Group at County Hall were ignored by the ruling Conservative group.
 - c) Cllr Welsford fully supports residents in Bonchurch in asking the Isle of Wight Council to
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- reconsider the closure of toilets at Monks Bay.
- d) He is in full support of residents in respect of Ventnor Library.
 - e) Lifeguards are of particular concern to him. He wants to reverse the cuts put in place. The Lifeguard Service costs in the region of £120,000 per annum; the cost of a life is at least £1,000,000.
 - f) He is very much against the plans for 1a Church Street to be converted into an estate agency. Shops, cafes, etc., in town *must* remain.
 - g) He continues to campaign to get a much-needed ATM machine in town and he has secured additional car parking spaces at Wheelers Bay car park.
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3) REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Brian Lucas reported on behalf of the Bonchurch Community Association:

- a) Brian stated that the closing of the village store and post office was a blow to the community and visitors alike.
- b) A date for the diary, Bonchurch Open Gardens weekend, to be held on Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 July will help to raise money for enhancements to the village.
- c) Bonchurch Village Green has now been planted up, ready for the summer season.
- d) The closure of Bonchurch Village toilets was a real blow, to the community and visitors alike.

Maureen Cawley reported on behalf of the Ventnor Enhancement Fund:

- a) Commenting about the Sea Breeze play area, Maureen said the equipment and space was well used and appreciated.
 - b) From their funds, Ventnor Enhancement continue to pay the electricity costs for both the Cascade and Ventnor Park lighting.
 - c) Evelyn Knowles is currently securing the Open Air Fitness Centre and finding a suitable plot on which the equipment can be installed.
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After a short question and answer session, it was announced that the Annual Town Council Meeting would follow after this meeting, at 7.45pm.

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE