



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST FRANCIS SCHOOL

7PM

11 APRIL 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Debby Robinson (Mayor), David George, Steve Stubbings, Jason Mack, Carol Jones, James Toogood, Harry Rees

ITEM SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor opened the Public Forum with 11 members of the public present

- a) A member of the public asked about the Decorative lighting in the Town and the Mayor reported that the Town Council is in the process of arranging for it only to be switched on for Christmas and New Year.
- b) Another member of the public asked about the clearing up once the extraction of seaweed from the Haven had been completed. Councillor Toogood announced that over 1,000 tonnes of seaweed had now been taken out of the Haven and this was welcomed.
- c) It was reported that there had already been one serious incident on the beach and that in the absence of lifeguards there were real risks of serious injury: last year saw four rescues from drowning and those responsible for withdrawing the service are putting lives at risk, it was said.
- d) There was a suggestion that signage should be improved on the beach generally so that risks are clearly advertised.
- e) The meeting began at 7.10pm.

45/11 CO-OPTION OF A TOWN COUNCILLOR

The Mayor outlined the process of co-option that had ended in the recommendation that Jim Morgan be appointed as a Member of the Town Council to represent Ventnor Parish East Ward.

It was unanimously resolved:

that Jim Morgan be co-opted to the Town Council to fill the vacancy for Ventnor Parish East Ward.

With the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form signed, Councillor Jim Morgan joined the Members at the table.

46/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence as all Members were present.

47/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Harry Rees declared an interest in respect of Ventnor Social Club.

Councillor Jim Toogood declared a personal interest in Agenda item 9.

48/11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meeting of 14 March 2011 were considered.

It was unanimously resolved:

that the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 14 March be agreed as an accurate record of the business of that meeting and be signed accordingly by the Mayor.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee of 23 February 2011 were received.

49/11 DOGS & THEIR OWNERS

- a) The Mayor welcomed Mike Rowlands, Senior Environmental Officer, to the meeting.
 - b) He explained his service's role as enforcement officers for the Isle of Wight Council on matters including footpath clearances, fly tipping, beach safety equipment, litter and dog fouling.
 - c) He acknowledged that Ventnor is one of the worst areas on the Island for dog fouling and said that tomorrow there would be 10 officers patrolling the whole Ventnor area.
 - d) Councillor David George asked about the chemicals used in weed spraying and was assured that the materials used were environmentally sensitive. He went on to ask what proof was needed about failure to collect dog waste for action to be taken. Mike Rowlands stated that provided the act was seen by an Officer a fixed penalty could be issued.
 - e) Councillor Jim Toogood set out reasons why he felt the dog ban on beaches should be extended and Mike Rowlands said his team had a similar view.
 - f) Councillor Harry Rees commented on the need for action in respect of pigeon waste and, again, there was agreement from the Environment Officer. Concerns about the future demolition of the old Bus Station were expressed as it had become home to a significant pigeon population. Mike Rowland said he would look into the matter.
 - g) Councillor David George asked how to get permission to put up specific signs in relation to dog fouling and Mike Rowlands said he would provide the relevant contact details.
 - h) Councillor Steve Stubbings commented that he could not remember a local education campaign on the matter and asked if help would be available. Mike Rowlands said that his team were currently running a programme in Cowes and would be glad to move it to Ventnor next. The Town Clerk was asked to keep in contact with Mike Rowlands about the results of the Cowes experiment and possibility of running it in Ventnor soon.
 - i) Mike Rowlands was thanked by the Town Councillors for making his time available to contribute to the meeting.
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50/11 FINANCE

- a) The Finance report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 March 2011 and a list of payments made during March 2011.
 - b) An accompanying paper set out the Precept related expenditure in relation to the Budget lines for it.
 - c) The Town Clerk further reported on progress in clearing debts from final trading of the Winter Gardens.
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51/11 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report for this meeting had been previously circulated to Members and included information on the process for the selection of a preferred bidder for the Winter Gardens and the present situation in respect of the remaining vacancies on the Town Council.

It was unanimously resolved:

that the Co-option process be repeated to fill one of the vacancies in St Lawrence

52/11 BEACH SAFETY

- a) The Town Clerk's report outlining a proposed approach to the Isle of Wight Council for a one-quarter share of the £25,000 it had allocated to facilitate beach safety for this year had been previously circulated.
 - b) Councillor Jim Toogood explained the background and identified the equipment he was proposing to use the funding to purchase
 - c) Councillor Harry Rees read a draft for a letter he felt should be sent to the Isle of Wight
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Council about their statutory duties as identified in advice from the Royal Life Savings Society UK before any further action was taken.

It was unanimously resolved:

that the letter as drafted be sent to the Chief Executive of the Isle of Wight Council by the Town Clerk with an added stress on urgency and requesting an immediate response.

Advice from Sophie Blake on related matters during a short period of suspension of Standing Orders in the course of this item was much appreciated by Members.

53/11 ADULT FITNESS AREA

- a) The Town Clerk's report summarising the background to the proposal to develop an outdoor adult fitness area and the requirements to secure it had been previously circulated and the Town Clerk introduced it.
- b) Councillor Steve Stubbings expressed strong support for the project saying that it fitted well with the way the Town Council hoped to see the Town develop.
- c) After similar comments from other Members

it was unanimously resolved:

that the Town Council fund the Maintenance agreement for the project and make further enquiries about insurance for it.

54/11 GREEN TOWN

- a) Councillor David George introduced this item, reporting on the initial well supported meeting of the group convened to progress the Green Town project
 - b) He announced that the Green Town Officer, Footprint Trust and Green Gym representatives were attending the next meeting of the group on Wednesday 13 April and asked that fellow Town Councillors attend if possible.
 - c) The intention was to establish a steering group to take the project on.
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55/11 TIDY TOWN

- a) The Mayor introduced this item expressing widely shared concerns about the collection of issues affecting town's environmental health.
 - b) She said that she would start with two areas of particularly unpleasant appearance: the Co-operative Car Park and the old Bus Garage for which Gully Howard currently had responsibility. The Town Clerk was asked to contact the owners of both sites with a view to securing clean ups.
 - c) Councillor David George referred to the need for a Waste Bin at or near the Skatepark.
 - d) Members asked that their appreciation of Wendy Marshall's excellent work on litter clearing be recorded.
 - e) The Town Clerk was asked to contact the Company responsible for bin emptying in connection with a significant waste problem on the Esplanade.
 - f) Councillor Jason Mack reported on the incidence of broken benches and the Mayor mentioned two that are now missing from sites important to elderly people.
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56/11 ESPLANADE CLOCK

Councillor Jim Toogood introduced this item saying that he had discussed the problem with the clock with a clockmaker in Cowes who would be able to remove the two clocks for investigation, provide an estimate for repair work and return them at a total cost of approximately £75.

It was unanimously resolved:

that the Town Council agrees this cost and that the matter be progressed by Councillor Jim Toogood.

57/11 EXTERNAL GRANTS

- a) The Mayor introduced this item, asking that the potential for accessing external grants be explored.
 - b) Councillor Harry Rees suggested that this would be most effectively done as the provisions of the forthcoming Localism Bill are clarified.
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PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor re-opened the Public Forum

- a) A member of the public said that the Isle of Wight Council would not agree to moving the Winter Gardens' bin until after the end of the process for its future ownership/management.
 - b) That Ventnor is one of the very few places not to have a programme of Health Walks was pointed out. Councillor David George said he would see that this was included in the Green Town discussions on Wednesday.
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58/11 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 as they are of a confidential nature.

The Meeting closed at 8.50 pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE