



# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

GREEN ROOM, SALISBURY GARDENS

7PM

8 AUGUST 2016

## MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Jason Mack (Mayor), Leigh Geddes, Tony Marvin, Ed Gouge, Ken Knapman, Stewart Blackmore, Delian Backhouse-Fry, Harry Rees.

## NO. SUBJECT

### PUBLIC FORUM

- a) The Mayor opened the Public Forum and welcomed Morgan Williams, the Town Council's Administrative Assistant, to his first meeting of the Town Council.
- b) A member of the public expressed concern about the state of rubbish outside a property in Madeira Road that she has already been discussing with the Isle of Wight Council and wants the Town Council to be aware of the problems it is causing for other residents.
- c) The Mayor said that the Town Council would contact the authorities to stress the importance of action being taken.

### 109/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Steve Stubbings, Brian Lucas, Ken Knapman, and Jim Toogood.

### 110/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Harry Rees declared an interest as local business owner.

### 111/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 11 July 2016, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council's Planning Committee meetings of 13 and 27 July 2016 were noted.

### 112/16 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting (50/16) had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 July 2016 and a list of all payments made during July 2016.
- b) Also included was a listing of budget variances for the first four months of the financial year.

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

### 113/16 STAFF PENSIONS

- a) Report 51/16 summarised the information related to the statutory requirement for the Town Council to establish an automatic transfer pension scheme for its eligible staff starting from 1 January 2017.
- b) Councillor Tony Marvin asked if staff could increase their contribution if they chose to do so and the Clerk said he would ask the provider.

**It was proposed by Councillor Leigh Geddes, seconded by Councillor Tony Marvin and unanimously resolved to:**

- i) appoint the National Employment Savings Trust as its Pension provider; and

- 
- ii) authorise its Clerk to enrol staff in accordance with the regulations.
- 

#### **114/16 YOUTH OFFER**

- a) In response to the ending of the current Isle of Wight Council funding for the Youth Offer Programme on 31 March 2017 a majority of the current providers have proposed the establishment of a Collaborative Partnership to explore opportunities for funding beyond that date.
- b) A copy of the draft Agreement for that Partnership was attached to Report 52/16 for this meeting.
- c) Councillor Tony Marvin asked how the Isle of Wight Council would fulfil its statutory obligations in respect of youth opportunities.
- d) He also asked if taking on the lead role for the proposed Collaborative Partnership could be accommodated within the Community Development Officer's workload and the Clerk indicated that he foresaw no problem in that regard.

**It was proposed by Councillor Stewart Blackmore, seconded by Councillor Ed Gouge and unanimously resolved to:**

- i) agree to join the proposed Collaborative Partnership as the basis for securing a future for the Youth Offer programme;
  - ii) adopt the draft Agreement attached to this Report as the basis for that Partnership; and
  - iii) accept the Lead role for the Partnership if requested to do so.
- 

#### **115/16 PUBLIC TOILETS FREEHOLD TRANSFER**

- a) The Isle of Wight Council's draft documentation for the Freehold Transfer of two of the town's public toilets – Eastern Esplanade and Ventnor Park – has been received and previously circulated to Members.
- b) It was noted that following an initial discussion by the Public Buildings Working Group the matter had been referred to the Town Council's solicitors.
- c) Councillor Leigh Geddes declared an interest in the matter and did not take part in the vote.

**It was proposed by Councillor Tony Marvin, seconded by Councillor Stewart Blackmore and resolved to:**

- i) approve the cost of £1,250 for the required legal advice; and
  - ii) ask the Public Buildings Working Group to continue its work on the draft documentation with a view to its signing off at the Town Council Meeting of 12 September.
- 

#### **116/16 SOLENT MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY**

- a) The Isle of Wight Council together with the City Councils of Portsmouth and Southampton have all opened public consultations on the draft for the Governance Scheme for a proposed Solent Mayoral Combined Authority the closing date for which is 18 September 2017.
  - b) Councillor Harry Rees reminded the meeting that Devolution was not yet a done deal with considerable uncertainty about Business Rates as a substitute for central grants.
  - c) Councillor Ed Gouge agreed that there is still uncertainty about the future of Devolution and said that the inclusion of Town & Parish Councils in any scrutiny committee would be essential. He added that financial arrangements are confused between funds available to the Mayor and to the individual Councils.
  - d) Councillor Stewart Blackmore favoured a slow and careful consideration of the Town Council's response to the consultation as the national approach is still uncertain.
  - e) Councillor Harry Rees urged that the Isle of Wight Council should refuse to set a legal budget because of the impact of doing so on the people they represent.
  - f) Councillor Leigh Geddes asked what we should decide, how and when.
-

---

g) Councillor Ed Gouge's offer to circulate a paper on the subject by Members was welcomed.

**It was agreed to:**

discuss the issues to be identified in Councillor Ed Gouge's paper and further developments in the government's Devolution proposals by email and in an informal meeting with a view to agreeing a response to the consultation at the 12 September Town Council meeting.

---

**117/16 ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (IWALC)**

- a) In response to recent discussions with IWALC, Report 55/16 provided the basis for a discussion of potential changes in its Constitution and working practices that might assist its effectiveness across the range of its objectives.
- b) Councillor Ed Gouge said that it was important for IWALC to be more effective in the current context.
- c) Councillor Stewart Blackmore commented that the objectives of the Constitution were not being effectively addressed and wondered what the case was for remaining in membership.
- d) Councillor Tony Marvin said that one way of responding to that question is to ask what we would lose by not being in membership.
- e) Councillor Rees drew attention to the legal advice available through IWALC and Councillor Leigh Geddes responded that this was not enough to justify our contribution.
- f) Councillor Ed Gouge said IWALC might consider issuing Press Releases on major issues.

**It was agreed to:**

invite IWALC's Chair and Vice-chair for an informal meeting with Members and Clerks.

---

**118/16 MY LIFE A FULL LIFE**

- a) Report 56/16 provided Members with an update on the latest developments in the Town Council's interest in engaging more formally with the programme.
  - b) The offers of meetings with the Whole Integrated System Review (WISR) Director and its consultants and later with the Director of the My Life a full Life Programme were welcomed.
- 

**119/16 CASCADE GARDENS**

- a) Councillor Leigh Geddes introduced this item reporting on the encouraging progress with the five year programme to introduce Ventnor Botanic Garden's more sustainable planting into the usual municipal plant choices.
  - b) She added that the success of the collaboration between the Botanic Garden and the Town Council's contractor, John O'Conner, would become apparent next year.
- 

**120/16 ISLE OF WIGHT DAY**

It was noted that the High Sheriff's plans for the Isle of Wight Day included the offer of 1 mile of bunting.

**It was agreed:**

take up the offer of the bunting.

---

**121/16 ISLE OF WIGHT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (IWALC)**

Councillor Harry Rees reported on IWALC's Annual General Meeting of 21 July, saying that in future nominations to posts and positions would be invited in advance of future AGMs.

---

**122/16 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT**

- a) The Town Clerks' report – 58/16 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
-

- 
- b)** It included information on the changes to the Town Council's email system, the Working Group meetings since the last Town Council meeting, Friends of Ventnor Library, additional signage and new tenants at Salisbury Gardens.
  - c)** The Clerk drew Members' attention to the programme for changes to the Town Council's email addresses for both staff and Members.
- 

#### **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no questions or comments at this time.

---

**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.50PM**

---

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE

---