



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

VIRTUAL MEETING

7PM

12 OCTOBER 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Stewart Blackmore (Chair), Stephen Cockett, Brian Lucas, Colm Watling, Dave Logan, Jamie Macaulay, Steve Milford, James Toogood, Ian Bond, and Delian Fry

SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

The arrangements for the meeting providing for public access for the Public Forum were on the web site. There were no members of the public present.

99/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Jason Mack.

100/20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 14 September 2020, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 15 September were noted.

101/20 FINANCE REPORT

- The Finance Report for this meeting (78/20) had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 30 September 2020 and a list of all payments made during September 2020.
- Also included was a listing of budget variances during the first six months of the 2020/21 financial year.

It was proposed by Councillor James Toogood, seconded by Councillor Dave Logan and unanimously resolved that:

t Finance Report be accepted.

102/20 LAND IN UPPER VENTNOR

- Report 77/20 provided an update on progress with the potential development of the remainder of Lowtherville Garden Estate.
- Councillor Stephen Cockett said that as it appeared that if the Town Council did not provide the £1,000 match funding the Isle of Wight Council required the project could not proceed he would support the proposal.
- The Mayor said that he agreed with that conclusion.

It was proposed by Councillor Stephen Cockett, seconded by Councillor Steve Milford and unanimously resolved that:

the Town Council provide £1,000 match funding to deliver the £2,000 needed for a site survey and initial drawings for a phase one stage of the project.

103/20 FILMING IN VENTNOR AND BONCHURCH

- The anticipated schedule for the filming of *The Beast Must Die* in Bonchurch and Ventnor was attached to Report 78/20.
- Members agreed the arrangements and Councillor Brian Lucas added that he hoped this might establish Ventnor as an attractive area for future filming.

104/20 NEW PUBLIC TOILET

- a) An update on progress with the project to provide a new Public Toilet in the Central Car Park was the subject of Repot 79/20
- b) Councillor James Toogood introduced this item and informed Members that the specifications for the building from the Quantity surveyor would be available by the end of this week.
- c) In response to a question about progress in discussions with the Isle of Wight Council about its proposed annual rent change of £5,900 for the use of four parking bays the Mayor said that County Councillor Gary Peace had agreed to take the matter up

105/20 A BETTER VENTNOR?

- a) Report 80/20 provided the basis for Members to discuss the significance for Ventnor of the Isle of Wight Council's Covid-19 Recovery Plan.
- b) Noting that there was no mention of Ventnor in that Council's Plan, Councillor Brian Lucas said that the town was being treated as the poor relation by the local authority.
- c) He added that the Town Council will need to be increasingly proactive in working on the town's regeneration.
- d) Councillor Jamie Macaulay agreed and said that he hoped the Town Council could develop ways of assisting the town's commercial sector.
- e) Councillor Stephen Cockett pointed out that as Ventnor had 4.5% of the Island's population it should have at least that share of any regeneration and recovery funding and he hoped it would be possible to develop training courses for young people to help with trade related qualifications and deliver an events programme.
- f) Councillor Colm Watling supported the development of an events programme and suggested that would be best delivered by the engagement of a specialist independent leader for it.
- g) Councillor Delian Fry pressed the need for a clear Ventnor identity as the basis of the town's marketing.
- h) In a general discussion of relationships with the Isle of Wight Council the Mayor returned to the reality that the Town was currently very low in its priorities and said that he would look for a stronger media profile.
- i) The Clerk added that the Town Council's current regeneration programme was not expecting or needing major financial support from the Isle of Wight Council but the town's long standing and deeply embedded deprivation could only be effected within a collaborative partnership between the two Councils.

It was unanimously resolved that Members would:

- i) forward their suggestions for progressing the Town Council's regenerations strategy; and
- ii) ask the town's County Councillors to work with the Town Council in progressing that strategy.

106/20 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT CONSULTATION

- a) The Town Council's response to the consultation on further changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme in the context of the Isle of Wight Council's 2021/22 was discussed.
- b) Councillor Steve Milford suggested that the saving the Isle of Wight Council is looking to achieve in its 2021/22 Budget could be secured by differential rates for second homeowners rather than the poorest households.

It was proposed by Councillor Colm Watling, seconded by Councillor Steve Milford and unanimously resolved that:

- i) none of the options set out in the consultation be supported;
 - ii) the Isle of Wight Council be informed that, notwithstanding its predicted Budget deficit
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- for 2021/22, savings that affect only residents on low incomes are unacceptable; and
- iii) the Isle of Wight Council should consider alternative options to achieve additional income such as differential council tax levels for second homes.
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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE CONSULTATION

- a) Members considered the changes to the planning system and local housing targets in the context of the government's White Paper *Planning for the Future* and the Islands MP's response to it.
- b) A draft response to the consultation prepared by an informal meeting of the Town Council's Planning Committee was attached to Report 82/20 for this meeting.
- c) The Mayor said that the Island MP's presentation to Parliamentary colleagues on this subject had been excellent.
- d) Councillor Brian Lucas said he agreed and that he expected many other MPs to share those concerns.
- e) Councillor Ian Bond said that he supported the approach to second homes and added that he was concerned that the proposed framework for the planning system in the White Paper unacceptably diminished local control of development.
- f) It was agreed that Councillor Brian Lucas would add to the draft response and circulate it to Members prior to its submission to the consultation and the Island's MP in advance of the 29 October deadline for submissions.
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108/20

STANDING ORDERS

Attached to Report 83/20 for this meeting was a revised version of Standing Order 18 on Procurement as agreed with Councillor Colm Watling and the Mayor further to Minute 97/20 of the meeting of 14 September 2020

It was proposed by Councillor Colm Watling, seconded by Councillor Brian Lucas and unanimously resolved that:
the Town Council adopt the new Standing Orders as amended at this meeting.

109/20 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

- a) The Town Clerks' Report – 84/20 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
- b) It included information on St Catherine's College, the latest Staff Meeting, the 10th anniversary of our Assistant Clerk's start date, Seasonal Services, Risk Assessments, Public Space Protection Orders, the Food Bank, the Annual Governance and Accountability Report and the meetings of Working Groups.
- c) Councillor Ian Bond commented that County Councillor Gary Peace had said he would revisit the issue of the restriction on the period dogs are allowed on public beaches in the Public Space Protection Orders in due course.
- d) The Mayor, on behalf of all Members, thanked Alison Killick for her 10 years of excellent service to the Town Council and the town's residents.
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The meeting closed at 8.27pm.

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE
