



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S HALL

7PM

21 JUNE 2021

Members Present

Councillors: Stephen Cockett (Mayor), Steph Toogood, Brian Lucas, James Toogood, Phil Warren, Julie Hutchison, Ian Bond, Colm Watling.

Joined following Minute 62/21: Councillors John Watkins and Steve Cooper

MINUTE SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

There were two members of the public present. County Councillor Rodney Downer was present and welcomed by the Mayor. Rodney Downer said that he would attend every other Town Council meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest at this time.

60/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Mark Jefferies.

61/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council meeting of 17 May 2021, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 17 May 2021, having been previously circulated to Members, were agreed with one amendment.
- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee meeting of 15 June 2021 were noted.

62/21 CO-OPTIONS TO CURRENT VACANCIES

Report 47/21 for this meeting summarised the Co-option process and its outcomes.

The Mayor thanked all five residents that had expressed an interest.

It was proposed by Councillor James Toogood, seconded by Councillor Ian Bond and unanimously resolved to:

appoint John Watkins as a Member for the Bonchurch and Ventnor East Ward and Steve Cooper as a Member for the Lowtherville Ward.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor John Watkins and Councillor Steve Cooper and invited them to join Members at the table.

63/21 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance Report for this meeting, 48/21, had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 May 2021 and a list of all payments made during May 2021.
- b) Councillor Brian Lucas welcomed the refunding of the Business Rates on the Public Toilets.
- c) **It was proposed by Councillor James Toogood, seconded by Councillor Brian Lucas and unanimously resolved that:**
the Finance Report be accepted

64/21 APPOINTMENTS

Report 49/21 identified the appointments outstanding from the Annual town Council Meeting last month

It was proposed by Councillor Ian Bond, seconded by Councillor James Toogood and unanimously resolved that:

the following appointments be agreed

- i) Councillor John Watkins as a member of the Planning Committee;
- ii) Councillor Phil Warren as Chair of the Planning Committee;
- iii) The Mayor and Steve Cooper as members of the Staffing Committee;
- iv) Councillor Ian Bond as Chair of the Staffing Committee;
- v) Councillors Steph Toogood and Steve Cooper as representatives to the South Wight Health and Wellbeing Forum; and
- vi) Councillor Julie Hutchison as the representative to the Ventnor Library Steering Group.

65/21 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- a) As revisions of the Terms of Reference for the Town Council's two Standing Committees were overdue Councillor Ian Bond introduced proposed updates for both the Planning and Staffing Committees.
- b) The new drafts were attached to Report 50/21 for this meeting and, subject to two minor recommendations, Councillor Ian Bond proposed they be adopted.

It was proposed by Councillor Phil Warren, seconded by Councillor Brian Lucas and unanimously resolved:

to adopt the updated Terms of Reference for the Town Council's Planning and Staffing Committees as attached to Report 50/21 for this meeting, with two minor amendments.

66/21 CAR PARKS: COSTS AND RECEIPTS 2020/21

- a) Report 51/21 provided a summary of the costs and receipts from the four car parks the Town Council is responsible for managing.
- b) The Mayor introduced the item with a summary of the arrangements since the Town Council took over the management of the car parks in 2015, noting that there had been no price increase since then while charges had been significantly increased by the Isle of Wight Council for the town's other four car parks.
- c) Councillor James Toogood said that he thought it was time to consider increasing the charges in the Town Council's Car Parks to the level of the Isle of Wight Council's first increase.
- d) Councillor Ian Bond commented that the Central car park should be categorised as Short Stay rather than as Long Stay at present.
- e) Following a discussion of the various tariffs and the future management of all the car parks the Clerk's suggestion that the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Assets and Services Working Group with more detailed information available was accepted.

67/21 31 Bus

- a) The Mayor summarised the history of the service up to its reduction from a 5-day service to two-days only in response to Covid-19.
 - b) He added that although the figures for the use of the service provided in Report 52/51 showed the continuing need for a significant subsidy the service is much valued by its users, some of whom had no other means of access to the town.
 - c) Councillor Phil Warren pointed out that the passenger use statistics showed an upward trend and said he felt it would be a shame to see it go
 - d) Councillor Colm Watling referred Members to the Isle of Wight Council's recent commitment to an Enhanced Bus Service and the hope that this might lead to an improvement in the available public transport services.
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- e) The Mayor concluded the discussion by describing his recommendation as attached to the Report.

It was proposed by Councillor John Watkins, seconded by Councillor Colm Watling and unanimously resolved to:

- i) establish a 31 Bus Working Group with the Terms of Reference attached to Report 52/21;
 - ii) subject to an agreement with an alternative service provider for the existing service by 30 June 2021, continue the service until 31 December 2021 with that provider;
 - iii) if that agreement is secured, give the current provider one month's notice of the end of the Town Council's existing agreement; and.
 - iv) appoint the Mayor and Councillors Brian Lucas, John Watkins, and Steve Cooper as Members of the Working Group.
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68/21 BONIFACE FIELDS LEASE

- a) A draft lease for Boniface Fields to the Town Council has been provided by the Isle of Wight Council and forwarded to the Town Council's Solicitor; it had also been circulated to Members in advance of this meeting.
 - b) Councillor James Toogood said that the poor state of the old portacabin on the site indicated the need for a Condition Survey in advance of signing the Lease.
 - c) Councillor Brian Lucas commented that although the Lease is a fairly standard document the accompanying Deed of Surrender is mysterious.
 - d) It was agreed that as the Town Council's Solicitor's advice on the documents was essential the matter would be referred to the Assets and Services Working Group in advance of the 12 July Town Council meeting.
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69/21 TIME AND TIDE PROJECT

- a) Councillor Phil Warren introduced this project to the meeting based on the Powerpoint slides that had been included in the papers for the meeting.
- b) He said the project's purpose is to focus coastal communities on their links with the sea, draw attention to climate change and provide educational opportunities for local schools and young people.
- c) The Mayor commented that it appeared to be a really good fit for Ventnor.
- d) Councillor James Toogood added that he felt it was a fantastic opportunity for the town.
- e) Councillor Colm Watling made the point that public funding of works of art is a difficult case to make.

It was unanimously resolved that:

the Town Council is supportive of the project in principle and asks Councillor Phil Warren to return to a future Town Council meeting with a detailed and costed proposals.

70/21 RESPONSE TO DOG FOULING

- a) The Deputy Mayor introduced this item by claiming that Ventnor had the most pavement mess of any town and that dog population increased in lock down and said the issue cannot be ignored any longer.
- b) She introduced examples of relevant notices and said we would ask every shop to display one, adding that the town's Pet Shop had offered to keep copies of posters available.
- c) The Mayor said that good clear signage is essential and that he is in favour of a poster campaign.
- d) Councillor James Toogood raised the issue of fouling in Spring Hill Gardens and supported the use of appropriate signage.
- e) Councillor John Watkins asked that the impact of increased signage be evaluated.

It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

asks the Deputy Mayor to work with Councillors Ian Bond and Julie Hutchinson to agree the basis of a poster campaign.

71/21 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

- a) The Town Clerks' Report – 54/21 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
 - b) It included Southern Water's inspection of the Town Council's buildings, the appointment of a Co-ordinator for the Anxiety Café, Bob Seely's meeting for Town and Parish Councils, the meeting with the Chief Officer and Chair of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils, the new table at Spring Hill Gardens and the dates of the Working Group meetings.
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The meeting closed at 8.30pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE
