



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S HALL

7PM

12 JULY 2021

Members Present

Councillors: Steph Toogood (Chair), Brian Lucas, James Toogood. Phil Warren, Julie Hutchison, Ian Bond, John Watkins, Steve Cooper, Mark Jefferies

MINUTE SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

There was one member of the public present. County Councillor Rodney Downer had sent his apologies as he was attending Wroxall Parish Council meeting this evening.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest at this time.

72/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from the Mayor.

73/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 21 June 2021, having been previously circulated to Members, were agreed with two amendments.
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee meeting of 6 July 2021 were noted.

74/21 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance Report for this meeting, 55/21, had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 30 June 2021 and a list of all payments made during June 2021.
- b) Also included was a listing of budget variances during the financial year.

It was proposed by Councillor Mark Jefferies seconded by Councillor James Toogood and unanimously resolved that:
the Finance Report be accepted

75/21 BONIFACE FIELDS LEASE

- a) Report 56/21 for this meeting summarised the latest developments with the lease to the Town Council for Boniface Fields.
- b) The Clerk advised Members that he had been informed that a request for a Break Clause in the lease would cause complications, delay and additional cost.
- c) Councillor Brian Lucas said that the project was proving more successful every year and he would be content to proceed on the basis of the currently agreed lease.

It was proposed by Councillor James Toogood seconded by Councillor Brian Lucas and unanimously resolved to:
agree the Lease for the site subject to satisfactory outcomes from the Searches.

76/21 MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

- a) A summary of the seven major projects in progress was attached to Report 57/21 with an indication of the proposed next steps in their implementation.
- b) Councillor Phil Warren raised the matter of a sub Lease for Ventnor Community Shed and asked if that would include disability access; the Clerk responded that this was not affordable within the current year's Budget.

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- c) The Clerk informed Members that Borrowing Approval for the new Public Toilets had been received today from the Ministry of Housing, Local Government and Communities.
 - d) Councillor James Toogood pointed out that there would be some delay in securing the materials for the project.
 - e) Councillor Steve Cooper: asked about progress with the Feasibility Study and if there is a Plan B.
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77/21 COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE: CAR PARKS

- a) Report 58/21 provided an update on developments with the Expression of Interest under the Localism Act 2011.
- b) He added that legal advice on the Isle of Wight Council's rejection of it had been received this evening and that he would circulate it to Members for information and comment

It was unanimously resolved that:

The Town Clerk be delegated to progress the issue, advised by Members.

78/21 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER POST

Report 59/21 provided Members with the relevant information on the recruitment process for the new post of Business Development Officer.

79/21 WELCOME BACK FUND

- a) The Isle of Wight Council has offered the Town Council up to £5,000 of funding for two projects: a new bench in Spring Hill Gardens and Street Theatre activity in the Town Centre during the Fringe.
- b) Report 60/21 proposed a distribution of that funding between the two approved projects.

It was proposed by Councillor Mark Jefferies seconded by Councillor Ian Bond and unanimously resolved to:

agree the submission of a bid to the Welcome Back Fund of £5,000 distributed as set out in section 2(b) of Report 60/21 for this meeting.

80/21 CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY WORKING GROUP

- a) Councillor Julie Hutchison's proposal to set up a Sustainability and Biodiversity Working Group was attached to Report 61/21 for this meeting.
- b) She introduced the proposal, referencing the increase in greenhouse gases, the need to lower carbon footprints, the effect on crops, species loss and heat growth.
- c) She said she hoped that the group would include work on protecting natural habitats and wild life and changes in heating appliances as well as sharing good practice with other Town and Parish Councils.
- d) Councillor Steve Cooper said he was really pleased to see this on the Agenda as these subjects were a major reason for his joining the Council and that he felt it was the most important work we have to do.
- e) Councillor Mark Jefferies agreed and added that he was aware that other Town and Parish Councils were thinking on similar lines.
- f) Councillor Brian Lucas said that this would be an excellent chance to set a standard.

It was unanimously resolved to:

establish a Sustainability and Biodiversity Working Group of Councillors Steve Cooper, Mark Jefferies, Julie Hutchison, Brian Lucas, John Watkins, Phil Warren and the Mayor.

80/21 NEW WEB SITE

- a) Councillor Ian Bond's proposal for preparatory work in the development of a new Town Council website was attached to Report 62/21 for this meeting
 - b) He introduced his proposal by identifying some of the weaknesses of the existing site
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81/21

including the fact that it was now not compliant with current legislation and had structural weaknesses that did not accommodate the range of wider communication opportunities now possible.

- c) Councillor Brian Lucas said that he welcomed the proposal with its focus on using standard suppliers specialising in sites for Town and Parish Councils.

It was proposed by Councillor Ian Bond seconded by Councillor Steve Cooper and unanimously resolved to:

- i) agree in principle to launch a new VTC website as early in 2022 as is possible;
- ii) note that a budget of £6,000 is likely to be sufficient to cover the first year's costs;
- iii) consider and agree what governance arrangements it wishes to have, such as a member working group;
- iv) receive a further report to its August meeting, informed by officer advice, that:
 - o identifies at least three potential suppliers who will then be contacted with a formal request for a proposal and quote for the work;
 - o confirms an appropriate budget allocation to cover the costs; and
 - o proposes a draft accessibility statement, to be published on the existing website as is now a legal requirement, setting out the council's plans.
- v) it was also agreed to establish a working group of Councillors Brian Lucas, Julie Huchison and Ian Bond supported by the Clerk.

82/21 **TOWN CLERKS' REPORT**

- a) The Town Clerks' Report – 61/21 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
- b) It included works on retaining walls, Ventnor Day Planning, the Island MP's meeting with representatives of Town and Parish Councils, meeting with the Isle of Wight Council's Recreation and Open Spaces officers and the meeting of the Assets and Services Working Group.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE