



# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

ISLAND FREE SCHOOL, NEWPORT ROAD

7PM

13 SEPTEMBER 2021

Members Present

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

## MINUTE SUBJECT

### PUBLIC FORUM

There were five members of the public present. Two representatives of Perpetuus Tidal Energy Centre (PTEC) were also present. County Councillor Rodney Downer sent his apologies.

- a) The Mayor outlined the evening's processes for the PTEC item and invited Councillor Phil Warren to introduce the Planning Application.
- b) Councillor Phil Warren outlined the process for Planning Applications and the Town Council's role within it reminding the meeting of the importance of Material Considerations for planning permission matters.
- c) A member of the public said that she felt it is extraordinary that development is being considered on such a beautiful site so important to the life of the town.
- d) 'Everybody loves Flowers Brook' was the theme of another contribution and the member of the public went on to say he felt the proposed site was not big enough to accommodate the project's development and extensions would be inevitable.
- e) Another member of the public expressed concerns about the red squirrels that made good use of the area of which he had hundreds of photos of them on and around the site and they should not be disturbed.
- f) Concern about the noise levels inevitable from the present proposals and their likely increase over time was registered with supporting detail.
- g) The proposed 7.5 metre high wall around the transformer would be unsightly and unwelcome to nearby residents and visitors.
- h) Transport access to the site during construction was also a matter of concern;
- i) PTEC's Chair responded to each of the matters raised with reassurances and said he was grateful for the opportunity to be present and to respond to the concerns raised, commenting that the company would do everything possible within the financial and operational parameters to limit impacts and assuring residents that once construction was complete the site would be restored to its current condition.
- j) He also stressed the project's contribution to the local economy and job creation.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest at this time.

### 92/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Ian Bond.

### 93/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 9 August 2021, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read with the addition of one phrase.
- b) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 23 August 2021 were noted.

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## 94/21 PTEC PLANNING APPLICATION

- a) Report 71/21 for this meeting provided the background to the current application from the Perpetuus Tidal Energy Centre Ltd.
- b) The Mayor explained for those online that a 40 minute public forum had already been held on the matter and asked Councillor Phil Warren to introduce the subject and the planning process.
- c) He summarised the concerns expressed and issues raised in the Public Forum as loss of visual and recreational amenity, access to the site, proximity to houses, disturbance of wildlife, the noise level of the transformer, the height of the fence and possible breach of the Castle Cove sea defences and suggested Members respond to them.
- d) Councillor James Toogood said that it was important to progress the move to green energy and that in his view the site would not be significantly changed once construction was completed and that there was already industrial development nearby and that other issues raised could be mitigated.
- e) Councillor Brian Lucas responded that he took a different view and supported the residents on all the eight points they had identified as summarised by Councillor Phil Warren.
- f) Councillors Mark Jefferies and Steve Copper both spoke in support of Councillor Brian Lucas's contribution with the assessment that it was the wrong site for the development and any development of such a beautiful site must fit in with what residents want.
- g) Councillor John Watkins said he had been convinced by the residents at the Public Forum that there are too many unresolved issues such as the likely noise levels and the validity of the environmental impact assessment.
- h) Councillor Phil Warren added that the meeting had confirmed the concerns he had already noted from his reading of the application documents.

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

this Council does not support this Planning Application on the grounds of the loss of visual and recreational amenity, access to the site, proximity to houses, disturbance of wildlife, the noise level of the transformer, the height of the fence and the possible breach of the Castle Cove sea defences.

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## 95/21 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance Report for this meeting, 72/21, had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 August 2021 and a list of all payments made during August 2021.
- b) Also included was a listing of budget variances during the first five months of the financial year.

**It was proposed by Councillor Steph Toogood, seconded by Councillor Mark Jefferies and unanimously resolved that:**

the Finance Report be accepted

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## 96/21 IT SYSTEMS UPGRADE

- a) The quotations for a range of upgrades to the Town Council's IT infrastructure, provided by Wight Computers - the provider of the Council's IT support for the last six years - were identified in Report 73/21.
  - b) The Mayor summarised the proposed developments and the associated costs.
  - c) Councillor James Toogood asked if the proposed transfer to the Cloud from the current server would free up the room it occupies and the meeting was reminded that although the actual Server would no longer be required the other use of the room in providing the linkages
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- for the building's tenants would remain.
- d) Councillor Brian Lucas asked if the new arrangements would provide adequate protection and was assured that was included in the monthly service provision.

**It was proposed by Councillor Steve Cooper, seconded by Councillor James Toogood and unanimously resolved to:**

authorise the Clerk to commission the upgrade and associated costs on the basis of the quotations attached to Report 73/21 for this meeting.

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**97/21 CAR PARK MANAGEMENT**

- a) The Mayor reported on the virtual meeting he and the Clerk had on Monday 6 September with the Chairs of Freshwater Parish Council, Sandown Town Council and Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council to discuss shared interests in the local management of Car Parks.
- b) He said that all three had agreed to discuss the potential at their next Council meeting and he confirmed that there had not yet been the promised response from the Isle of Wight Council.
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**98/21 31 Bus**

- a) Report 75/21 updated Members on the conclusions and recommendation of the 31 Bus Working Group at its meeting on 31 August.
- b) The Mayor presented the recommendation from the Working Group that the town could be well served by a volunteer run and operated service of which there were many existing examples and that this possibility should be explored by inviting potential champions and participants through social media and the Town Council's own channels.
- c) Councillor Mark Jefferies said that following his conversation with a current user very concerned at the termination of the service he was pleased to hear that this was being actioned.
- d) The Mayor told the meeting that he had identified most of the service's current users and that supporting them would be a subject for the next meeting of the Working Group.
- e) Councillor Steph Toogood commented that she felt it important to have greater clarity about the issues and challenges of establishing the proposed alternative service before making a public appeal for involvement.

**It was proposed by Councillor Mark Jefferies, seconded by Councillor Steve Cooper and unanimously resolved to:**

- i) endorse the recommendation of its Working Group to terminate the service through the process identified in section 3(b) of this Report and to inform the supplier accordingly; and
- ii) Ask its Working Group to continue to explore alternative arrangements for a Community Bus service.
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**99/21 DRAFT ISLAND PLANNING STRATEGY**

- a) The Mayor introduced the item, noting the target for Ventnor of just 10 new homes in the 15-year period of the Strategy and welcoming the inclusion of the land behind the Island Free School among the areas for economic development.
- b) However, he added that the major concerns for him were the growing numbers of second homes and holiday lets in the area and he was pleased to have been assured by both County Councillor Michael Liley and Portfolio Holder Paul Fuller that they were legitimate areas to raise within the current consultation.
- c) Councillor Brian Lucas said that he would like the Town Council's response to be on the basis of advice from a Planning Consultant so that it can be directly translated by the Isle of Wight Council into changes in the Strategy.
- d) The Mayor reminded Members that comments have to be registered by 1 October,
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**It was proposed by Councillor Mark Jefferies, seconded by Councillor Steve Cooper and unanimously resolved to:**

establish a working group with the Clerk having delegated authority to submit a response to the consultation consisting of Councillors Stephen Cockett, James Toogood, Mark Jefferies, Steve Cooper and Brian Lucas.

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**100/21 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT**

- a) The Town Clerks' Report – 77/21 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
  - b) It included the appointment of Nigel Slater-Bishop to the Business Development Officer post, the new Administrator post, Ventnor Day, new benches, the Ventnor Sign, Busking in Spring Hill Garden and the dates of the Working Groups.
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**101/21 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

In view of the confidential nature of the following item:

**it was proposed by Councillor Brian Lucas, seconded by Councillor Phil Warren and unanimously resolved under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings (1960) Act** to exclude the Public and Press whilst the next item is under discussion as it is of a confidential nature.

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The meeting closed at 9.10pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE

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