



# SEABREEZE PLAY AREA

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 14/15

9 FEBRUARY 2015

The purpose of this paper is to ask Members to respond to the options for the future funding of Seabreeze Play area set out in an email from the Isle of Wight Council's Recreation and Public Services Manager, Lee Matthews, dated 23 January 2015.

## No. DETAIL

### 1) BACKGROUND

- a) Ventnor Enhancement Fund successfully applied in 2009 for a grant of £50,000 to the then Department for Children Schools and Families' £235M Playbuilder Fund and the £1.2M of it secured by the Isle of Wight Council (IoWC) for 22 play areas on the Island.
- b) The funding was administered through an Agreement between the IoWC and Ventnor Town Council dated October 2009 with the grant funding being held by the Town Council.
- c) At its meeting of 9 October 2009 the Town Council agreed to contribute £750 a year to the Isle of Wight Council *towards the upkeep of the playground on condition that the IW Council undertake all necessary H&S inspections.*
- d) That amount has been provided for in every Town Council Budget since then,
- e) An email from the IoWC's Recreation and Public Services Manager, Lee Matthews, dated 14 October 2014, however, stated that:  
*When Seabreeze play area was built it was agreed that £1500 a year would be invoiced to the Town Council to cover maintenance and repair costs. (part of the grant conditions) Ventnor Enhancement Group who were a key player in the project and had an agreement with the Town Council to contribute towards these annual costs - £750.*

### 2) CURRENT SITUATION

- a) Neither we nor Lee Matthews have been able to source any paperwork referring to any agreement for Ventnor Enhancement Fund to contribute the additional £750 and nor has its present Treasurer.
- b) On that basis, we have withheld payment of the current IoWC invoice for their activity in respect of Seabreeze in a total of £1,500.

### 3) OPTIONS

- a) Lee Matthews' email of 23 January identifies four options for progressing the matter:
  - i) *Ventnor Town Council fund £750.00 only. This would keep the facility inspected by our Environment Officers but repairs to the equipment would be stopped.*
  - ii) *Ventnor Town Council and Ventnor Enhancement jointly fund the inspection and repairs of the equipment £1500*
  - iii) *No contribution is made and the play area becomes the responsibility of Ventnor Town Council.*
  - iv) *Any other options we can come up with....*
- b) Under the 2009 Agreement, Ventnor Town Council has a clear responsibility for the maintenance of the play equipment expressed in its paragraph 5.8:  
*[VTC] will retain and maintain the play trail and its assets in good working order and repair for a minimum period of ten (10) years. If [VTC] fails to maintain it for a minimum period of ten (10) years from completion, [the Isle of Wight Council] may recover the full market value of the assets, net of any costs of disposal, if applicable.*

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#### 4) RECOMMENDATION

The Town Council is recommended to:

- i) authorise the Town Clerk to explore alternative arrangements for the fulfilment of the Town Council's responsibilities under the Agreement; and
  - ii) ask the Public Buildings Work Group to consider the options in the light of the quoted costs of alternative provision.
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