



TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 91/15

12 OCTOBER 2015

The purpose of this paper is to record developments in the past month not requiring an Agenda item at this meeting.

No. DETAIL

1) HSBC BANK

- a) In response to our letter to the HSBC's Chief Executive we were visited on Thursday 8 October by their Portsmouth and Southampton Area Director, Madelaine Phillips, along with local Branch Manager Nikki Alexander and Deputy Area Director (Business Banking) Terry Rice.
- b) The meeting was Chaired by the Mayor and attended by the Clerks; the Ventnor Business Association's Chair Bob Ventress and Secretary Tracy Ward also joined the meeting.
- c) As expected, it was immediately clear that there would be no change to the decision to close the Ventnor Branch and discussion focused on alternative arrangements being made for local HSBC customers at the Post Office which are promised to be fully in place no later than the end of this year.

2) BEACH CLEANING

- a) Ventnor Town Council took over beach cleaning services from Isle of Wight Council on 1 April this year.
- b) The project has run seamlessly, thanks to Beach Cleaners Wendy & Don, together with John from Ace Waste - all of whom have provided an excellent and consistent service throughout the season, which finished on 30 September.

3) PADDLING POOL

- a) Maintenance of the Paddling Pool has been extended until the end of October, which takes into account the school half term week.
- b) Merv Ringer and Mick Wade are to be thanked for their flexible approach and continued quality work on this successful project.

4) APPRENTICESHIP GRANT

- a) Thanks are due to the Island's MP, Andrew Turner, for his effective intervention on our behalf to secure the £1,500 grant usually available to employers with few staff towards the cost of taking on an apprentice.
- b) Our application for that grant was refused by the government's Skills Funding Agency (SFA) on the surprising grounds that as the Town Council is part of the Isle of Wight Council it has too many employees to qualify.
- c) Approaches to the SFA by both us and HTP – the agency providing Florence Barrett's training – were unsuccessful so we asked both the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils and the Island's MP for assistance.
- d) As Members are aware, correspondence from Andrew Turner MP last week informed us that the Minister, Nick Boles, had arranged for an exception payment to be made.

5) VENTNOR LIBRARY AGM

- a) The Community Development Working Group met with members of the Friends of Ventnor Library for a discussion about potential responses to decisions on the current consultation on the future of the Library Service.
- b) The Mayor has been invited to speak at the Friends' Annual General Meeting on 21 October at 6.30pm at the Library.