



VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

CLERK'S COLUMN

EDITION 96

MONDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2022

Welcome to edition 96 of our Clerk's Column circulated as usual to the 490 residents on our Residents' Forum email list and through the Chronicle's page 4.

NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET & PRECEPT

Last Monday's Town Council Meeting unanimously agreed its Budget for 2022/23 anticipating a total total expenditure during the year of £574,362. Of that total, £195,992 is expected to be covered by a combination of income from activities, grants and the loan for the new toilet; the Precept will provide the remaining £378,370. That is an increase of £22,481 or 6.3% over last year and an increase in the Band D charge of 17 pence a week.

The major Precept increases are the additional £9,500 to fund the return of the Beach Safety service and £7,000 for the extension of the very popular Wellbeing Café.

Around £200,000 or 52% of the Precept total is the consequence of the Town Council's commitment to retain services from which the Isle of Wight Council withdrew funding: the Paddling Pool, Grounds Maintenance, the Library, Beach Cleaning, Beach Safety, Ventnor Park, Youth Centre, Youth activities, Public Toilets and associated administration.

THE VENTNOR BELL

The proposal by Venture South to install a sculptured Bell that rings softly with tidal movements near the Bandstand steps that the Town Council has supported ran into difficulties at our Planning Committee on 25 January when doubts were raised about its safety and the Planning Application was withdrawn.

Five Councillors attended an informal meeting with the Bell's sculpturer and project organisers on Thursday afternoon to discuss what to do next. The organisers said that it will provide access to all and for educational and science programmes via school groups. It would be seen as the "Ventnor Bell". Concerns about the dangers of children and young people climbing on and falling from it were raised and it was agreed to consider other locations.



Bell that rings softly with tidal movements near the Bandstand steps that the Town Council has supported

FEBRUARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Monday's Town Council meeting opened with the Island's High Sheriff James Attrill presenting his Awards to Marzena Turner and Joyce Milford for their work with Baby Box and Steve Northern for his with Ventnor Food Bank.

Other Agenda items were the Finance Report, the Financial Risk Assessment, the Budget and Precept 222/23, our Social Media Policy, Park Signage and Beach Safety.

ONE VENTNOR PARK TREE DOWN

Of the many trees in the Park, an inspection by Councillor Toogood yesterday revealed that only this one, in the Putting Green had given way.

Arrangements to remove it and for an inspection of the Hut that's half underneath it have already been made



MERV RINGER

We were all very sorry indeed to hear that Merv Ringer had died on 7 February at the age of 71. Among his many contributions to the life of the town he worked part-time with us during the season keeping the Paddling Pool clean, fresh and safe for five years from when we took it on in 2014. His funeral is at 11.15am on Wednesday this week at the Crematorium. Donations to the Hospice.

ROAD CLOSURE(S)

Island Roads' list of road closures affecting the town includes:

- ❖ *Gills Cliff Road:* Today until Friday
- ❖ *Grove Road:* Today until Wednesday 9 March
- ❖ *Shore Road:* Tomorrow until Thursday 17 March
- ❖ *Bonchurch Road:* Continuing until Friday
- ❖ *Leeson Road:* Continuing until Friday

VIA MY TWITTER FEED LAST WEEK

- The [Child Poverty Action Group](#) issued a Briefing today showing 'In April, Universal Credit will increase by 3.1 per cent, just as inflation is predicted to peak at 7.25 per cent. This means the value of UC for families with children will fall by around £570 a year, on average.'
- A [YMCA](#) Report registers 'not only have funding cuts now reached £1.1bn real-terms fall of 74% since 2010/11) but annual spend per head on 5-to-17-year-olds in England has plummeted from £158 in 2010/11 to just £37 in 2020/21.'

MORE INFORMATION: is available from the Town Council's website and @ventnor clerk