



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

GREEN ROOM, SALISBURY GARDENS

7PM

17 APRIL 2023

Members present

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

MINUTE SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

- a) There was one member of the public present at this time.
- b) The Mayor informed the meeting that the member of the public, David George, would be recording the proceedings and invited him to address the meeting.
- c) He introduced himself as a previous member of the Town Council and ex-Deputy Mayor and asked a number of questions based on the Clerk's letter of resignation of which he said he had a copy.
- d) He first asked if a member of the Town Council been accused of bullying and the Mayor replied that two complaints had been passed to the Monitoring Officer who had decided not to act on them.
- e) He then asked if the allegations had been withdrawn and Mayor said they had not and had not been resolved as there was no procedure for doing so.
- f) Moving to the circulated March IWALC Bulletin he quoted the statement in it by a Member of this Town Council what 'some weaknesses were recently discovered... and asked if these weaknesses were related to accusations of bullying.
- g) Councillor Steve Cooper said that a full review of all policies relating to bullying was underway.
- h) David George responded that he had noted the Civility and Respect Pledge proposal but asked if Members agreed that accusations of bullying would be a matter of concern for the electorate.
- i) Councillor Steve Cooper responded that the Town Council have had a series of informal discussions and are making progress on all matters.
- j) David George concluded by saying he thought something very unpleasant has happened in this Council and is a serious democratic issue for all of you.
- k) Councillor Steve Cooper responded that if he witnessed any bullying he would directly challenge it.

28/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest at this time.

29/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor James Toogood.

30/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 13 March 2023 having been previously circulated to Members were taken as read.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of 21 March 2023 were noted.

31/23 FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Report for this meeting 19/23, had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 31 March 2023 and a list of all payments made during March 2023.

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

accept the Finance Report

32/23 RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS 2022/23

a) The cash book summary that provides the Receipts and Payments Accounts for the financial year 2022/23 was attached to Report 20/23 for this meeting.

b) Members noted that the Income and Expenditure Accounts would follow in due course.

It was proposed by Councillor Brian Lucas, seconded by Councillor Phil Warren and unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

notes the Receipts and Payments Accounts for its financial year 2022/23 as attached to Report 20/23 for this meeting.

33/23 CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

a) Report 21/23 for this meeting included a copy of the National Association of Local Councils'/Society of Local Council Clerks' Civility and Respect Pledge supported by a motion by Councillor Steve Cooper that it be signed by all Members individually and endorsed bi-annually.

b) Councillor Steve Cooper introduced the Report and explained the reason for the request that individual members sign up to the Pledge and agree to do so bi-annually.

c) The Mayor noted that we are only the sixth Town & Parish Council on the Island to sign up to this Pledge.

d) Councillor Mark Jefferies asked if breaches of the Pledge would be met by enforcement action and Councillor Steve Cooper replied that at present no sanctions were available but that lobbying for the restoration of sanctions was an aspect of the Civility and Respect Pledge.

It was proposed by Councillor Steve Cooper, seconded by Councillor Ian Bond and unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

signs up to the NALC/ SLCC Pledge on the basis of individual signatures to be refreshed bi-annually.

34/23 HR COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

a) Attached to Report 22/23 for the meeting were proposed Terms of Reference for the HR Committee following discussions with senior staff.

b) The Mayor thanked Councillor Steve Cooper for his dedicated work on the Terms of Reference.

c) It was noted that the decision on this matter in Minute 23/23 of the Town Council's March meeting had included that the Membership of the HR Committee would consist of seven Members and this was not being challenged at this time.

It was proposed by Councillor Steve Cooper, seconded by Councillor Mark Jefferies and unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

agrees the Terms of Reference of its HR Committee as attached to Report 22/23 for this meeting with the number of Members to be retained at this time at the level set in Minute 23/23 of its March Meeting.

35/23 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

- a) The Town Clerk's Report – 23/23 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
 - b) It included the Gold Award to the Island's Living Well and Early Years Project, the March Our Place session, the meeting for Town and Parish Councils with the Island's MP, Litter Picking and the vacancy for a Member to represent the St Lawrence Ward.
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The meeting closed at 8.25p

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE

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