



Here's edition 152 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.

## EXTRAORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Monday's Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council was called to record formally my resignation and agree a recruitment process for my successor. The Minutes of the meeting, as always, are available on our web site and these are [here](#). The decision on the recruitment process was unanimous and based on the recommendations of the Town Council's HR Committee. So adverts will be published on 10 April. The increased agreed salary on offer is in the range £37,638-£40,578 for a 37 hour week combining as now the two roles of Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and managing a staff of 16 (10.5Ftes) within a total Budget of around £500k.

## ASSETS & SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Drone coverage of the Salisbury Gardens' roof gave the Group the clearest view yet of its problems – the



first item on the Agenda of its Tuesday morning meeting. We agreed to fund the replacement of some slates, the adjustment of others and clearance of the gully as urgent repairs to prevent leakages. There are larger problems with both roof and some areas of the walls that are now the focus of a five-year repair and maintenance plan. The refurbishment of the Green Room kitchen was reported to be also complete with new oven, larder, dishwasher and new storage cupboards.

We agreed to obtain another quotation for the tree works we know are needed on Boniface Fields and to fund some repairs to Ventnor Central following recent storm damage. Our annual Insurance renewal was agreed with a 12% increase on the rebuild value of our insured assets.

## VIA MY TWITTER FEED THIS WEEK

- [National Energy Action](#) has updated its prediction of the numbers in Fuel Poverty as charges continue to rise: '7.5 million UK households will be in [#FuelPoverty](#) from April.'
- A new [Workforce Plan](#) from the NHS says: 'the health service is already operating with 154,000 fewer full-time staff than it needs, and that number could balloon to 571,000 staff by 2036 on current trends.'

## COUNTY COUNCILLORS MEETING

Gary Peace was unable to join the monthly meeting the Mayor and I have with our County Councillors due to a hospital appointment so Rodney Downer was asked about items in both their areas at Wednesday's session. Subjects covered included the Planning Application for East Dene, the Cemetery, Alpine Road closure and the need to introduce the proposed parking space changes on the Esplanade pre-season.

## COUNCILLOR COCKETT'S RESIGNATION

The Mayor received Councillor Stephen Cockett's resignation letter last Sunday and his email to me about it made clear that the reasons are about schooling and housing.

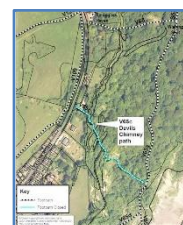


Stephen joined the Town Council following election to the St Lawrence Ward at the local elections of May 2017. Well known for his strong commitment to and knowledge of environmental matters and climate change he was also the strong supporter of the Town Council's 31 Bus Service. He was appointed Mayor of Ventnor for the year 2021/22 at the Town Council's Annual Meeting of 17 May 2021. He was appointed Deputy Town Mayor for the current 2022/23 year at the Annual Meeting of 9 May 2022.

A Notice of the Vacancy and the opportunity for a by-election will be posted this week.

## DEVIL'S CHIMNEY CLOSED

The Isle of Wight Council has had to close public footpath V65c known as Devil's Chimney in Bonchurch landslip. This is because land movement has shifted a set of steps out of position. Once the land has settled it will move the flight of steps back into place, but until then it is not safe to use.



## OFFICE CLOSURE DAYS

Our office will be closed on Friday and Monday.