



Here's edition 155 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.

APRIL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Public Forum In a highly unusual Public Forum at the start of Monday's Town Council meeting local resident, ex-Town Councillor and Deputy Mayor David George questioned whether a Member of the Council had been accused of bullying by two women as stated by the Clerk in his letter of resignation as the reason for his leaving. David George recorded the 15-minute exchange during which the Mayor confirmed that



two such complaints had been received, that they had been referred to the Isle of Wight Council's Monitoring Officer who had determined he was not in a position to investigate them and the complaints remained unresolved. Councillor Steve Cooper outlined the steps the Town Council was now undertaking with a full review of all policies that are pertaining to bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Formal Business After the acceptance of the March Finance Report the revenue and payments summary for the 2022/23 year was received with the final Income and Expenditure Accounts expected at the May meeting. Next was the motion by Councillor Steve Cooper that Members individually sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge developed by our national associations to fill the gap left by the government's removal of Code of Practice enforcement powers from Monitoring Officers. All Members committed to signing the Pledge that will guide their, and their successors', actions. The final Agenda item was agreement on the new Terms of Reference for the Town Council's HR Committee.

ST LAWRENCE VACANCY: ELECTION DATE

As more than 10 St Lawrence residents have signed letters requesting that the vacancy be filled by election, the Isle of Wight Council has agreed one will be held on 22 June with the closing date for nominations set at 25 May. The Isle of Wight Council will publish details.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

The Group's meeting on Thursday opened as always with Tony McCarthy's Report including: the increasing popularity of the monthly Our Place sessions held last Thursday, our Playgroup is now meeting twice a week, the national Gold Award achieved by the Living Well and Early Years Project of which Tony is a Board member representing the Town Council's involvement as a partner in the project, welcome visits to Baby Box by County Councillors Ian Stephens and Rodney Downer, the fact that the Pantry's membership has grown to 213 and the planned move of the Food Bank to Ventnor Central alongside Babybox. Other items were the Annual Town Meeting, Ventnor Day for which planning is well underway, the Community Support Fund, the Better Days Café and the possibility of providing an external Defibrillator for Salisbury Gardens.

HR COMMITTEE MEETING

The Town Council's HR Committee met on Monday morning for an Agenda of two items: arrangements for the recruitment process for my successor and its Terms of Reference. On the first the composition of the Panel of four – three Members and me - to interview shortlisted applicants, questions to be asked at the formal interviews and the interview process were all discussed and agreed. On the other item the meeting agreed a draft of its new Terms of Reference following a discussion of them with senior staff that Councillor Steve Cooper had led and were subject to approval by the evening's Town Council meeting.

TRAFFIC ORDERS

From midnight Saturday 29 April until midnight Friday 5 May 2023, or when the works have been completed, no traffic along Bonchurch Shute between its junctions with Leeson Road and The Pitts.

VIA MY TWITTER FEED THIS WEEK

- The [Food Foundation's](#) Food Price Tracker finds 'Analysis shows the price of a weekly basket of food has increased by 24-26% in the past year.'
- The [UN's Secretary General](#) told a conference of the world's major economies 'If governments continue with the same environmental policies currently in place, the world will become 2.8°C hotter by the end of the century, which would be "a death sentence."'

MORE INFORMATION is available from the Town Council's website and @ventnorclerk