



# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

GREEN ROOM, SALISBURY GARDENS 7PM

12 JUNE 2023

Members present

Councillors: Mark Jefferies (Chair), Brian Lucas, Phil Warren, John Watkins, Ian Bond, Julie Hutchison & Steve Milford

## MINUTE SUBJECT

### PUBLIC FORUM

The Chair welcomed Steve Milford, new Councillor for St Lawrence Ward.

There were four members of the public present: local residents David George and James Toogood, County Councillor for Ventnor East Rodney Downer, and Louise Hill, reporter from the County Press:

- David George, previously a Deputy Mayor of Ventnor Town Council raised the question as to why the decision at the end of the Town Council meeting of 22 May was to withdraw and no longer publish future editions of the long-established Clerks' Column.
- He continued to say that the then Town Clerk David Bartlett queried its relevance for discussion/decision as it was not an agenda item.
- The Chair of that meeting Steve Cooper concurred, but allowed discussions by Councillors, leading to the taking of a vote to cease its publication.
- David George continued, pressing the point that this was not an item on the agenda of that meeting for decision and enquired as to whether the suggestion of censorship of the Clerks' Column was as a direct result of the events of the Annual Town Meeting – where bullying by a Ventnor Town Councillor was alleged.
- At this point, Councillor Bond raises Point of Order 4b) (that a member of the public can only bring business to the meeting of those items on its agenda and 2 minutes is permissible for an individual person to speak).
- David George requested that he be permitted to continue as per the time allocated to 30 Minutes of the Public Forum.
- Chair Mark Jefferies responds, reiterating the 2-minute per person ruling; David George continues speaking, and the Chair insists that he stop or leave the meeting.
- After being permitted to speak by the Chair, James Toogood became verbally abusive towards Councillor Bond and subsequently the Chair insisted that he and David George leave the meeting.

County Councillor Rodney Downer reported:

- That he has confirmed with officers that the planning application for East Dene go before the Isle of Wight Council's Planning Committee, should it be looking likely to be approved.
- He continued that the pleasure grounds and part of the former East Dene estate have now been registered as a park of special historic interest. Several garden structures have been specifically listed. Also listed are the curvilinear-walled garden feature, icehouse, remains of a fernery and walled kitchen garden. Details of these can be found on Historic England website.
- Requests have been logged for cutting out of footpaths from the bottom of Kings Bay Road along to Wheelers Bay car park and down to the revetment, along with footpaths in Monks Bay.

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**44/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for Absence received from Councillors Steve Cooper, Steph Toogood & Dave Logan.

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**45/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declaration of interest received by Councillor Steve Milford as a Trustee of BabyBox and Ventnor Pantry.

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**46/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 22 May 2023 having been previously circulated to Members were taken as read.

The Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting of 15 May 2023 having been previously circulated to Members were taken as read.

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**47/23 FINANCE REPORT**

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

Councillor Julie Hutchison asked about the reason for a significant number of expenses payments and the Assistant Town Clerk said she would provide that information soonest.

**It was proposed by Councillor Ian Bond, seconded by Councillor Brian Lucas and unanimously resolved to:**  
accept the Finance Report.

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**48/23 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2022/23**

The final Accounts for 2022/23 were attached to Report 32/23 for this meeting.

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

the Town Council accepts the Income and Expenditure Account and related Balance Sheet attached to report 32/23 for this meeting as its Annual Accounts for the financial year 2022/23.

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**49/23 ANNUAL RETURN 22/23: GOVERNANCE**

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23 that the Town Council is required to submit to its External Auditor by 30 June 2023, had been previously circulated to Members.

**It was proposed by Councillor Phil Warren, seconded by Councillor Brian Lucas and unanimously resolved to:-**

approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement as attached to Report 33/23 included in the papers for this Meeting and authorises its Mayor to sign Section 1 accordingly.

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**50/23 ANNUAL RETURN 2022/23: ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

a) Members considered the Accounts Statements for the financial year 2022/23 in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 as set out in the previously circulated copy.

**It was proposed by Councillor Brian Lucas, seconded by Councillor Julie Hutchison and unanimously resolved to:**

- i) approve the Accounting Statements 2022/23 in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return attached to Report 34/23 for this meeting;
  - ii) authorise its Mayor to sign Section 2 accordingly; and
  - iii) ask its Town Clerk to submit the completed Return together with the required additional papers identified in Section 4 of this Report in advance of 30 June 2023 deadline.
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**51/23 APPOINTMENT TO TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

- a) Members are asked to appoint Councillor Stephen Milford to the Town Council's HR Committee as per previously circulated report 35/23.
- b) Members are asked to consider joining the Town Council's Planning Committee.

**It was proposed by Councillor John Watkins, seconded by Councillor Ian Bond and unanimously resolved to:**

- i) appoint Councillor Stephen Milford to the HR Committee.
  - ii) there are no Councillors wishing to join the Planning Committee at this time.
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**52/23 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT**

- a) The Town Clerk's Report 36/23 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
  - b) It included staff cover for the Wellbeing Café's Co-ordinator, the Beach Safety team, the Town Clerk's Chronicle Clerks' Column Farewell, the vacancy in Ventnor West ward and recent meetings of the Town Council's Working Groups.
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**53/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

In view of staff absence in July, the Town Council is recommended to hold its next full meeting on Monday 14 August:

**It was proposed by Councillor Julie Hutchison, seconded by Councillor Steve Milford and unanimously resolved:**

- a) For the next full Town Council meeting to be held on Monday 14 August.
  - b) To amend any published dates reflecting this date change.
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**54/23 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

In view of the confidential nature of the following item:

**It was resolved under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings (1960) Act:** to exclude the Public and Press whilst the next item is under discussion as it is of a confidential nature.

TOWN CLERK SUCCESSION RECOMMENDATIONS

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The meeting closed at 7:45pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE

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