



# NEW SIGNAGE FOR VENTNOR

## PUBLIC PROPOSAL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PAPER C

6 AUGUST 2025

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information regarding a public offer to design and donate new signage for Ventnor. While the offer is generous and well-intentioned, this report outlines the broader implications of accepting such a contribution, including procurement, governance, reputational, and operational considerations. The matter is brought before Full Council to ensure a transparent and collective decision-making process.

### No. DETAIL

#### 1) BACKGROUND

A member of the public has approached Ventnor Town Council with a proposal to design and donate new signage for the town. This follows a previous offer to design a town flag, which was considered and declined by Full Council due to concerns about design suitability and process.

#### 2) CONSIDERATIONS

- a) Budget and Capacity: While the signage may be externally funded, any change to town branding has wider implications. Implementation would require updates across multiple platforms: physical signage, digital assets, printed materials, uniforms, and correspondence. At present, the Council's focus remains on financial recovery and core service delivery. There is no allocated budget or officer capacity to support a rebranding exercise.
- b) Governance and Procurement: Accepting creative contributions from individuals raises questions of fairness, transparency, and precedent. Any design or procurement process should be open, equitable, and in line with Council policy. If the Council wishes to explore new signage, a formal procurement process should be developed to invite and assess proposals fairly.
- c) Communications and Reputation: A visible rebrand at this time may be misinterpreted by the public, potentially undermining trust in the Council's priorities. It is essential that all Council actions reflect its current position and reinforce its commitment to financial prudence and community service.

#### 3) RISKS OF ACCEPTING THE OFFER WITHOUT DUE PROCESS

- a) Perceived Favouritism and Lack of Transparency: Accepting an unsolicited design from a member of the public without a formal process may be perceived as preferential treatment, undermining the Council's commitment to fairness and openness.
- b) Operational Strain: Implementing new signage, even if externally funded, would place additional demands on staff time and resources - both of which are currently focused on financial recovery and essential service delivery.
- c) Reputational Risk: A rebranding initiative at this time could be viewed by the community as unnecessary or poorly timed, potentially damaging public trust in the Council's priorities and decision-making.
- d) Precedent-Setting: Accepting this offer without a clear policy framework may set a precedent for future unsolicited proposals, complicating governance and making it difficult to manage expectations or ensure consistency.

#### 4) SUGGESTED APPROACH

- a) Politely decline the current offer considering the Council's financial position and focus on recovery, while noting that any future consideration would be subject to due diligence and Council policy.

#### 5) RECOMMENDATION

- a) Members are recommended to support approach.