



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

LG1, SALISBURY GARDENS

10AM

17 NOVEMBER 2025

Members present:-

Councillors: Steph Toogood (Chair), James Toogood & John Watkins.

Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey: Substitute committee member

Joint Clerks: Morgan Williams & Alison Killick.

VTC Officer: Catherine Hammond.

MINUTE SUBJECT

66/25 PUBLIC FORUM

There were two members of the public present.

67/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence received from Cllr Brayden Gibbins.

68/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

69/25 2026 EVENTS

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this agenda item.

With assistance from Cllrs Ernie Polak-Harvey and Brayden Gibbins in collating information from local communities, a calendar of community events for 2026 is proposed, to be uploaded onto the Town Council's website.

70/25 COMMUNITY ALL-YEAR-ROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Chair Steph Toogood introduced this item, with Officer Catherine Hammond providing greater detail.

It is felt that the local community are unaware of exactly what projects/assets the Town Council are responsible for.

To gather local residents' and visitors' feedback, a year-round questionnaire is proposed - with its distribution yet to be confirmed - but its purpose being for long-term projects/ideas and not for urgent subjects.

71/25 IOW WALKING FESTIVAL 2025 & 2026

Business & Community Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item.

In October this year, there were two walks in and around Ventnor promoting the Armada trail, for which she assisted and attended.

It was unanimously agreed that:

Support for the Business and Community Officer be approved to continue co-ordinating and attending the walks for 2026, for four mornings throughout the Walking Festival period.

72/25 REMEMBRANCE SERVICES (NOVEMBER)

Chair Steph Toogood introduced this agenda item.

“Lesley’s Nutshell” have agreed to provide their shop space year-round for making and co-ordinating poppies.

Cllr John Watkins suggested the idea of “postbox toppers” for Remembrance events.

Clerk Alison Killick confirmed a “wash-up” meeting has been arranged for 28 November to discuss this year’s event.

73/25 WELLBEING CAFÉ

Discussions took place to include the possible need of employing a casual member of staff to assist with the ever-growing numbers of Café members needing support, with approximately 135 members in total.

With the current Café Co-ordinator Terri Exposita in mind, lone working is a serious consideration; it should be noted that - although a volunteer can assist whilst a staff member is present - they cannot cover the role if the staff member is absent.

Cllr Watkins advised that the Café are receiving referrals from the NHS and asked if there is funding available.

Clerk Morgan Williams responded that the NHS may be able to provide some funding, especially as they are referring people to the Wellbeing Café for the support it provides.

It was unanimously agreed that:

- the Committee recommend to the Full Council that - as part of the 2026/27 budget - a part-time/casual member of staff be considered.
 - the Wellbeing Café Co-ordinator’s hours be re-considered to increase current hours.
 - external funding be sought.
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74/25 THURSDAY KITCHEN & REALLY USEFUL THURSDAYS

Chair Steph Toogood & Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this agenda item, updating committee members on the activities of Thursday Kitchen and Really Useful Thursdays.

Cllr John Watkins suggested more councillor involvement in the Thursday meetings.

The Chair advised that St Catherine’s Church provides the much-needed space to accommodate the growing numbers of attendees on Thursdays – there is nowhere else large enough in Ventnor.

Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey enquired about the arrangements for setting-up and has offered his assistance.

It was unanimously agreed that:

the Business & Community Committee recommend to the Full Council that consideration be given for a donation of £1,000 annually to St Catherine’s Church towards its running costs for this worthwhile project, to be included in the 2026/27 budget.

75/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 10:00am

The meeting closed at 10:50am

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR

DATE
