



# MINUTES OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

GREEN ROOM

7PM

8 DECEMBER 2025

Members present:-

**DRAFT**

Councillors: Steph Toogood (Chair), Mark Jefferies, Ian Bond, James Toogood, Karl Hunter, Steve Milford, John Watkins, Brayden Gibbins, Linda Jefferies & Ernie Polak-Harvey.

## MINUTE SUBJECT

### 86/25 PUBLIC FORUM

There were two members of the public present.

Within the Public Forum section of the meeting - Cllr Mark Jefferies, also County Cllr for Bonchurch & Ventnor East - provided the following update:-

- works to rebuild and resurface the road to Wroxall are slightly ahead of schedule, and the road is due to re-open for Christmas and New Year only, from tomorrow evening (9 December).
- there is considerable movement at the property Ravenscourt – a large crack has appeared in the middle section of the property. This has been reported to the property owner and Building Control at the Isle of Wight Council.
- in Bonchurch discussions are ongoing regarding Bonchurch Pond, with the Water Courses officer investigating the Pond's water supply and retention issues.
- re-surfacing of Shore Road is expected to complete this week.
- the monitoring report for Leeson Road shows all movement to be low risk, ie., nothing out of the ordinary.

County Cllr for Ventnor West Ed Blake provided the following update:-

- the coastal defence scheme has been confirmed, with major works planned from Monks Bay to as far along the coast as Castle Cove.
- the budget for the very extensive works needed was much under-estimated – originally suggested at £40m, now increased to £287m.
- a meeting is proposed with Southern Water – they want to install sewage pipes, particularly in the Bonchurch area, which will entail a huge scheme of works, requiring a consultation to take place.
- he attended a meeting regarding the shop in St Lawrence closing down in January.
- to become more “user-friendly”, there have been discussions around changing the run times of the No:31 Bus from Fridays to Thursdays instead.
- brief update on Bath Road closure – a new date has been set for the court case.
- caravans parking in Park Avenue and being used as “living accommodation.”

Local resident Maggie Nelmes provided a brief update:-

- Maggie oversees the ducks' welfare at Ventnor Park, and she has now engaged four volunteers for duck feeding. She enquired about the next grant available for duck feed, etc.
- She also helps with preservation of a nature reserve at Pelham Wood in St Lawrence.
- She and Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey are listed Tree Wardens for Ventnor.

### 87/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence received from Cllr Steve Cooper.

### 88/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

## 89/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 4 November 2025 - having been previously circulated to Members - were taken as read:

**It was proposed by Cllr Linda Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey and unanimously resolved to:**

accept the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 4 November 2025.

The Minutes of the:-

o Policy & Resources Committee 30 October & 20 November 2025

o Business & Community Committee 12 & 17 November 2025

o Environment & Transport Committee 2 December 2025

o Planning Committee 14 October 2025

are for information only.

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## 90/25 FINANCE REPORT

The report provided Members with information regarding the end of November balances, and payments made during October and November 2025.

Comments were raised about very high charges for the water supply to the Esplanade toilets with Clerk Morgan Williams confirming that likely usage versus charges indicates there is a problem which is under investigation.

Cllr Karl Hunter raised the subject of changing the town council's bank account from its current HSBC provider to a higher interest account.

Clerk Morgan Williams confirmed that – due to recent staff changes and the now demand on staff time, there hasn't been the time to fully address this but that as soon as the precept for 2026/27 is provided to VTC, the staff will ensure that a high interest account is set up to maximise returns.

**It was proposed by Cllr Steve Milford, seconded by Cllr Linda Jefferies and unanimously resolved to:**

accept the Finance Report.

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## 91/25 FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

To comply with Assertion 5 of Section 1 of the AGAR (Annual Governance & Accountability Return), it is a requirement for Councils to undertake a Financial Risk Assessment.

At least once in each financial year, the Town Council is required to undertake a review of the effectiveness of its internal financial controls, including the management of risk.

The findings of this review must be minuted by the Town Council.

**It was proposed by Cllr James Toogood, seconded by Cllr Brayden Gibbins and unanimously resolved to:**

approve the Risk Assessment Schedule as tabled

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## 92/25 BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

In previous years, the agreed protocol regarding signatories on the town council's bank account was: two members of staff and three councillors.

Currently, the four active signatories are: Joint Acting Town Clerk Morgan Williams, Cllrs Steve Cooper, Mark Jefferies and Steve Milford.

**It was proposed by Cllr Linda Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Steve Milford and unanimously resolved to:**

approve the addition of Joint Acting Town Clerk Alison Killick as a bank account signatory.

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## 93/25 FREE PARKING REQUEST

A request has been received by the town council from the organisers of "East Dene Christmas Extravaganza" for free car parking in Shore Road car park on 16 & 17 December 2025.

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This is a one-off community event, featuring 20 local artists, craftspeople, etc., and is supported by the Bonchurch Community Association.

Cllr Karl Hunter referred to the town council's most recent Environment & Transport committee meeting at which free car parking was discussed.

Cllr Hunter supports this agenda item, suggesting that it provides a small contribution by the town council, for the town and Bonchurch.

A policy for free car parking will be drafted in due course, which will remove the requirement for requests to be debated by the full council each time, instead delegating the decision to the clerks.

**It was proposed by Cllr James Toogood, seconded by Cllr Karl Hunter and unanimously resolved to:**

approve the request for free car parking on 16 & 17 December 2025 in Shore Road car park.

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#### 94/25 MOTION FROM CLLR JAMES TOOGOOD: BONCHURCH ROADS

As per previously circulated Motion, received from Cllr James Toogood:-

**It was proposed by Cllr Ian Bond, seconded by Cllr Mark Jefferies and unanimously resolved that:**

- Ventnor Town Council agrees to consult with residents in the affected area about the proposed changes and welcomes the offer of voluntary assistance by the Ward councillors in distributing the consultation.
  - Ventnor Town Council write to the Isle of Wight Council's Highways department with the representations collected.
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#### 95/25 VENTNOR LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The revised draft Partnership Agreement for Ventnor Library between the Town Council and the Isle of Wight Council was reviewed and discussed.

The Isle of Wight Council had previously suggested a contribution from the town council in the region of £26,000 towards the Library's running costs.

After re-negotiation, it has been possible to reduce the suggested contribution to £20,000 for the current financial year.

**It was proposed by Cllr Karl Hunter, seconded by Cllr John Watkins and unanimously resolved to:**

- agree to the contribution of £20,000 for the current financial year.
  - approve the signing of the new Isle of Wight Council/Ventnor Town Council Partnership Agreement for Ventnor Library, to commence in April 2026.
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#### 96/25 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS (PSPOs)

Prior to a full public consultation by the Isle of Wight Council for implementation of additional PSPOs, they are seeking the Town Council's views.

Cllr John Watkins added that it should be the decision of local town and parish councils to impose their own restrictions in their own areas, not the Isle of Wight Council

**It was proposed by Cllr John Watkins, seconded by Cllr Ian Bond, and resolved with one abstention that:**

- the Joint Clerks formally respond to the Isle of Wight Council's letter – in consultation with Cllr Karl Hunter – expressing concerns about the proposals tabled.
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#### 97/25 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION – HAMPSHIRE & THE SOLENT

As part of its national plans for local government reorganisation, the Government has launched a public consultation on the future of Hampshire and the Solent area.

On behalf of the town council, a meeting of up to three members is recommended to be arranged to consider a formal response to this consultation; the deadline for submission is 11 January 2026.

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All four options propose the Isle of Wight remain unchanged as an existing unitary council, with Cllrs Steve Milford, John Watkins and Mark Jefferies confirming that they wish the Isle of Wight to remain separate.

**It was proposed by Cllr John Watkins, seconded by Cllr Mark Jefferies and resolved with three abstentions to:**

delegate the Clerks to formulate a formal response on behalf of the town council and submit in advance of the deadline of 11 January 2026, in favour of the Isle of Wight retaining its own Council

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**98/25 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Cllr Ian Bond suggested amendments be made to the Policy and Resources Terms of Reference.

**It was proposed by Cllr Linda Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Ian Bond and resolved, with one abstention to:**

adopt the suggested changes to the Policy and Resources Terms of Reference.

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**99/25 STANDING ORDERS – AMENDMENTS**

As per the tabled report, Cllr Ian Bond has suggested that Standing Orders numbers 16 and 21 be amended to reflect NALC guidance and changes from the “Staffing Committee” to “Policy & Resources Committee.”

**It was proposed by Cllr Ian Bond, seconded by Cllr Steve Milford and resolved with one abstention to:**

adopt the suggested changes to numbers 16 and 21 of Standing Orders.

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**100/25 MEMBERS’ CODE OF CONDUCT**

As per the tabled report, a review of the current Members’ Code of Conduct is now due. Additionally, a separate Confidentiality & Access to Information Statement has been made available.

**It was proposed by Cllr Linda Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Steve Milford and unanimously resolved:**

- to adopt the Members’ Code of Conduct with no amendments
  - for all Members to read & sign the separate Confidentiality & Access Information Statement.
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**101/25 EMPLOYEES’ CODE OF CONDUCT**

As per the tabled report, a review of the current Employees’ Code of Conduct is now due.

**It was proposed by Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey, seconded by Cllr Brayden Gibbins and unanimously resolved to:**

renew the Employees’ Code of Conduct with no amendments

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**102/25 2026/27 BUDGET CONSULTATION**

At the full council meeting in October 2025, Ventnor Town Council agreed a schedule for dealing with the budget for the year 2026/27.

Part of that agreement was to hold a budget consultation and staff have now drafted a consultation questionnaire to be distributed as soon as possible, after any suggestions/amendments.

**It was proposed by Cllr Mark Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey and unanimously resolved to:**

approve the Consultation Questionnaire, with the view of it being distributed by 10 December 2025.

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**103/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 9 February 2026, Green Room, Salisbury Gardens.

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The meeting closed at 8:30pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE

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# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

LG1, SALISBURY GARDENS

10AM

14 JANUARY 2026

Members present:-

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

Joint Clerks: Morgan Williams & Alison Killick.

VTC Officer: Catherine Hammond.

MINUTE SUBJECT

DRAFT

76/25 PUBLIC FORUM

Dean Wilkinson was the only member of the public present, wishing to discuss agenda item 9, Tumble Dryer.

Wellbeing Café members are struggling to clean and dry their clothes. There is already a washing machine installed in the Green Room kitchen, but wet washing has to be air-dried which - in the cold weather with people not having any drying facilities at home and unable to afford heating – results in wet clothes hanging around for many days in a cold environment, causing a damp atmosphere.

Mr Wilkinson, in discussions with Officer Catherine Hammond, is prepared to purchase a tumble dryer, and donate this to Ventnor Town Council, along with associated safety equipment and installation of a double electric socket - primarily for use by Wellbeing Café members – providing the dignity of having clean and dry clothes.

Officer Catherine Hammond confirmed that the tumble dryer will only be used under supervision, not on an “ad-hoc” basis, stating that extensive background work has gone into establishing the suitability of this project.

77/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No Apologies for Absence received.

78/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr John Watkins declared an interest in item 9, Community Use Tumble Dryer.

79/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> & 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025

The Minutes of the Business and Community Committee meetings of 12 & 17 November 2025 - having been previously circulated to Members - were taken as read.

**It was unanimously resolved to:**

Accept the Minutes of the Business and Community Committee meetings of 12 & 17 November 2025.

80/25 SUPPORT-IN-KIND POLICY

Chair Steph Toogood introduced this Agenda item, with Officer Catherine Hammond providing greater detail based on the Policy.

**It was unanimously resolved to:**

recommend the draft policy to the Policy and Resources Committee, subject to adding further detail to include recognising Councillors’ time as Support-in-Kind, as well as some adjustments to the numbering in the document.

## 81/25 2026 EVENTS

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item for discussion.

Although event planning in Ventnor is taking place, Catherine is struggling with some community groups to establish any details of proposed events.

Once more information has been collected, an events calendar will be compiled and uploaded to VTC's website, Facebook etc.

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## 82/25 ST LAWRENCE MAGAZINE

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item.

With the "St Lawrence Village Chatter" ceasing publication as the village shop closes next month, a local resident will create a new bi-monthly magazine, "St Lawrence Village Voice."

The cost of an advert/article is: full page £14, half page: £8 and quarter page £5. Catherine Hammond has suggested the town council submit an advert for Thursday Kitchen, alongside some brief narrative.

### **It was unanimously resolved to:**

- delegate to the officers - in consultation with the Chair - the production of an informative full-page article to be included in the new magazine providing information about the Council's range of services
  - request that the council allows sufficient funds within its 2026-27 budget for a full-page article in each of the magazine's bi-monthly publications (ie., 6 per year at a total cost of £84).
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## 83/25 INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION 2025

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item on the recently released data from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2025, with reference to targeting services towards meeting needs in the area.

LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) have an average population of 1600 people.

There are 3 LSOAs on the Isle of Wight in the most deprived decile:

- Ryde (Oakfield)
- Ventnor (town)
- Ryde (town)

Each LSOA receives a score and rank, with Ventnor's town area ranking as 018A. The data is showing that this area is more deprived *than most neighbourhoods in England*.

This serious downward trend shows that in the last 10 years since 2015 - where 13% of LSOAs in England were more deprived than Ventnor town - 2025 data shows that this has now declined to 7%.

Employment, health and disability are the issues most affected.

It was agreed that these statistics be acknowledged by all Members and for the full council to decide how these issues should be addressed.

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## 84/25 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item for discussion.

- In partnership with the NHS, "KOOOTH" is a free, safe and anonymous online platform where young people between the ages of 10-25 can access mental health support.
- Co-ordinated by Youth Opportunities Officer Jordan Royle, Ventnor Youth Group will be holding an information evening at St Margarets Hall on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January.

Eloise Preston, Playgroup Co-ordinator is recruiting for volunteers to assist with Ventnor Family Play sessions on Monday and Thursday mornings.

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**85/25 COMMUNITY USE TUMBLE DRYER**

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item.

As tabled in the report made available to the meeting, the purchase and subsequent donation of a tumble dryer by a volunteer member of the Wellbeing Café for use by vulnerable members of the community is proposed to be installed within the toilet area in the Green Room, Salisbury Gardens.

Users will pay for each drying cycle based on the Council's current electricity unit rate to cover energy usage.

An extra cost for additional electrical capacity in the form of a new double-socket is required, and the volunteer has offered to fund these works.

Cllr Watkins suggests that a Register of Use book is supplied and completed, gauging and recording usage with a report provided after an initial 3 months.

Officer Morgan Williams confirmed that the people who will be using it will need to meet eligibility criteria, such as demonstrating that they are in receipt of means-tested benefits etc.

**It was unanimously resolved to:**

- agree to the proposal of installing a tumble dryer in the toilet lobby area of the Green Room, Salisbury Gardens, noting that there is minimal cost to the town council of staff time for its management.
- agree submission of the proposal to the next full town Council meeting for approval and provide a review after 3 months of usage to ensure that it is being used correctly.

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**86/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 16 April 2026 at 9:00am

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The meeting closed at 11:10am

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR

DATE

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# MINUTES OF A PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

GREEN ROOM, SALISBURY GARDENS

4:30PM

15 JANUARY 2026

## PRESENT

Councillors: John Watkins (Chair), Steph Toogood, Jim Toogood & Karl Hunter.

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## ITEM SUBJECT

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### 1) PUBLIC FORUM

There were two members of the public present.

County Cllr Ed Blake has spoken with the owner of 64 High Street, who has said that he is not adamant about having a flat as opposed to a rentable space, but currently it is not being used.

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### 2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence received from Cllr Steve Cooper.

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### 3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

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### 4) MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 4 December 2025 – having been previously circulated to members - were taken as read and approved.

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### 5) PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a) 25/01324/FUL: 16A PIER STREET

**It was unanimously resolved:**

that Ventrnor Town Council's Planning Committee reiterates its comment from their meeting of 4 December 2025:-

*Ventrnor Town Council supports this application. The committee feels that this proposal is a good use of an empty building to provide additional housing stock.*

However, in light of the additional objections that the committee have now had sight of, these objections should be taken into consideration.

b) 25/01700/FUL: 7 MADEIRA ROAD

**It was unanimously resolved:**

that Ventrnor Town Council supports this application.

c) 25/01732/HOU: 7 STEEPHILL COURT ROAD

**It was unanimously resolved:**

that Ventrnor Town Council sees no reason to oppose this application.

d) 25/01358/FUL: 64 HIGH STREET

**It was unanimously resolved:**

that Ventrnor Town Council sees no reason to oppose this application. It should however be noted that the planning committee acknowledge and sympathise with the objections raised locally.

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The Meeting closed at 5:05pm.

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR:

DATE:

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