



MINUTES OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

GREEN ROOM, SALISBURY GARDENS 7PM

8 JUNE 2026

DRAFT

Members present:-

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

Clerks: Morgan Williams & Alison Killick

MINUTE SUBJECT

18/26 PUBLIC FORUM

There were five members of the public present.

- Local resident Abi Wheeler referred to the film "*People's Emergency Briefing*" - a film about localised climate change and proposed engaging residents to form a community group, working collaboratively with the Town Council to improve Ventnor's resilience.

Chair Steve Milford welcomed the initiative, noting the Council's strong environmental focus.

Cllr Mark Jefferies expressed interest in further discussions once the group is established, in his role as Chair of the Environment and Transport Committee.

Cllr Ian Bond suggested the need for a new, updated town strategy, as the current one is out of date.

- The Town Council can offer support in kind.
- County Councillor Ed Blake congratulated Steve Milford on his appointment as Deputy Mayor. He also reported that the Isle of Wight Council is in ongoing discussions with the owners of the Winter Gardens regarding the building's appearance and necessary roof works, which are currently subject to insurance-related issues.

Cllr John Watkins queried whether the condition of the roof forms part of the building's external appearance.

19/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs James Toogood, Steph Toogood, Steve Cooper, Linda Jefferies.

20/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received at this time.

21/26 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 20 April 2026 - having been previously circulated to Members - were taken as read. Clerk Morgan Williams informed Members that since the publication of the draft minutes, the office's attention had been drawn to the fact that it was Debbie Honeybourne rather than Ross who had presented the paper regarding the No.31 Bus during that meeting.

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

accept the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 20 April 2026, with the minor amendment in the Public Forum that Debbie Honeybourne presented the paper re the 31 Bus.

The Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting of 18 May 2026 - having been previously circulated to Members - were taken as read.

It was proposed by Cllr Steve Milford, seconded by Cllr John Watkins and resolved, with one abstention to:

accept the Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting of 18 May 2026.

Minutes of the:-

- Business & Committee meeting 16 April 2026
- Buildings & Maintenance Committee meeting 14 May 2026
- Environment & Transport Committee meeting 26 May 2026
- Planning Committee meeting 1 June 2026

were provided for information only.

22/26 FINANCE REPORT

The report provided members with information regarding the finances of the town council at end of May 2026, including details of payments made during April & May 2026.

As per the report, Item 5 provides information of a request from Cllr Steve Cooper for reimbursement of travel expenses to the King's Garden Party in May.

The total claim is £65.43, for which receipts have been provided to the Clerks.

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

- accept the Finance Report

It was proposed by Cllr John Watkins, seconded by Cllr Brayden Gibbins and unanimously resolved to:

- approve the request for Cllr Cooper's reimbursement of travel expenditure to the King's Garden Party.
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23/26 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The tabled report provided Members with income and expenditure accounts for 2025-26.

Town and Parish Councils with either receipts or payments during a financial year in excess of £200,000 are required to submit their Annual Accounts on an Income and Expenditure basis.

It was proposed by Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey, seconded by Cllr Steve Milford, and unanimously resolved to:

Adopt the final accounts, including the Reserve Statement as tabled.

24/26 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

The report provided Members with the Internal Auditor's Report covering the financial year 2025/26.

Chair Steve Milford thanked the Clerks for the positive comments made by the Internal Auditor in completion of the Accounts and related records.

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

Receive and note the Internal Auditor's Report and consider how to address the recommendations within.

25/26 ANNUAL RETURN: GOVERNANCE

The provided report seeks the Town Council's agreement in respect of Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year 2025/26, and to authorise the Chair to sign it accordingly.

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

approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement as tabled and authorise its Chair to sign accordingly.

26/26 ANNUAL RETURN: ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

The provided report requests the Town Council's approval in respect of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year 2025/26 and to authorise the Chair to sign it accordingly.

It was proposed by Cllr Mark Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Karl Hunter, and unanimously resolved to:

- approve the Accounting Statements in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return attached to this report and authorise the Chair to sign it accordingly.
- ask the Clerk to submit the completed return to the External Auditor, together with the required additional papers in advance of the 30 June 2026 deadline, with the exercise of public rights to take place from Tuesday 16th June to Tuesday 28th July 2026.

27/26 BDO LLP

This agenda item asks Members to confirm they are not aware of any Conflicts of Interest with BDO LLP.

It was proposed by Cllr John Watkins, seconded by Cllr Steve Milford, and unanimously resolved to:

Authorise the Chair and Clerk to sign the Conflict of Interest Statement upon confirmation from Members.

28/26 REQUEST TO USE VENTNOR PARK: VENTNOR FRINGE 2026

The tabled report seeks Town Council approval for the hire of Ventnor Park for Ventnor Fringe in July 2026, including its conditions.

Cllr Karl Hunter suggested reviewing the hire charge by setting a higher daily rate for longer hire periods.

Cllr John Watkins noted rising costs (e.g. staff and general expenses) and proposed these increases be reflected, potentially through deductions from the deposit. He also suggested that an inflationary increase should be applied.

It is also a requirement of the town council that the park remain open and free for other park users, for the duration of this event.

It was proposed by Cllr John Watkins, seconded by Cllr Ernie Polak-Harvey, and unanimously resolved to:

- agree the dates of 12-28 July 2026 inclusive for hire of Ventnor Park for Ventnor Fringe Festival 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr Mark Jefferies, seconded by Cllr Karl Hunter, and unanimously resolved to:

- agree a hire charge based on the day-rate from last year's event, plus inflation (plus VAT), and a refundable deposit of £600 (not subject to VAT).
- agree the hire charge of £2,200 plus VAT and a refundable deposit of £600 (not subject to VAT).

29/26 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of the following items:

Town Clerk Arrangements.

It was resolved under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings (1960) Act:

To exclude the Public and Press whilst the next items are under discussion as they are of a confidential nature.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR:

DATE