



# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

LG1, SALISBURY GARDENS

9AM

16 APRIL 2026

Members present:-

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

Clerk: Morgan Williams

VTC Officer: Catherine Hammond, Jordan Royl

Outside agencies: Baby Box staff

MINUTE SUBJECT

DRAFT

**01/26 PUBLIC FORUM**

2 members of public were present, but did not ask any questions as part of the Public Forum.

**02/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No Apologies for Absence received.

**03/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

**04/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 14 JANUARY 2026**

The Minutes of the Business and Community Committee meetings of 14 January 2026 - having been previously circulated to Members - were taken as read.

Cllr John Watkins requested a note explaining the numbering be added to the Minutes, which should have had a /26 suffix as the meeting was held in 2026.

**It was unanimously resolved to:**

Accept the Minutes of the Business and Community Committee meetings of 14 January 2026.

**05/26 VENTNOR SUMMER FESTIVAL UPDATE**

Business & Voluntary Sector Officer, Catherine Hammond, updated the committee on progress with the Summer Festival.

Many crafting people booked in. There has been an increase in bookings, likely as people/groups are planning the summer events they will be attending.

The portaloos, and waste management are booked. Bands are booked in for the whole afternoon.

Cllr Steph Toogood raised that we struggle on that day for Members to assist. She requested that we take to Full Council Meeting to ask for assistance from Councillors on the day. Cllr John Watkins raised the point that without Member presence, the burden otherwise falls on the staff.

Chair Steph Toogood asks about Ventnor Day. Tracey Tredwell & Ross Honeybourne respond from the public gallery that the Baptist Church & St Catherines are booked and a full schedule of events is planned. Free parking for Ventnor Day to be requested in VTC car parks.

**06/26 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Business & Voluntary Sector Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item for discussion.

The committee noted that events are sometimes shared a long time in advance and then often not shared again until very close to the events. VTC will continue making every effort to get events listed where organisers don't tell us in advance.

It was noted that getting a calendar of events onto the website was not proving an easy task, but work was still underway to get this done.

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**07/26 COMMUNITY PROVISIONS UPDATE**

Chair Steph Toogood started the discussion by noting that that VTC do so much more than some of the bigger councils in terms of helping in the Community.

The staff from Baby Box/Foodbank/Pantry led their update noting the current access difficulties with the former Youth Club. Although staff can access the premises, the public cannot so pop-up events are happening instead. Baby Box are operating from outside Ventnor Central, and at the carnival hub. Pantry & Foodbank are being run from St Catherine's Church. They staff are hopeful that this will be short-term, and are in talks with regarding the Barnardo's Children Centre. Chair Steph Toogood thanks them for the update and to let the Council know if they need any help with getting volunteers etc.

Business & Voluntary Sector Catherine Hammond provided the Committee with an update about the Library, including the children's clubs operating, craft events being held, and general operations. Cllr John Watkins expresses his endorsement of all these activities, and asks if people are aware or how they may be better made aware. The response is that a lot is shared on Facebook and on VTC noticeboards. Clerk Morgan Williams raises that as the partnership agreement has been renewed, it may be a sensible time to re-start the Library Steering Group so that VTC can have more input on direction and management of the service.

Business & Voluntary Sector Catherine Hammond read an update from Ventnor Community Playgroup from the Playgroup co-ordinator, Eloise Preston, explaining that they were recruiting a new volunteer, and that attendance on Mondays had increased and they were looking at ways of diversifying the provision to attract more people.

The next update was from the Youth Opportunities Officer, Jordan Royl. The Committee were informed of the highly successful Youth Voice event on 31 January which she had assisted with facilitating. Over 70 children had attended for the day as well as a number of staff/volunteers from the core youth organisers on the island. Chair Steph Toogood asked whether it was currently just Upper Ventnor that VTC has youth provision. The response was that this was the case at the moment, although there were plans to develop some more sessions possibly making use of other spaces. Charging for youth clubs was briefly discussed, but Members agreed that VTC should be aiming for more engagement and that any barrier to entry would not be a positive move.

Business & Voluntary Sector Officer Catherine Hammond updated the Committee about the ongoing works of Thursday Kitchen and Really Useful Thursday, both of which are well attended and supported by a variety of volunteers and support agencies which plays a massive part in helping the attendees' mental health.

Officer Catherine Hammond also updated the Committee on the Wellbeing Café, with new members every week, some with complex mental health concerns. Membership is still growing, in part because of social prescriber referrals, demonstrating how valuable and well-respected the group is. People able to open up in a safe space. Numerous volunteers are helping run the group with various administrative tasks. Councillor John Watkins regularly attends and notes a high percentage of male membership which has been historically unusual for this type of group.

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**08/26 ISLE OF WIGHT WALKING FESTIVAL**

Officer Catherine Hammond introduced this Agenda item. Ventnor does well with a large number of walks planned during the festival, including the Armada Heritage Trail on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May. Catherine will be doing some walking, invites people to accompany the walk.

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**09/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

10am, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2026

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The meeting closed at 10:05am

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR

DATE