



East Cowes Town Council

Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO32 6R
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Minutes of a meeting of the **East Cowes Town Council** held at East Cowes Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes
Thursday 17th October 2024 at 6pm

Present

Councillors: Reardon, Packham, Love, Brimble-Brennan, Palin

Clerk: S Chilton **Deputy Clerk:** C Jones

Also present: 4 members of the public

Public Forum

A member of the public commented on the future rebuilding of the East Cowes Fire Station and what a relief to have this validated. A member from the East Cowes Heritage Society enquired about the amount of support that the town council gives to the businesses of the town, as he was concerned about local business. Cllr Reardon advised that this would be a matter for the East Cowes Business Association and that any support would need to come from them or alternatively the Chamber of Commerce, it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to support local businesses and not the Town Council.

113/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hendry, due to a School Place Planning meeting and Cllr Lake, who is on sick leave.

114/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2.1 Cllr Reardon declared a non-pecuniary interest in the East Cowes Community Partnership and the East Cowes Business Association. Cllr Love declared a non-pecuniary interest in the East Cowes Community Partnership, East Cowes Business Association and as an IWC Ward Councillor.

2.2 No written requests for dispensations were received

115/24 MINUTES

3.1 Cllr Packham asked for an amendment to the minutes stating that the Environment & Sustainability Forum had coincided with the Full Council meeting being held and was not cancelled, this was agreed and the minutes were amended and initialled by the Mayor. The minutes were then approved and signed.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of Full Council on the 19th September 2024.

116/24 BELLS LANDING

4.1 Nick Wright IW Council Health and Safety Advisor had informed the council of the need to put a sign on the gate at Bells Landing at eye level, to warn the public not to enter the 3rd or 4th landing stage. Currently the only location to fix the signage is the gate. Cllr Reardon advised that the location of signage is temporary and that it could be moved in the future when the Bells Landing project was complete.

4.2 A request had been received from Ross Edmunds, IW Council, asking the council to reconsider their previous decision to pay for the cleaning of the slipway when the lease had been signed over to ECTC and agree to start paying now as progress had been made. Cllr Palin proposed that the original decision stand as there has been no official building works. Cllr Love stated that the IW Council have a legal obligation to ensure that the public slipway is clean.

Resolved: To abide by the original decision that payment for the slipway cleaning will commence once the project is completed and a lease is signed over to the Town Council.

117/24 COMMUNITY ORCHARD PROJECT

5.1 The Deputy Clerk gave a short report on the progress of the Community Orchard Project which included a long-term management plan. The plan has been developed by the Asst Facilities Officer in collaboration with Tina Whitmore, Wildlife Trust. It will ensure regular maintenance involving local organisations. The question was raised regarding restrictive covenants on the land. Cllr Palin discussed a supplementary project involving the plot of land near the Orchard. He has spoken to the Studio School who are enthusiastic to get involved and have a potential budget to fund this project.

Resolved: To investigate any restrictive covenants on the land. Cllr Palin to liaise with local bodies and St Georges Studio School.

118/24 COWES WEEK

6.1 Cllr Palin stated that following the recent news of Cowes Harbour Commissioners marina plan for East Cowes, and Cowes Week 200th Anniversary in 2026, he felt that the town council should request a seat on the board of Cowes Week Ltd. He stressed the importance of maintaining the connection with West Cowes, especially with these new developments. Cllr Love raised concern as to whether there would be any liability implications for the Town Council from having a seat on the Board.

Resolved: To further investigate the possibility of a seat on Cowes Week Ltd and, if possible, whether there would be any public liability affecting the Council.

119/24 FLOATING BRIDGE

7.1 The council received an update on the Floating Bridge statistics.

7.2 Cllr Love stated that he had responded to a communication received from the IW Council regarding the replacement of the floating bridge and is now awaiting the IW Council's response but is not hopeful. Cllr Love conveyed that time is critical and the Town Council need to be involved in the procurement process. Cllr Palin proposed that a closed meeting be arranged to include IWC Leader, Phil Jordan, IWC Strategic Director of Community Services, Colin Rowlands, IWC Cabinet Member, Julie Jones-Evans, and two representatives from Cowes Town Council. This should take place before the next town council meeting.

Resolved: To invite those identified above to a closed meeting to discuss the status of the procurement process. Meeting to take place before the November Full Council meeting

120/24 WATERFRONT REGENERATION UPDATE

8.1 The Mayor reported that following a meeting with ERM the waterfront regeneration project was moving forward. The councillors present had requested a few minor amendments, and it is hoped that by November the planning application will be lodged. A link was sent out to all councillors to review the latest proposals, and any questions needed to be made to Gino Wooldridge(GW) / ERM by 25th October at the latest. K.L. expressed concern that no public consultation would take place regarding the new plans. The Mayor explained that this was due to the time constraints. She also confirmed that a surveyor had now been able to identify the exact position of the underground pipes.

Resolved: Councillors to consider the revised project plans by the emailed link and send any questions to GW by 25th October.

121/24 FINANCES

9.1 The Council approved and agreed payments as presented and ratify payments including the LBDO External Audit Fee 2024 made by Direct Debit and BACS

9.2 The Council noted the bank reconciliation for September 2024

9.3 The Council noted the 2nd Quarter budget report

9.4 The Council noted the Notice of Conclusion of Audit 2023/2024 including the comments made by LBDO

Resolved: To approve and ratify the payments including by Direct Debit and BACS as presented. To note the bank reconciliation for September 2024. To note the 2nd Quarter Budget Report and the Conclusion of Audit report from LBDO

122/24 FOOTPRINT TRUST DONATION

10.1 The Council considered a request for a donation to the Warmer East Cowes 24 initiative from the Footprint Trust. Councillors questioned why the request had not been made at the proper time – April/September and whether there was any grant funding available. The clerk confirmed that there was funding available. Cllr Palin

proposed a donation of £2000, Cllr Love proposed a donation of £1000. A vote was taken, and the council supported Cllr Love's proposal. Councillors suggested that the Trust be made aware of the months when grants were considered for future applications.

Resolved: To donate £1000 for the Warmer East Cowes 24 project and to advise the Footprint Trust when future applications should be made.

123/24 GOV.UK DOMAIN NAME

11.1 The Clerk gave the background to the advantages of changing the council's domain to a Gov.uk one and how external audit requirements, although not mandatory, were leaning towards this. Charges for registering the domain could be financed through a government grant and the transfer could be completed by Wight Computers for approx. £500.

Resolved: To change the Councils domain to a Gov.UK domain and to commission Wight Computers to complete the transfer process.

124/24 REPORTS

12.1 The Clerk reported that a thank you's had been received from UKSA and the Applegate Breast Cancer support group for hosting a charity coffee morning. Red Funnel have granted us £1000 for the Senior Moments Group and are offering to host a Xmas dinner on board the car ferry for group members. The Facilities Report was noted. Cllr Love asked if we could check that the lip of the tarmac on the path at jubilee isn't a trip hazard. The Community Events and Activities report was noted. The Council thanked staff for all their efforts.

12.2 The Mayor reported that she had attended the St James's Harvest Festival and had given a donation for the food pantry. She and Cllr Love had attended the inauguration of the new Vicar. She attended the Priory school Harvest Festival and taken a donation.

12.3 IW Ward Councillors reports

Cllr Love discussed that Armistice Day was fast approaching and he wouldn't be able to attend the local commemoration as he had to attend the Newport memorial as Chairman of IWC. Cllr Hendry will lay a wreath locally Cllr Loves behalf. Fire station have confirmed they will be rebuilding, and he is currently awaiting the planning application. He had suggested an alternative location. Norris Castle – The 17th was the last day for appeal. No appeal had been made. He was taking a School Governor position at Holy Cross as Cllr Hendry was stepping down. Red Funnel – discussions were ongoing with MP regarding regulation. IWC are projecting 5.7 million pound deficit. He asked that we promote the warm spaces over the winter with increasing costs being experienced by the community for fuel. The Council needs to be keeping an eye on IWC devolution as this will have governance changes.

12.4 Town Councillors reports

Cllr Brimble -Brennan reported on the Early Help Community Capacity grant of up to £5k that would be made available to community organisations, including parish councils, for setting up new activities for families in the area. She would like to have a more detailed discussion about this. There is a 4-week window in January. She asked that this be included as an item at November Full Council.

Cllr Packham had attended the beach clean on the 29th September, the environment and sustainability meeting had been cancelled.

Cllr Palin had also attended the beach clean and the waterfront regeneration meeting. He had also attended a carnival meeting about restarting the carnival. He reported that safety barriers had been installed at Saunders Way and he had attended the recent public Budget Consultation at the town hall. The Kingston film studio application had been accepted and agreed with a few conditions on noise and a management plan which the public will need to be consulted on. There are key milestones identified and piling will begin October. Construction completed by April 25

125/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

13.1 The Council resolved that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public are excluded. (1960 Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act s1 (2)).

Resolved: To exclude the press and public

Contractual & Staffing Matters were discussed

Meeting Closed at 8.00 pm