



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 **Annual Meeting of East Cowes Town Council** held at East Cowes Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes **Thursday 15 May 2025 at 6pm**

Present

Councillors: Reardon, Lake, Palin, Love, Warleigh-Lack, Hendry, Pragnell; Cllr Brimble-Brennan joined at 6.30pm

Clerk: S Chilton

Deputy Clerk: Charlotte Jones

Also present: 4 members of the public

Meeting opened at 6.00pm

MAYORS REPORT: Cllr Reardon gave a brief report as the Mayor for the preceding term.

48/25 ELECTION OF MAYOR

1.1 The Clerk advised that one nomination had been received for Cllr Tracy Reardon for Mayor

1.2 Cllr Reardon was nominated and seconded. A vote was taken by show of hands. Cllr Reardon was duly elected Mayor for one year.

1.3 Cllr Reardon completed and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Reardon took the chair.

49/25 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

2.1 The Clerk advised that one nomination had been received for Cllr Love for Deputy Mayor.

2.2 Cllr Love was nominated and seconded. A vote was taken by show of hands. Cllr Love was duly elected as Deputy Mayor for one year.

2.3 Cllr Love completed and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

50/25 DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Declarations of acceptance of office were signed, received and made by Councillors

51/25 APOLOGIES

Apologies were given by Cllr Brimble-Brennan who would be late due to a training commitment

52/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

5.1 Cllr Hendry declared a non-pecuniary interest as IW Ward Councillor, Cllr Love declared a non-pecuniary interest as IW Ward Councillor and as a member of the East Cowes Community Partnership, East Cowes Business Association and East Cowes Heritage. Cllr Reardon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the East Cowes Community Partnership and East Cowes Business Association.

5.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

53/25 REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Registers of interest were received, Cllrs who had not returned them were requested to complete their register of interest form and return it to the Clerk.

54/25 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

7.1 H.R Committee (4 members); Cllrs Lake, Palin, Reardon and Warleigh-Lack were appointed

- 7.2 Grievance Sub-committee (4 members); Cllrs Love, Brimble-Brennan, Pragnell and Hendry were appointed
- 7.3 Planning Committee (6 members); Cllrs Palin, Warleigh-Lack, Lake, Pragnell, Reardon and Brimble-Brennan were appointed
- 7.4 Theatre Committee (5 members and 3 non-voting Amy White Theatre representatives): Cllrs Palin, Love, Reardon, Lake and Warleigh-Lack were appointed.

55/25 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- 8.1 IWALC (1 Representative and 1 Deputy); Cllr Palin was appointed
- 8.2 Cowes Harbour Commissioners (1 Representative and 1 Deputy); Cllrs Reardon and Warleigh-Lack were appointed
- 8.3 Cowes 200; Cllrs Reardon and Pragnell were appointed
- 8.4 IW Council Environment & Sustainability Forum (1 Representative and 1 Deputy); no Cllrs appointed
- 8.5 East Cowes Community Partnership (2 representatives); Cllrs Reardon and Lake were appointed
- 8.6 Cowes Town Council (1 Representatives – 1 Deputy); No councillors appointed, this outside body to be discontinued
- 8.7 Waterfront Regeneration Group (1 Representative and Planning Consultant); Cllrs Reardon, Lake and Martha James, Planning Consultant were appointed

56/25 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Resolved: The Mayor confirmed that the Council, at the time of this resolution, is eligible to use the General Power of Competence by confirming that:

- I. The number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council.
- II. The Clerk to the council holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration, or other relevant qualification.
- III. The Clerk has completed the *relevant training*:
 - a. in the exercise of the general power
 - b. provided in accordance with the National Training Strategy for parish councils adopted by the National Association of Local Councils.

57/25 INSURANCE & FINANCIAL CONTROLS

10.1 The Clerk confirmed that suitable arrangements for internal financial controls and insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks are in place, to a sum of £10 million pounds with Zurich Insurance.

58/25 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW

11.1 Code of Conduct

The Clerk presented the Code of Conduct for review.

Resolved: To adopt the Code of Conduct as presented.

11.2 Standing Orders

The Clerk presented Standing Orders for review

Resolved: To adopt the Standing Orders as presented.

11.3 Financial Regulations

The Clerk presented Financial Regulations for review.

Resolved: To adopt the revised Financial Regulations

11.4 Risk Management Policy

The Clerk presented the Risk Management Policy, which included financial controls and procedures as recommended by the Internal Auditor.

Resolved: To adopt the Risk Management policy

59/25 ANNUAL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The annual calendar of meetings was presented. Cllr Hendry proposed changing the date of the June meeting to the 12th June as it clashed with the start of the Pop Festival. Councillors agreed.

Resolved: To agree the annual calendar of meetings with the amendment to the June meeting to the 12th and not the 19th.

The Annual meeting closed at 6.35pm

FULL COUNCIL MEETING 7pm

Present: Councillors: Reardon, Lake, Palin, Love, Warleigh-Lack, Hendry, Pragnell

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

Also present: 4 members of the public

Public Forum

A member of the public asked an update on Saunders Way. Cllr Palin explained that power cables need to be moved onto IW Council land and that the three parties involved need to get together to resolve it. Barratts cannot proceed until it has been resolved. Cllrs Hendry and Palin stated that they had heard nothing lately and would be chasing the matter up. Cllr Love suggested writing to Alan White stressing the concerns about the road opening and connection made good. Cllr Hendry will chase. Cllr Palin will forward contact details for Barratts to the Clerk. Cllr Love suggested putting this matter on the next agenda and asking the site manager to attend. Cllr Lake stated that representatives from all organisations involved should be asked to attend. Cllr Pragnell voiced his concerns about the traffic. Cllr Love spoke about the condition of the road surface of Kingston Rd and that traffic calming was needed. and Cllr Reardon said that traffic calming needs to be discussed as parking on one side creates traffic calming. Councilors agreed that this matter needs discussing at a separate meeting and that an Island Roads representative should be invited to attend. Cllr Palin stated that Island Roads will not admit responsibility, but Cllr Love stated that they were responsible for the area between Kingston Rd and the junction.

A member of the public stated that the railings on the Esplanade leading down to the beach had received some repair but that it had not been completed and that it was still rusted away and was a danger to users. The job had only been half done. The Clerk to chase up Coastal Protection on this matter and to get an update on the wobbly paving slabs.

60/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Council approved and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2025

Resolved: To approve and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 17th April 2025

61/25 FINANCES

14.1/2 The Council approved and agreed payments as presented and ratify payments made by Direct Debit and

14.3 The Council noted the bank reconciliation for April 2025

Resolved: To approve and ratify the payments including by Direct Debit and BACS as presented for April 2025 and to note the bank reconciliation for April 2025.

62/25 WATERFRONT REGENERATION PLAN

15.1 The Council received an update on the Waterfront/LUF Regeneration Planning application from Gino Wooldridge stating that ERMCo had submitted an additional environmental report which the planning department had requested. The document had been accepted, and Gino is waiting for final approval which will hopefully be a matter of days. Tender documents are ready, and he is now working to publish.

63/25 FLOATING BRIDGE

16.1 The Council received the statistics for last month together with the income and expenditure details for years from 2017/18 onwards. Councillors were alarmed to see that the deficit for the bridge was £1.119 million at the end of the 24/25 financial year. They agreed that enquiries should be made as to what action the IW Council were taking in respect of the deficit. Councillors stated that they would like to see the timeline for the tender for the business case and that the Chairman of the IW Council's Transport Committee be requested to attend a future meeting and update them on the status of the replacement bridge and the outstanding deficit.

Resolved: Following the IW Council Annual Meeting to invite the IW Council Chair of Transport Committee to attend a Town Council meeting and update the council on the status of the replacement bridge and what action is being taken to address the deficit

64/25 COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT PROJECT

17.1 Cllr Palin presented a paper on a Community Allotment project. The aim of the allotment is to increase biodiversity, improve the health outcomes of group members by increasing outdoor activity, learning about growing of produce, cooking healthy meals and providing free fruit and veg for the community. The allotment would allow people access to herbs, fruit and vegetables for free; to look at the information boards about how they could grow it as well as allowing those without gardens to enjoy growing and picking produce. Next to the

proposed site is a new social, emotional, mental health school who currently have no green space available for them to use, and they have expressed an interest in helping maintain the site, look at the growing process as part of their education as well as using some of the produce in their kitchen as part of their curriculum. A grant of £3800.00 has been awarded by the Eden project through the East Cowes Community Partnership and the Council were asked to support the project going forward. Some concern was raised about how the site would be watered in school holidays. Cllr Palin said that he would speak to the school about how this could be resolved. Cllr Reardon said she would like the Queens Tree replaced as part of this project.

Resolved: Council resolved to support this project going forward and Cllr Palin to agree watering programme with school during the holiday periods.

65/25 WILD ISLE'S BEACH CLEAN AND COMMUNITY NATURE SESSIONS

18.1 The Council considered a request to finance beach clean/community educational sessions for local families delivered by Wild Isle Nature School during school half term and summer holidays, at a cost of £260 per 5-hour session. Councillors noted that they had financed two sessions last year which had been very successful. They agreed that the beach hut should be made available and that they would fund 2 sessions in the summer and one in the October half term at a cost of £780.00, on the condition that it is aimed at East Cowes children, and that evidence is provided for DBS checks and public liability. Council also requested that they receive feedback on the sessions

Resolved: To agree to fund 3 sessions aimed at East Cowes children on condition that DBS and public liability requirements are met.

66/25 COUNCIL EVENTS UPDATE

19.1 The Council discussed upcoming events that were planned for this year. These included a Volunteers Reception, a Charity Event on the 1st August, Cowes Week Festivities 2nd – 8th August, VJ Day 80th Commemoration 15th August, East Cowes Carnival – 23rd August and the Christmas Event. It was agreed that the Volunteers reception would take place in January/February 2026. The Charity event on the 1st August may need an alcohol licence and a TENS licence. It would be a formal, cocktail reception and tickets would be sold for the event, including councillors. It was agreed that numbers attending needed to be looked at. It was felt that more detail needed to be discussed about the Charity to be supported, cost of tickets, numbers attending and cabaret programme. It was agreed that this should be brought to a future meeting to confirm these details. The Cowes Week event on the 8th August could mirror what the council had done for VE Day. VJ would have a Beacon Lighting, location to be confirmed and this could be used as a fundraising event for the carnival. The Christmas event would be as last year.

Resolved: To place an item on the next agenda to confirm details for the Charity event. To begin preparations for the other events as detailed.

67/25 REPORTS

20.1 Clerk's report – The Clerk gave an update on the invited groups for the Annual Town Meeting on the 29th May.

20.2 Mayors report – the Mayor's report had been given at the start of the meeting

20.3 IW Ward Councillors reports

Cllr Hendry stated that he had reported on Saunders Way in the public forum

Cllr Love gave an update on the planning application for the Fire Station, and this will be discussed at the June meeting. There was no further news on the Coastal Path. There is a public consultation due soon. He asked about the Queen Victoria motif in York Avenue and requested that Island Roads be asked for an update on its repair. The IW Council Annual Meeting would be taking place next week. He stated that there should be some news on Norris Castle soon.

20.4 Town Councillors reports

Cllr Palin said that the planning department had repeated the same to him about Norris Castle and that they had been made aware that they needed to go through the town Council. He said that he had discussed replacement of play equipment with the Clerk and Facilities Officer. The clerk said that the Strategic Plan would be reviewed at the June meeting and that this should be included. He had spoken to Phil Jordan about the impact on the Horsebridge Hill diversion on East Cowes. The VE celebrations had been attended by him and were very good.

Cllr Lake congratulated East Cowes Vics on their recent promotion. She had been involved in cleaning the gabion plaques and that that area should be included in future beach cleans. The boat at the bottom of Cambridge Road needs watering. She advised that the footpath was closed between the Folly and Island Harbour. Could this be investigated and to advise Whippingham Parish Council, copied to Matt Price. She asked

for an update on air pollution monitors as nothing had been heard recently. IW council will be asked to provide an update. Cllrs Love and Palin spoke about the Council's Environmental Policy with a view to focussing on priorities and Cllr Hendry suggested forming a working group to get it started. This would be brought to the June meeting. Cllr Lake spoke about the Round the island webcams and suggested that the Council might look at the possibility of placing one on the Esplanade. Cllr Love said he had a contact and would pass this information on. **Cllr Pragnell** stated that he had received reports that the paddling pool was half empty and slippery and we should ask the contractor what had been used. The Clerk confirmed that the correct pool paint had been used but that it was a new surface. The level of the water was due to air in the pipes which had now been corrected. The sides of the pool had been raised which may be giving the impression there is less water in it. But it is filled to a standard depth. He spoke about the Charity Event that was planned and asked about the bar and cost of drinks and that we shouldn't lose money. He asked about whether outdoor gym equipment was a possibility for the Esplanade. The Clerk explained that the Council's strategic plan would be reviewed at the June meeting, and this could be considered as part of that review.

Cllrs Brimble-Brennan and Warleigh-Lack had no reports

68/25 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Council resolved that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that it is in the public interest that the press and public should be excluded. (1960 Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act s1 (2)). This item was taken early due to the early finish of the annual meeting and councillors retired to the Curve.

Resolved: To exclude the press and public

Legal Matters were discussed

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed:

Dated: