



East Cowes Town Council

Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO32 6R
Tel: (01983) 299082 Email: clerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the **Annual Meeting of East Cowes Town Council** held at East Cowes Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes **Thursday 16th May 2024 at 6pm**

Present

Councillors: Reardon, Packham, Lake, Palin, Love, Irwin

Clerk: S Chilton

Also present: 5 members of the public

Meeting opened at 6.00pm

51/24 ELECTION OF MAYOR

1.1 The Clerk advised that three nominations 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.

52/24 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

2.1 The Clerk advised that two nominations had been received for Cllr Palin for Deputy Mayor.

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

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

53/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies were given by Cllr Hendry who had a family commitment.

54/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

4.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

55/24 REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Cllrs were requested to complete the register of interest form if there had been any changes and return it to the Clerk.

56/24 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

6.1 HR Committee (5 members)

Cllrs Palin, Packham, Lake, Irwin and Reardon were appointed.

6.3 Grievance sub-committee (4 members)

Cllrs Love, Lake, Palin and Reardon were appointed

6.4 Planning Committee (6 members)

Cllrs Irwin, Palin, Lake, Reardon and Packham were appointed

6.5 Theatre Committee (5 members)

CLRs Love, Reardon, Lake and Palin were appointed. The 5th member would be appointed at a later meeting

57/24 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

7.1 Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils (IWALC)

CLr Palin was appointed as representative

7.2 Cowes Harbour Commission Advisory Committee

CLr Reardon was appointed as representative, CLr Love was appointed deputy.

7.3 IW Council Environment & Sustainability Forum

CLr Packham was appointed representative

7.4 Local Access Forum (LAF)

No nominations

7.5 East Cowes Community Partnership (ECCP)

CLr Love and CLr Reardon were appointed as representatives.

7.6 Cowes Town Council

CLr Palin was appointed as representative and CLr Reardon as deputy

7.7 Waterfront Regeneration Group

CLr Reardon was appointed along with Planning Consultant Martha James.

58/24 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Resolved: 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.

59/24 INSURANCE & INTERNAL AUDIT

9.1 The Clerk confirmed that insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks was in place. KL asked if it was at a sufficient level, and it was agreed that it was in line with recommended levels of cover.

9.2 The Council considered the appointment of Mrs M Warr to act as Internal Auditor

Resolved: To appoint Mrs M Warr as Internal Auditor

60/24 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW

10.1 Code of Conduct

The Clerk presented the Code of Conduct for review.

Resolved: To adopt the Code of Conduct as presented.

10.2 Standing Orders

The Clerk advised that CLr Hendry wished to add the wording "unless an extension granted by the Mayor" to Standing Order number 3x.

Resolved: To adopt the Standing Orders as presented with the inclusion of CLr Hendry's amendment.

10.3 Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations had recently undergone a complete revision by NALC. Main points to note were exclusion of the EU regulations on contracts and online banking arrangements.

Resolved: To adopt the revised Financial Regulations

10.4 Internal Audit Controls

The Clerk presented the Internal Audit Controls for annual review as recommended by the Internal Auditor.

Resolved: To note and agree the Internal Audit Controls

61/24 ANNUAL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The annual calendar of meetings was presented.

Resolved: To agree the annual calendar of meetings

The Annual meeting closed at 6.30pm

FULL COUNCIL MEETING 7pm

Present

Councillors: Reardon, Packham, Lake, Palin, Love, Irwin

Clerk: S Chilton

Also present: 5 members of the public, Margaret Prior and Peter Lloyd, Friends of the Blyskawica Society

Public Forum

David Burdett asked that his thanks to all councillors, staff and volunteers for all their hard work be minuted. A member of the public asked about the deadline for the return of the Maresfield Rd site to Homes England. Cllr Love explained that there had been a 2 year extension granted. A member of the public spoke about how complimentary some people from Ryde were, about what is being achieved here by the council, staff and volunteers, and how the heritage of the town is celebrated. She said they were very impressed. A member of the public (TM) spoke about the advantages of installing a lifting bridge across the Medina rather than a floating bridge. Cllr Love explained that the IWC cannot afford it. It would cost around 30 million and the IWC has 3 million and that the tidal river Medina cannot be compared to the canals in Holland where they have lifting bridges. The IWC cannot get Government funding unless they can prove the money could be paid back which would mean trebling the fees. TM said that he had written to Westminster to ask if the island would be eligible for funding for a bridge. Cllr Palin spoke about the engineer's report commissioned by the IWC which stated that a bridge was not feasible, and that Cowes Harbour Commission control the river traffic. Cllr Reardon thanked TM for his ideas and looked forward to hearing any responses he got from government.

A presentation of a limited edition print of the Blyskawica was made to the Town Council by the Friends of the Blyskawica Society, Margaret Prior and Peter Lloyd. The Vice President of the Society had recently passed away and his daughter-in-law had suggested that the Town Council might like to have it. The Mayor thanked PL and MP and gratefully accepted the print on behalf of the council.

62/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of Full Council held on 18th April 2024 were approved and signed.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of 18th April 2024.

63/24 FINANCES

14.1 & 14.2 The council considered the payments made, including by Direct Debit and BACS, as presented for April/May 2024.

14.3 The bank reconciliation for April 2024 was noted.

Resolved: To approve and ratify the payments including by Direct Debit and BACS. To note the bank reconciliation for April 2024

64/24 WATERFRONT REGENERATION PLAN

14.1 The Council had not received an update from IWC other than the meeting that had been arranged with ERM and representatives of the IWC on site at Albany Green on 3rd June at 4.45pm, to be followed by a meeting at the East Side Curve. The Mayor suggested that all councillors attend.

Resolved: To note the date and time of the meeting with ERM – Monday 3rd June at 4.45pm onsite at Albany Green.

65/24 FLOATING BRIDGE

16.1 The council felt that a complaint should be made regarding the decision to take the floating Bridge out of service on Minday 13th May. The decision had been made by the Master of FB6 and as there was no launch in service either the schoolchildren were told to make other arrangements. Clearly this was not acceptable for the children as they had been given no prior notice and were stranded. The Clerk had made a complaint to Mark Downer and Ashley Jefferies, School Transport, IWC. MD gave an apology and stated that he had been told that the launch would be operational within 15 minutes of FB6 being taken out of service. However it took longer than expected and so he asked that additional crossings be made to ensure the children got to school.

Resolved: The Clerk to write a letter of complaint and to requesting that they review the current policy adopted for taking the FB6 out of service. Letter to go to Mark Downer, copied to Colin Rowlands, Ashley Jefferies and Jonathan Bacon.

66/24 COUNCIL EVENTS UPDATE

17.1 An update was given on the Civic Reception at the Town Hall on 24th May. The mayor encouraged all councillors to attend

17.2 An update as given on the arrangements for the 100th Anniversary at the Esplanade on the 25th May by Cllr Love

17.3 The Clerk gave an update on the progress of the Volunteers Reception on the 5th June. Replies were slow in coming back

17.4 The D Day lighting of the Beacon was all in hand. Cllr Love to collect and arrange for the gas

67/24 REPORTS

18.1 The Clerk gave an update on the Annual Town meeting that only a few groups had responded. The Facilities Officer's report was discussed and it was agreed that the dead hedging should be removed and not replaced on the Esplanade.

18.2 The Mayors report had been circulated. She said it had been a busy and enjoyable year and she was looking forward to her next year in office. No questions were raised.

18.3 Cllr Love gave an update on a number Freedom of Information requests that had been received by the IWC from Mr Wellington. It was also noted that the enforcement notice by the IWC would soon be expiring. The Film Studio was still progressing. They have half of the required funding so far. There had been a mini landslip in the woods and a tree had fallen. The red Eagle Mural was progressing as planned. Clarence Rd mural was looking very good. Closure of the fire station was supposed to be temporary because the building was dangerous. Staff had been told one hour before closure. Cllr Love has spoken to the Fire Chief about the lack of information and that the Town Council had not been informed about the decision to close or about the state of the building, as they may have been able to help. He also said that the council needs confirmation that the site was secure and will be made safe. He said that the station needed to be rebuilt as it was vital for East Cowes. Bob Seely had met with the fire service this week. ECTC want to be part of the solution. He has spoken to the inshore lifeboat station about the possibility of housing the fire engine there.

Elections were getting closer and there would be a period of purdah so everything that needed attention should be completed before that. Overnight campers were parking on the Esplanade and disposing of their toilet waste on the beach. Need to get a response from IWC on how this can be resolved.

18.4 Cllr Palin gave an update on Saunders Way. Legal papers going before the IWC this month. Ther needs to be a discussion about what happens when it does open. He had attended the Commemoration events for the Blyskawica, and it had been lovely to meet everyone.

Cllr Packham reported that the Environment & Sustainability meeting had been cancelled.

68/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve 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 are excluded. (1960 Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act s1 (2)).

19.1 Exclusion of press and public was proposed, seconded and agreed.

Resolved: To exclude the press and public for the confidential item

The Council considered staffing matters.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed:

Dated: