EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL
Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO32 6RU
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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of **East Cowes Town Council Meeting** held on 21st May 2026 at the Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes.

Present: Councillors: Reardon, Pragnell, Warleigh-Lack, Brimble-Brennan, Love, Hendry, Lake
Clerk: S Chilton
Deputy Clerk: C Jones
11 members of the public

AGENDA

44/26 ELECTION OF MAYOR

1.1 The Clerk advised that four nominations had been received for Cllr Tracy Reardon for Mayor
1.2 Cllr Reardon was formally 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.

45/26 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

2.1 The Clerk advised that two nominations had been received for Cllr Love for Deputy Mayor and one nomination for Cllr Hendry. Cllr Hendry agreed he was happy to withdraw.
2.2 Cllr Love was formally 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.

46/26 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Palin ad from Cllr Lake who would be arriving late.

47/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

4.1 Cllr Reardon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the East Cowes Community Partnership and East Cowes Business Association. Cllr Love declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the East Cowes Community Partnership, East Cowes Business Association, IWC Ward Councillor, RNLI.
4.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

48/26 REGISTERS OF INTEREST

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.

49/26 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

6.1 H.R Committee (4 members) - Cllrs Hendry, Reardon, Brimble-Brennan, Pragnell were agreed
6.2 Grievance Sub-committee (4 members) - Cllrs Love, Lake, Warleigh-Lack, Palin were agreed
6.3 Planning Committee (7 members) – Cllrs Reardon, Lake, Palin, Warleigh-Lack, Brimble-Brennan, Pragnell and Hendry were agreed
6.4 Theatre Committee (5 members and 3 non-voting Amy White Theatre representatives) – Cllrs Reardon, Warleigh-Lack, Brimble-Brennan, Lake and Hendry were agreed
6.5 Events Committee (5 members and 3 non-voting members) – Cllrs Reardon, Warleigh-Lack, Pragnell, Brimble-Brennan and Love were agreed

50/26 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

7.1 IWALC (1 Representative and 1 Deputy) - Cllr Hendry was agreed

7.2 Cowes Harbour Commissioners (1 Representative and 1 Deputy) – Cllr Reardon and Cllr Pragnell as Deputy agreed
7.3 Floating Bridge Working Party (1 Representative) – Cllr Reardon and Cllr Pragnell as Deputy agreed
7.4 East Cowes Community Partnership (2 representatives) – Cllr Reardon and Cllr Warleigh-Lack agreed
7.5 Waterfront Regeneration Group (1 Representative and Planning Consultant) – Cllr Readon and Martha James, Plan Research agreed

51/26 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

8.1 Councillors resolved that at the time of this resolution, the council 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* in the exercise of the general power & provided in accordance with the National Training Strategy for parish councils adopted by the National Association of Local Councils

52/26 INSURANCE & FINANCIAL CONTROLS

9.1 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.

53/26 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW

To review and adopt Council Policies and Procedures
10.1 The Clerk presented the Code of Conduct for review. A new guidance document had been developed by NALC and Councillors were asked if they would like a copy. Councillors agreed that they would and would collect them from the Clerk's office
Resolved: To adopt the Code of Conduct as presented.
10.2 The Clerk presented Standing Orders for review. Cllr Hendry stated that he felt the term Chair should be replaced with Mayor. This was agreed
Resolved: To adopt the Standing Orders with the agreed amendment.
10.3 Financial Regulations
The Clerk presented Financial Regulations for review.
Resolved: To adopt the revised Financial Regulations
10.4 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

54/26 ANNUAL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

11.1 The annual calendar of meetings was presented.
Resolved: To agree the annual calendar of meetings

CLOSE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual meeting closed at 6.30pm

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public (MD) asked about new Ward Councillor Paul Williams' attendance; the Clerk confirmed he was unavailable in May and June but plans to attend in July. MD also queried the Council's response to recent sewage discharges. Cllr Love reported planned pipe realignment works at Spring Hill following a meeting with Southern Water's Adam Wilds. MD raised concerns about tanker damage to Esplanade footways, the delays in public notification (13 hours most recently) of sewer discharge, and suggested improved communication, warning signage, and weekly water testing.

Cllr Love said he has requested schedules of planned and unplanned works from Southern Water. Cllr Reardon supported improving communication and proposed writing to Southern Water to address concerns. Alternative tanker parking at CeCamm was suggested, with subsidence at Albany Green also noted. The Clerk advised that Adam Wilds will attend the June meeting.

55/26 MINUTES

12.1 The Council approved and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2026

Resolved: To approve and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 16th April 2026

56/26 FINANCES

13.1 The Council approved and agreed payments as presented

13.2 The Council ratified payments made by Direct Debit and BACS

13.3 The Council noted the bank reconciliation for April 2026

13.4 The Council considered a request from the East Cowes Heritage Centre for dispensation of hall hire charges for the 85th Anniversary Event in May 2027

Resolved: To approve and ratify the payments including by Direct Debit and BACS as presented for April 2026 and to note the bank reconciliation for April 2026. To agree dispensation of hall hire charges for East Cowes Heritage Centre

57/26 WATERFRONT REGENERATION PLAN

14.1 Cllr Love gave an update on the recent meeting with the Gino Wooldridge, IWC where the discussion between the IW Council and Southern Water regarding power connections was queried. It was assumed that this had all been agreed at the start of the project which now did not seem to be the case. It was felt that clarification on this topic was required from Gino Wooldridge.

Resolved: To seek clarification on the original agreement between Southern Water and the IW Council from Gino Wooldridge

58/26 FLOATING BRIDGE

15.1 The Council received statistics on the Floating Bridge. Cllr Love noted that it is operational but continues to experience the same issues. He added that it will be for the new Isle of Wight Council administration to determine how the matter progresses. He also suggested inviting the relevant Committee lead, once appointed, to attend a meeting to hear the Town Council's perspective. In addition, a meeting with the Floating Bridge Working Group is anticipated.

Resolved: To invite the relevant IWC Committee lead, once appointed, to a future meeting of the Council

59/26 STORAGE TOWN HALL

16.1 Following a suggestion from Cllr Love, the Council considered a proposal from the Facilities Officer to build a covered storage area at the rear of the Town Hall, estimated at £4,250, to address storage issues at the Town Hall and Hub.

Members raised queries regarding access, materials, labour costs, and potential additional expenses, as well as concerns about fire risk and insurance implications. It was agreed that further detail and a fuller cost breakdown were needed before a decision could be made.

Resolved: That the Facilities Officer provide a more detailed cost estimate.

60/26 YOUTH OFFER

17.1 Cllr Brimble-Brennan reported on a positive meeting with Youth Club representatives, who welcomed the Council's involvement. She proposed several recommendations: launching a youth consultation (online and in-person) with incentives; exploring external funding; forming a small working group; and developing activities such as skateboarding, seafront events, and partnerships with the sailing club.

She emphasised the need for services that reflect young people's interests and represent value for money. Additional suggestions included an August consultation event, improved communication via noticeboards, and a tuck shop during sessions.

Members thanked her for her work and agreed to establish a working group led by Cllr Brimble-Brennan and Cllr Warleigh-Lack, and to invite John Cattle, Wight Trash and Peter Ball, East Cowes Sailing Club, to join them. Cllr

Brimble-Brennan will arrange initial meetings and report back. It was also agreed that DBS checks be offered to all councillors.
Resolved: That a working group be established as outlined, with Cllr Brimble-Brennan to arrange initial meetings and report back, and that DBS checks be offered to all councillors.

61/26 REPORTS

18.1 Clerk's report – The Clerk read a report submitted by the new ward councillor, Paul Williams. He is looking forward to working alongside other ward councillors and the town council for the benefit of the East Cowes community. gave an update on the paddling pool and gave details regarding the Annual Town Meeting which would be taking place on Thursday 28th May 6pm, Town Hall
18.2 The Mayor had attended the Armed Forces breakfast in honour of setting up an Island branch and the Cowes Classic parade which was rained off.
18.3 IW Ward Councillors reports
Cllr Love reported that invitations to the grand opening of the East Cowes Army Cadets facility would be circulated to councillors shortly, and he will follow this up. He also noted that the planning application for a children's home in Adelaide Grove will be considered at the June meeting.
He advised that ferry charges during Cowes Week and the Isle of Wight Festival are approximately £500. In addition, he raised a concern regarding a hole in the fencing on Castle Road, opposite Datum Electrics, although ownership of the fence is currently unclear.
Cllr Love further reported that the Fire Station rebuild is progressing well, and he expects to receive an update shortly. He concluded by thanking everyone who supported him in the May elections.
18.4 Town Councillors reports
Cllr Pragnell gave an update on the GKN shelter. Cllr Love asked if the cost of building had to be covered. Cllr Pragnell stated that it was his understanding that it would be sponsored. The value of it would need to be added to the council's insurance.
Cllr Brimble-Brennan reported that the meeting with the GKN apprentices was excellent. She gave thanks to the Youth Club. She felt that the Red Funnel advertising of the East Cowes Festival was very positive. She suggested a thank-you be sent to apprentices at GKN.
Cllr Lake said that she had attended the open day of the community orchard and the commemoration events for the Blyskawica.

62/26 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 are excluded. (1960 Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act s1 (2)).
Resolved: To exclude the press and public
Contractual and staffing matters were discussed

Meeting closed at 8.50pm