



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

GREEN ROOM, SALISBURY GARDENS

7PM

8 JULY 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors: Stewart Blackmore (Chair), Stephen Cockett, Tony Marvin, Jason Mack, Brian Lucas, Dave Logan, Leigh Geddes, Ian Bond, Colm Watling, Jamie Macaulay, Delian Fry

No. SUBJECT

PUBLIC FORUM

There was one member of the public present at this time.

78/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence as all Members were present.

79/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this time.

80/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 10 June 2019, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read.
- b) The Minutes of the Town Council's Planning Committee meeting of 8 June 2019 were noted.
- c) The Minutes of the Library Steering Group meeting of 11 June 2019 were noted.

81/19 FINANCE REPORT

- a) The Finance report for this meeting (54/19) had been previously circulated to Members and included information on Bank Balances at 30 June 2019 and a list of all payments made during June 2019.
- b) Also included was a listing of budget variances during the first three months of the 2019/20 financial year.
- c) The Mayor asked if the problems with metering the Esplanade Toilets water supply had been resolved and the Clerk confirmed that was the case.

It was proposed by Councillor Tony Marvin , seconded by Councillor Stephen Crockett and unanimously resolved:
that the Finance Report be accepted.

82/19 VENTNOR AREA HEALTH VISITORS

- a) Report 55/19 for this meeting detailed actions taken since the Town Council's statement of its concerns at its June meeting about the proposed move of the Ventnor-based team to Sandown.
- b) The Mayor reported on his attempt to raise a question on the matter at the NHS Trust Board meeting that was sent with the required 48 hours' notice only to be told by the Chair when he arrived at the meeting that there would not be an answer available
- c) Councillor Jason Mack reported on this morning's meeting the Mayor, Clerk and he had with the Head of Nursing and Quality Jennifer Edgington and Communities Manager Nicola Longson when they explained the reasons for the change in development of the Localities framework.
- d) He said they had assured us that the change would not result in any reduction in the service

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- to Ventnor residents.
- e) He went on to add that the Sandown Barracks building is still not fit for purpose and its development is well short of the proposed Locality Hub.
 - f) Councillor Jamie Macaulay said that he felt the Town Council should explain publicly to residents what we have done.
 - g) The Mayor suggested that we should wait until we have the response from the Chief Executive and to the Mayor's question to the Board.
 - h) Councillors Tony Marvin and Dave Logan both stressed the importance of ensuring that Town Council is not ignored by those planning service changes.
 - i) Councillor Leigh Geddes asked if there are advantages to the service in the move and Councillor Jason Mack responded that he believed it to be driven by budget considerations.
 - j) Councillor Brian Lucas commented on the tendency of all bureaucratic organisations to prefer central control.
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83/19 MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT WORKER

- a) The case for the Town Council to continue the funding of the Mental Health Support Worker leading the Monday Group satellite of the Island's Mental Health Centres following their planned closure later this year was set out in Report 56/19.
- b) This proposal has the full support of the Community Development Working Group.
- c) The Mayor said he was happy to support the proposal to continue the employment of the Support Worker if and when the Isle of Wight Council withdraws its support.
- d) Councillor Tony Marvin asked if there would be the added cost of a training requirement.

It was proposed by Councillor Ian Bond, seconded by Councillor Dave Logan and unanimously resolved that the Town Council agrees to:

take on responsibility for the employment and funding of the Mental Health Support Worker for the second half of this financial year following the ending of Isle of Wight Council support for it.

84/19 NORTH STREET PLAYGROUND

- a) A request from the recently formed Longdown Residents Association for the Town Council to take on the ownership and management of the North Street Playground has the support of the Community Development Working Group.
- b) Councillor Leigh Geddes informed the meeting that the latest public meeting of the Association was taking place today.
- c) The Mayor said that he fully supported the proposal.

It was proposed by Councillor Leigh Geddes, seconded by Councillor Dave Logan and unanimously resolved that the Town Council:

asks its Clerk, advised by the Assets and Services Working Group, to:

- i) initiate discussions with the Isle of Wight Council about their willingness to transfer responsibility for the Playground to the Town Council and the basis for any agreed transfer;
 - ii) identify the cost consequences for the Town Council in relation to the management and maintenance if the transfer proceeds; and
 - iii) report back to a future Town Council meeting with recommendations.
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85/19 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME CONSULTATION

- a) The Isle of Wight Council has invited all stakeholders to contribute to its current consultation on the options it is considering for changes to its Local Council Tax ^{Support} Scheme in the financial year 2020/21.
 - b) Councillor Jason Mack drew attention to the problems caused for residents by the
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ramifications of Universal Credit and that prompted a detailed discussion of the threats it presented for many people.

- c) Although Members recognised that it also caused difficulties for the administration of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme the unanimous view was that the necessary adjustments should not result in any further reduction in the financial support from scheme for any qualifying resident and the Clerk was asked to respond to the consultation accordingly
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86/19 UNDERCLIFF DRIVE CONSULTATION

- a) The Isle of Wight Council has invited all stakeholders to contribute to its current consultation on a proposal to re-open the landslide area of Undercliff Drive.
- b) The Mayor opened the discussion by stating that although he was in favour of the re-opening of the road he recognised that many residents and others did not.
- c) Councillor Delian Fry said that it was clear to her that the proposal would not work and recommended that a working party visit a scheme in Lyme Regis that offered a much more rewarding investment, adding that there could be no justification for spending £200k given the numbers of residents in temporary accommodation.
- d) Councillor Leigh Geddes said that she too was clear that the scheme isn't going to work.
- e) Councillor Tony Marvin argued that alternative routes for the road should be explored but only if the economic case for it can be made.
- f) There was support for exploring the possibility of re-opening the route from both Councillor Jamie Macaulay and Councillor Ian Bond based on it providing such an attractive and effective entry to Ventnor and the opportunity it provided for those enjoying the drive round the Island.
- g) Councillor Brian Lucas said that its restoration would be greatly welcomed by Ventnor Botanic Garden whose business had been seriously affected by the landslide.
- h) Councillor Colm Watling said that he was not in favour of the proposal scheme but that he could be persuaded otherwise if the economic case for it was clear.
- i) The Mayor said that he believed there was a statutory duty for the Isle of Wight Council to maintain and keep open the A3055 given its classification.
- j) Councillor Stephen Cockett said it was currently the most important issue in St Lawrence and reminded the meeting of the wide range of issues that needed to be considered before support for the scheme could be given, arguing that the current consultation was not fit for that purpose.

It was proposed by Councillor Leigh Geddes, seconded by Councillor Delian Fry and resolved by seven votes to three with one abstention that:
the Town Council cannot support the proposal at this time.

87/19 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

- a) The Town Clerks' Report – 60/19 – recorded recent activity which did not require Town Council decisions at this time.
 - b) It included information on the Town Centre Hanging Basket, Bonchurch Open Gardens, Upper Ventnor Community Association, the Children's Centre, Ventnor Business Association and the meetings of the Town Council's Working Groups.
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PUBLIC FORUM

There were no comments or questions at this time.

88/19

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of the following item:

it was resolved under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings (1960) Act: to exclude the Public and Press whilst the next item is under discussion as it is of a confidential nature.

The Meeting closed at 9.10pm

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR

DATE

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