

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Town Council's Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 9 July 2024 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Rafferty (Chair), Adams, Brown, Ellis, Nicholson, Peacey Wilcox and Sanders

In attendance: Kate Scragg, Deputy Town Clerk

597. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dodwell.

598. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

599. MINUTES RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 11 June 2024 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

600. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) The Cut - Enhancements

There is no update from the IWC's Contract Management Team on costs and timetabling for the works, or details of changes to Traffic Regulation Orders.

b) The Cut - Changing Places Facility

Councillor Rafferty has researched Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) testing requirements and costings and proposed the Town Council engages a company that is a member of the Lifting Equipment Engineers Association (LEEA) to undertake the six-monthly LOLER inspections and maintenance of the lifting equipment in the Changing Places facility. He provided the Clerks with a number of LEEA certified companies in the area, from which quotations can be sought.

Councillor Rafferty has researched Health and Safety Executive guidelines in relation to the requirement to provide a sling for the hoist. The conclusion is that users should provide their own sling, as it would be unhygienic to share among users.

Advice is being sought on the installation of a powered door on the Changing Places facility. The installer, Danfo, has not recommended a powered door is fitted and provided their reasoning for this. This will be raised during the accessibility audit of The Cut facilities.

The Deputy Town Clerk presented a photo of the current sign on the Changing Places facility, which fails to mention the Town Council's contribution to the project. Draft wording for an additional sign, to promote the Town Council's involvement in the project, was discussed. The Chairman suggested incorporating a QR code which users can log any comments on the facility directly with the Town Council.

The Clerks will arrange an official opening of the facility, once the new sign is installed.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain quotations from LEEA certified companies for the LOLER inspections and maintenance of the Changing Places facility.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain quotations for the new sign.

- c) **Medina Road - Public Conveniences Refurbishment**
The installation of a safety barrier and yellow warning markings is on hold until permission is granted by the IW Council to install them on the public highway.
Southern Water have not responded to several requests for permission to install external CCTV cameras on the public conveniences. It was agreed:
ACTION
The Deputy Town Clerk will contact Southern Water again for permission to install external CCTV cameras at Medina Road public conveniences.
- d) **Cowes High Street Events**
No meeting of Cowes Traders' Group had been held and there is no update on this item.
- e) **Notes from informal meeting with IW Council held on 6 June 2024**
The Notes from the above meeting were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.
No questions arose.
- f) **Parade Toilets - Refurbishment**
The public toilet facilities at The Parade are the next facility to be looked at for refurbishment. As they adjoin the Bandstand, consideration is being given to look at improving the whole site with better access.
A complaint was received from a local business regarding the untidiness of the flowerbed on Bath Road and the poor level of cleanliness of the public conveniences. The flowerbed has since been thoroughly weeded. Councillors felt that the public conveniences should have a deep clean by a professional company to remove all build-up of dirt and odours. The sites suggested for this deep cleaning are: The Cut, The Parade and Mornington Road public conveniences.
It was agreed:
ACTIONS
1. The Deputy Town Clerk will produce a draft list of requirements for the new toilets for Councillors' consideration.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain quotations from professional cleaners, including their availability for a deep clean of the three town centre public conveniences.
- g) **Heritage Boards**
At the last meeting Councillors were asked to send any ideas to Councillor Oliver for inclusion on the Heritage Board. It was noted that Councillor Oliver was not in attendance and has given his apologies for the next three Projects Committee meetings. It was agreed:
ACTIONS
1. This item will be removed from the Agenda until the November Projects Committee meeting.
2. Councillor Oliver will be asked to provide an update for the November Projects Committee meeting.
- h) **CCTV Policy**
Councillor Rafferty had produced a draft policy for discussion. It was agreed:
ACTION
Councillor Rafferty and the Town Clerks will review the draft CCTV policy for Councillors' further consideration.

i) **The Cut Mural**

The Deputy Town Clerk has contacted two known mural artists to enquire if they are interested in redesigning the mural. Councillors were asked to consider a theme for the new design. Councillors felt that the “heritage of Cowes” should be honoured in the new mural, to include historic aspects of Cowes, such as the Hammerhead Crane, shipbuilding, yacht building and sailing. The timescale for the mural was agreed to be completed as soon as possible, due to the poor condition of the existing mural, which is badly peeling. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will contact the two mural artists to update them with the outcome of this meeting.

601. NEW PROJECTS

a) **Picnic in the Park Comment Cards**

Seven comment cards had been completed at the Picnic in the Park. Councillors discussed the issues raised.

A request had been received for a new litter bin by the picnic tables on Mornington Green, or the relocation of a nearby bin. An area bin audit was suggested, to look at the usage of current litter bins in Cowes, possibly extending the audit area to include Gurnard and Northwood, if the Parish Councils wished to be included and contribute accordingly to the costs.

Comments had been received about the lack of a Post Office in the town, lack of cash dispensers or them not working, and a lack of banks. The Town Council has raised its concerns with Post Office Ltd about a lack of town centre Post Office, only to be advised that the Post Office at the Co-op is close-by, and also requested a mobile Post Office visit to the town centre, which was also refused as they are only for rural areas who are without a Post Office. A request for better publicity to promote the mobile bank visits was received. This will be promoted in the next newsletter.

A comment had been received about the zebra crossing on Mill Hill Road, reporting a number of injuries have been sustained when using the crossing. Councillors stressed the importance to report these incidents to the Police to enable a log at this location to be compiled. Without any evidence, a request for a pelican crossing is unlikely to be supported by the Highway Authority.

Comments have been received regarding the copse at Shamblers Road / Arctic Road; and a request for double yellow lines at the junction of Stephenson Road and Mill Hill Road. Councillor Peacey Wilcox advised she has been involved in both of these issues. Island Roads have not supported the request for additional double yellow lines at this junction.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will write to Island Roads to request a litter bin audit and details of all litter bins in the town.
2. The Mayor will ask Cowes Traders’ Group if any businesses will consider installing a cash machine at their premises.
3. The Deputy Town Clerk will include details of the mobile banking service and available cashpoints in the next newsletter.
4. The Deputy Town Clerk will contact the resident to request they report incidents at the zebra crossing to the Police, and to encourage others to do the same.

b) **Accessibility Audit at The Cut Public Conveniences**

The informal Chairs and Clerks meeting requested the Projects Committee consider engaging an access consultant to carry out an accessibility audit at The Cut Public

Conveniences. The consultant should be on the National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC). It was considered important to have an access audit carried out at this location before any further changes are made to the facilities. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain quotations from NRAC registered consultants to undertake an access audit on The Cut public conveniences.

c) **Request for waste bins in Gents' public toilet facilities**

A request has been received from the Isle of Wight Prostate Cancer Support Group, asking the Town Council to consider installing waste bins in our Gents' public toilet facilities, for disposal of soiled pads from gentlemen affected by prostate cancer. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that, if Councillors agreed to the request, 15 waste bins will need to be purchased, which would be emptied by the cleaning contractor as part of the cleaning regime. It was agreed:

ACTION

The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain costs for 15 waste bins, for Councillors' consideration.

d) **Festive Lights**

Councillors felt that no changes are required to the locations of the lights, which are displayed on Birmingham Road, Shooters Hill, the High Street and Bath Road. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers approving up to £16,000 for all costs associated with installing the festive lights for the 2024 festive season, with the cost to be met from the 'Festive lights/Xmas tree' budget heading.

e) **Christmas Tree**

Councillors discussed the number and location of Christmas trees in the town for 2024.

They felt that one dressed Christmas tree should be provided by the Town Council and sited in Francki Place, at a cost of up to £1,000. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers providing one dressed Christmas Tree to be located in Francki Place, at a cost of up to £1,000, with the cost to be met from the 'Festive lights/Xmas tree' budget heading.

602. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **Street Furniture**

A number of items of street furniture and Northwood Recreation Ground public conveniences and The Parade public conveniences are in the process of being painted by Community Payback. Low turnout, along with prior diary commitments, has meant the works are taking longer than anticipated, however, progress is being made and the facilities at Northwood Recreation Ground are nearing completion.

At the last meeting of the Projects Committee, the Chairman and Deputy Town Clerk offered to undertake a Health and Safety assessment of the Watch House Shelter, following further vandalism to the guttering system. Councillor Rafferty's proposal, following the assessment, was discussed. It recommended removal of the guttering to provide a solution to the recurring vandalism. It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers appointing John Groves (IW) Ltd to remove the guttering system and make good any fixing holes on the Watch House Shelter, at a cost of £270, with the cost to be met from the money set aside for the Watch House Shelter.

b) **Public Conveniences and CCTV**

Monthly inspections were undertaken by the Deputy Town Clerk and Facilities Manager and areas requiring attention have been raised with the cleaning contractor. A leak has been identified in the service area at The Cut, which has been drawn to the attention of the cleaning contractor for initial assessment.

DARES will be requested to undertake a pre-Cowes Week flush through of the drains at the public conveniences at Mornington Road, The Cut and The Parade, in preparation for the increased demand during Cowes Week.

The CCTV camera in the Gents area at Medina Road had been tampered with. The Deputy Town Clerk obtained video and photographic evidence of the incident, which will be reported to the Police. The camera lens was covered with wet toilet paper; this has since been rectified.

Costs are awaited from Lifeline Alarms for cages to protect all the dome cameras.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will book DARES to undertake a pre-Cowes Week flush through of the drains at the public conveniences at Mornington Road, The Cut and The Parade.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will report the CCTV incident at Medina Road public conveniences to the Police.

c) **Northwood Recreation Ground and CCTV**

Following vandalism affecting the CCTV cameras at Northwood Recreation Ground, the Deputy Town Clerk has asked Lifeline Alarms to provide costs for protective cages for the cameras. Councillor Rafferty has undertaken research into methods of protecting CCTV cameras, which was circulated to Councillors as a background paper.

The annual RoSPA safety inspections have been undertaken by Playsafety on the MUGA, Skate Park and Outdoor Gym areas. Maintenance issues raised in the report will be actioned.

The poor condition of the paintwork on the mobile outdoor gym was discussed. Councillors felt we should look to engage a professional painter to treat any rust.

Councillors agreed it was important for the equipment to be serviced by the installer's own maintenance team; this is undertaken annually.

It was:

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council considers appointing FreshAir Fitness to undertake a service on the mobile gym equipment, at a cost of £659.80, with the cost to be met from the 'Northwood Rec – Skate Park / MUGA / Outdoor Gym Maintenance' budget heading.

It was agreed:

ACTIONS

1. The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain costs for protective cages for all the CCTV cameras.
2. The Deputy Town Clerk will engage contractors to carry out maintenance identified in the RoSPA reports.
3. The Deputy Town Clerk will obtain quotations for rust treatment for the mobile outdoor gym equipment.

603. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items raised for inclusion on a future agenda.

The proceedings terminated at 7.37pm.

CHAIRMAN