

Minutes of a meeting of VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL held at The Winter Gardens, Ventnor, I.W. on 10 December 2007.

Present: Councillor Mrs.S.J.Scoccia Town Mayor  
 Councillor Mrs.M.Cawley Deputy Town Mayor  
 Councillors A.C.Bartlett, J.S.Fitzgerald-Bond, Mrs.B.Lawson, B.M.Lucas, R.J.Mew  
 and Mrs.V.Taylor.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C.J.Elvers.

1. PRAYERS

The meeting opened with prayers led by Rev. B.Downer.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2007 were approved and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. REPORTS FROM THE POLICE AND TOWN MANAGER

The Town Manager reported upon the Public Forum meeting recently held and the priorities identified for action which included lack of parking, CCTV and dog fouling. Members expressed disappointment at the number of people attending the meeting but were pleased to note that the attendance included young people. P/Sgt Stapleton reported that he had been able to arrange for two mobile cameras to be available in Ventnor for the Christmas period with a direct link to Ventnor Police Station. The Town Mayor welcomed this cover and thanked the police for having this provided.

5. CLOSURE OF POST OFFICE AT UPPER VENTNOR

The Town Clerk reported an acknowledgement from the Post Office of the representations made by the Town Council. Councillor Lawson said that the IWRCC were pressing the case for a post office at Upper Ventnor as one of their four priorities for the Island.

6. REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MRS.S.J. SCOCCIA

The Town Mayor reported upon various issues relating to the town. The Ventnor Fun Day had been very successful in spite of bad weather and the Town Council congratulated the organisers. Ventnor Youth Centre had been awarded a sum of £7000 for a mural on the wall of the Youth Centre and designs were displayed. The design would be exhibited at the Youth Club and the Library. Members said everyone involved should be proud of this effort and the Town Mayor was asked to thank and congratulate members of the Youth Club. Details were given of a project named Ventbag which aimed to make Ventnor the first town on the Island to be plastic carrier free. Members supported this initiative.

7. UNDERCLIFF DRIVE

The Town Clerk read a letter from the Isle of Wight Council regarding the decision taken to abandon the scheme for the proposed work to Undercliff Drive and stating that it had been decided to undertake a detailed survey of the alternative route via Whitwell in order to ascertain to what extent it would need improvement to make it suitable to function as part of the Strategic Road Network including the feasibility of bringing the route up to principal "A" road standards. Investigative options for Undercliff Drive which may include maintaining single lane working, closing the road at particular points or investigating options for developing a "green way" along Undercliff Drive would also be considered.

## 7. UNDERCLIFF DRIVE (continued)

Members expressed their great concern at any possibility that Undercliff Drive should be lost as a principal route whilst noting the proposal to carry out a survey regarding an alternative route through Whitwell.

The maintenance of Undercliff Drive is essential in the interests of residents of Ventnor and St.Lawrence preserving its use for all forms of traffic albeit with some traffic management control at certain points. Moreover the route is one which is popular with summer visitors and therefore an important feature in the local economy. The Town Council are of the opinion that the use of the road can be preserved with only light engineering works at this time and this should be the policy of the Isle of Wight Council.

As far as the suggestion of an alternative route is concerned the Town Council point out that the existing condition of Whitwell Road is one of great concern which has been raised by the Town Council and local members of the Isle of Wight Council continuously. The Town Council in the past have been advised by officers of the IW Council of the problems which affect Undercliff Drive, Leeson Road, Newport Road and Whitwell Road which are the access routes to Ventnor and each of which are very vulnerable to collapse at any time and have been the subject of previous studies relating to ground instability. Any ongoing study must recognise this situation.

It was Resolved - That the Town Clerk convey to the Isle of Wight Council these views of the Town Council and seek an assurance as soon as possible that the Isle of Wight Council will maintain a traffic route through Undercliff Drive and emphasise that the delay which has taken place over the last year is most unfortunate in that the outcome is that works which are so necessary to maintain Undercliff Drive have again been put back and action needs to be taken and given priority to expedite the completion of a scheme to deal with the matter at an early date.

The Town Mayor would approach the Chairman of Niton and Whitwell Parish Council with an invitation for members of that Council to meet Ventnor Town Council members to discuss the position regarding any route which will affect both Ventnor and these villages.

## 8. NEW DOG CONTROL ORDERS

The Town Clerk submitted details of the consultation by the Isle of Wight Council regarding proposed new Dog Control Orders which were noted.

## 9. REPORT OF FINANCIAL OFFICER

The written report of the Financial Officer was submitted to members.

## 10. IW ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Councillor Mrs.Lawson made a report on matters dealt with by this Association.

## 11. PLAYING AREA FOR CHILDREN

A suggestion that an all weather playing area for children might be provided at the raised land at the eastern end of the putting green in Ventnor Park was considered but this area was not thought suitable for this purpose. Other possible sites were being investigated.

## 12. WINTER GARDENS COMMITTEE

The report of a meeting of the Winter Gardens Committee held on 26 November 2007 was received.

12. WINTER GARDENS COMMITTEE (continued)

The Chairman reported that the Manager of the Winter Gardens had resigned and the post had been advertised.

13. QUESTIONS

Councillor Lawson said she had been challenged by a traffic warden when she parked in Pler Street in the section marked "motor cycles" but she believed that this area was not officially designated as such and indeed the Town Council had previously when considering a review of parking arrangements asked that the motor cycle parking area be moved to the High Street. She asked for clarification of this matter and Councillor Fitzgerald-Bond said he would take up the matter with the Highways Department.

Councillor Mew asked a question regarding the circulation of election material relating to the forthcoming by-election for the Ventnor West Ward (which had been handed to him by a member of the public). The Town Clerk said that any question concerning the election or its procedures must be addressed to the Returning Officer and not the Town Council.