

Minutes of a special meeting of VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL held at The Winter Gardens, Ventnor, IW on 6th October 2008.

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

In attendance: Mr.Keith Simmonds, Head of Policy, Planning and Commissioning.
Isle of Wight Council, Education Department.

Before the meeting commenced members of the public were invited to put questions relating to the business to be discussed at this meeting. Several questions were put to which Mr.Simmonds replied.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2008 were approved and signed.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs.V.Taylor declared a personal interest in the matter set out below.

3. CONSULTATION REGARDING THE FUTURE OF VENTNOR SCHOOLS.

Mr.Simmonds gave answers to questions put by members regarding the proposals of the Isle of Wight Council concerning the reorganisation of schools in Ventnor

Councillor S.Milford said that he believed that an Environmental Impact Assessment should be carried out before any final decisions were taken and expressed his concern that voluntary aided schools would effectively be under church control. Mr.Simmonds explained the difference between a voluntary aided school and a voluntary controlled school and the financing arrangements.

Councillor Mrs.V.Taylor said she supported the proposed two tier system but was opposed to voluntary aided schools joining together three different schools of different faiths. She felt there should be a new community school for Ventnor.

In answer to a question from Councillor J.S.Fitzgerald-Bond, Mr.Simmonds said denominational school do often have better performance records.

Councillor R.Mew did not like church control of schools - he believed also that Ventnor should continue to have the benefit of Ventnor Middle School which had a record of high performance. Mr.Simmonds said that the current proposals would be in the better interest of pupils in their academic progress.

Regarding the process of an Environment Impact Assessment Mr. Simmonds said this would follow the final decision of the IW Council on the current consultations and the issue of a Statutory Notice for the future reorganisation of the structure of the school system in the Island which would then provide for further consultation.

The Town Mayor thanked Mr. Simmonds for his attendance and for the information he had been able to give and Mr.Simmonds left the meeting at this stage.

The Town Council proceeded to discuss the matter and consider a number of proposals.

3. CONSULTATION REGARDING THE FUTURE OF VENTNOR SCHOOLS (Continued)

Councillor S.B.Milford proposed and Councillor Mrs.V.Taylor seconded a proposal that Ventnor should be provided with a single community school.

On being put to the vote there was an equality of voting those voting FOR the motion being Councillors Mrs.M.Cawley, R.J.Mew, S.B.Milford, M/s D.Robinson and Mrs.V.Taylor and those voting AGAINST the motion being Councillors A.C. Bartlett, C.J.Eivers, J.S.Fitzgerald-Bond, B.M.Lucas Mrs.S.J.Scoccia.

Councillor S.B.Milford then proposed and Councillor Mrs.V.Taylor seconded a proposal that there should be two primary schools in Ventnor, one faith school and one community school.

On being put to the vote there was an equality of voting those voting FOR the motion being Councillors Mrs.M.Cawley, R.J.Mew, S.B.Milford, M/s D.Robinson and Mrs.V.Taylor and those AGAINST being Councillors A.C.Bartlett, C.J.Eivers, J.S.Fitzgerald-Bond, B.M.Lucas and Mrs.S.J.Scoccia.

The Town Clerk would convey to the Isle of Wight Council the views expressed by members and the outcome of the voting upon the above motions.

Town Mayor