

Minutes of a meeting of VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL held at The Winter Gardens, Ventnor, IW on 9th June 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.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs.B.Lawson.

1. PRAYERS

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

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 12th May were approved and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. UNDERCLIFF DRIVE

Mr. Stuart Love, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, attended the meeting accompanied by Mr.Malcolm Smith of Engineering Services. He explained the current position regarding the works to be undertaken at Undercliff Drive. A consultant would be appointed in September to look at the options before a report was made in January 2009. Councillors again emphasised the need to keep Undercliff Drive as a major route repeating the reasons which had been given previously. Mr. Love answered questions from members. He said that the condition of other roads into Ventnor was recognised and repairs were to be put in hand.

5. HIGH STREET VENTNOR - LOADING BAYS

Further to Minute No. 13 of the last meeting a letter was received from an officer of the Traffic Department stating that any change of the parking regulations would require a new Order and the next review would not be done for another eighteen months due to the time and resources it takes to complete. Mr.Love said that the implementation of traffic orders must be consistent but he understood that traffic wardens were not being unreasonable in the enforcement of the regulations. This was disputed by members and he said he would look again at the issue.

6. CAR PARKS - HIGH STREET AND MARKET STREET

A letter from the Traffic Manager confirmed that the recommendation of the Town Council that Market Street car park should be retained as a long stay parking place was accepted but with regard to the High Street parking place the suggestion that it should be divided into two sections to provide short stay and long stay parking would create a number of operational difficulties. Members did not accept this argument as the access point in its present position needed only signage to indicate the different sections. Mr.Love said he would discuss this matter with his responsible officer.

Mr. Stuart Love left the meeting at this stage and the Town Mayor on behalf of councillors and members of the public thanked him for his attendance and for the information he had given.

7. REPORT OF TOWN CENTRE MANAGER

The report of the Town Centre Manager was received. Progress was being made regarding the provision of the Ventnor Activities Games Area. It had been suggested that it would be more beneficial to approach the project as an area improvement. This was accepted.

8. PROPOSED REMOVAL OF PUBLIC CALL BOXES

The Council considered a letter from BT (plc) proposing the closure of public call boxes at Bonchurch Village Road, Whiteley Bank, Undercliff Drive and Ventnor Botanic Garden.

Any comments must be made via the Planning Department of the IW Council.

It was Resolved - That the Town Council make the following comments.

- (a) Bonchurch Village Road - This provides an important service in a village area which has very poor mobile phone coverage and is therefore needed for use by residents and visitors. No other service is available within an acceptable distance. The call box should be retained.
- (b) Undercliff Drive. This is the only call box in the St.Lawrence area and it is regularly used. The local village shop reports that it has frequent enquiries from visitors as to the whereabouts of a public call box. It provides an essential service. This call box should be retained.
- (c) Whiteley Bank. This box is in a remote position which is a point at which bus passengers change services and is essential for public use in the case of emergency. The actual phone apparatus has recently been vandalised and is awaiting replacement - members of the public have already made complaints that the service is not available. This call box should be retained.

The Town Council also note the comment made by BT regarding the use of mobile phones but draw attention to the fact that coverage in the Ventnor area is poor and unreliable in general, and also state that the sole reason for closing a public call box is not its revenue return - proper regard should be given to the need to provide an adequate public service.

9. TOWN NOTICE BOARD

The Town Centre Manager gave details of an initiative proposed to have a town notice board in the patio area adjacent to the High Street car park for use by himself, the local police and the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership. He asked if the Town Council would make a contribution towards the cost so that he could make a bid for funding to the IW Partnership Tactical Tasking & Coordinating Group. It was Resolved - That the Town Council offer a contribution of £1,000.

10. RECORDING OF MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Further to Minute No. 16 of the last meeting the Town Clerk reported that the Monitoring Officer had confirmed that recordings of Council meetings could only take place with the consent of the Council and in agreeing to recording the Council may set conditions and limitations. The Monitoring Officer said this should include a condition that the Town Council may require the deletion from any recording of words which are improper or misleading.

It was agreed to allow recording subject to the above condition.

11. REPORT OF FINANCIAL OFFICER

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

12. REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations required revision every four years and the Financial Officer submitted revised Financial Regulations to take account of changed working arrangements and the requirements of risk assessment.

It was Resolved - That the revised Financial Regulations be now approved and adopted.

13. CONTINENTAL MARKET

Councillor Mrs.Cawley reported upon an enquiry she had received from a person wishing to hold a Continental Market in Ventnor. It was agreed that this be referred to the IW Council who would be the Authority to deal with such a request.

14. QUESTIONS

Several questions were asked and answers given.

Town mayor