

NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE EDWARD EDWARDS LIBRARY, NITON ON MONDAY 27th JANUARY 2020 AT 7:15 PM

PRESENT: Councillors T Addison (Chairman), S Biles, J Boileau Goad, S Burridge, M Hughson, L Sheerin and J A Stotesbury

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D Stewart (Isle of Wight Council) and Mrs V J Ford (Clerk to the Council)

APOLOGIES: Councillors P K G Fradgley, M A Innes and A Logan

M01/01/20 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Helena Hewston, Chair of the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils (IWALC), and 2 members of the public to the meeting.

Councillor Hewston thanked the Parish Council for its support for IWALC and asked that it continue. She stated that subscriptions to IWALC paid for training (Code of Conduct Training coming up in March); local council membership enables IWALC to keep an eye on what is happening locally; and gives access to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). She added that NALC lobbies Central Government on town and parish council issues; offers legal advice through IWALC; organises conferences with workshops and useful resources.

Councillor Hewston offered IWALC's help at any time. A new Secretary (County Officer) had been recently appointed, who was keen to take IWALC forward. Members of IWALC's Executive Committee would be asked at the next meeting if they would be willing to attend via Skype in certain circumstances.

Councillor Boileau Goad said he thought that using Skype was a good idea, which he would support. He had found IWALC meetings fascinating and interesting.

The Chairman said that the Parish Council was very committed to supporting IWALC going forward and that it was very important to present a consistent point of view. He outlined matters already raised through IWALC but asked for reports to be more forthright.

Councillor Hewston said that 17 local councils had been represented at the recent Infrastructure Workshop and that contact with officers and consultants had given all attendees a slightly different perspective.

Councillor Burridge reported that Southern Water had given a very helpful presentation at the last IWALC meeting.

Councillor Stewart said that he had met with the Chairman of NALC, who would be visiting the Island. He pointed out that some Island town and parish councils were not members of IWALC. The Chairman suggested that non-members of IWALC should not gain advantage by meeting individually with the Isle of Wight Council.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hewston for attending the meeting.

A member of the public stated that he would be going ahead with asking Island Roads to install two planters beside the memorial bench in Bannock Road, Whitwell and that he would be asking for a contribution towards costs from the Parish Council. The Chairman said the member of the public was welcome to ask and suggested also approaching the local Horticultural Society for ideas.

The member of the public conveyed on a complaint about the state of the public toilets in Niton. The Chairman reported that the toilets were cleaned on a daily basis by volunteers. He apologised for the unacceptable state of the toilets on the occasion of the visit by the member of the public's friends but stated that it was impossible to take responsibility for what happened between cleans.

The member of the public reported that there were two pieces of metal sticking out from the bench on the small area at the top of Whitwell Shute in the High Street. Councillor Hughson said that the land on which the bench was sited was privately owned and that the landowner had suggested that the metal was removed and replaced by a picket fence.

The member of the public asked if any action was being taken to provide disabled access to Whitwell Parish Church. The Chairman replied that the disabled access had been a matter for consultation on the recently circulated questionnaire and that it would be considered as part of the budget-setting process.

M02/01/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

M03/01/20 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25th November 2019 be taken as read, confirmed and signed as being an accurate record of the proceedings.

M04/01/20 FINANCE

Members had before them a schedule showing a cashbook balance of £52,028.43 in the General Funds, £25,392.73 in the Public Sector Deposit Fund and £6,265.61 in the Bequest Account. A schedule of accounts for payment was also before the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Financial Statement to 20th January 2020 be received and noted.

* Already paid; for ratification only

Cheque Number	Payee	Details	Amount £
1630*	Kompan Ltd	Replacement floor for toddler multi-action play unit	427.57
1631*	John O'Conner (GM) Ltd	Mowing/strimming Niton Recreation Ground	114.00
1632*	V J Ford	Clerk's salary: December 2019	708.90
1633*	Thompson's Plants	Parish Christmas trees	254.99
1634	V J Ford	Clerk's salary: January 2020	708.90
		Total	2,214.36

M05/01/20 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2020/21

Members had before them a draft budget for 2020/21 and explanatory notes.

The Clerk was asked to explain the basis for the budgetary costs associated with the public toilets, which she duly did.

The Chairman observed that the budget reflected the increasing costs of taking on responsibility for extra services and assets. It also tied in with the results of the recent public consultation.

RESOLVED: that the draft budget, as prepared by the Clerk, be adopted.

RESOLVED: that the Precept (together with the Localised Council Tax Support grant) for 2020/21 be set at £50,087, as per the budget.

M06/01/20 RISK ASSESSMENTS

Members had before them a detailed Parish Council risk assessment, which had been prepared as part of the budget-setting process, and an updated risk assessment for Niton Recreation Ground.

RESOLVED: to adopt the risk assessment as presented by the Clerk.

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M07/01/20 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Parish Council Planning Committee meeting held on 13th January 2020 be taken as read, confirmed and signed as being an accurate record of the proceedings.

M08/01/20 PLANNING APPLICATION

Members had before them one Whitwell planning application.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk be asked to submit to the Isle of Wight Council the comments set out in the Appendix which forms part of these minutes.

M09/01/20 PLANNING DECISIONS

Members were notified of the following planning decisions:

1. 19/01477/HOU: Proposed conservatory at Maycroft, Castlehaven Lane, Niton: **GRANTED**
2. 19/01478/HOU: Demolition of garage; proposed single storey side extension at Little Thatches, High Street, Whitwell: **REFUSED**

M10/01/20 ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Stewart reported that he was monitoring the proposed Ladyacre Farm development. With regard to the proposed 20 dwellings in Whitwell, he had passed on the comments he had received and he was looking for the community benefits relating to the application; he would await the Planning Officer's recommendation. He was also looking at the planning application for 14, Strathwell Crescent, Whitwell.

Representatives of the Department of Transport had visited Undercliff Drive. The existence of the Highways PFI contract with Island Roads had been appreciated, which would enable the Isle of Wight Council to act quickly if Government funding was given. The next step towards securing funding for reinstatement of the road etc would be to submit a business case.

With regard to flooding in Puckwell Lane, Niton, the adjacent development had served to highlight the issue. The Island Roads District Steward had visited the site. Councillor Stotesbury had been asked to carry out the work to solve the problem (on a voluntary basis).

Councillor Stewart said that he had been pleased with the attendance at his community meeting on 25th January. He committed to flagging up the work of the South Wight Area Youth Partnership (SWAY) to the Isle of Wight Council.

With regard to the Niton old telephone exchange/library, the building currently sat on a tenancy at will agreement between the Isle of Wight Council and the Library. The Isle of Wight Council was still considering options for the building.

Councillor Stewart reported that the Isle of Wight Council would be setting a lawful and balanced budget in February and acknowledged the work from officers to achieve this. The Council Tax would be increasing by 4%. The “Cabinet on the Road” meeting held in Whitwell Village Hall on 9th January had been well received.

The Parish Council Chairman had raised the issue of the transfer of Isle of Wight Council assets: Councillor Stewart was working with Councillor Stuart Hutchinson, Isle of Wight Council Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, to put a strategy in place.

Work on the draft Island Planning Strategy (IPS) was continuing. The Isle of Wight Council had told the Government that it could set housing numbers but the Isle of Wight could not deliver. There would be another consultation on the draft IPS later in the year; it was unlikely that any decisions would be made prior to the next election (May 2021).

The Chairman thanked Councillor Stewart for his report.

M11/01/20 COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS

Councillor Boileau Goad reported that he had met with representatives of the Ramblers Association and shared concerns regarding the coastal footpath following the route of the A3055 along Undercliff Drive in view of the intention to reinstate the road. Efforts were being made to establish a route seaward of the A3055. Councillor Stewart asked Councillor Boileau Goad to liaise with Councillor John Hobart, Isle of Wight Council Cabinet Member for Heritage and Environment.

Councillor Boileau Goad outlined the “Donate a Gate” scheme, which was run by the Isle of Wight Ramblers in partnership with the Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way team. Councillor Hughson agreed to take responsibility for oversight of Whitwell rights of way.

Councillor Burridge reported that the land rear of Barrack Shute in Niton and the land off Chatfeild Road (with outline planning permission for 9 dwellings) was for sale.

Councillor Burridge had received a complaint regarding the missing access from Castlehaven Village Green onto the newly concreted stretch of public footpath NT46. The Chairman stated that the Clerk had received communication from the Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way Department offering to remove the tripping hazard.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk thank the Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way Department for the offer to carry out this work; that the Parish Council would prefer the use of concrete but would settle for stabilised material if necessary.

Councillor Sheerin reported that she had received complaints concerning the surface of Lacey’s Lane, Niton. Councillor Stewart undertook to investigate. She had also taken forward concerns regarding the surface of public footpath NT38; the Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way team had carried out an inspection and was satisfied that the surface was currently fit for purpose.

Councillor Sheerin raised the issue of dog fouling in Niton; the Chairman added that there was also a problem in Whitwell. The Clerk reported that the Environment Officer had unfortunately been on sick leave for 4 weeks but had now returned to work and would be meeting with her later in the week to discuss concerns.

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Stewart on his public meeting on 25th January, both in terms of attendance and the way matters were handled.

M12/01/20 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that, although she had declined to take a workplace pension, the Pensions Regulator had written to remind the Parish Council of its statutory duty to carry out re-enrolment before 1st May 2020 and re-declaration of compliance before 30th September 2020.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk take to necessary action to effect re-enrolment and re-declaration of compliance before the required dates.

The Clerk drew attention to the Isle of Wight Council's Housing Needs Survey, which would be open until 16th February 2020. She stated that, for the results to be officially recognised for the Parish, a response from 20% of households was required. Printed copies of the survey were available at Niton Library. She reminded members that the previous Niton and Whitwell Housing Needs Survey was carried out in 2014 and was therefore at the end of its useful life. She asked for every encouragement to be given to Parishioners to complete the survey.

The statement of interest on the Bequest Account for 2019 had arrived after the financial statement had been produced for the meeting. The amount of interest added was £50.13 bringing the balance in the account to £6,315.74 (earmarked funds).

M13/01/20 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2020/21

Members had before them a draft calendar of meetings prepared by the Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the calendar of meeting dates as prepared by the Clerk be accepted.

RESOLVED: that the Annual Parish Meeting be held on Monday 18th May.

RESOLVED: that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council be held on Monday 18th May.

M14/01/20 REQUESTS FOR GRANT FUNDING

Members had before them four requests for grant funding.

After some discussion, the Parish Council did not feel it had received the financial information requested from the South Wight Area Youth Partnership (SWAY).

RESOLVED: that the award of a grant to SWAY be deferred to the February Parish Council meeting, the Chairman to contact Lead Youth Worker Andy Dorning in the meantime.

RESOLVED: that grants be awarded as follows:

- £100 for Whitwell WI for maintenance of the Whitwell War Memorial plant troughs
- £900 for Niton PCC for Churchyard grass cutting
- £400 for Whitwell Parish Church for grass cutting in Ashknowle Churchyard.

M15/01/20 SMUGGLERS TRAIL

Councillor Boileau Goad outlined the latest developments on the project. The project had already been published on the Parish Council website and the leaflets would be available from 1st March. Solent and

Co and Visit Isle of Wight had shown interest in advertising and Mr Mark Tuckey had arranged to conduct a smugglers' walk, following the published route as far as possible, every Thursday through the season.

RESOLVED: that payments of up to a further £700 be authorised to cover project costs up to 31st March 2020.

The Chairman thanked Councillors Boileau Goad and Sheerin for their work on the project.

M16/01/20 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

RESOLVED: that the Clerk arrange a programme of up to 6 Parish excursions during 2020.

Councillor Boileau Goad undertook to investigate the idea of acquiring a community minibus. The Chairman stated that it would be imperative to consult on a business case in order to minimise financial risk.

M17/01/20 TRANSFER OF ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL ASSETS WITHIN THE PARISH

The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had met with Councillor Stewart and Councillor Ian Ward, Isle of Wight Council Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport, to discuss various outstanding matters previously raised by the Parish Council, including the transfer of Parish assets owned by the Isle of Wight Council to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk write to Councillor Stuart Hutchinson, Isle of Wight Council Cabinet Member for Resources, stating that the Parish Council would, in principle, welcome the opportunity to acquire any, or all, of the following with full responsibility for maintenance:

- Allotment Road car park
- Niton public toilets
- Niton Old Telephone Exchange; and/or
- the Bert Sprake Memorial Garden

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9 pm

Signed..... Date.....

APPENDIX TO MINUTES

1. 19/01658/HOU: Proposed alterations and conversion of garage to create overspill accommodation at Kemming Cottage, Kemming Road, Whitwell: **NO OBJECTIONS**