



## SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

**Mrs Valerie Taylor**

**Town Clerk**

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### **A MEETING OF SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL WAS HELD AT THE BROADWAY CENTRE ON 1<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2006 AT 7. 0PM**

Mr P. Hollis attended the Town Council Meeting as an observer on behalf of the Business Association.

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllr Mereweather (Mayor) Cllr Woolley, Cllr Ward, Cllr Cowley, Cllr Dupre, Cllr Rogers, Cllr Young, Cllr Blezzard, Cllr Beevers.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Wright, Cllr Teasdale, Cllr Stephenson. Cllr Humby sent her apologies as she was unable to attend due to illness.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Blezzard declared a non-prejudicial interest in items 3 (Minutes 4,5,9&10). Items 6,9,10

Cllr Blezzard, Cllr Young and Cllr Dupre declared a non-prejudicial interest as Item 3 (Minute 7)

Cllr Blezzard declared a non-prejudicial interest in items 3(Minute 8) and Item 7. Items 9(b) and Item Staff salaries.

Cllr Blezzard declared a prejudicial interest in item 6 and 9b (paragraph 1) as partner of an employee of the Isle of Wight NHS Trust and he will withdraw from the meeting when this agenda item is considered.

#### **3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2006**

The minutes were approved.

#### **a. To approve the recommendation from the Broadway Management Committee to add Cllr Beevers onto the Broadway Management Committee.**

The appointment of Cllr Beevers to the Management Committee was agreed.

The Clerk reported that since she had been on a training day, matters arising on the agenda are no longer recommended as good practise by Alan Fairchild. Any items needed to be brought forward from the previous minutes will be an agenda item. Cllr Blezzard asked if we could have a Clerks report to inform of progress on other items that would not become agenda items. To which the Clerk agreed.

**It was agreed to carry on with the agenda until Inspector Kenny arrived.**

#### **5. FINANCE**

##### **a. Council**

The Clerk reported back to the Council the recent advice she had received from a leading authority on VAT regarding VAT on lettings. She informed the Council that she had been advised VAT was not chargeable on the hire of rooms but was chargeable on the hire of the kitchens. It was agreed that all new bookings for the hire of the kitchen from April would be at the rate of £1.20 per hour inclusive of VAT. Agreed.

The Clerk presented formally to the Council the Risk Assessment that had been used when drawing up the budget for 2006/07. Copy attached to these minutes.

The Clerk presented the financial statements for the Month ending February 2006. She reminded the Council some of the balances shown includes income received for next financial year. A question was raised on whether we would be getting training money from the Isle of Wight Council. The Clerk replied she had already put out feelers to the Isle of Wight Council for some training money and had been reminded their budget did not start till April 06. The finance report was approved by the Council with one vote against.

##### **b. Progress on Loan**

The Clerk reported on the delay on the loan for the re-mortgaging of the Centre. The £30,000 loan can be obtained without a problem. The £50,000 loan re-mortgaging of the Centre is a problem. The original loan was borrowed from the Isle of Wight County Council at a rate of 9.9% which in those days was a very good rate. It would appear the then Town Council

did not obtain permission from the Public Service Board to borrow the present loan from the then Isle of Wight County Council. This has caused a delay as the Deputy Prime-Ministers Office is in the process of taking legal advice on this matter. She reported that Gareth Hughes was being extremely helpful dealing with the Deputy Prime-Minister's Office on our behalf. There was a good relationship with Mr Soloman. At the end of the day the Clerk said she thought we may still get our loan approved as she has pointed out to Mr Soloman that when the loan was taken out it was between the previous Isle of Wight County Council that no longer exists and the Councillors who were on the old Sandown Town Council are no longer on this Council. It was agreed to leave the matter for resolving in the hands of the Clerk.

#### **4. WELCOME TO INSPECTOR KENNY**

The Mayor welcomed Inspector Kenny to the meeting.

Inspector Kenny said he had come to tell us about the significant changes in policing that will come into effect in April 06. There is to be the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing. The general public are demanding a return to the bobby on the beat and this forthcoming change is the most significant change he will have seen over his 26 year service. It is the most positive change that they will have had in that time. He talked about the present policing arrangements on the Island and the numbers of Police covering the service 24/7.

From April the movement is into Neighbourhood Policing and the idea behind that is to provide the Neighbourhoods with more beat officers and to have a centralised response team. The Island is going to be divided into two - East and West Wight. Sandown is in East Wight and there will be an Inspector for each of those areas. Inspector Kenny said he would be the Inspector for this side covering from Wootton down to Ventnor, and he would have 20 beat officers at his disposal initially. Sandown will have 3 Police Officers, Lake 2, and there will be 1 Sergeant working in the community every day. It is not huge but it means that those 3 Police Officers in Sandown will not be on emergency response, and will not be called out to backfill for other people but they will be on duty from 8.0am to midnight ensuring that Sandown will get a far more effective Police Service. There will not be a time when we have not got a Sandown beat officer on duty during these hours. On Friday and Saturdays the officers will be covering to 3.0am. The beat is now going to be called a Neighbourhood. The idea is that every member of the public will know who their Neighbourhood Officer is. They will be making themselves known in the Neighbourhoods and attending meetings and will assist, advise and guide. Yaverland would be a Neighbourhood and a further area will be created such as the Commercial Area including the High Street and Esplanade. It starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> April and it is hoped that by increasing Neighbourhood Teams it will decrease the use of response officers. The emergency cover in patrols will come from the centre.

There will also be Police Community Support Officers which are being recruited at the present time. We are having 39 Police Community Support Officers giving East Wight 19 or 20 which will double the size of Police Officers. He said he would share them out and Sandown would have 3 thus doubling our numbers of Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers to 6 as the PCSO are full time employed people. Also there will be Special Constabulary and Community Wardens and if we can get some they will be also working in the community. The Neighbourhood Officers will be beat managers and they will be managing on a daily basis.

Cllr Dupre asked how many police will we have on a Friday and Saturday night patrolling and whether we would have a visible presence on the street. Inspector Kenny said 3 PC and 1 Sergeant till 3.0am. There will also be 32 officers on targeted patrol on the Isle of Wight which means there will be 16 in East Wight and they will be a visible presence until 4.0am.

Cllr Mereweather asked if there will be more police during the summer season. Inspector Kenny replied that we will have the Safer Street Bus which is full of Police Officers which is an Island wide resource and that will continue. Because we are Hampshire and the Isle of Wight it is intended to bid for extra support units to come over during our peak periods during the summer. The plan is to have them over Friday and Saturday nights, they won't come over every night but we could guarantee every Friday and Saturday night.

Cllr Dupre said with the police presence on the street can we start building up a rapport with the teenagers addressing issues of the young and getting respect of the young and visa versa. He would like to see the return of the firmness and the fairness that used to be there. Inspector Kenny said he could virtually guarantee that would be the role of the Neighbourhood Police Officers and he would want to know if that was not happening and he would deal with it. In reply to the question on what is happening regarding the amalgamation of police forces he replied that is with the Home Secretary at this moment in time, but Hampshire is trying to stay as we are.

Cllr Woollley asked if we still kept Chris MacIntosh. He has volunteered to do something different, but he may come back as his new role is like a secondment.

Cllr Blezzard said it seems like déjàvue going back to East and West Wight. Inspector Kenny said other people had said this but Neighbourhood Policing has never been tried certainly in the last 26 years. Cllr Blezzard said it was good news getting all these extra support officers but in the case of uniformed Police Officers is it a case of re-arranging the deckchairs or are we getting a substantial amount of extra resources. We were informed this was all being done out of existing resources; it is re-jigging the whole thing. Cllr Blezzard said there is a perception that we are subsidising the policing at Portsmouth and Southampton with the Council Tax we are paying if you compare the number of officers there compared with the number of officers on the Island. It would have been re-assuring if we had actually been getting some extra resources. Inspector Kenny replied there is a resource allocation formula that has been decided for policing throughout the country and if you apply the Isle of Wight to that you have the right amount of officers. It is worked on population, geography, social issues and other factors.

Cllr Rogers asked if we could get a police station back in Sandown. To which we were told no. There will be some change to police premises over the next few years. He said the Sandown beat officers will start their duty at Shanklin and then they will make their way down to Sandown to their neighbourhoods. What we don't really want them to do is keep coming back to the police station every-time they have some paper work to do, or they want to have their lunch. So they have been asked to look in the community to see if there is anywhere they can set up an office such as here.

Cllr Cowley asked if someone wants to get hold of one of your officers urgently whether there will be a special contact number and will it be advertised. We were told there will be a number and it will be advertised and also there is planned a lot of publicity about this and a request for mobile phones for the Police Officers is going to be made.

The Clerk reported on the survey that the Council had done. She said two major points had come out of it and one is already being addressed by you and that is Neighbourhood Policing, dealing with such things as vandalism in Carter Street after Bogeys had turned

out, damage to cars etc., and it looks like with the increased numbers you will answer a big chunk of the survey. The other point was that the public wanted to see a police station in the town and that was on every returned form. People in the town are very resentful that Police are coming from Shanklin and it came over quite forcefully they wanted their own police station. They even suggested it could be in one of the shops that are not being used. It was the wrong message for the area and for our community to say they are starting from Shanklin as it seems as though we are second best again and that is what the public perception will be especially after taking a lot of trouble to answer in the questionnaire on how they wanted to see policing in Sandown.

Cllr Young suggested in the interim that one of the police mobile caravans be situated at the Broadway Centre Inspector Kenny replied that there is only one and it goes round the villages on set days. It was emphasised a focal point is needed.

Cllr Dupre said it was a great start and it was agreed that our new Police Officers will come and meet the Town Council as part of their role.

Cllr Mereweather thanked Inspector Kenny for coming to talk to us and said it was very interesting and informative.

## **6. N.H.S. CONSULTATION**

Cllr Blezzard left the room for this agenda item.

The Council discussed the N.H.S. Consultation including a single Health Authority for the Isle of Wight and our special circumstances that have been recognised because of our uniqueness, accessibility and difficulty in accessing services from Portsmouth and Southampton. Comments are required on the Ambulance Trust. The fact that we are an Island is being recognised.

Cllr Ward commented the Minister supports this option for the Island. Many of the welfare services the Council provides are linked into the Primary Care Trust and up until now that discussion had not taken place. People are in hospital beds and they need to go into Nursing Homes and that communication is not there and is one of the things that should be improved.

Cllr Rogers raised the issue of people who have to go onto the mainland for treatments that are not provided on the Island such as for cancer, and the financial burden placed on relatives that have to stay over there. He asked about provision to help these people as it is a problem they don't have in other areas.

Cllr Ward responded with a point of information. He said that the Primary Care Trust had cut out the funding for cancer and renal patients. Since then the Isle of Wight Council has agreed to replace that funding by giving the Primary Care Trust the sum of £38,000 and also increasing it by £12,000 to a total of £50,000 from April 06. The point Cllr Rogers raised is what the IW Council discussed with the Minister. He had spoken to both Ferry Operators who are supportive but wish to remove the abuse from the system that happened previously.

Cllr Cowley suggested a simple way of controlling the abuse.

The proposal to join together the Health Service Trusts on the Island to create one Health Service Trust for the Isle of Wight was agreed unanimously. The Council wanted to keep the Isle of Wight Ambulance Service. They wanted the control room kept on the Island as they feared problems if the calls went to Netley or somewhere else on the mainland. This was agreed unanimously. They also agreed that they would not accept a reduction of service on the Isle of Wight.

Cllr Blezzard returned to the meeting.

## **7. TONNEY- CHARENTE SIGN**

The Clerk presented to the council the costs she had received for the proposed sign. It was agreed the sign should be in black and gold to conform with the other signs in the town. It was agreed that The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cllr Rogers have delegated authority to purchase a sign up to the cost of £1500 as laid down in the budget.

## **8. LETTERS RECEIVED FROM;**

- a. E-mail received from Isle of Wight Council from Peter Taylor. Re Car Parking Resolution No proposals to re-introduce charges at the Heights there is a proposal to limit the length of stay to 5 hours to those not in possession of an Island Residents permit. Cllr Blezzard commented that it does vindicate the position taken by this Council when it unanimously proposed to oppose these charges.
- b. E-mail received from Ashley Curzon agreeing to attend the Planning Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March to talk to the Town Council about the Island Plan. Also a leaflet was given out to Councillors informing them on the Island Plan Exhibition at the Heights on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 06. Cllr Ward commented there are no hidden agendas and it truly is a consultation exercise.
- c. letter from the Deputy Prime-Ministers Office saying section 137 expenditure for 2006/7 for Councils in England is £5.44 per head.
- d. The Clerk reported back to the Council on quotes that she had received from Vaughns for a new Deputy Mayors Badge. No decision was made on this item as it was an item for information.

## **9. OBSERVATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES.**

- a. Report received from Cllr Cowley on Island Waste Services. Noted.
- b. Report received from Cllr Blezzard on the Association of Town and Parish Councils. Cllr Blezzard commented that the Clerks Society have decided that they want to join with the Council so the Association will be going on their own and will be appointing a new Secretary in future.

Cllr Blezzard also raised the point that the Isle of Wight Council refused to give the representative of the Association of Town and Parish Councils a vote. Cllr Rogers asked Cllr Ward to expand on that to which Cllr Blezzard put it into context.

He said that the Scrutiny Committee made up of Members of all parties agreed with him that the Town and Parish Council representative should have a vote. They recommended to the Isle of Wight Council that the representative from the Parish and Town Councils should have a vote on the scrutiny committee. Cllr Ward replied it came up at the Council Meeting before last and the issue was adjourned for consultation during that Council Meeting. At the present meeting an amendment was put

forward that the Town and Parish Councils could have a vote but the incumbent had to meet the same criteria of independence as the other independent members. That amendment received all party support and that amendment was put to the vote and was accepted. Cllr Ward confirmed that the representative of the Town and Parishes can have a vote but it has to be a truly independent person.

Cllr Rogers surmised that because Cllr Blezzard was the agent of the Liberal Democrat Party that he is barred from having a vote and asked if that was correct. To which Cllr Blezzard replied this was not strictly true. There is a whole range of conditions not only about political activity and having been a candidate at the last election and it also says you have to have a certain amount of managerial experience. He also said he thought not many people in the room would be eligible under the conditions that the Council retrospectively imposed. He said the person from the Town and Parish Councils comes with an electoral mandate.

Cllr Rogers said that we have to pay £800 to this body annually and our representative on the scrutiny committee does not have any powers. Cllr Rogers proposed that we write to the Association of Town and Parishes to consider appointing a member that does meet the criteria that is truly independent to actually safeguard our interests and look after our interests on the Scrutiny Committee. He said if they are not prepared to do that then we should withdraw our representative all together.

The Mayor asked if Councillor Rogers's proposal was seconded to which Cllr Dupre responded that it seemed to him we are looking for someone being non-political and he seconded the proposal. Cllr Blezzard interjected and said that the people who elected him were elected members from all parties and they had chosen to elect him.

Cllr Rogers replied he would like somebody on the Town and Parish Councils to represent this body fully not by just attending meetings but also by having a vote. Cllr Blezzard is not able to do so as he is deemed to be a political animal by the County Council.

There must be someone in the Town and Parish Councils who would meet the criteria who would be acceptable to them and be better able to represent the interests of the Town and Parish Councils and he would like our Council to put this to them. As the current representative of the IW Town and Parish Association on the scrutiny committee has been deemed to be a political person and therefore has not been given a vote on that committee he surely cannot fully represent the Town and Parish Councils. An Independent person who has no political affiliations would be able to have a vote

Cllr Mereweather put the proposal:-That the Council writes to the Secretary of the Isle of Wight Association of Town and Parish Councils to say that since we are not fully represented could they have a look at their representation on behalf of their members (i.e. those who pay the subscription)) and can we have a representative that is qualified to actually have a vote and to fully represent the Town and Parish Councils on the Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Blezzard requested a recorded vote.

Those in favour of the proposal Cllr Young, Cllr Rogers, Cllr Dupre, Cllr Ward, Cllr Cowley, Cllr Woolley

Those against the proposal Cllr Blezzard

Abstentions Cllr Mereweather. The proposal was carried.

Cllr Rogers requested a copy of the Town and Parish Council's minutes. Cllr Blezzard agreed to supply them to the Clerk.

c. Report received from Cllr Teasdale on the Partnership. Noted.

#### **10. OBSERVATIONS FROM CLLR HUMBY AND CLLR WARD ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

In the absence of Cllr Humby due to illness Cllr Ward reported on the Council Budget and the pensioners fares. The Isle of Wight Council has brought in 24 hour free travel for pensioners on both the bus and train. There is a 50p ticket for children up to the age of 19 to travel anywhere on the Island and this will come into effect in April 06. The Drinking in Public Places consultation will not be brought into a bye-law at this moment in time as the Commission did not recommend it. The police will present evidence then the Isle of Wight Council can put a ban in place. There is a problem as many incidents take place without the Police's knowledge. There needs to be a log of events and he has asked for a local system to be put in place so people on a Friday or Saturday night can phone in and say what has happened in their street and this system is going to happen. The Decriminalisation of Parking is happening and will come under the Isle of Wight Council Wardens. Fines will go to the Isle of Wight Council not the Treasury. The plan for the toilets has been completed and £500,000 has been allocated to deal with the immediate plan.

#### **11. CLERK TO PRESENT CODE OF PRACTISE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

The Clerk presented the proposed Code of Practise for Handling Complaints to the Council and explained why it was necessary to have one. The Code of Practise for handling Complaints to the Council was approved.

#### **12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That in the view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and are instructed to withdraw was approved.

##### **Staff Salaries (Standing Order 15)**

Staff salaries were agreed. The Clerk also brought a staffing matter to the attention of the Council.

Cllr Mereweather thanked the Councillors for turning out to-day to support the Channel 4 Big Art Project.

**DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING** 5<sup>th</sup> April 2006

**Signed**

**Date**

