



The Yarmouth Isle of Wight Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Yarmouth Town Council held at CHOYD Tuesday 4th March 2025 at 6:30pm

PRESENT: Councillors G Head (Deputy Mayor), S Cowley, T Cowley, P Cronin, P Spink, P Farrell

IN ATTENDANCE: B Jacobs, 2 Southern Water representatives and 9 members of the public

Southern Water delivered a presentation about its activities in West Wight, with particular reference to the treatment of storm water and flooding using slow frame water butts and planter units to mitigate the flow of storm water and sewage into the drainage system. It was explained that this was an improvement on the previous arrangements particularly in respect of an additional 700 cubic metres storage and an additional pump at Norton where the plant had previously been overwhelmed during heavy rain. Cllr S Cowley pointed out that these arrangements were similar to the Sea Clean Wight scheme promulgated some 13 years ago.

Southern Water explained that all pumping stations now pump independently and communicate with each other, all of which has increased efficiency in dealing with excess water. It was proposed to speed up the distribution of water butts and planters in the West Wight.

Cllr Spink raised a question about the area around Kings Manor Farm (west side of the Yar), but the SW representatives explained that that area was being handled by another team and undertook to investigate it and report back. Cllr T Cowley quoted some disturbing statistics for water spillages in the Norton area and SW responded that the recent improvements quoted should improve that situation.

A member of the public asked if SW worked with Ian Boyd on the Nature Recovery Programme with particular reference to the recreation of ponds for the benefit of wildlife habitats, but the SW representative was unable to answer the question.

The Deputy Mayor thanked SW for attending.

210/2024 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mayor McCleary, Cllr Ingram and YTT Chairman Martyn Collinson.

211/2024 PUBLIC FORUM:

i) HARBOUR MATTERS

The Harbour Commissioner was not present and had not submitted a report.

ii) YARMOUTH TOWN TRUST

The YTT Chairman was not present but had indicated that he had no news to report this month.

iii) ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The Isle of Wight Councillor's report appears under Appendix 1 below.

iv) COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Cllr Farrell reported that the Yarmouth Pancake Races were excellent and commended the Carnival Committee.

Cllr S Cowley commented that he was pleased to see that the sale of the Yarmouth School site was nearing completion, and the Herapath-Shenton Trust Chairman confirmed that and thanked all members of the Yarmouth Community Foundation for their hard work in achieving this situation. In response to a question by Cllr T Cowley he stated that the Yarmouth Community Foundation is a Community Interest Company, and that representation by local residents would be extended as soon as possible.

Cllr T Cowley reported that he intends to deliver the bench, formerly outside the Church, to Clare Lallows the following morning for an estimate of repair costs.

The Deputy Mayor reiterated the praise for the Pancake Races, indicating that some 178 children had taken part.

v) LOCAL ISSUES

Cllr Farrell raised the issue of mobile homes parked overnight at the Mount, referring to mobile phone apps which can be used to locate suitable parking for these vehicles. It was clear there were mixed feelings about this issue – eg visits to Yarmouth need to be encouraged, but use of the public toilets to dispose of waste from mobile homes is not acceptable. It was mooted that, as with Fort Victoria, one or two such vehicles did not present a problem, but if it led to a larger number using this site it would create a nuisance for other users and residents of this area, and pressure on the public toilets. It was agreed that YTC could do little about this issue but would continue to monitor it and bring it to the attention of the appropriate authorities if this problem become unacceptable.

Cllr Cronin referred to a problem he'd had with one of the locks on the flagpoles and had been in touch with Island Flagpoles to resolve it. The Clerk advised asking Island Flagpoles to carry out a service and this was accepted.

vi) PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Sylvia Mence referred to a growing problem of commuters causing surface damage by parking on the grass area at the back of CHOYD, and the Clerk stated that traffic cones had now been deployed there in an effort to discourage this abuse.

Jill Cowley commented on a planning proposal to dig trenches from the proposed solar park though the edge of Yarmouth which would disturb Bronze Age fields and burial sites and the Clerk was asked to make a comment recommending involvement of the IWC archaeology department.

A member of the public asked about the Yar slurry pit. Cllr Spink reported that the Environment Agency has carried out two site visits and say that some repairs have been carried out to it and that, although it is leaking a little, it is within acceptable EA tolerances and its representatives had been down to the Causeway and measured it. He hoped the EA will do what they promised this time last year, which is that when the weather gets better and the pit drains out naturally the contents will be spread over the fields and will not result in as much flooding. Cllr T Cowley reported that he had been in detailed and technical contact with the EA and suggested that a compromise outcome would be reached. It was also pointed out that the site is unfenced.

A discussion took place about the proposed new Harbour powers and concern was expressed about the lack of consultation with residents. Members of the public were recommended to submit questions by the deadline for comments of 7/3/25. Cllr Spink undertook to look into this issue and advise Councillors. Cllr T Cowley suggested putting a link to the Harbour Charter URL on the YTC Facebook page.

212/2024 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor	Personal	Pecuniary
G Head	British Horse Society RSPB	National Trust Bowcombe Estate
P Farrell	RSWYC	
S Cowley	Yarmouth Town Trust Shalfleet PC Wight Nature Fund	Lee Farm
T Cowley	Shalfleet PC Wight Nature Fund	Camp Wight Garden Works
P Spink		IWC Conservative Association Campaign for Protection of Rural England

213/2024 MINUTES AND CONFIRMATION OF ACTIONS

RESOLVED: To take as read and confirm as accurate the minutes of the January monthly meeting held 4/2/25.

214/2024 FINANCE

214/2024.1 Payment of Accounts

The Clerk drew the attention of Councillors to the large electricity bill from SSE, but did advise that the cumulative annual bill was in line with previous years.

It was proposed by Cllr Cronin, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and agreed unanimously to approve the following payments for March:

245098	Brian Jacobs	Clerk's salary Feb 25	£1,000.27
245099	HMRC	PAYE Clerk's salary Feb 25	£317.93
245100	Brian Jacobs	Clerk's expenses	£156.80
245101	ICS	Cleaning public toilets	£668.33
DD	SSE	Electricity charges public toilets	£1,472.75
DEB	Microsoft	Office 365	£3.00
DEB	GiffGaff	Office phone	£6.00
DD	Everflow	Water charges public toilets	£337.07

214/2024.2 Bank Reconciliation

The financial statement for 28/2/25 was noted.

215/2024 PLANNING ISSUES

New Applications:

25/00171/FUL: The Clerk was asked to object on the basis of a reduction in housing stock, and that the dormer window was out of character.

Licensing:

The following application has been accepted by the licensing authority:

Application for a Premises Licence – Word of Mouth, 2 - 3 High Street, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, PO41 0PL

216/2024 CHOYD CCTV

It was proposed by Cllr S Cowley, seconded by Cllr Cronin and agreed unanimously to make a grant of £1500 towards CCTV installation at CHOYD.

217/2024 VE DAY 80th CELEBRATIONS 8/5/25

Medina Marching Band has been booked for the above and permission obtained from YHC. The Clerk will arrange for posters, etc to publicise the event and notify the Fire Service regarding the lighting of the beacon. The Clerk was also asked to order lamp-post plaques and a flag.

June Ring announced that CHOYD would also be marking the event.

218/2024 YARMOUTH SCHOOL COMMUNITY ASSET

This had been dealt with earlier.

219/2024 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

Working Party Deputy Chairman Cllr T Cowley advised:

- The Housing Needs Survey had elicited a greater response than the national average.
- Living Streets were about to conduct a foot traffic survey, which is entirely grant-funded.
- Consideration will need to be given as to whether a neighbourhood plan is the best option or whether a place plan might be better.
- Any further work will be deferred until after the May elections.

220/2024 PROMOTION

Adey Evans gave an update about the video for promoting Yarmouth town and businesses. The video had been completed and is currently live on the Wightlink ferries.

221/2024 RECREATION GROUND

Rec Ground Committee Chairman Cllr P Cronin reported that there were 2 levels of training for inspecting play equipment being arranged via IWALC, though the forthcoming local council elections could delay arrangements. Cllr T Cowley volunteered to undergo the operational training and suggested that those who engaged in the training could offer their services to other local councils in the Isle of Wight area. Cllrs Cronin and Farrell also agreed to undertake training, and Peter Scott had already indicated that he would do it.

The condition and drainage problems of the carousel was discussed and Cllr Cronin reported that he had contacted All Seasons Gardening and Landscaping with a request to inspect the unit.

Cllr Cronin also referred to mounting gate closures on the pedestrian accesses to the Rec and quoted a price of £94 each. He proposed buying and installing on one gate as a trial and this was seconded by the Deputy Mayor and agreed unanimously.

222/2024 MILL COPSE

Cllr T Cowley reported that the issue of rights of way, access and fencing in around Mill Copse was progressing, though he had nothing to report this month.

223/2024 YARMOUTH SPORTS FOUNDATION

Cllr T Cowley had nothing to report, though the outlook is positive. In response to a question from Cllr Farrell he suggested that the Foundation's main sources of income were car parking and court fees.

224/2024 TREE WARDEN SCHEME

Cllr T Cowley reported that he had arranged a meeting with the Tree Council to finalise the details for establishing this scheme on the IW.

225/2024 PATH BY MILL

The Clerk reported that he was waiting for a response from IWC about the likely scale of a contribution towards the cost of resurfacing the footpath outside the Mill, and in the meantime IWC had added it to a list of similar schemes to be carried out on the Island.

226/2024 CLERK'S REPORT

226/2024.1 ROSPA TRAINING

This had been dealt with earlier.

226/2024.2 COMMEMORATIVE TREE

An approach had been made by the daughter of a lady who owned holiday homes since the 80's in Yarmouth and Colwell Bay (her father still owns the latter) and would like to plant a commemorative tree to her mother in Yarmouth. It was suggested that the Heroes' Orchard or the area adjacent would be most suitable.

227/2024 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received since the last meeting was noted.

228/2024 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Grants

Commemorative trees

RoSPA training

Elections

Mill Copse

Mill footway

VE Day celebrations

Place Plan, etc

229/2024 MEETING VENUES

The venue for the next monthly meeting at 6:30pm 1/4/25, Thorley Church was confirmed.

Appendix 1: ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

1. Yarmouth School Site: The detailed terms of sale have now been agreed and are to be formally approved by the Cabinet Member on the 8th March. Completion should take place, therefore, relatively soon although some legal issues are still outstanding. Below is an extract from the report for cabinet:

Background 6.

In 2020 the decision was made to relocate Yarmouth CE Primary School to the former All Saints Primary School site in Freshwater following a new modern, purpose-built school being built there, now known as Freshwater and Yarmouth CE Primary School. Yarmouth Primary School relocated to this new site in December 2022 rendering the former Yarmouth Primary School site surplus to educational requirements and therefore available for disposal. During the summer of 2023 a marketing exercise was undertaken and Bidder D, The Yarmouth Community Foundation ("The Foundation"), was approved by Cabinet in March 2024, which can be found under Background Papers below.

7. Cabinet approved the preferred bid in March 2024 subject to the detailed terms of sale being agreed and delegated approval of these detailed terms to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance. This report seeks approval of these to enable the sale to complete. The detailed terms are attached as exempt Appendix 1.

8. For clarity there are no changes to the two parties who submitted the successful bid which has now formed the Foundation, comprising of The Herapath-Shenton Trust and The Maritime Archaeology Society, the development proposals for the site or the purchase price which remains at £435,000.

9. The Foundation's development proposal remains as follows:

- *Enabling a target number of eight affordable/social housing units for local people. (This is a target number because planning permission has not yet been granted.)*
- *Provision of high-quality community use, including an offer to provide land for the Scouts and Guides.*
- *A wide-ranging and high-quality education offer including educational links to local schools as well as national and international universities, facilitating placements and apprenticeships, bringing students to both Yarmouth and the Isle of Wight, thereby creating revenue and regeneration opportunities for both. Education benefits include creating a roadshow for Island schools with displays based around STEM subjects on the national curriculum and also offers options around further education.*
- *The bidder is a UNESCO accredited Non-Government Organisation (NGO) working within the UN Decade of Ocean Science Network of global universities and institutions to promote the underwater cultural heritage as assets that inform climate change, accordingly the bidder proposes to establish the site as a centre for an already well-established programme of climate change initiatives supporting the Island's UNESCO Biosphere designation.*
- *A Shipwreck Centre and Maritime Museum.*

10. Department for Education (DfE) consent to dispose will be required before the council can sell the site. The application has been approved in principle and consent should be with the council shortly.

11. There are Crown Estate covenants on the former school playing field title which need to be varied to allow other uses. Terms have been agreed with the Crown Estate and lawyers are currently drafting a deed of variation to formalise this.

12. Once the detailed terms of sale are approved, DfE consent to dispose has been granted and the Crown Estate deed of variation is ready to be signed the site can be sold and The Foundation can deliver their proposed development.

2. **Removal of Shop-front** (former delicatessen). As reported to the last meeting an Enforcement File has been opened. The conservation officer had visited and said that in his opinion the shop front is not in keeping with the conservation Rea and therefore will have to be replaced and redone in the old style. It was rumoured that the original shop front had been stored in anticipation of such a ruling

3. **Meeting of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee** for Children's Services Education and Skills. I substituted for Cllr Medland at the February meeting. Inevitably there was discussion re the proposal to close 5 Island primary schools. It is clear that some closures are necessary, given the falling birthrate; however, there is concern re the selection process and 'a letter before action' has been served by the Diocese of Portsmouth. I very much hope that this can be resolved without the need for a court hearing.

4. **Examination of Island Planning Strategy:** The Inspector's hearing is now in its second week (a third week has been set aside, should it be needed). I have managed to watch much of it either in person or virtually.

5. **School Closures**

There are 5 primary schools in the frame for closure and three of them are Church of England diocese schools and the Diocese has issued a full action letter saying that the procedure is not being properly or fairly carried out and that unless IWC starts the consultation period again it will be issuing judicial review proceedings.

confirm the venue for the next monthly meeting at 6:30pm 1/4/25, Thorley Church.