



## SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL – MEETING MINUTES 9 FEBRUARY 2026

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandown Town Council held on **MONDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2026** at 7:00 pm at The Broadway Centre, 1 Broadway, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 9GG.

**Present:** Cllrs Alex Lightfoot (Mayor), Debbie Andre, Frank Baldry, Ian Boyd, Liam Cregg, Leon Girling, Tracy Mikich, Joan Soloman, Ian Ward and Gary Young.

**Also Present:** Jennifer Armstrong (Clerk/RFO) and 1 member of the public.

### **105-2025/26**     **PUBLIC QUESTIONS:**

A member of the public asked two questions in relation to the item on Pier Street Toilet. The first related to why the Isle of Wight Council had deferred the decision relating to the disposal. He was advised that due to changes at the estate agents responsible for the sale a proposal from a developer had not been put forward and once received there was insufficient time before the committee meeting for officers to undertake due diligence.

The member of the public suggested there was a divide between the Town Council and the Isle of Wight Council ward members and asked them to confirm their position in relation to the site.

Cllr Andre advised the Isle of Wight Council like any Council had a duty to ensure value for Sandown residents and Isle of Wight Taxpayers.

Cllr Ward responded that in his opinion the Town Council made the correct decision not taking on the site due as it would be a burden due to the structural and other issues associated with the site. He then stated that the site was a prime regeneration site on the sea front and a commercial developer should be sought.

### **106-2025/26**     **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Lee Ambler and Paddy Lightfoot

### **107-2025/26**     **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

#### 1. To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non -pecuniary interests

Cllr Andre declared an interest in matters pertaining to the Isle of Wight Council as ward member and a pecuniary interest in the Carnival Association. It was also noted her property backed onto Los Altos Park and was used as an Air BnB.

Cllr Ward also declared an interest in matters pertaining to the Isle of Wight Council as ward member.

Cllr Girling declared an interest in matters pertaining to the Isle of Wight Council as an employee of the authority.

2. To receive and consider granting any written requests for dispensations.

None Received.

**108-2025/26**      **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 26 January 2026 subject to an amendment to minute 103-2025/26, was moved and duly seconded. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously agreed:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2026 be approved as a true record subject to the following amendments to minute 103-2025/26:

"Finally, Cllr Lightfoot informed members that ~~the Town Council~~ the Isle of Wight Council were considering the disposal **of the Pier** Street toilets site at the February meeting of the relevant committee."

**109-2025/26**      **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE**

No recommendations were put forward.

**110-2025/26**      **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE**

No meetings held.

**111-2025/26**      **THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL POLICY, FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE DECISIONS IN RELATION TO THE DISPOSAL OF THE PROPERTY IN SANDOWN.**

The Isle of Wight Council Policy, Finance and Resources Committee decisions in relation to the disposal of the property in Sandown including Sandham Middle, Pier Street Toilets and East Yar Road Tip were considered.

**Sandham Middle**

No decisions were made relating to the site, but members noted the developer had undertaken further consultation with residents.

**East Yar Road Tip (Site of Proposed Southern Water Recycling Plant)**

The decision to dispose of the property had been deferred until after the planning application had been decided.

Cllr Paddy Lightfoot had attended the meeting to set out the Town Council's objections to the proposals for the site and to urge the Committee to refuse the disposal, demonstrating to Southern Water that the plans were not acceptable.

Members agreed to monitor the application for any amendments requiring further consultation, to ensure a representative of the Town Council's Planning Committee attends the Isle of Wight Council Planning Committee meeting to reinforce the Town Council's position, and to circulate a summary of the reasons for objection to all Isle of Wight Council Planning Committee members in advance.

A motion was moved and duly seconded accordingly. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements. The results were as follows and it was unanimously:

For (8), Against (0), Abstain (2)

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) THAT the application should be monitored for any amendments to ensure, if necessary, a new consultation was undertaken.
- (ii) THAT it was important for a representative of the Town Council's Planning Committee to attend the Isle of Wight Council Planning Committee meeting to reinforce the Town Council's position.
- (iii) THAT a summary of the reasons for the objection should be circulated to all Isle of Wight Council Planning Committee members in advance of the meeting.

**Pier Street Toilets**

Due to changes at the estate agents responsible for the sale, a proposal from a developer had not been put forward and once received there had been insufficient time before the committee meeting for officers to undertake due diligence before the decision was made. Therefore, the decision had been deferred.

A motion was moved and duly seconded to move discussion regarding the site to confidential session as this was now a commercial matter. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements. The results were as follows and it was unanimously:

For (7), Against (1), Abstain (2)

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the decision of the Isle of Wight Council Policy, Finance and Resources Committee decisions in relation to the disposal Pier Street Toilets Site be considered in confidential session.

**112-2025/26      WORKING PARTIES**

Members noted the report and acknowledged the following amendments:

- The Young Futures Working Party met on 27 January 2026 rather than February.
- Under the report for the Events Working Party:
  - That the National Reading Project bags would include a Competition in schools to design logo for reading bags.
  - That it was noted that the Expression of Interest for Town of Culture must be submitted by 31 March. Although the core requirement is a 400-word summary of intent, several additional elements also need to be completed.

It was agreed the dates for the parties which met regularly would be circulated but noted some working parties met on an ad hoc basis.

The recommendations made by the Young Future Working Party were then discussed:

**Skate Park**

In order to inform the engagement and consultation relating to the project and tender process,

pre-design and feasibility work needed to be undertaken. As well as a ground-penetrating radar survey to confirm that no historic structures, voids, or other underground features and to map utilities.

Members noted that there were no records indicating the exact location of the Sandham Fort and as a result construction of the site required on onsite archaeologist. There were also restrictions on construction as a result of the presumption the historic site was under the Skate Park.

A motion was moved and duly seconded supporting the recommendations, and councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements, and it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

- i) THAT the council delegate authority to the Clerk with approval from the Mayor to engage an expert to undertake the initial scoping and feasibility steps for the skate park project up to the value of £500.
- ii) THAT the council delegate authority to the Clerk to engage a ground-penetrating radar survey of the Skate park and adjacent areas.

**Outreach Base**

Members noted approximately £40,000 in Capital Monies were now allocated to for the provision of a container or office space for the Bay Youth Project to support young persons' outreach work at the park. The proposed location for this facility is Sandham Grounds, within the open space between the Sky Nets and Rainbow Park. The Working Party had recommended that the project be taken forward now there was sufficient budget.

A motion was moved and duly seconded supporting the recommendation to delegate the project, and councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements, and it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Council delegate authority to the Clerk, with the Mayor's approval, to undertake the procurement exercise for an outreach base within a £40,000 budget envelope, with the final decision to be made by Council.

**113-2025/26      TOWN CLERK REPORT**

Members received and noted the report from the Town Clerk who also verbally updated them on arrangements to support a potential emergency evacuation during recent flooding and the first steps taken with the Community Development Lead (CDL).

This included providing a list of nearly 100 projects from the Council's budget, working parties and part two of the Neglect Strategy and links to community groups such as the football club.

Members were reminded that the CDL could not be instructed by individual councillors and meetings should be arranged through the Clerk.

Concerns were raised that the Council did not have sufficient policies and planning documents to support grant applications exceeding £500,000. Members were advised the Council's

governance arrangements were in line with the Council's budget and size. However, in terms of a Forward Plan, this had been recommended in the Council's Risk Register.

In terms of the recent flooding, the Broadway Centre had acted as a reactive emergency shelter with staff on call through the night for the seven days the flooding warning remained in place.

**114-2025/26      TO RECEIVE ANY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES RAISED**

Cllr Andre provided an update on the recent flooding around the town and the evacuation of residents of Riverview Court. In relation to the latter members noted the Section 19 investigation on the site had not yet been completed. However, a multiagency meeting would be held to try and find a resolution to the issues using a holistic approach. The Clerk would support Cllr Andre to push the Section 19 forward. Cllrs Cregg and Solomon would be updated on any matters relating to the site.

**115-2025/26      TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS AND OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Andre advised members a Speed Watch team had now been recruited and would undertake training the week commencing 16 February 2026. Three roads had been selected for the initiative.

Cllr Boyd updated members on the tree planting project noting that trees had been planted. It was agreed the appointment of a Community Tree Warden would be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr Solomon advised residents had been complaining about the lack of post office and banking facilities in Sandown. It was agreed that the Thriving Communities Working Party would look into the matter.

Cllr Ward had engaged with the Police regarding Anti-Social Behaviour. There had been a significant reduction in Sandown and much of the remaining activity was related to a handful of individuals.

Cllr Alex Lightfoot highlighted that members had recently received an update on Operation Spider which demonstrated the benefit of the Youth Offer. He continued to advise members that the Police were recruiting for a PCSO for Sandown but PCSO May continued to cover the area in the interim.

**116-2025/26      NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 23 March 2026.

**117-2025/26      PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

None Received.

**118-2025/26      EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

A motion was moved and duly seconded to exclude the public and press, and councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements, and it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, namely Agenda item number 13 (Use of Reserves) on the grounds that there is likely to be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 7, and 14 as defined in paragraphs 7, 9 and 10, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**119-2025/26      USE OF RESERVES**

Members considered the use of the general reserves for unseen emergent projects and unexpected costs such as legal fees which could not be budgeted. It was agreed that should Council agree to the use of reserves, a minimum of 3 months should be retained as was outlined in the Practitioners Guide and that reserves should be rebuilt year on year via the budget. There would be no change to the reserves policy.

**Strip of Land Adjacent to the Ocean Hotel**

Members were advised that a strip of land on the seafront, formerly part of the Ocean Hotel site, was being offered for sale by auction.

A motion was moved that the Town Council submit a bid for the site to support and progress improvements to derelict sites in Sandown. The threshold for bidding would need to allow for any purchase costs, auction fees and taxes. The risks and benefits were explored.

It was agreed that should bidding be successful works to improve the site would need to be undertaken quickly and that should the bid be successful, a development plan for the site be brought to the next meeting of the Council.

The motion was duly seconded, and councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirement as follows, and it was:

For (9), Against (1), Abstain (0).

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Council delegate authority to the Clerk with the Mayor's approval, to bid up to £149,000 on the site excluding costs.

**Legal Costs**

The use of reserves to fund legal costs and professional advice which could not be budgeted, in relation to the Council's projects, land and assets was discussed with members noting it was important professional advice be sought on safety or legal matters regardless of if it had been possible to budget in advance for the costs and this was an appropriate use of reserves.

A motion to this effect was duly seconded, and councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirement, and it was unanimously agreed:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Clerk with the Mayor's approval, use the reserves to fund unbudgeted professional and legal advise.

**120-2025/26      PIER STREET TOILETS**

Following the deeply disappointing decision by the Isle of Wight Council not to dispose of the Pier Street Toilet Site to the Town Council, against officer recommendation, the Town Council's position in relation to the Pier Street Toilet Site was debated.

Historically, the Town Council had funded summer and event opening of the toilets and some minor repairs to facilitate this while the regeneration of the site was progressed making it a reputational risk. They had also offered to operate or provide and operate the toilets on the site to support the development.

The continued neglect of the property and its impact on Sandown as well as the Isle of Wight Councils failure to secure a developer for the land over the last five years was noted.

A motion was proposed and duly seconded that the Town Council set out its position on the site to the Isle of Wight Council in the strongest terms, and it was unanimously resolved:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Town Council formally and unequivocally reaffirms its disappointment that the development of the site continues to be pursued in a manner contrary to community expectations and the long-term interests of the town; and stating the Town Council can no longer support this approach to the regeneration of the site.

Meeting Closed 20.55