

MINUTES OF THE VENTNOR TOWN ANNUAL MEETING

ST CATHERINE'S CHURCH

6.15PM

14 MAY 2018

ITEM SUBJECT

The meeting was opened by the Mayor with 30 residents present.

1) MAYOR'S REPORT ON 2017/18

The Mayor began by saying how proud he was of the achievements during the year by the Town Council and its partners.

He thanked his fellow Councillors for their support and for the opportunity to serve the town as its Mayor for four years.

His Report referred specifically to the excellent event of *Ventnor Day* that is so well established now as to be running into its third year this July, the significant benefit for the town's communities of the *Boniface Fields Project* with its Allotments, Ventnor Shed and Atelier, the successful initiative that is the now the six-weekly meeting of the South Wight Locality Health & Well Being Forum and the refurbishment of both the First Aid Hut and Spring Hill Gardens.

He also assured the meeting that work was still going on to progress the relocation of the Library to the Ventnor Central site and the consultation on the future development of the town centre.

The Mayor closed his summary of the year's activity by thanking all his fellow Councillors and the staff team.

2) REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

a) *Ventnor Carnival*: Theresa Preston

Theresa expressed the Group's thanks to Tony McCarthy and the Mayor for their support. She added that the event costs about £10,000 to run and that effective fundraising had met the target this year.

b) *Friends of Ventnor Library*: Lesley Telford

Lesley described the Group's big project at the moment that is the cataloguing of Daphne Carter's remarkable photographic collection from the 1970s and 1980s to provide a permanent record of Ventnor at that time.

c) *Ventnor Shed*: David George

David reported that the Group had changed its name from Men in Sheds and is now based in one of the Portacabins on Boniface Fields and is a well-established workshop with membership open to anyone over 18. It had taken three years to develop and had been supported throughout by a well-run Town Council. He thanked Tony McCarthy for his consistent support of the project. He added that the Group intended to run a pilot for those with memory loss and Dementia as part of its commitment to complete inclusivity. Thanks too were due to Southern Housing Group for their grant.

d) *Ventnor Heritage Centre*: Lesley Telford

Lesley celebrated a very good year for the Centre that included a Big Lottery Grant enabling its new web site and cataloguing of its resources.. She said that there were two things the Group was particularly proud of: its well-attended programme of talks and starting a Facebook Group in February that anyone is free to join and share ideas. She added that they are going through the process to become an accredited Museum on the Island.

e) *Undercliff Wildlife Project*: Stephen Cockett

Stephen said that he had arrived in Ventnor 16 months ago and been bowled over by wildlife diversity. The Group of experts in ecology and biodiversity were looking to work between St Lawrence and St Catherine's Point.

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- f) *Spring Hill Garden Group:* Claire Grant
 Claire told the meeting that the Group started in 2004 and had maintained the Garden since by volunteers. It now needs radical change and thanks to a generous donation from a local resident and the Town Council securing an Awards for All Grant that is now being done. She said that it's been a well-used area in the past and will be again a site for the town's rich cultural activities. She thanked Brian Lucas for his work in preparing the Group's Annual Accounts and Jim Toogood for leading the refurbishment works.
- g) *St Lawrence Community Association:* Tony Ridley
 Tony said that although St Lawrence doesn't have a village green it does have a Post Office and Stores as the heart of its community and an excellent Village Hall that is registered as a Charity and used by an encouraging range of groups. He referred to the work to raise the funds necessary to maintain what is an old building to good standards. It's bookable through the Post Office. Although there is no pub in the village he added that they do have good pop-up events.
- h) *Ventnor Enhancement Fund:* Maureen Cawley
 Maureen reminded the meeting that the Group started in 2005 and had gone from strength to strength with many new members. She then read a Report from its Chairman that highlighted the fact that the Group was in a position to employ local businesses from time to time before outlining its latest new project, the cleaning of empty shop windows. The report said that the Group's planters in the town centre look better than ever with many new plants and it has also installed planters in Upper Ventnor. In addition to currently financing the restoration of a patch at top of Grove Road the Group had carried out two maintenance sessions on Flowers Brook, installed smart phone links to national web sites on each Planet and refreshed the Dinosaur maze. The Report concluded with thanks to Town Council for its support.
- i) *Ventnor Youth Service:* Matt Hitt
 Matt started by introducing himself as the Town Council's new Youth Opportunities Officer, taking over from his predecessor, Lauren Fry. before outlining the current work that included running two Clubs a week, in Upper Ventnor on Monday evenings and in Lower Ventnor Tuesday evenings that are both well attended. He mentioned the partnership working with the New Carnival Company on a funded project and said he was looking to extend the age range to older groups. The work had been assisted by funding from Down to the Coast and a range of outdoor activities were developing.
- j) *Ventnor Bowling Club:* Colin Beavis
 Colin gave the meeting a fascinating skip through the Club's history of which he had been a member for 15 years and more recently looked after the web site that launched in 2012. He said it was the oldest bowling club on the Island, being founded in 1886. It had moved location several time as it grew in membership, numbers of teams and range of activities. In 1991 a new £60k facility provided indoor bowling. He said that the main green is maintained professionally and is the biggest cost in its budget. Women members were admitted in 1972. Catering arrangements are excellent with a 5-star rating and well-stocked bar. He ended by saying that it remained difficult to attract younger members but the Club was promoted regularly through its website and the Chronicle and currently had over 100 members.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7PM

SIGNED BY THE MAYOR	DATE