



# BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

5 Foreland Road, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, PO35 5XN

Tel: 01983 874160

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## Clerk's Report 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### Matters arising from the meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> of September:

Minute No: 104/24 – The Bembridge Parish Council reply to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme consultation was submitted and accepted on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2024.

Minute No: 105/24 – A letter of objection (attached) was produced by the working group of Cllr L White, Cllr M Sullivan, Mrs A De Trey and Mrs T Palmer and submitted to the consultation email address on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Latest information on the Solent CO<sub>2</sub> Pipeline Project website states:

*'We recently held a non-statutory consultation to gather views on three potential CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline corridors. We appreciate the time and effort the community has invested and value your input.*

*However, we have decided not to progress with the CO<sub>2</sub> storage in the English Channel, and as a result, the Solent CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline project will not proceed.*

*Despite our efforts over the past three years to secure the necessary government policies and market conditions to support the significant investment required, we have concluded that these conditions are not currently in place.*

*We are committed to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from our operated assets and continue to actively evaluate a range of technical solutions for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions in the UK.*

*We thank everyone who engaged with us during the consultation process and appreciate your interest in the project.'*

Minute No 106/24: The amended Village Hall hire agreement has been agreed and signed by Cllr L White and by Mr J Hammond on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee.

Minute No 107/24: The Employee Health and Safety Pack has now been issued to all employees for signature.

### Event/Project updates:

The annual Community Chest event was held in the BYCC on 4<sup>th</sup> October and was a great success once again. Cllr H Brabazon will be able to update further.

### Office/Lengthsmen updates:

Staff annual appraisals have been scheduled for Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October and/or Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October in the Parish Office. The appraisal committee will comprise of at least two Councillors from Chair, Vice-Chair and Chair of Finance and Governance.

The Lengthsmen have been taking much-needed annual holiday during October whilst also beginning the refurbishment of the Point Toilets, which will remain closed until completion.

The Bembridge Parish Council Tree Survey has been completed and reported to the Finance and Governance Committee alongside the Park RoSPA Safety Inspection Report. I'm pleased to say that there were no major concerns in the RoSPA Report with all remedial measures falling within the Lengthsmen's remit. The Lengthsmen are also working on actioning the majority of recommendations in the Tree Survey, however up to 7 trees will require specialist attention, and quotes are therefore being sourced.

### Training:

A NALC training course re: The Future of Neighbourhood Plans was held online on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September and I attended along with Cllr L White, Cllr G Stoddart-Stones, and Cllr M Sullivan. The Planning Committee have begun planning for the revision of the Bembridge Neighbourhood Plan produced in 2014. Cllr M Groom will be able to update further.

I have also attended free webinars on the Introduction to Nature Towns and Cities Programme by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Natural England and National Trust, and a NALC webinar on the Local Council Awards Scheme.

Cllr C Adams will be attending a NALC online course 'Mastering Emergency Planning' on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

### Items on the Agenda:

#### Agenda item 7: Insurance

Insurance for buildings and contents plus Product/Public Liability etc - renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> October at a cost of £3,390.05. Unfortunately, despite many reminders we have still not received the updated asset revaluations that the Council agreed to at its March meeting. As a result, this renewal is for one year only, allowing the chance to input revised figures before the next renewal and assessing any changes. This renewal figure is lower than the amount that we had allowed for in the 2024/25 budget.

Motor Insurance – renewed from 23<sup>rd</sup> September at a cost of £599.01. This is also below the amount allowed for in the 2024/25 budget.

#### Agenda item 8: Internal Auditor – Letter of Engagement

A requirement of the External Auditors is for Councils to sign a letter of engagement for their Internal Auditor each year. We need to review and sign the attached letter to officially appoint Tim Light as our Internal Auditor for 2024-25. As you can also see from the attached 'End of Service' letter this will be the final year that Tim will be carrying out the Internal Audit for Bembridge Parish Council.

#### Agenda item 9: Steyne Park Height Barrier

As you all are no doubt aware, a three-month closure of Steyne Road has begun, causing much disruption.

A resident visited the office to enquire as to whether the Council would consider opening the height barrier during this period to allow vehicles above the allowed height to park in the car park. They believe that this will alleviate congestion along Steyne Road.

The Council should note that in addition to the above closure, the Steyne Park car park will also need to be closed for 24 hours on the 15<sup>th</sup> (or 16<sup>th</sup>) of October to allow Island Roads to re-surface and re-mark the car park.

The IoWC accept that there is currently no formal agreement between BPC and IoWC for the leasing of the Car Park (BPC have leased the Car Park to IoWC in the past, dating back to 1960). However, as it forms part of the PFI agreement between IoWC and Island Roads it was deemed advisable to continue with the works at no cost to BPC. It is, however, likely that a proposal for a formal agreement regarding the car park will be brought to council in the coming months. I await to hear back from the Highways and Legal departments of IoWC.

There are also parking restrictions in place along Steyne Road on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October during the fireworks event in the park.

#### Agenda item 10: Parish Council Vacancy

Sadly, Cllr J Lake has resigned from the Council. I'm sure the Council will thank him for his hard work and wish him the best for his future endeavours.

A notice of vacancy has been advertised and parishioners had until the 10<sup>th</sup> of October to write to the IoWC Proper Officer requesting an election. The Proper Officer will be in contact following this date and further information and instructions regarding the process should be available on or before the date of the Parish Council meeting.

Thank you,

Mark Rochell, Clerk/RFO Bembridge Parish Council.