



BEACH SAFETY

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

13 JUNE 2011

The purpose of this Report is to provide Members with information on the development and operation of the Beach Safety project.

No. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

- a) Following the Isle of Wight Council's decision to withdraw the Lifeguard Service from the four beaches of Ryde, Sandown, Shanklin and Ventnor, the Council ring-fenced a budget of £25,000 for this year to assist their local councils in providing beach safety support services.
- b) After detail discussion of the insurance and legal consequences of accepting that funding and of the uses to which it could be put, Ventnor Town Council committed to accessing the available £6,250 to be deployed in providing a First Aid service based in the old Lifeguard Hut from 10am to 4pm at least six days a week until the end of September.
- c) Legal advice was taken from the Town Council's solicitor that has confirmed that as the Town Council is not the owner of the beach it has no liability whatsoever to any member of the public who might be injured or killed while using it. Liability could arise from the Town Council's provision of services on the beach and it was therefore essential that full insurance cover for those services is in place.
- d) The Town Council's insurers have extended its Public Liability cover to those services with the specific exclusion the neither staff nor volunteers engaged in the service enter the water and that it is made clear to the public that there is no proactive life guarding in place.

2) STAFFING

- a) The position of a Beach First Aid Worker was advertised with a requirement for the following qualifications:
 - o A current First Aid Certificate
 - o Familiarity with Ventnor Beach
 - o Experience in working with and organising the work of volunteers
 - o A friendly and approachable manner.
- b) Dave Gray was appointed to the post with effect from Monday 6 June on a temporary contract of 36 hours a week until 30 September 2011.
- c) Councillor Jim Toogood's earlier discussions with potential volunteers to support the service had resulted in 10 people coming forward. He also arranged for them to attend a refresher day-long First Aid Course run by the St John's Ambulance Brigade at the Coastguard Centre.
- d) Dave Gray and over half the volunteers already have existing CRB checks and applications are in process for the rest.

3) DEVELOPMENTS

- a) The Hut formerly known as the Lifeguard Hut, now rebranded as the First Aid Post, was handed over to Ventnor Town Council at mid-day on 9 June and work on repainting the inside of it has been completed.
- b) Some supplies were handed over with the keys and an order for all other necessities has been placed with fulfilment anticipated on 13 June. New Signage is also on order.
- c) A number of Isle of Wight Council officers co-operated very positively with our commitment to

have the service in place by the Festival Weekend, and that objective was met with their assistance.

- d) There will be no net cost to Ventnor Town Council for the project as all costs are budgeted within the combination of the grant funding and several donations from Ventnor residents.
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