

## **Item No 157 Minutes of PC Meeting 11.3.24.**

### **Beach -**

A brief outline was given by Cllr JBacon of the situation at the Seafront. The area is subject to a lease between the IOW Council and a company called Duver Enterprises.

In about 2002 Duver Enterprises took on the lease which has 3 sections:

1. the land where the Beach Huts are situated,
2. the land the carriages stand on, the Railway Carriages (which are IOW Council property but leased to Duver Enterprises), and
3. the area of land the Caravans are situated - ( behind this area it is National Trust land, which is land of a Site of Special Scientific Interest.)

The Council sought to repossess the entirety of the area in 2016, an error was made with the legal side, so instead of regaining the lease, a litigation commenced, which is ongoing.

A number of delays, partially with the pandemic and due to a dispute with the National Trust over the boundary of the caravan area and an encroachment of the SSSI area.

The lease is a poor document and does not contain adequate terms regarding maintenance of the property.

In the discussion that followed various suggestions were made about routes to be taken in order for the Carriages to be maintained. It is a difficult area of law. Suggestions were made about powers relating to derelict dwellings, but the Railway Carriages are not dwellings.

It is not a Parish Council responsibility. The PC does not have any power with the legal side but has been monitoring the area, taking photographs and liaising with the IOW Council and the Police.

The Railway Carriages are a potential heritage asset. They are of interest to the Steam Railway.

Questions were raised and answered if the knowledge was available.

Who is responsible for the repair - is it with Duver Enterprises under their lease?  
Also is there a legal responsibility for safety?

A member of the public said on their documentation in the past, their license stated Duver Enterprises was responsible for the upkeep of the outside . Arrangements between those who have had any license to use the carriages are granted on an annual basis, and it seems no licenses have been granted for this year.

No-one seems to understand what Duver Enterprises wishes to do in the future?

Concerns were stated about the way holidaymakers view the area and the feeling of the local people who are frustrated that the area looks so unwelcoming. Will this affect the tourist trade?

The effect of the debris has been reported to the Environmental Agency, the Environmental Health Dept and the National Trust.

It was stated that there should be much better terms for the Beach Hut Licensees in the future (compared with other Hut Licensees over the Island) - urge that the PC support this group.  
Communication

Beach Hut Association - when the lease was about to expire they wished to apply for the lease for that area. The Lease would be of the same type as other places over the Island.

The state of the area needs to be resolved.

The IOWC is trying its best to solve this error and the effects of it.

Concern that the parties who are suffering are not being represented.

The whole area is an embarrassment to St Helens beach. A request - could there be a screen covering the Harris fencing that is in place at present so the area would look more pleasant during the holiday season.

Not only an embarrassment but is a disaster for wildlife. Could a litter pick be organised - the only issue is some of the debris is building material - particularly the fibre glass material. This is an issue as it is blowing all around, onto the beach, onto the NT land and has been seen at Mill Pond.

Could CCTV be installed? The Cafe is having CCTV installed outside of their building - this will show vehicles that pass in the area.

Cllr PJ offered to undertake a meeting with the IOWC - Head of Property Services & Head of Legal with the Chair & Vice Chair of the St Helens Beach Hut Association.

Finalising the issue - there is mutual willingness amongst us all to resolve the issue.

A kind donation of PPE was offered when and if the litter pick could take place.

Q. Is there any legality to a collective of people doing the Carriages up for the summer?  
Technically not correct because of intervening on someone's property.

It was noted that the Carriages were painted annually until Duver Enterprises took over the lease.

Concern of the local businesses in the area - will their businesses be affected from the unwelcome area on the Duver.

Suggestion to get some Media interest in the history of the Carriages, local and national media. Could this be beneficial or have the opposite effect. Lots of visitors are already making comments on the state of the area.

National Trust - they were going to get their Rural Surveyor to visit - Clerk to follow up, has the visit taken place?

Thank you to all who have attended, a member of the Public thanked the PC in getting everyone together to discuss their views.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 20th at The Community Centre, the topic to be The Seafront.