



Minutes

Name of meeting	<u>CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u>
Date and time	TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2020, COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM
Venue	MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING – ONLINE
Present	Cllrs Andrew Garratt (Chairman), Debbie Andre, Vanessa Churchman, John Hobart, Michael Lilley, Chris Quirk
Co-opted (Voting)	Gill Kennett (IWALC)
Cabinet Members	Cllrs Paul Brading, Steve Hastings, Stuart Hutchinson, Clare Mosdell, Gary Peace, Dave Stewart, Brian Tyndall, Ian Ward
Also Present	Cllrs Geoff Brodie, Charles Chapman, Julie Jones-Evans, Karl Love Simon Bryant, Steve Crocker, Jayne Dando, Natasha Dix, Alex Minns, John Metcalfe, Sean Newton, Wendy Perera, Colin Rowland, Claire Shand, Paul Thistlewood, Carol Tozer, Megan Tuckwell, Geoff Wild Phil Horton, Rob Gillespie (Island Roads)
Apologies	Cllr Richard Hollis

11. Minutes

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2020 be confirmed, subject to the inclusion of Cllr Geoff Brodie's attendance.

12. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Lilley declared an interest in Minute 17 as a trustee of Wight Community Energy.

13. Public Question Time

Mr Cameron Palin, on behalf of the Floating Bridge Stakeholders' and Engineers' Group, submitted written questions to the Committee regarding the operation of the Floating Bridge ([PQ 23/20](#)). The Chairman advised that responses would be sought to all concerns as the information would be of interest to the Committee when looking into resolving the current problems experienced with the vessel.

14. Covid 19 Response and Recovery – Update on current issues

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance & Covid-19 Recovery presented the report submitted to the Cabinet on 10 September 2020 relating to the Covid-19 Isle of Wight Recovery Plan.

Questions were raised with regards to collaboration with town, parish and community councils. It was confirmed that a series of meetings were planned and input from all sectors of the community was welcomed. Discussion took place with regard to grant support and the Leader confirmed that the Council had worked hard throughout the pandemic with community-owned businesses and facilities to ensure they were able to access any available government funding.

Concerns were raised regarding the Health and Wellbeing Board being chosen as the accountable body for the wider recovery plan as it was health-focussed and does not represent economic and financial recovery. It was confirmed that this body was inclusive of all health partners and included the voluntary sector and representatives of town, parish and community councils.

Questions were raised regarding local food production, and the Director of Neighbourhoods confirmed that the climate change action plan covered food security and sustainable agriculture. Members sought information with regards to mitigation strategies for tackling the winter season including Brexit and a possible second wave. It was confirmed that this was being worked on by the Local Resilience Forum.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Committee formally agreed that it found that the report was comprehensive and that the principles contained within it were evidence based and set out details of an action plan for the recovery of service delivery but had a concern about the Health and Wellbeing Board being the accountable body for the wider recovery plan.

15. Quarterly Performance and Finance Reports

a) Highways PFI Contract

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport, and the Director of Neighbourhoods, presented the Highways PFI contract performance report.

Members noted the figures contained within the update on the core investment period and wished to be also provided with comparatives against the targets set out within the contract. It was confirmed that the delivery of the contract was measured on average road conditions and not by the distance of road.

Discussion took place regarding increased traffic and the impact of Wightfibre works on highway improvement schemes. Concerns were raised regarding the clarity of the method statement and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport provided background information on the contract and noted that there was a misplaced assumption that the contract required all roads to be resurfaced.

Members requested further information around the number of footways and carriageways that had not been completed in the original core investment period. The representatives of Island Roads clarified that performance measures were not based on distance and were contracted to maintain an average.

Members asked for assurance that the contract allowed for seriously deteriorating roads to be resurfaced, rather than relying on those above-average roads in maintaining the average score. It was confirmed that roads which were identified for intervention would be identified by achieving a road condition score or due to whole life cost implications.

Members requested a list of roads that have been upgraded and those that have not been touched. Representatives of Island Roads confirmed that would be provided, as a programme of works was produced annually which identified which roads and carriageways would need to be done. It was however noted that this was subject to change due to weather conditions and the result of the pandemic. Additionally, clarification would be provided by officers on the current status of a number of contract documents including the method statement.

RESOLVED:

- i) THAT a report be submitted to the next meeting to clarify the approach taken in assessing the average measures used within the performance report,
- ii) THAT the latest annual programme of works be circulated to members.

At the conclusion of the discussion members adjourned for a 10-minute comfort break.

b) Waste Contract

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Heritage and Waste Management presented the performance report in respect of the Waste contract. The report was welcomed by the committee.

Members acknowledged the progress made by the team and wished to explore areas for future improvement. The Strategic Manager for Waste and Recycling advised that an annual improvement plan was in place (informed by a recent five-year waste composition study) and would be circulated to the Committee.

Consideration was given to the reopening of recycling centres for the disposal of general waste, the phased approach, and the introduction of a booking system. Discussion took place regarding the impact of increased waste and use of plastic due to Covid-19. A change in the type of litter was reported, particularly in relation to disposable PPE. It was advised that the Council was supporting the Great British September Clean. Voluntary groups were invited any to get in touch should they wish to assist with litter picking.

Questions were raised regarding bin collection in rural areas, and the legislation around bonfires. Members inquired into what extent could illegal fly-tipping been attributed to the necessary restrictions in place due to Covid-19. It was clarified that total incidents of fly-tipping on the Island during the pandemic had not exceeded normal levels.

RESOLVED:

- i) THAT the performance report in respect of the Waste contract be noted.
- ii) THAT the improvement plan arising from the recent five-year composition study be circulated to members of the Committee.

c) Cowes Floating Bridge

The Committee considered the performance issues connected with the Floating Bridge and the associated financial implications.

Affected ward members Cllr Love (East Cowes) and Cllr Peacey-Wilcox (Cowes Medina) were invited to provide verbal accounts of their experiences. Alongside the local ward member for Newport Central, Cllr Jones-Evans, they had been approached by leading international procurement experts who were willing to assist in the development of solutions to the issues. The Leader was urged to attend a meeting with those experts. It was strongly recommended that discussions on future options for the service involve the affected ward members, Cllrs Love, Peacey-Wilcox and Jones-Evans, in conjunction with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, and the Chief Executive.

The Leader provided an update on the current position, including an overview of the historic issues which included the chain depth, noise, and electrical issues. The overall reliability of the Floating Bridge was highlighted, nevertheless it was confirmed that the legal process detailed in the contract was now being progressed. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport provided further information around the hydraulics and confirmed that officers were monitoring progress and briefing him on this twice weekly.

Discussion took place regarding a proposed task and finish group to look into the issues with the vessel. Members were advised that this may require officer capacity that was not available at this time and to the degree that would be needed in order to be effective. Members were reassured that significant officer commitment was in place to support the legal action.

Members requested a clear action plan, together with timeframes, at its next meeting detailing the actions being taken. It was agreed that a risk register document detailing the mitigating actions be circulated to all members of the Committee for information.

RESOLVED:

- i) THAT the Committee receive a report at its next meeting detailing the actions being taken to ensure that the vessel is operational, and to enable discussions to take place on future options for the service involving Cllrs Love, Peacey-Wilcox and Jones-Evans, the Leader, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure and the Chief Executive.
- ii) THAT the risk register documents be circulated to all members of the Committee for information.

d) Quarterly Performance Reports (Quarter 4 2019-20, and Quarter 1 2020-21)

Consideration was given to the quarterly performance reports submitted to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 10 September 2020. The Chairman advised that any member requiring clarification on a specific issue contained within the reports may discuss with the relevant Cabinet Member and Director. No comments were received at this stage, and the reports were noted.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Quarterly Performance Reports for Quarter 4 2019-20, and Quarter 1 2020-21, be noted.

16. Comments on other items to be considered by the Cabinet on 10 September 2020

Since publication of the agenda, the items in relation to the Newport Harbour Masterplan and the Approval of Housing Strategy had slipped to the meeting of the Cabinet in October 2020.

• **Loan Investment in Perpetuus Tidal Energy Centre (PTEC)**

Members considered the report due to be presented to the Cabinet and the verbal commentary provided by the Leader. Members felt that there was sufficient evidence to show that the analysis undertaken ensured that there was a good understanding of the risks to the Council. The Committee were therefore supportive of the proposed recommendations being made to Cabinet, to not make any further investment in PTEC at this time, and to authorise PTEC to raise the required funds by selling up to two thirds of the Council's shareholding in the company.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Committee support the recommendations contained in the report.

17. Scrutiny Review 2019-20

The Chairman presented the report which highlighted the work undertaken by the Council's scrutiny function for the period 2019-20.

RESOLVED:

THAT the review of the work undertaken by scrutiny during 2019-20 be noted.

18. Committee's Workplan 2020/21

a) Forward Plan

Members were invited to identify any items contained within the Council's published forward plan that would benefit from early consideration within the scrutiny workplan. No comments were received at this stage.

RESOLVED:

THAT the forward plan be noted.

b) Workplan

The Chairman presented the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's workplan for 2020-21 and reminded members that the Committee may see a change in membership following the annual meeting of Full Council on 16 September 2020. No comments were received at this stage relating to any amendments to the workplan.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's workplan for 2020-21 be noted.

CHAIRMAN