



Minutes

Name of meeting	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND REGENERATION
Date and time	THURSDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2019 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Michael Beston (Chairman), Debbie Andre, Geoff Brodie, Andrew Garratt, Chris Quirk, Brian Tyndall
Cabinet Members	Cllrs Steve Hastings; John Hobart, Ian Ward, Wayne Whittle
Other Members	Cllr Karl Love, Cllr Dave Stewart
Officers Present	Sarah MacDonald, Alex Minns, Paul Thistlewood
Apologies	Cllr John Medland

1. **Minutes**

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2019 be confirmed, subject to the correction of a spelling error in the word “Resolved” on Page A-3.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Andre declared an interest in any matters relating to Sandown North, as the local member for that area.

3. **Public Question Time**

Tanja Rebel of Cowes asked whether the Committee would scrutinise what steps, if any, were currently being taken in relation to 5G. The Chairman indicated that he would seek a response from the Cabinet member in due course.

4. **Progress on outcomes and recommendations from previous meetings**

Record Office

Cllrs Hobart and Hastings had visited the proposed site of the new record office at Westridge on 22 July 2019 and a visit would be arranged for other members in due course.

Speed Limits

It had been agreed at the meeting on 2 May 2019 to establish a task and finish group to look at speed limits on the Island. This had been delayed due to the availability of resources.

Biosphere Status

Confirmation was given that the report on the biosphere status would be included as part of the report of the Chairman of the Committee and Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage, as recommended by full Council on 24 July 2019.

Public Utilities

Highways officers and Island Roads had been asked to provide contacts for the utility companies, but the information had not yet been forthcoming.

Housing

Members indicated that the informal briefing be arranged in the very near future as the Housing and Homelessness Strategy was being discussed at Cabinet in November.

RESOLVED:

- a) The Chairman and Scrutiny Officer would urgently progress the establishment of a task and finish group to look at speed limits.
- b) The proposed meeting with representatives of Island Roads to discuss public utilities be progressed and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport be requested to assist.

5. IW Infrastructure Task Force

Mr Christopher Garnett, chairman of the Task Force, gave an update on its work and confirmed that regular meetings were held with the ferry companies, South Western Railway, Southern Vectis, Island Roads, Visit IW, Solent Transport and council officers. The meetings were generally informal.

With regard to Islandline, Network Rail had committed £25 million and other funding had also been obtained to refurbish Ryde Pier. The group was remaining hopeful that further government funding would be forthcoming in the near future for the rest of Islandline. Mr Garnett had seen some of the proposed new rolling stock.

The task force had agreed that the ferry fares were not too expensive for large coach and hotel operators, however they were deemed expensive for the less well-off. Multilink tickets were available for people in receipt of Housing Benefit, assisted by the Council. There was a cost to the ferry companies in the region of £350k - £400k per annum to provide discounted fares for patient

travel to mainland hospitals. Work was being done by health partners on a guide for patients travelling for medical treatment. Members felt it was important to provide information at ferry terminals when there were ferry delays.

Other discussions which had taken place were the proposed works at St Mary's roundabout, a long-term strategy for Coppins Bridge and the concept of a Medina bridge.

The Department for Transport had launched an initiative relating to major transport links. The Isle of Wight contributed to Solent Transport which was deemed worthwhile as the hovercraft and catamaran were included within Portsmouth's transport links. Funding may therefore become available to the Council.

The impact of Brexit had been discussed together with potential problems if a clean air zone charge was introduced for lorries travelling through Portsmouth to the Island.

Cycling and walking should be promoted, and it was important to finish the East Cowes to Newport cycle link as soon as possible.

Members queried whether all options had been put forward to the DfT for Islandline, particularly in respect of light rail. Mr Garnett explained that he understood representations had been put forward for light rail but that the stock used was part of the commercial negotiation for the franchise between South West Rail and DfT.

Members felt that the following matters should be explored by the task force:

- Action to address anti- social behaviour in Newport Bus Station
- Ticket initiatives for the less frequent user to encourage them not to use cars.
- The implementation of bus lanes where achievable.
- A Park and Ride Scheme in Newport

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation suggested that the need to travel in cars should be reduced by providing work centres outside towns to save on congestion and cut pollution levels, although there would need to be a balance with supporting local businesses and saving the local high streets.

The possibility of extending the Steam railway line into Ryde St John's had been put forward but it was uncertain how far the idea had progressed.

There were currently issues regarding connections between the National Express coaches coming into Portsmouth Hard and the ferries. This should be investigated, as the coach was often the choice of those on a low budget.

Mr Garnett confirmed that the current focus was day to day issues and the provision of information at the ferry terminals. Funds were awaited before moving on with other projects.

The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods gave a brief update on the East Cowes to Newport cycle path. The path had been included as part of the IW Coastal Path, however there had been issues with land ownership in certain places.

The Committee thanked Mr Garnett for his work and were pleased to see the achievements so far and that the task force was moving forward.

RESOLVED:

The lack of progress with the delivery of the East Cowes to Newport cycleway was noted and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport would circulate the actions being taken to address this and timescales.

6. **Environmental Issues**

(a) Green Flag and Blue Flag Status

Members noted that the Bay area attracted an income of around £600k per annum from tourism in the area. There were concerns about safety issues with the jet skis and the conflict with bathers and other leisure users.

It was suggested by members that the marker buoys, which had previously been removed, should be reinstated as a deterrent. They were told, however that, as there were no lifeguards, they could not be policed. Additionally, the Council did not have any funding for the provision and maintenance of marker buoys or lifeguards. The Town Council could remove and store them over the winter if necessary. Cllr Andre knew of some buoys which could be used all year, and she would pass details to the Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods.

In order to gain Blue Flag status, full time lifeguards would be a requirement. Members would need to decide whether resources should be applied in order to gain awards at a time where the council is struggling to provide statutory services. Many of the requirements connected with blue and green flag status were already being met.

It was not possible to have a one-size-fits-all policy for seaside towns as they did not all the have the same issues. Town and Parish Councils across the Island appeared not to be supportive of sharing the cost of beach issues between them all. It was agreed to approach IWALC again.

RESOLVED :

- i. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage be requested to investigate the resource issues of placing of buoys off main beaches to overcome safety issues created by jet skis.

- ii. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage be requested to approach town and parish councils with regard to collaboration on green flag and blue flag status.

b) Recommendations from Full Council on 24 July 2019

The Chairman confirmed that a task and finish group on the reduction in carbon emissions had been set up. The second meeting was due to be held on 26 September 2019 with relevant officers. A report would be submitted to the committee in six months' time.

RESOLVED :

THAT the matter be noted.

7. Unadopted Roads

Members discussed the current situation relating to the approach to private/unadopted streets on the Island. It was believed that the council was providing street lighting in some private roads but not in others. The lighting on the prison estate was inadequate. Members hoped that the Cabinet Member would be prepared to consider investigating improved lighting for unadopted roads for health and safety reasons as they were doing in other areas.

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport explained that the Council was not currently in a financial position to adopt roads and pay for future maintenance. There could be opportunities depending on the outcome of negotiations over land at the prison estate. The Council could consider taking on the provision of lighting from the current provider, without having to adopt the road. Cllr Garratt would prepare a costing in respect of the Camp Hill prison estate for the Cabinet Member to discuss with officers.

The Council had committed to securing Dark Skies status which seemed relevant to this point. The Cabinet Member confirmed that it had recently been discussed with the Contract Management team.

Cllr Brodie explained that in his ward (Newport East) some residents of Pan Meadows were still waiting for Barratt Homes to pay Island Roads to adopt their roads, as had been agreed.

RESOLVED :

- i. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport would investigate the costs incurred by the council in the provision of street lighting on private/unadopted highways and circulate these to the committee.
- ii. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport would investigate the reasons for the delay in the adoption of roads on the Pan Meadows development.

8. Regeneration Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Business Development gave an update on the following projects:

Newport Harbour – the public consultation had ended on 30 August 2019. There had been a positive response overall although there were some concerns over the scale of the development at Seaclose. A summary would be published later in September 2019.

Nicholson Road – A planning application had been submitted, and a funding application prepared for the Solent LEP to assist with Phase 1 infrastructure for a community hub, new premises for a Ryde GP practice, small business start-up units and key worker flats.

Venture Quays – A price had been agreed in principle for purchasing the Columbine building and negotiating land with the objective of securing marine jobs for the foreseeable future. Negotiations would be undertaken with the existing tenant as required.

Dinosaur Island and Sandham Gardens site – the procurement exercise was continuing.

Branstone Farm - Plans were proceeding for agriculture, business premises and rural housing. The Cabinet member could not release any details at the time

The Digital Business Incubation Hub business case had been completed. This would be considered by the Solent LEP board in October 2019, with the aim to be open in Cowes by March 2020 and fully refurbished by November 2020.

Members were disappointed to note that Newport had not been included in the second announcement for the Future High Street funding, despite an excellent submission. There was still optimism that Newport and Ryde would be included in the Heritage High Streets bid. The Cabinet Member for Business and Regeneration would be meeting with English Heritage on 17 September 2019.

Housing – The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing and the Cabinet Member for Business and Regeneration were determined to bring forward the urgent housing schemes as there was the need for affordable homes, to reduce the housing waiting list.

RESOLVED:

THAT the progress on the projects be noted.

9. Committee's Workplan

a. Cabinet Members Update

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport advised that the floating bridge was currently working well, with only one or two tidal issues per month.

The Ryde Hub was part of South East Hampshire Rapid Transport scheme. The Council was working with Portsmouth and Hampshire which included a rapid train link between Portsmouth and Southampton, including an upgraded Ryde interchange facility. Network Rail had already committed £25 million, another bid had been made for £15 million from the transforming cities fund for Ryde Hub. Hopefully a further £28.5 million would come from the government for Islandline.

The Council had submitted a bid for additional electric car charging points as the number of electric cars was increasing. The Council had one electric car and a further three on order. Members were concerned that the range of vehicles which could be charged at the charging points should be as wide as possible, and a franchise considered if necessary. Electric bicycles should also be considered. There may be a possibility of installing charging points for cycles in County Hall car park, Riverside Centre at the cycle hub, and Fountain Quay in Cowes. Wightlink were installing car charging at its ferry terminals.

Cllr Andre reported that she believed that the Southern Water plant at Sandown had the facility to offer free electric car charging as a by-product. This should be investigated further.

The Cabinet Member for Procurement, Waste Management, Special Projects and Forward Planning reported that the Forest Road waste plant had undergone a 30-day trial and was to have a further trial before being due to being fully operational around February/March 2020.

There were in the region of 7000 subscribers to the garden waste collection service, with a further 700-800 people on the waiting list. A further waste truck had been ordered to help reduce the waiting list.

Other services provided by the waste service were being marketed.

There was a need to clarify the criteria for chargeable and non-chargeable waste for people letting out rooms in their homes. The cabinet member advised the best course of action was to contact the waste management team for specialist advice. The Cabinet member would forward some information for members to pass on.

The waste composition survey was underway

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage advised that the Dinosaur Isle proposals was making progress. The legal issues were being resolved. The local member asked for an update when appropriate on the tenders received.

The Coastal Path issue was ongoing. The Council had been unable to secure a route through Jersey Camp, Newtown which was MoD land. There was an absence of footpaths in East Cowes The Cabinet Member was working with Natural England to persuade Norris, Osborne and Barton estates to allow a footpath over their land.

RESOLVED :

- i. The Cabinet Member for Procurement, Waste Management, Special Projects and Forward Planning circulate a copy of the revised terms of reference for the Environment and Sustainability Forum to the committee.
 - ii. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage ensure that the local member is kept advised of proposed arrangements on the future of Dinosaur Isle.
- b. [Workplan 2019/20](#)**

Members considered the key priorities from the corporate plan relevant to the Committee. Members would take these away and consider whether they wished to add anything to the workplan.

CHAIRMAN