



Minutes

Name of meeting	FULL COUNCIL
Date and time	WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2012 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Susan Scoccia (Chairman), Barry Abraham, Reg Barry, George Brown, George Cameron, Vanessa Churchman, Dawn Cousins, Roger Dixcey, Rodney Downer, Paul Fuller, Edward Giles, John Hobart, Richard Hollis, John Howe, Heather Humby, Tim Hunter-Henderson, Stuart Hutchinson, Julie Jones-Evans, David Knowles, Geoff Lumley, Roger Mazillius, David Pugh, Colin Richards, Ian Stephens, David Stewart, Andy Sutton, Arthur Taylor, Gary Taylor, Ian Ward, Ivor Warlow, Margaret Webster, Chris Welsford, Jerry White, Wayne Whittle, David Williams
Apologies	Cllrs Jonathan Bacon, Peter Bingham, Patrick Joyce, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, David Whittaker

28. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meetings held on [18 July](#) and [22 August 2012](#) be confirmed.

29. [Declarations of Interest](#)

Cllrs Colin Richards and David Knowles declared an interest in Minute 32 (b) in regards to Council Tax.

30. [Public Question Time](#)

Questions were put to the Chairman as follows:

Name	Subject	Comment
Mr M White of Newport	Re: Taxi Fares How can the figures used by the Licensing Panel more or less say that no increases have been incurred?	As Mr White was not present, The Cabinet Member would provide a written response which was available on the following link (<u>PQ 15/12</u>)

Name	Subject	Comment
Tanja Rebel of Cowes	Was the Council going to take any action about the deteriorating state of the former Frank James Hospital in East Cowes when it had used £4m to refurbish County Hall?	The Leader advised that the refurbishment of County Hall was of part of the wider budget strategy to reduce the number of properties the council occupied. He highlighted that Frank James was not a council owned property and did not serve any council purpose and therefore the council would not commit funds to return the building into use.
Jason Robinson of Niton	Does the council not have a duty of care to protect this building and could it not use compulsory purchase powers? Bearing in mind the physical and moral limitations on natural resources, what does the council have planned to combat the inevitable end of economic growth in terms of resilience for the Island?	The Leader restated that the council had no responsibility for the building. The Leader highlighted the appendix to the budget paper forming part of the meeting's agenda, which demonstrated how economic growth was being supported on the Island including support for apprenticeships and opportunities for young people He further stated that the council had a clear approach to protecting the Islands natural resources including investment in tidal energy schemes.
Stuart Blackmore of Ventnor	Would the Leader acknowledge the depletion of global resources. Resources are our economy as we do not have an intellectual economy and do you recognise those resources are depleting? Regarding the Ventnor Winter Gardens has the sale been finalised by contract completion and is the contract subject to any release clause?	The Leader advised that he was not in a position to comment on the global resources situation but could confirm that the council was committed to the protection of the environment. The Cabinet Member stated that the final legal arrangements with lawyers were progressing well.

Name	Subject	Comment
	Would the Council note the untidy state of the building and consider a cosmetic makeover prior to the commencement of building works?	The Cabinet Member reiterated that the issue was contained within the contract of sale which was due to conclude shortly.

31. [Chairman's report, official announcements, communications and correspondence for the Council.](#)

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

Madam Chairman drew particular attention to two functions she had recently attended, those being the L.I.F.E passing out parade at Sandown Fire Station and the official opening of Haylands Primary School.

32. **Reports of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources**

(a) [Budget Review](#)

The Leader of the Council stated that the government's deficit reduction strategy had led to some difficult decisions being made over recent years, in order to continue to deliver a balanced budget, whilst minimising the impact on front line services. Members were appraised that 76% and 90% of the savings in the last year and the current year respectively had been made through reductions in back office functions and savings of £2.290m had been achieved.

The report set out the strong financial position of the council in preparation to tackle the likely budget reductions in future years. It was highlighted that the Cabinet report in December would further clarify the on-going situation, once the Government Finance Settlement was known and due to the continued uncertainty the report only proposed a limited number of one off investment schemes, these being contained in appendix 2 of the report.

There was some discussion about the merits of investing in one off initiatives rather than further increasing reserves to meet further budget reductions.

RESOLVED :

THAT Council considers the results of the budget consultation undertaken as summarised in Appendix 1 to the report and the recommendations of the Cabinet and:

- (a) Agree the overall approach and strategy as set out in the report as the basis for developing the Budget Strategy for 2013/14 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

- (b) To note the progress with regard to various economic initiatives and to agree that £400k be earmarked to the initiatives recommended in Appendix 2 to the report, using additional savings that arose from the 2011/12 outturn, and that the recommended steps outlined in Appendix 2 were also agreed.

(b) [Localisation of Council Tax Support](#)

The Leader of the Council presented his report which set out the councils approach to Government proposals to abolish the national Council Tax Benefit Scheme (CTBS) and replace it with a local scheme, with a 10% reduction in Government funding for the scheme. The Council was required to adopt its own local scheme. Failure to do so would mean that by default the existing national one would operate and the shortfall in funding from the government would need to be met locally.

A draft local scheme was proposed that would protect pensioners and not adversely impact those of a working age who were identified as vulnerable but allow all those of working age to make an affordable contribution towards the costs of local services, as summarised in paragraph 107 of the report. The Leader added that the consultation would be comprehensive and any final proposals would include an equality impact assessment.

There was general support for conducting a consultation exercise provided it was thorough, using all the communication routes available to the council including partners, to deliver the message on those protected groups and the need to engage. Although members remained open minded on the scheme until the responses to the consultation were analysed.

During the discussion Cllr Roger Mazillius declared an interest, as he had a non-dependent relative who was in receipt of housing benefit.

RESOLVED :

THAT Council agree

- (a) the overall consultation arrangements;
- (b) the preferred option that will form the basis of the consultation.

33. Cabinet

Reports of the Cabinet Members

(i) [The Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources](#)

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

(ii) [The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Economy and Regulatory Services](#)

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

Oral questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

Name	Subject	Comment
Cllr Reg Barry	Why were the council considering the sale of the car park and dinghy park in Pier Road, Seaview?	The Cabinet Member indicated he would provide a written response.
Cllr Vanessa Churchman	Ask the council to write to the organisers of Bestival to express our horror and expressing condolences about the crash the following day affecting some attendees.	The Cabinet Member shared the views about the traffic accident and stated condolences had already been expressed to the organisers. The Cabinet Member agreed to make a similar representation from the elected members of the council.
Cllr Heather Humby	Could the proposed higher charges for the South Wight swimming club be reconsidered?	The Cabinet Member responded that he did not believe the charges to be unreasonable and would not be reviewing the charges.
Cllr Chris Welsford	Is it not possible for work to be undertaken on the Ventnor Winter Gardens to improve its appearance, possibly through imposing a legal order?	The Cabinet Member stated that the principal purpose of the negotiations was to produce a different building to that in place and would not recommend any expenditure on a building shortly due to change ownership from the council.

(iii) [Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Housing](#)

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

(iv) **Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education**

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member drew attention to the number of on-going discussions following the recent release of school results and highlighted that members would have a further opportunity to ask questions of primary and secondary providers at additional meetings of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel. The successful delivery of Haylands Primary School was also highlighted including the positive reaction of the pupils.

Oral questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

Name	Subject	Comment
Cllr Julie Jones-Evans	Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the recent Ofsted inspections of the Children Centres?	The Cabinet Member confirmed that the benefits of partnership working and a professional approach to commissioning were demonstrated through the number of outstanding Ofsted outcomes.
Cllr Vanessa Churchman	Noting the Headmaster of Haylands Primary views on enabling community use, will other Island schools have the same ethos?	The Cabinet Member confirmed that Haylands was a community school to be used by the community and that this would be the same for other Island schools.
Cllr Geoff Lumley	Clarification was sought on the date of the Cabinet Members visit to Haylands Primary School.	The Cabinet Member confirmed that she had visited the school previously to the official opening.
Cllr Chris Welsford	Had the Cabinet Member written to the Secretary of State for Education to request the remarking of GCSE exams?	The Cabinet Member stated she had not written regarding the results, although schools remained free to do so. She reiterated that the results were being taken seriously and again highlighted the invitation for members to attend the Scrutiny Panels.

(v) **Cabinet Member for Procurement, Fire, Highways and Transport**

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member corrected a small typographical error in the published report, where it read “moth” it should read “month” within the surface dressing section.

Written questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

Name	Subject	Comment
Cllr Heather Humby	The council previously issued exemption permits to GP’s enabling them to park on waiting restrictions if called out in an emergency but these were withdrawn. Given that there is now greater emphasis on keeping people in their home environment; will the council consider reviewing this matter?	The Cabinet Member provided a written response which was available on the following link (MQ 14/12)

Oral questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

Name	Subject	Comment
Cllr Paul Fuller	Could local members and local councils be advised on the dates the remedial surface dressing works were due to commence?	The Cabinet Member confirmed elected members and town/parish councils would be advised by officers.
Cllr Paul Fuller	Can an update be given on how sustainable transport grant monies will be distributed?	The Cabinet Member confirmed that a delegated decision was due to come forward in the coming months and a meeting had been held earlier that week with stakeholders to bring projects forward.
Cllr Vanessa Churchman	Was the toilet cleaning contract being tendered a full contract covering all Island conveniences?	The Cabinet Member advised that the contract would cover all conveniences.
Cllr Vanessa Churchman	Some interest had been shown from local residents to undertake cleaning of	The Cabinet Member agreed to raise the issue with officers but

Name	Subject	Comment
Cllr Geoff Lumley	certain toilets, could this not be made possible instead of all conveniences being under one contract? Could the public conveniences be split into three zones and offered out to contract to introduce competition?	highlighted the advantages of monitoring performance when one contractor was used. The Cabinet Member would be happy to look into the matter but reconfirmed the ease of monitoring standards through using a single contractor.
Cllr Richard Hollis	Asked if the Cabinet Member would note the approach of members of a Parish Council in regard to cleaning of conveniences	The Cabinet Member agreed with the councillors observations.

(vi) **Cabinet Member for Public Health, Community Safety and Local Services**

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member asked council to acknowledge their condolences on the news about the deaths of two policewomen in Greater Manchester, acknowledging the role played by said officers in the community.

(vii) **Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

A [written report](#) had been circulated for information.

It was clarified by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny that her report contained a slight typographical error and that the rescheduled meeting of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel would be held on the 26 November 2012 and not the 12 November.

CHAIRMAN