



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>FULL COUNCIL</b>
Date and time	<b>WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2013 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM</b>
Venue	<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs Susan Scoccia (Chairman), Barry Abraham, Jonathan Bacon, Reg Barry, Peter Bingham, George Cameron, Dawn Cousins, 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, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, David Pugh, Colin Richards, Ian Stephens, David Stewart, Andy Sutton, Arthur Taylor, Gary Taylor, Ian Ward, Margaret Webster, Chris Welsford, Jerry White, Wayne Whittle, David Williams
Apologies	Cllrs George Brown, Vanessa Churchman, Roger Dixcey, Patrick Joyce, Ivor Warlow, David Whittaker

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41. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [27 February 2013](#) be confirmed.

42. [Declarations of Interest](#)

There were no declarations received at this stage.

43. [Public Question Time](#)

Questions were put to the Chairman as follows :

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Mr D Miller of Cowes	Did the Leader consider there could be an inverse correlation between the Local Authority being identified as having the largest average secondary school sizes and the second	The Cabinet Member provided a written response which was available on the following link (PQ 10/13)

Name	Subject	Comment
	highest number of surplus primary places, with attainment and the reduction in admission applications?	
	Supplementary – Did the Leader agree with the comments of Cowes Enterprise College Trust and Governors that the drop in attainment was due to parents’ complacency?	The Leader stated it was important for parents to maintain an active interest in their children’s education. It was believed that the comments had been made with that in mind.
Mr A Nicholas of Newport	Could the Leader justify spending £2.1m of public money subsidising a large private corporate broadband supplier and a further £1m for an estimated 40 people through the introduction of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme, when compared with the paltry sum of £344k allocated to the Local Discretionary Hardship Relief Assistance Fund?	The Leader provided a written response which was available on the following link (PQ 11/13)
	Supplementary – How will the Health and Well Being social objectives support the large number of “sofa surfers” or those of no fixed address?	The Leader advised that those individuals would be considered under the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which proposed to manage the limited housing stock on the Island, putting it to greater use.

44. [Chairman’s Report](#)

A written report had been circulated for information.

45. [Motion submitted under Procedure Rule 10 of the Council’s Constitution](#)

By Councillor David Pugh

Councillor Pugh moved:

That Council:

- 1) Agrees with the decision made by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Housing to implement the recommendations of the delegated

decision report on the Development of a New Housing Strategy and Approval of the Tenancy Strategy.

- 2) Welcomes the new Tenancy Strategy which allows for the introduction of fixed term tenancies for the first time, to ensure that the limited availability of social housing is more appropriately reviewed and prioritised, on an ongoing basis, for those in greatest need at any one time.
- 3) Supports the development of a number of additional and complementary housing-related measures and activities for future consultation and implementation, in particular that:
  - a. A new and comprehensive Housing Needs Survey is undertaken to inform the development of a new Housing Strategy which will be considered by Council later in the year;
  - b. A review of the Housing Allocation Policy to consider including the setting of household income thresholds to help determine whether families are eligible or ineligible to be housed in the limited stock of social housing on the Island, and to also consider introducing a degree of prioritisation for those residents who are in employment or taking steps towards securing employment. Furthermore the Council will ensure, through its Housing Allocation Policy, that those who are serving or have served in the Armed Forces are given access to advice and are not disadvantaged in the allocation decisions that are made (in line with the provisions of the Armed Forces Covenant);
  - c. A continuation and expansion of the use of Local Lettings Policies and the Homefinder Scheme, which would also be complemented by the introduction of an explicit Local Connection criteria in the Housing Allocation Policy (as permitted under the Localism Act) which would propose strengthening the ability to prioritise the allocation of social housing to those residents with a strong and long-standing connection to the Island, and also where appropriate to those residents in particular types of employment;
  - d. A proposed Relocation Incentivisation Scheme to encourage and assist tenants in downsizing where appropriate, particularly in light of the forthcoming changes to housing benefits;
  - e. A £1m First Time Buyer Fund to help Island residents take initial steps onto the housing ladder, by helping to bridge the gap between the deposit that homeseeking residents are able to raise and that required by banks and building societies to approve a mortgage.
- 4) Endorses the four overarching principles set out paragraph 5 of the recent Cabinet Member delegated decision report as the basis for the development of the new Housing Strategy.

The motion was seconded. During the debate mention was made to the introduction of a “bedroom tax” and it was clarified this was a government proposal, not the local authority. The council was however legally obliged to agree a housing strategy. Following debate the motion was put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED :

THAT Council

- 1) Agrees with the decision made by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Housing to implement the recommendations of the delegated decision report on the Development of a New Housing Strategy and Approval of the Tenancy Strategy.
- 2) Welcomes the new Tenancy Strategy which allows for the introduction of fixed term tenancies for the first time, to ensure that the limited availability of social housing is more appropriately reviewed and prioritised, on an ongoing basis, for those in greatest need at any one time.
- 3) Supports the development of a number of additional and complementary housing-related measures and activities for future consultation and implementation, in particular that:
  - a. A new and comprehensive Housing Needs Survey is undertaken to inform the development of a new Housing Strategy which will be considered by Council later in the year;
  - b. A review of the Housing Allocation Policy to consider including the setting of household income thresholds to help determine whether families are eligible or ineligible to be housed in the limited stock of social housing on the Island, and to also consider introducing a degree of prioritisation for those residents who are in employment or taking steps towards securing employment. Furthermore the Council will ensure, through its Housing Allocation Policy, that those who are serving or have served in the Armed Forces are given access to advice and are not disadvantaged in the allocation decisions that are made (in line with the provisions of the Armed Forces Covenant);
  - c. A continuation and expansion of the use of Local Lettings Policies and the Homefinder Scheme, which would also be complemented by the introduction of an explicit Local Connection criteria in the Housing Allocation Policy (as permitted under the Localism Act) which would propose strengthening the ability to prioritise the allocation of

social housing to those residents with a strong and long-standing connection to the Island, and also where appropriate to those residents in particular types of employment;

- d. A proposed Relocation Incentivisation Scheme to encourage and assist tenants in downsizing where appropriate, particularly in light of the forthcoming changes to housing benefits;
  - e. A £1m First Time Buyer Fund to help Island residents take initial steps onto the housing ladder, by helping to bridge the gap between the deposit that homeseeking residents are able to raise and that required by banks and building societies to approve a mortgage.
- 4) Endorses the four overarching principles set out paragraph 5 of the recent Cabinet Member delegated decision report as the basis for the development of the new Housing Strategy.

46. **Proposed Changes to the Chief Officer Structure**

Members were reminded of the changes to the chief officer structure that was agreed at a meeting of Full Council on 27 February 2013.

The Employment Committee, held on 11 March 2013, agreed to further changes to the chief officer structure. During the debate members enquired in regard to the continued involvement of scrutiny and were assured that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel would continue to receive updates and would remain fully involved.

**RESOLVED :**

THAT the recommendation of the Employment Committee to remove the Director of Children's Services role from the responsibilities of the Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing and Social Care and appoint the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire County Council as undertaking the same role for the Isle of Wight Council, subject to the due diligence requirements of Hampshire County Council being satisfied be agreed. Furthermore that the timescales for the implementation of the change and the finalisation of the detailed working arrangements be delegated to the Chief Executive (or after 1 April to the Acting Head of Paid Service) to determine in consultation with the Leader, whilst recognising that these timescales and arrangements may be overridden by any requirements set out in a direction notice from the Department for Education be agreed.

47. [Annual report on Isle of Wight Council Pay Policy](#)

The Employment Committee at its meeting of 11 March 2013 considered and approved the proposed updates and amendments to the Council's pay policy statement. This was to meet the local authority's on-going statutory requirements under the Localism Act 2011. Following debate the recommendation was put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED :

THAT Employment Committee recommendation for the adoption of the Pay Policy be accepted.

48. [Approval of Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

Members were advised that there was a statutory responsibility, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to have a joint health and wellbeing strategy in place by April 2013.

During the debate, Cllr David Knowles declared an interest, as he was the proprietor of a specialist mental health facility. There was some discussion highlighting the above average number of suicides on the Island, and in particular young men. It was stated that whilst not being identified as a separate priority within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the comments would be taken into account.

RESOLVED :

THAT the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 – 16, as recommended by the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, for implementation from 1 April 2013 be approved.

49. **Cabinet**

**Reports of the Cabinet Members**

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

A written report had been circulated for information.

The Leader acknowledged the contributions of the outgoing members, who would not be standing in the Local Elections in May 2013 and further voiced his personal thanks to the outgoing Chief Executive over the past five years. During the Cabinet Member reports, other members voiced their thanks and best wishes to fellow members and the Chief Executive.

Oral questions were put to the Leader as follows :

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Cllr Howe	Had the council received the best value for the sale of the former West Wight middle school site?	The Leader stated he would provide a written response but stated that price was not the only consideration and that the sale would provide a higher level of social housing, which provided best value to the community.
Cllr Taylor	Was democracy still active on the Island?	The Leader advised that the vitality of democracy on the Island had been proven through the recent results of by-elections.
Cllr Fuller	Could the Leader provide statistics on the length of waiting times for callers to the contact centre and was it increasing?	The Leader would provide that information.
Cllr Welsford	Was the Leader content to delegate important strategic decisions to Senior Officers and recently relating to the restructure of staffing of the coastal protection unit and the policy disallowing council employees from volunteering for roles such as retained fire fighters?	<p>The Leader responded that the council had a policy framework in place that allowed officers to run the authority including management of staffing levels, although members could consider any decisions where appropriate.</p> <p>In regard to fire fighters, the Leader restated the need to maintain consistency across the authority but recognised there could be exceptions. He further stated that the coastal management unit was not being abolished and an increased number of coastal stabilisation schemes were the responsibility of the PFI provider and the restructure would reflect those changes.</p>

(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 Leader (in the absence of the Deputy Leader) as follows :

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Cllr Cousins	Would the Leader agree and acknowledge the hard work of staff at the Crematorium during the recent refurbishment works?	The Leader agreed with the comments.
Cllr Welsford	How was the decision not to list the Coastal Centre as a Community Asset supported against the level of local support and would the decision be brought before council?	The Leader stated that the local consultation planned by the Town Council had contained inaccurate information and that the decision had been made in line with the agreed policy.
Cllr Bacon	How many prosecutions had been made in the last 12 months relating to dog fouling?	The Leader stated no prosecutions had taken place, it being notoriously difficult to do so. The Leader further indicated he was open to suggestions on methods of increasing the identification of those responsible.
	Supplementary – Could the council not employ more staff?	The Leader responded this would have on-going revenue budget implications and would need to be offset with savings in other areas.

(iii) **Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Housing**

A written report had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member appraised members of the outcomes following the recent workshops and pre- launch event of the My Life a Full Life Programme. He further highlighted the results of the survey of Adult Carers, and highlighted some of the results received.

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

A written report had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member highlighted several points from the circulated report and agreed to circulate further information to members regarding the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) figures.

Oral questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Cllr Howe	Would the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel be involved and appraised of results in relation to the Child Wellbeing Survey?	The Cabinet Member assured members results would be communicated, although this would not include individual reports.
Cllr Fuller	Was the low level of happiness registered in girls 11+ linked to the levels of domestic violence and how could this be addressed?	The Cabinet Member stated that the Children’s Society would arrange individual conversations with that identified area, however it appeared that levels of happiness related to appearance and low esteem rather than bullying.
	Supplementary – Could the pressure on girls appearance link to domestic violence?	The Cabinet Member acknowledged peer pressure existed, stating that the Children’s Society would work with these individuals in this regard.
Cllr Welsford	Noting that a second Secondary School , which was out of Local Authority control had entered special measures, had reorganisation failed and damaged children’s education?	The Cabinet Member acknowledged that reorganisation had not been trouble-free, although she had recently visited one of the schools in special measures and was confident with the actions being taken to address the issues.
	Supplementary – Would the Cabinet Member continue to support the reorganisation of schools?	The Cabinet Member indicated she was unable to give this commitment as they would not be standing for re-election in May, although she accepted change always included elements of disruption and

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
		she continued to support the decision to move to a two tier system to improve educational standards.

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

A written report had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member drew attention to the visit of Brandon Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities on 21 March 2013 and advised members of his itinerary.

Oral questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Cllr Richards	Highway Policy in relation to inspection methods of the condition of Island roads.	The Cabinet Member agreed to make enquiries and respond appropriately.
Cllr Howe	Could the Cabinet Member update on plans for the future of the seawall at Totland?	The Cabinet Member stated that the land remained unstable, limiting access but acknowledged it formed part of the coastal path with restoration of pedestrian access being researched.
	Supplementary – Whilst awaiting these works, could improvements be made to the cliff path?	The Cabinet Member agreed to provide a response.

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

A written report had been circulated for information.

The Cabinet Member stated that the local funding support bids submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner had been determined and the Island had been awarded £99,000 to tackle crime and disorder, youth offending and other related activities. The Cabinet Member highlighted the centenary of the death of Professor John Milne, who had developed the first seismic recording observatory at Shide.

Oral questions were put to the Cabinet Member as follows :

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Cllr Lumley	Newport Parish Council were organising a project to mark the centenary of the	The Cabinet Member stated he would be pleased to support it.

Name	Subject	Comment
	death of John Milne and would the Cabinet Member support that project?	

(vii) [Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#)

A written report had been circulated for information.

Following the conclusion of council business, the Chairman wished to express her thanks to all councillors for their support, hard work and dedication as ward members over the past year. She also conveyed her thanks and best wishes to the Chief Executive, who would be retiring shortly.

CHAIRMAN