



Minutes

Name of meeting

Isle of Wight Council Environment & Sustainability Forum

Date and time

Thursday 27th February 2020 at 17.30

Venue

Conference Room 5, Floor 4 - County Hall

Attendees

Natasha Dix (ND) – Strategic Manager Waste & Environment (IWC)
Rob Brooker (RB) – Waste & Recycling Contract Manager (IWC)
Emily Crew (EC) – Waste Business Administrator (IWC)
Kayleigh Richter (KR) – Project Officer Environment & Sustainability (IWC)
Paul Thomas (PT) – Assistant Director of Regeneration (IWC)

Cllr John Hobart (JH) – IWC
Cllr Steve Hastings (SH) – IWC
Cllr Paul Fuller (PF) – IWC
Cllr Sarah Talbot (ST) – Fishbourne Parish Council
Cllr Alison Logan (AL) – Niton & Whitwell Parish Council
Cllr Tom Murphy (TM) – Freshwater Parish Council
Cllr Marianne Sullivan (MS) – Bembridge Parish Council
Cllr Venetia Verey (VV) – Arreton Parish Council

Dave Wallis (DW) – Island Roads
Tanja Rebel (TR) – Transition Island
Dina Jung (DJ) – Bus Users Group
David Thornton (DT) – Smart Island
Vince Ward (VW) – Smart Island
Roger Bartrum (RB)
Lester Slade (LS)
Judith Slade (JS)
Jay Robinson (JR)
Gillian Hill (GH)
Gilly Steele (GS)
Richard Steele (RS)
Jean Bartrum (JB)
Richard Bartrum (RB)
Nick Sewell (NS)
George Wilks (GW)
Steve?

1.

Apologies

John Metcalfe
Bob Seeley
Colin Rowland
Colin Palmer

Chris Ashman
Cllr Karl Love
Cllr Ian Ward

2. **Minutes from last meeting**

Previous minutes agreed.

3. **Questions from forum members**

Tanja Rebel

Mature trees are being chopped in urban areas across the country like never before. What have you to say on this and can the Forestry Commission mitigate for this short-sightedness?

TR cited the issue of the acacias outside County Hall that are suffering decay. ND advised that the trees are suffering decay, but are not currently dangerous, and a further assessment will take place later in the year. TR requested a second opinion, as in the case of the umbrella tree.

TM commented that it is a common occurrence that trees are removed, but not replaced.

TM and JH commented re Ash Dieback. This weakens trees but is not necessarily an immediate issue, some trees can live for many years. DW commented that IR assess each tree individually to assess the severity of the disease before taking any action. DW further added that when a tree is re-planted, it is maintained and if it fails it is replaced.

TR commented that it is important to consider conservation, in particular mature trees. Urban trees are removed, and trees are then replaced in woodland areas. Carbon offsetting is not good enough. Trees are important.

ND advised that the authority is recruiting a tree officer to assist the current officer with tree protection and management.

ST stated that trees are being felled all the time. Historically, trees on private land are not looked after; those with TPOs will try to be protected, but there is little that we can do if they are privately owned. DW stated that all trees are protected within the project guidelines. Safety is an ongoing issue, and claim culture is a factor in considering tree maintenance. An education piece needs to be established to inform landowners. PF of the opinion that parish councils should employ tree wardens.

Discussion followed regarding hedgerow management, and the

possibility of enforcement to reduce or stop the destruction of young trees in hedgerows. JH commented that hedgerows are important for farmers in terms of stock-proofing, that they need to keep them trimmed but there is a difference between laying and flaying. TM stated that flaying is ruining hedges, and laying is not realistic – what is needed is ‘hedge-ucation’. ND advised that there are government grant schemes available and that perhaps this is an action for the forum to take forward.

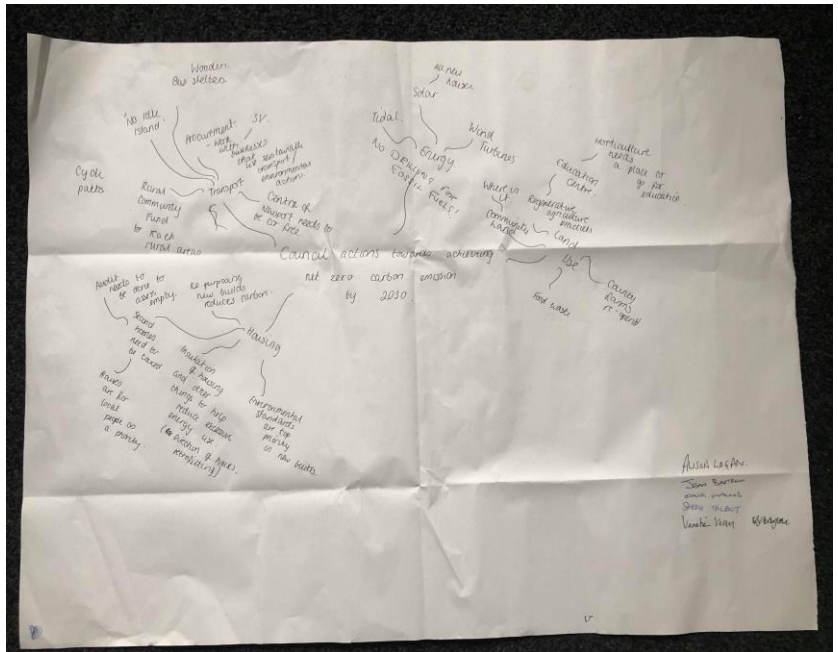
4. **Group activity/discussion: Climate & Environment Strategy**

ND advised that the draft strategy document has been circulated, and she has received some comments back, but would like to have further discussion around what actions members would like to see moving forward. ND divided the forum into five groups and gave each group an objective and encouraged them to think of 2 actions for each of 5 themes under the objective:

- Housing
- Transport
- Energy
- Land Use
- Waste/Circular Economy

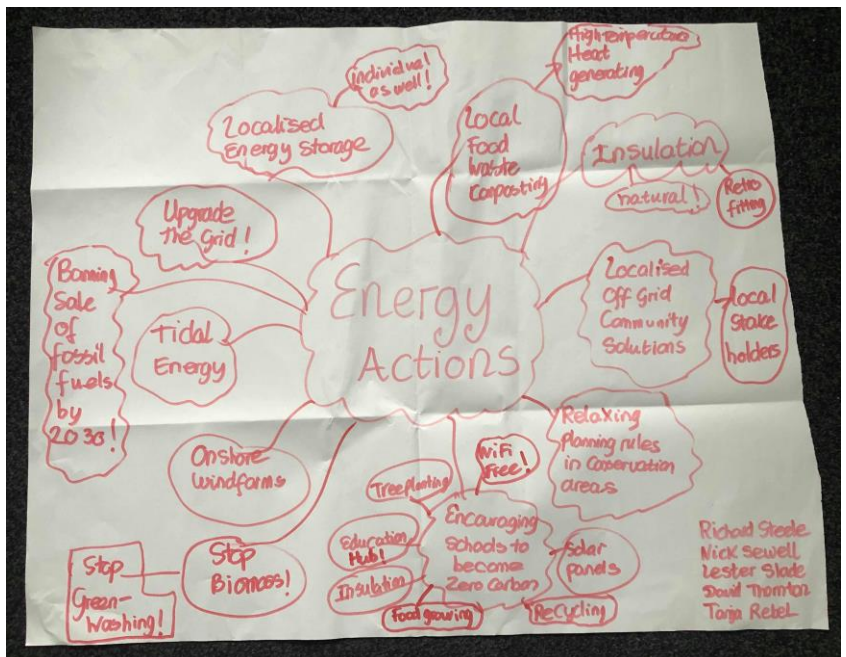
Group 1: Objective: **Council actions towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030.** (KR, AL, JB, DW, ST, VV)

Feedback: Housing – Re-purposing new builds reduces carbon, retrofit rather than build new, insulation to reduce excessive energy use, environmental standards a priority in new builds, second homes taxed, audit on empty properties. Transport – Rural community fund, more rural buses with better shelters, cycle paths, become a ‘no idle’ island, centre of Newport to be car free, work with businesses to improve sustainable transport options. Energy – tidal power, solar power for new homes, wind turbines. Land use – county farm re-opened, use regenerative agriculture methods, land turned over to community gardens and allotments for food security, education centre to teach new agriculture methods.



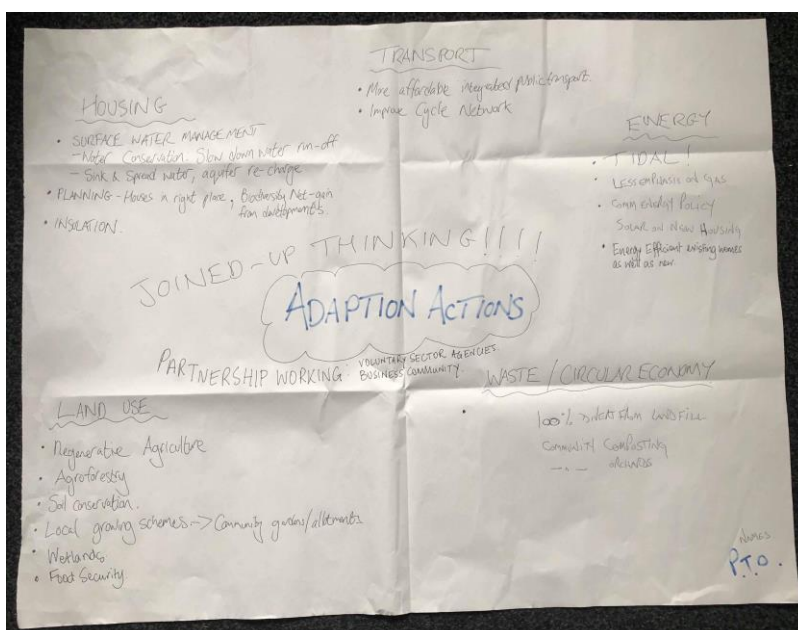
Group 2: Objective: **Energy actions developing opportunities and energy resilience for the Island.** (TR, DT, LS, NS, RS)

Feedback: Relaxing planning rules in conservation areas to allow cladding, solar panels etc to existing properties to improve energy efficiency. Insulation particularly natural insulation to be retrofitted. Localised off grid community solutions with local stakeholders. Upgrade grid to feed into. Localised energy storage, including individual storage aswell. Local food waste composting – small scale anaerobic digestion. Onshore wind farms, tidal energy. Encourage schools to become carbon zero: tree planting, Wi-Fi free, solar panels, recycling in schools. Schools to become education hubs.



Group 3: Objective: **Adaptation actions to ensure that the island is adapted and resilient to the effects of climate change.** (TM, MS, PF, RB, GW)

Feedback: Housing – Managing water use, water conservation, sink and aquifer recharge, houses in the right place, emphasis on biodiversity within communities, insulation. Transport – more affordable public transport, improve cycle networks. Energy – tidal, less emphasis on natural gas, solar, community energy policy, homes made more energy efficient. Waste – 100% diversion from landfill, community composting, use of orchards, regenerative agriculture, local growing schemes, community gardens, protecting wetlands. Food and energy security need to be considered and energy resilience.

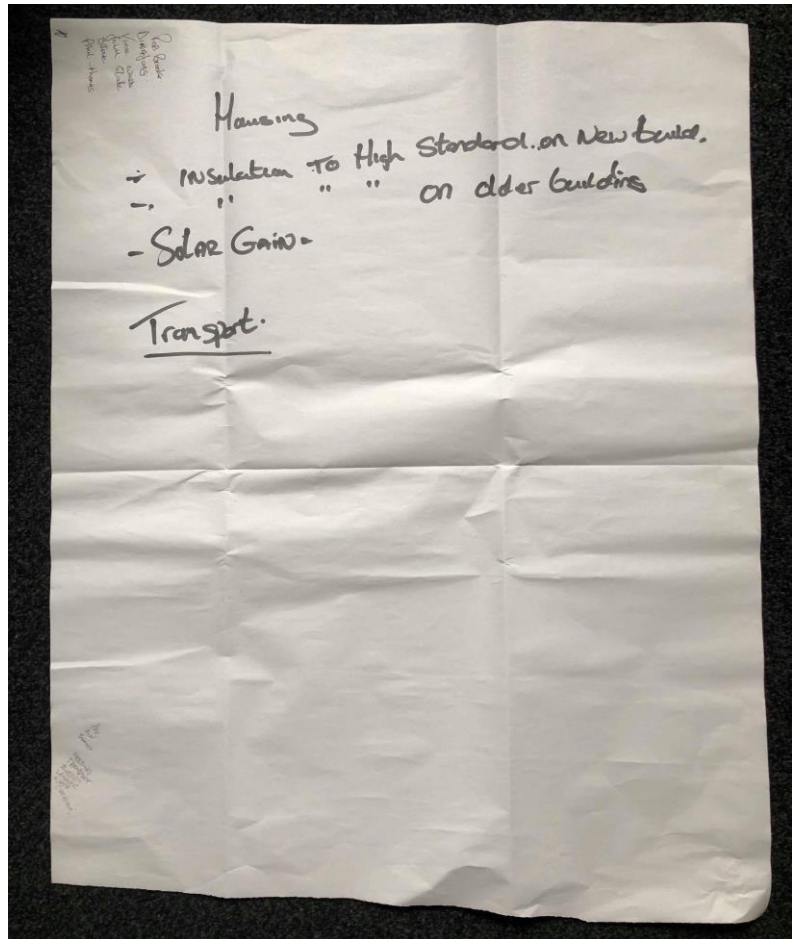


Group 4: Objective: **Environmental actions to protect to protect and enhance the island natural environment and UNESCO Biosphere by managing land sustainably and connecting people with the environment.** (RB, DJ, PT, VW, JS, S?)

Feedback: Housing – Insulation on new builds and retro fitted, solar gain (allowing positioning of new builds to maximise solar)

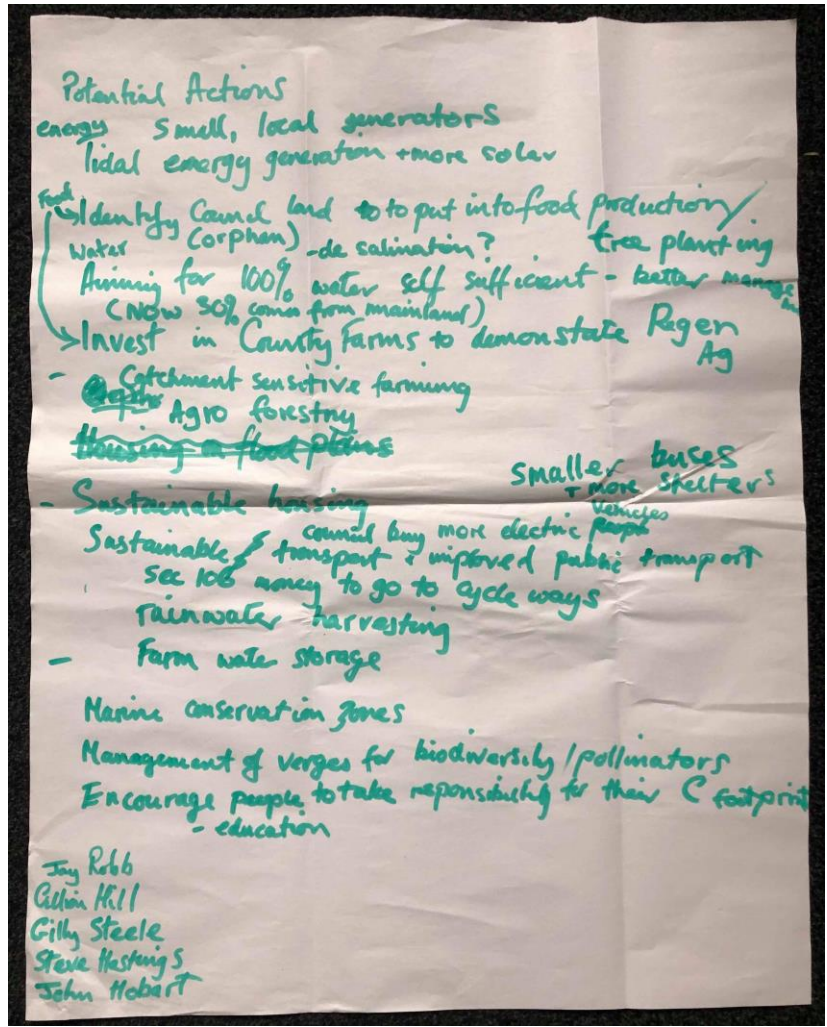
Transport – buses. Ban use of glyphosate weed killers on island.

No neonicotinoids allowed, or replacements. ND commented that the IW has large areas of inshore waters, have protected areas of sea grass, other parts of the country that grow kelp as part of carbon sequestering, increases fisheries. AL commented that Newtown creek is having issues with chemical nitrate off-spills from farms even though the area itself is protected. ND advised that the EA are putting hold on large planning apps across SE of England until this has been addressed, looking at forestry to address this issue. RB commented that this is also an issue in areas with high septic tank usage, discharge if unmanaged also pushes out nitrates, EA starting scheme around this.



Group 5: Objective: **Enabling actions for community and town and parish councils to support the island journey towards net zero of carbon emissions.** (SH, JH, JR, GS, GH)

Feedback: Housing – encourage micro-generation e.g. small turbines on houses, tidal and solar. Food, identify orphan land for food production, county farms to demonstrate and promote regen agriculture. 100% water self-sufficiency as get 30% from mainland, need to be self-sufficient for drinking water at least – de-salination. Regenerative agriculture holds carbon in soil, reservoirs. WATER RESILIENCE. Housing – better insulation, rainwater harvesting, stop building on flood plains. Transport – more electric vehicle fleet, more cycleways, rural communities connected to main towns. Need compulsory purchase powers, or voluntary schemes with landowners to connect via bridleways and over land, improve public transport and bus shelters to make safe. Marine conservation zones, management of verges for maximum biodiversity. Awareness of personal responsibility and own carbon footprint – behaviour change. Schools and towns to have water fountains.



5. **AOB.**

ST advised that Footprint Trust and Amey are visiting Fishbourne Sailing Club to discuss waste management.

JH commented that he would like to see more about catchment sensitive farming. SH in agreement. TM advised that AONB have an officer, Mark Simmonds.

ACTION: workshop to be organised.

PT queried the mentions re houses being built on known flood plains. ND advised Morton Brook, approximately 15 years ago.

GW mentioned urban gardens for biodiversity, encouraging them and educating people as to how this can be done and the benefits.

TM commented that in terms of planning policy, hedges rather than fences should be encouraged as they are resilient and encourage wildlife.

MS advised that Bembridge Parish Council have installed an EV charging point in Bembridge but are struggling to source a minibus

that is not very expensive. LS suggested that they look at leasing.

***The next meeting will be Thursday 19th March 2020 at 17.30 –
Conference Room 5, Floor 4, County Hall.***

Presentation: TBC