



Minutes

Name of meeting	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR REGENERATION, PLANNING, HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT
Date and time	7 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 5.00PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Tig Outlaw (Chairman), Debbie Andre, Michael Beston, Andrew Garratt, Michael Lilley, Chris Quirk, Brian Tyndall
Cabinet members present	Cllrs Dave Stewart, Ian Ward, Wayne Whittle
Other members present	Cllrs Charles Chapman, Paul Fuller, Julie Jones-Evans, Karl Love
Officers Present	Mr Chris Ashman, Jon Baker, Paul Thistlewood

1. **Minutes**

The minutes to last meetings of both the Economy and Tourism Select Committee and the Environment and Transport Select Committee were reviewed.

RESOLVED:

- i. THAT the Minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Tourism Select Committee held on [15 September 2016](#) be agreed.
- ii. THAT the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Transport Select Committee held on [3 November 2016](#) be agreed.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Quirk declared an interest in that he was a member of Keep Island in the Franchise (KILF).

3. **Public Question Time**

Mr Mike Ward of Seaview asked a question in relation to the Council not being included on the national register of providers of social housing. The Head of Place indicated that the Cabinet Member was reviewing the matter and an update would be provided for the committee in due course.

4. Terms of Reference of the Committee

The committee's terms of reference were discussed and members were keen to ensure that the best evidence from all stakeholders would be received and taken into account as well as utilising the experience from Island residents and service users. Such users could include tenant's representatives from various organisations with regard to housing and the use of all the Island's Housing Associations.

As the remit of the committee was very large, members expressed a desire to be able to establish more than one Task and Finish Group with the approval of the Leader, relevant Cabinet Member and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, should it be deemed necessary.

RESOLVED :

THAT the Terms of Reference of the Committee be noted.

5. Cabinet Members Update

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Business Development gave an overview of the directorate and the future plans for the council in order to provide opportunities to the Island. These would provide redevelopment and income generating prospects by means of developing key projects towards identifying the necessary resources and methods of delivery, whilst at the same time developing a holistic regeneration strategy for the Island.

A major conference was held on the Island in July 2017 that attracted over 130 various stakeholders who had demonstrated an interest in working with the council to achieve the desired goals. There was also an online survey entitled the "Wight We Want" that would enable Island residents to contribute their thoughts, priorities and objectives around the future of the Isle of Wight.

The survey was being monitored very carefully with regard to the demographics of those responding. The council was taking active steps to ensure that all age groups were being given the best opportunity to contribute and all Island citizens would also be encouraged to participate in the forthcoming Residents Panel which would enable them to engage in the community in future research and consultation.

With regard to the Island Plan consultation, it was noted that it had been extended to the end of September 2017 in order to allow as many Town and Parish Councils as possible to contribute.

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport then provided the committee with an overview of his area of responsibility.

Following the takeover of Island Line by First MTR South Western Trains, the Cabinet Member and officers had met with representatives of the new owners, including the new Head of Stakeholders and Communications, who would be the main point of contact for the service. Finances of Islandline had been isolated from the rest of the franchises services in order to identify exactly what the costings and benefits would be.

The company was keen to engage as much as possible with the whole of the Island and had also joined Visit Isle of Wight to highlight their input to the tourism sector. There would also be a visit to the Island in the coming months from the Managing Director of South Western Trains.

In respect of the ongoing issues of the Cowes Floating Bridge, it was noted that a decision had to be taken with regard to addressing the problems around providing a consistent facility and as a result the vessel was taken out of service. The manufacturers and the architects were being spoken to with a view to bringing the Floating Bridge back into service as soon as possible, but this would not happen until all issues had been addressed and the council was certain that a full and consistent service could be made available.

Members were pleased to learn of plans between First MTR and Isle Access for the development of the old ticket office at Ryde Esplanade into a new Café and Centre as part of the Gateway to assist both tourists and residents alike, with accessibility issues addressed as well as advice and access to specialist equipment.

On the issue of the floating bridge, members requested what plans were in place should the service not be reinstated at all. The Cabinet Member advised that it was intended that the floating bridge should return to full service as soon as all investigations had been concluded.

Members were advised that the car parking policy would be reviewed as soon as it had been looked at by the new administration. Members were also informed that a Cabinet Member delegated decision around the commencement to proceed with consultation over Isle of Wight Resident Parking Zones was scheduled to be taken towards the end of 2017.

RESOLVED :

THAT the Cabinet Member updates be noted.

6. **Report of the Transport and Infrastructure Task Force**

The committee reviewed a paper which reported on the outcomes of the findings by an independent Transport Infrastructure Task Force (TITF) which was established in September 2016. The outcomes of the TITF were that there needed to be focus on areas such as cross Solent travel, Island Gateways, congestion and sustainable transport as well as improved technology, and key recommendations around these issues were submitted. Town and Parish councils would also be welcomed as being important stakeholders with regard to any proposals.

Members suggested that in order to achieve the best possible outcomes from the recommendations of the TITF, it may be necessary to adopt a more pragmatic approach in addressing them. Ryde Pier should also be seen as a key component of the success of the recommendations around Island Line. Any investment in Island Line should be by means of a realistic approach that would benefit not just the local community but visitors to the Island as well.

The committee believed that as a minimum, all relevant ward members directly affected by the Island Line Service should be invited to any appropriate negotiation meetings involving the service in order to be kept apprised of proceedings and be able to engage with stakeholders.

There was also recognition from the committee that congestion issues needed to be addressed. This could be linked in with advances in digital technology, where people could be encouraged to work from home more therefore relieving the pressure of increased traffic on the Island's roads. Cycling was also highlighted as a component of achieving reduced congestion as well as use of electric bicycles and cars.

With regard to an independent study of a fixed link, it was clarified by the Leader of the Council that whilst the authority would support such a study, it would not be at any financial cost to it. It would also be necessary for any study to be seen as totally independent.

With regard to the recommendations set out in the report, the committee was advised that they would all be addressed via various methods. This could include further actions required by Cabinet, Cabinet Member, scrutiny committees or by officers. Members agreed to offer any suitable support to Cabinet in expediting any of the key priorities as set out within the recommendations.

RESOLVED :

- I. THAT the committee note and welcome the report and the recommendations of the TITF.
- II. THAT the committee offer the Cabinet the appropriate support in progressing those that are seen as a key priority.

7. [Affordable / Specialist Housing on the Isle of Wight](#)

The committee reviewed a report which set out the general background to all local housing needs. It felt that a Task and Finish group should be established to look in detail at the supply of affordable / specialist housing on the Island.

The chairman was keen that all available support be provided to the Cabinet and the authority as a whole in order to see how an appropriate level of affordable housing could be delivered for the Island community.

Members acknowledged that the housing situation on the Island was very concerning with the trend for people registered with the authority as having housing needs increasing and that 40 percent of households on the Island were not able to meet the affordable rents.

The Head of Place advised that housing was the key to an individual's wellbeing, providing a safe place of residence, not only provided by means of new builds but also by reusing any existing stock and buildings, including those that were within the council's property portfolio. Those with special care needs and learning difficulties which required more specialist housing needs also needed to be addressed.

Not only should the registered housing providers be approached, but also private landlords and developers needed to be engaged in assisting in the delivery of affordable homes and identifying a range of delivery options that would work for the Island.

Members also acknowledged that low Island wages was also a factor in the current situation and that a successful regeneration programme, which attracted more investment to the Island along with higher wages, would assist in allowing more people to afford rents and mortgages.

RESOLVED :

THAT a Task and Finish group be established to look at the supply of affordable / specialist housing on the Island, how this should be reflected within the Island Plan and make appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet.

8. **Committee's Workplan**

The Committee acknowledged that there was a lot of debate during the meeting which had resulted in various recommendations being taken forward for action. Should any further ideas be forthcoming, then they should be shared between members of the committee and added to the workplan for future debate.

Depending on the agenda, any future meetings of the committee would require the presence of the appropriate Cabinet Member who would be notified in advance of the meeting.

RESOLVED :

THAT the members of the committee would continue to exchange ideas for inclusion in the workplan.

CHAIRMAN