



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR REGENERATION, PLANNING, HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT</b>
Date and time	<b>THURSDAY, 27 JULY 2018 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM</b>
Venue	<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs Steve Hastings (Chairman), Michael Beston, Andrew Garratt, Michael Lilley, John Medland, Chris Quirk, Brian Tyndall,
Cabinet members present	Cllrs John Hobart, Michael Murwill, Tig Outlaw, Wayne Whittle
Officers Present	Chris Ashman, Ashley Curzon, Maisy Green, Paul Thistlewood

1. [\*\*Minutes\*\*](#)

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2018 be confirmed.

2. [\*\*Declarations of Interest\*\*](#)

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Public Question Time**

An oral question was asked by Tanya Rebel of Cowes on progress with the Council's proposals on a dark skies policy and plastic free strategy following the Environmental Conference.

The Cabinet Member for Procurement, Waste Management, Special Projects and Forward Planning advised that plastic was being minimised across the council. It was also confirmed by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage that the leisure centres across the Island were working hard to eliminate the use of plastic. An update on progress with the dark skies policy would be provided later in the meeting.

#### 4. **Housing and Homelessness Strategy**

##### (a) **Final report of the Task and Finish Group on Affordable Housing**

Members gave consideration to the report of the task group looking at affordable housing. The previous chairman of the committee, now the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Protection, who chaired the task group, thanked Councillors Lilley, Quirk and Andre for their support and hard work throughout the inquiry. It was highlighted that the evidence within the report proved that the Isle of Wight was not delivering on affordable homes. Lower wages and a shortage of skills on the Isle of Wight were a cause for concern.

The committee congratulated the members involved in the inquiry.. It was suggested that the use of different imaginative schemes should be explored. Other local authorities had adopted some good schemes that were working well to improve the shortage of affordable homes. Members requested that the current lack of affordable homes and social housing should be be looked at urgently by the Council.

##### RESOLVED:

THAT the following recommendations of the task and finish group be approved -

- i. The council should consider ways in which it can incentivise developers in the delivery of large schemes including making it easier to compulsory purchase land where homes remain un-built and to charge developers full council tax for every un-built development from the point that the original planning permission expires.
- ii. The Isle of Wight Council should consider a policy of early pre-application consultation with residents, heritage groups, Town and Parish Council's and ward councillors to allow issues of concern to the local community to be addressed and encourage the local community to be part of the delivery of the affordable homes that these communities require.
- iii. It is recommended that a standalone arm's-length property company dedicated to building specialist and affordable housing for Island families be created. It was encouraging to hear Sajid Javid (then Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) in his speech of 5th March 2018 confirm the government's commitment to promoting 'Build to Rent'.
- iv. If the Isle of Wight Council were to set up a housing delivery company any homes delivered by this company should have some protection from 'Right to Buy' unless councils are allowed to access 100% of 'Right to Buy, receipts to replace properties sold under that scheme.

- v. The Isle of Wight Council should wherever possible look to work in partnership with current providers of specialist and affordable housing to help with delivery through de-risking sites and releasing unused council land for development.
- vi. The Isle of Wight council should explore the possible viability of having a factory to produce high quality pre-fabricated homes on the Island once the SHLAA has been completed and an appropriate volume of sites identified.
- vii. The Council should avoid any new affordable housing developments for sale that are tied to 'Leaseholds' to ensure that new home buyers can have the protection, security and knowledge of future costs that 'Freeholds' offer.
- viii. With the pending roll out of fibre to the home across the Island that the new investment through Wight Fibre will offer, the council should do what it can to reduce future disruption to the road network and service delivery by facilitating fibre to homes for new build. Therefore it is recommended that fibre to the home should form an integral part of any housing development over 10 units that is within 200 metres of a fibre enabled cabinet.
- ix. the Isle of Wight Council should support the following proposals to change current legislation;
  - a. Councils should be allowed to keep 100% of the receipts from homes sold under the 'Right to Buy' scheme to reinvest in the replacement of specialist and affordable housing.
  - b. The Treasury Select Committee's view that the government should abolish the housing revenue borrowing cap to boost council house building.

**(b) Housing and Homelessness Performance Outcomes 2017-18**

It was confirmed that although performance had improved slightly, additional improvements still needed to be made. The majority of the issues related to the lack of buildings available, and the lack of housing stock. Members were advised that only one housing association had been actively building on the Isle of Wight, and that there was a huge demand for one and two bedroom homes.

It was requested that the housing list be submitted to the members on a regular basis as the committee would benefit from the data.

Members highlighted the need for more partners to work together, the chairman confirmed that the format of the homelessness forum would be changing; it would now act as a workshop rather than a talk shop. It was hoped that this would improve and build partnerships.

RESOLVED:

The Committee be supplied with regular updates on the number of people on the housing waiting list and this to show the number of working families and relevant trend data.

5. **Regeneration Strategy**

(a) **To review progress on the community hub 'One Public Estate' feasibility and delivery**

The Head of Economic Development provided the board with an update. It was advised that the 'One Public Estate' was a Local Government Association initiative to find ways to bring sites within public sector ownership forward for redevelopment. The IW Council put forward a bid which was successfully awarded £250,000. There were three projects in place at present:

(i) *Pyle Street Community Hub, Newport*

It was confirmed that out of the three projects this one had made the most progress. It was owned by three public sectors (IW Council, NHS and Homes and Community Agency) and funding was being sourced. Members were informed that discussions to move the library had taken place in terms of feasibility, but it was stressed that nothing had been confirmed at this stage

(ii) *Co-located blue light services, Newport*

Members were informed that the project was being led by Hampshire colleagues as the project was linked to the fire service review. The feasibility work has been completed by officers and a business case would be put forward.

(iii) *Heights / Barracks Community Hub, Sandown*

It was advised that officers were currently commissioning a feasibility study for the site. It was suggested due to the location of the Heights leisure centre the project would be more complex and it was important that the facility continued to operate in a commercially viable way.

Members raised concerns about relocating the library as part of the Pyle Street project. Officers suggested that at present it was about feasibility and demonstrating that services could be brought together on one site. The future maintenance that would need to be carried out at the existing library and the potential costs associated with this were highlighted to members.

The potential relocation of the current services based at Seaclose was raised by members. It was advised that the Council had been working

hard to reduce the number of office buildings, initially there had been 43 buildings, and at present there were 11.

In looking at the redevelopment of sites for new homes members highlighted the urgent need to encourage the construction of one and two bedroom properties which were in short supply on the Island.

RESOLVED:

- i. THAT the committee be provided with a regular update on the One Public Estate programme
- ii. The cabinet be requested to encourage the construction of one and two bedroom properties in any related development where housing is to be included as part of the project.

**(b) Regeneration Strategy**

The Director of Regeneration updated the committee with details of key regeneration projects. It was confirmed that the Scrutiny Committee had agreed to look at the strategy in more detail at a future meeting.

Newport Harbour was one of the key projects and was currently on track; however a partner needed to be appointed. Officers were reviewing the mix of the project and the opportunities it could provide. It was confirmed that there had been an excellent response to the brief. Twenty four enquiries had been now been shortlisted to eight. It was thought that an appointment be made in September.

Nicholson Road, Ryde had attracted lots of commercial interest. It was suggested that a scheme for a planning and transport solution needed to be brought forward. It was confirmed that the project would start in January 2019.

Shanklin Spa had been incorporated into the masterplan for the bay. There was an exciting vision for both local residents and tourism. It was noted that local level priorities and the need to create work were key.

It was advised that officers were seeking investment from the private sector for Dinosaur Isle. There had been some interest and dialog with potential investors. However it was important to obtain an investment that would help maintain the site's international accreditation.

The committee suggested that members of the public should be involved in Nicholson Road, Ryde. It was thought that incorporating the public would generate a positive response and that methodology such as 'Planning for Real' could be used.

Members were concerned about monitoring the number of projects and requested that a list of all projects and an update be provided to the committee.

RESOLVED:

- i. Future progress reports on regeneration projects should timelines, resource implications and a small commentary on key issues.
- ii. The committee to have an informal briefing by the Director of Regeneration on the draft regeneration strategy.

6. [Environmental Action Plan](#)

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage advised that the conference held on 26 June 2018 was successful with over 180 attendees. Professor Cragoe from Lincoln spoke about the biosphere and looking after and maintaining the environment. It was confirmed that a consultation on the IW had just concluded on marine conservation zones. Professor Bahaj from Southampton discussed sustainable energy and there were also presentations from local businesses. Overall the day was very successful, great feedback had been received, and it was suggested that the next conference would be for half a day.

The committee discussed the different requirements of the strategy and believed that the green flag status should be reintroduced for Council parks and spaces for quality control. It was confirmed that Northwood Cemetery had just reintroduced this.

On 25 July 2018 the Government revised the National Planning Policy Framework and members raised concerns about the changes and what the Council were trying to achieve in becoming biosphere.

RESOLVED:

- a) The Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage be requested to consider the reintroduction of Green Flag status for all council parks and open spaces and report back to the committee.
- b) The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing be advised of the Committee's concern in relation to the content of the new National Planning Policy Framework in relation to oil, gas and coal exploration and extraction and the impact that this could have on the Island's Biosphere nomination to UNESCO.

7. [Cabinet Member Update](#)

The Cabinet Member for Procurement, Waste Management, Special Projects and Forward Planning informed the committee that the construction of the new waste management facility at Forest Road was progressing well. It was suggested that by next year the Council would be operating one of the best waste sites in the Country with cutting edge technology.

6,000 residents had signed up to Green Waste which was more than had been originally anticipated and a new target was now being looked at.

Consideration was being given to opening Lynnbottom Civic Amenity site one evening a week together with opening the Afton Civic Amenity Site earlier and closing earlier to better meet local circumstances. There had been one complaint in the last month at Lynnbottom regarding the opening hours.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Protection informed members that the combined fire consultation was due to be signed off on 25 July 2018, it was confirmed that this was going to be delayed by one week. It was noted that the partnership with Hampshire was working well and that the various challenges which arose on 25 July 2018 were dealt with appropriately.

Members were informed by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage that discussions were ongoing about the coastal path and a new link had been agreed from the Folly along the river to East Cowes and was proving to be successful. A Newport Harbour Board had now been established to oversee the operation of the harbour St Helens Duver had been reopened, and a possible new site for the records office had been found in Ryde.

#### 8. Committee's Work Plan

Consideration was given to issues that should be included within the committee's work plan. Given what had been discussed earlier in the meeting a number of topics were identified. The Scrutiny Committee had requested that the committee monitor the proposed savings on the Highway PFI contract. .

#### RESOLVED:

- a) The monitoring of the proposed Highway PFI savings arising from commissioned expert consultancy work be included within the work plan.
- b) Any proposal regarding the relocation of planning services should be brought to the committee for consideration.
- c) Items be included within the work plan relating to green lanes and unadopted/private streets.
- d) A copy of the Island Roads report on lessons learnt from its scheme in Noke Common should be circulated to the committee.
- e) Consideration be given by the committee on an approach to scrutinising the effect of work by public utilities on the highway network.