

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR TOURISM,
CULTURE AND HERITAGE
TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
ON WEDNESDAY, 20 JANUARY 2016**

Culture

The Full Council agenda item includes a possible choice on cutting libraries but please note that libraries are a statutory service.

Local authorities have a statutory duty under the [Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964](#) 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it (section 7), taking into account local needs and within available resources.

Local councils must:

- have regard to encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service (section 7(2)(b))
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area (section 8(3)(b))

The Isle of Wight Council, through a previously threatened judicial review, within the High Court acknowledged a level of commitment to the library service. Therefore the already agreed savings will not close more facilities.

As stated previously, Isle of Wight Council officers are in unfettered discussion with three local town and parish councils. The possible outcome could be the creation of locally supported facilities.

Records department

The National Archives (TNA) continues to keep a watching brief on the planning to upgrade the Isle of Wight facilities. I met with the head of TNA, Jeff Jaynes, and gave him an assurance that Isle of Wight Council officers, led by Richard Smout, were moving forward with a cohesive solution.

Sport

The new government Sport Strategy has just been released and the request from the minister has requested feedback from a regional and local level... our Island status with travelling expenses and such difficulties will be submitted.

Ryde Arena changing room grant from Sport England remains in place (£75,000) although when damage to the roof was caused by gale force winds there was cause for concern.

I am working with Sport England to try to make Island beach soccer more sustainable. Throughout the summer period over 70 young people are involved in the sport with varying standards of skill. The Island team has won through to represent England in Europe.

Tourism

Visit England now comes under the umbrella of Visit Britain, which goes against the independent triennial review. I have made representation to the minister, Tracey Crouch, also stating my concerns over the future handling of the £40 million tourism grant recently allocated to Visit England. The said grant will be open to destination management organisations such as Visit Isle of Wight, who have quickly made contact with Visit Britain via David Thornton.

Councillor Ian Stephens
Executive Member for Tourism, Culture and Heritage