

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER
FOR PLANNING, LICENSING, PUBLIC REALM AND LOCAL
ENGAGEMENT TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
ON WEDNESDAY, 20 JANUARY 2016**

Planning

- **Planning Committee**

Planning Committee met in December and applications were approved for Harcourt Sands, Puckpool and Bembridge Marina.

- **Area action plans**

Consultation on the area action plans concluded on 21 December. In respect of this consultation, more than 100 representations were received from individuals, organisations and from town and parish councils. All comments are in the process of being analysed, and will be fed back.

- **Planning appeals**

In the last few weeks, decisions have been received in respect of the Blanchards planning application at Brighstone, and for the Brickfields redevelopment at Binstead. Both of these applications were refused by the Planning Committee against officers' recommendation, and in both cases these applications were overturned by the Planning Inspectorate.

In light of planning appeals in general, the local planning authority continues to exceed the government target of 70 per cent of our decisions being dismissed by the inspectorate. Of the 31 appeal hearings since April 2015, seven have been allowed (23 per cent), while 24 have been dismissed (77 per cent).

The start of the Brighstone Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation has been deferred, at Brighstone Parish Council's request, until Friday, 22 January, to allow Brighstone's community to digest the Blanchards appeal decision, and to understand whether it will have any implications for the proposed plan.

Licensing

- **Highways Permission Policy**

A meeting was held with Island Roads regarding the enforcement of A boards, after they were removed from the Highways Permissions Policy. It was agreed that the guidelines for A boards which was originally drafted and agreed for inclusion in the policy, can be provided to businesses as good practice should

a problem be identified. This policy is scheduled to be reviewed following the summer.

In the meantime, the Licensing Department has completed street permission licensing in Newport and will now be prioritising Ryde, Cowes, East Cowes, St Helens, Seaview and Bembridge. The licence ensures that all tables, chairs and other similar items placed on the highway have the correct permissions to do so.

Town and parish council engagement

- **Transferral of services**

I have attended a number of meetings with the Isle of Wight Association of Town and Parish Councils, with both the executive of the association, and with lead officers. These meetings continue to explore the transferral of services, with discussions currently underway on the transferral of public toilets.

- **Highways**

A meeting took place between IWALC, Island Roads and officers to resolve a number of ongoing concerns raised by members.

- **Public Meetings**

I attended a public meeting at Shanklin, for the purpose of outlining the area action plan and its objectives.

During the meeting, an emphasis was highlighted on the council's pending Parking Policy. Subsequently, since this meeting I can report, that with officers it is agreed that planning policy for town centre parking is consistent and is allowed to feed in with the new Parking Strategy.

In addition to this, I've received constructive input from local residents regarding the budget, and public toilets which I have referred to officers.

Rights of way

The wet weather is having an adverse impact on the rights of way network. In addition to wet, muddy and flooded paths, landslips are affecting the coastal path and beach accesses, the most noticeable of which is Compton car park beach steps at Hanover Point – the situation is being monitored with a view to considering beach access reinstatement proposals once land is stable.

On a positive note the following can be reported:

- **Nunwell Down:** Rights of Way (ROW) are grateful for landowner agreement to upgrade a public footpath to bridleway status to open up the network to a greater number of users. The path in question (B30) is particularly useful as it will link up to existing bridleways and other available routes on Nunwell and Brading Downs.
- **Coastal Path, Tyne Ledge, Bembridge:** A Diversion Order has been made to reroute the coastal path at Tyne Ledge. The existing route has been closed for some time due to landslips but with landowner agreement a new route on stable ground has been possible.
- **Niton Bridleway (NT26):** ROW is receiving messages of thanks for improving a bridleway at the back of Niton Primary School. With landowner agreement the width was increased by about one metre, opening up the path for convenient and safe multi use.
- **Lynnbottom, Newport:** ROW via planning has successfully negotiated funding from Amey via section 106 moneys to improve a public footpath and bridleway in the vicinity of the civic amenity site at Newport.
- **HF Holidays:** ROW has been awarded further grant funding from HF Holidays to improve a popular path (GL57) through a copse near Sainham, Godshill - works to start in the spring when ground conditions have dried to allow access.
- **Isle of Wight Ramblers' Association:** Successful joint schemes involving ramblers' working parties on steep paths in Ventnor and Niton where new retaining steps were required have been completed.
- **Isle of Wight Bridleway Group:** ROW supporting volunteer working parties clearing vegetation to improve visibility at points where bridleways meet roads. Jointly funded new bridle gates.

Also since last Full Council

- With the local member, I met with **marine businesses** based at **Medina Yard**. This was followed up with a meeting between businesses, Executive members and lead officers to understand the challenges these businesses face, and how as a local authority we can support businesses grow.
- I have attended a meeting of the **Local Access Forum (LAF)**. At the meeting, I raised questions regarding the future of the **Forestry Commission** and how the priorities of woodlands on the Island are in transition from being areas seen primarily for timber production to areas for leisure, recreation and ecology. In addition there is a mission from members to work towards 100 per cent of **bridleways** being re-opened. At the meeting I was informed that it was necessary for the police to intervene following damage to burrows from cycles, horses and other animals on common ground.

- Finally the LAF are seeking to use local expertise to bid for future funding initiatives.

Councillor Paul Fuller

Executive Member for Planning, Licensing, Public Realm and Local Engagement