

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC
TRANSPORT, TOURISM, RECREATION AND HERITAGE
TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
ON WEDNESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2016**

TOURISM

DBID Update

Visit Isle of Wight remains in the consultation phase of developing a Destination BID (DBID). More than 1,200 companies have been contacted by mail, twice, to explain the potential value of a DBID and to invite participants to consultation sessions and online surveys. Once sufficient responses have been gathered, the process will proceed to the publication of a draft business plan for five years. This will outline the proposed payment structures, collection details and projects that are envisaged over the lifetime of the DBID.

A total of 230 companies have so far provided feedback on the proposal. A further 100 companies are expected to participate in the consultation before the end of January. A draft business plan will be published in March, with a final version planned for May, and a vote in June. If a DBID receives favour as the appropriate way forward, then the DBID governance structure and operation would begin in September.

A full report will be presented to Executive in March.

Destination Marketing

1. Interest in the Island as a holiday destination got off to a good start with a surge in website traffic, national press coverage for February short breaks in the Mail and the Metro (where the Island was listed as one of the must see places to visit in 2016). In addition, there has been a significant increase in first time visitors to the Island with more than 80,000 people adding some £6.8 million to the visitor economy. This growth is important as our new visitors often come back year after year.
2. Visit Isle of Wight's exhibition partnership is attending a range of national and international exhibitions including the British Travel Show, the BBC Good Food and Gardening Show, the National Camping and Caravanning show, South East Film Expo (location scouting), Destinations 2016, and the Daily Mail Outdoor Adventure Show. New for 2016 will be a series of shopping centre promotions in 15 locations between the Island and London.
3. Brand development work is underway. Data from 15,000 previous holiday makers and potential visitors who participated in Visit Isle of Wight's "Brand perception survey" is being used to tweak and fine tune our destination brand and target markets. This will increase the impact and effectiveness of campaigns in 2016 and beyond.

4. The 2016 Festival of the Sea (late June) will this year feature the Solitaire de Figaro race alongside the Round the Island race and Shipwreck Isle and more than 40 other events across the Island. Once again, Visit Isle of Wight will feature events, festivals and carnivals from across the Island in destination marketing and press work.

Broadband

A further two cabinets in Shanklin and Brighstone are now ready for service. BT figures now show 19,715 premises are now able to connect to the service. These figures are being verified.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

I will be attending the AGM of the Rail and Bus Users' Association on Saturday.

Chris Wells and I attended the Solent Transport meeting last week at which Island Line was discussed. You all will have seen the report which will be presented to Full Council.

Harbours

A training session was held on 11 February to Executive members (duty holders). The session proved to be very informative setting out the responsibilities and regulations that need to be carried out at Newport and Ventnor. A number of items were due to be discussed at Newport Harbour Users' Group on 22 February.

Councillor Shirley Smart
Executive Member for Public Transport, Tourism, Recreation and Heritage