

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC  
TRANSPORT, TOURISM, RECREATION AND HERITAGE  
TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL  
ON WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 2016**

**TOURISM**

**Visit Isle of Wight (VIOW) tourism conference**

More than 250 Island tourism business representatives attended the VIOW tourism conference this month at Gurnard Pines. Speakers included the chief executive of Visit Cornwall, local business woman Jan Brookes of Isle Access, and John Carmichael of the National Coastal Academy. David Thornton launched the Draft Proposal Document for the WightBID and explained the themes of the BID to the audience.

**The WightBID**

Following the three month consultation between the Industry and VIOW, of the 350 tourism businesses who attended a meeting or completed a survey online, over 90 per cent of all businesses believe the BID is the best way forward. The WightBID draft proposal has now been published and can be downloaded from the VIOW industry resources website [visitwight.org](http://visitwight.org) or [isleofwightbid.com](http://isleofwightbid.com)

**VIOW spring campaign**

VIOW has just completed the spring campaign, "Pure Island Happiness", which has featured press adverts in national titles and magazines, radio advertising on the mainland, posters in South West and Great Western Train carriages, displays at national holiday exhibitions as well as widespread social media and excellent press coverage. So far VIOW has generated more than £7.5million of press coverage in the three years since it opened a press office. This year, for the first time, VIOW is running a series of shopping centre manned pop-up displays to encourage Hampshire and Dorset visitors across by foot.

**Rural Broadband Project update**

Current customer ready for service achievement (total homes passed) is 19,741 with 3,905 ports assigned for the purpose of customer connection (which accounts for nearly 20 per cent take up).

Work remains to complete a range of structures before the end of March. This includes fibre to the premise structures in Chillerton and Chale Green exchange areas and 'fibre to the cabinet' structures in Newport and Shanklin exchange areas.

Further structures are still being delivered in the Calbourne, Brighstone, and Yarmouth exchange areas.

The project team is in dialogue with both BT and BDUK to formally agree contract extension activity to the end of March. This has been required due to challenges in delivery in the following areas:

- Change of subcontractors to improve contract performance.
- Securing private wayleaves with landowners.
- Interaction with SSE for power connection to cabinets.

There have been benefits to this late delivery which has enabled technology and value for money efficiencies. For example, 17 cabinets now have cards installed which will assist in broadband speed increases. The Isle of Wight has been chosen as the first area for this activity to happen.

The council chief executive has received some very favourable comments from Jenny Nuttall, BDUK value for money lead following meeting last month with the Isle of Wight Superfast Broadband Team (Jayne Tyler, Becky Horn and Ashley Curzon).

After meeting with all the project teams across the UK she commented:

**The Isle of Wight team stands out from the rest. We were extremely impressed with the team's:**

- **grasp of the contractual mechanisms;**
- **extremely robust assurance undertaken;**
- **collaborative working with BT and the highways and planning teams to accelerate deployment.**

**Their dedication and hard work is reflected in the forecast underspend (all of which goes to reduce the public funding required).**

## **LEISURE**

### **Website new look**

Working with the Organisational Change Team, the Leisure Team has launched a new look website [1Leisure.co.uk](http://1Leisure.co.uk). It has a strong 'shopping cart' emphasis with sales of fitness supplements at highly competitive prices; even better for 1 Leisure card members is that they enjoy further discounts. We now have 100 supplement products on sale, which will be delivered straight to the customers door step by post/courier. What makes us different from all the other sites that sell such products is we offer free delivery – no matter how much (or little) you buy.

All those who sign up to a one card or to our website (which is free), will be sent a regular e-newsletter giving advice and guidance on exercise and nutrition. We also run competitions giving the chance for all our members and customers to win prizes with a value of up to £250.

Have a look at [1leisure.co.uk](http://1leisure.co.uk) - there is a huge range of goods now on offer from protein powders to gluten free cookies, delivered straight to your door.

## **Leisure membership**

Membership at council leisure centres continued to increase beyond expectation in the early months of this year. All three sites: Medina, Westridge and the Heights have all shown encouraging uptakes of new membership being 20 per cent collectively up on the same period last year. With the new project having started on the extension to the Medina Fitness studio and new spin fit studio, the membership will continue to offer exceptional value for money.

## **Library Service**

Consultations are still progressing well with Freshwater, Ventnor and Cowes Libraries.

**Councillor Shirley Smart**

**Executive Member for Public Transport, Tourism, Recreation and Heritage**