



Committee report

Committee	FULL COUNCIL
Date	24 JULY 2019
Title:	LEADER'S UPDATE
Report of	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

1. I am pleased to attach the council's annual report for 2019 which summarises the work and achievements of the council during the last financial year (the second year of this administration) and the progress made with the delivery of the corporate plan during this period. Such has been the progress in delivering the corporate plan that it was felt necessary to refresh the plan and this will be part of our considerations at today's meeting.
2. I was disappointed that the EU pre-election period meant that it was not possible for me to bring the annual report to the May meeting of the Council. I would commend it to all members and I am happy to receive questions on it. As the annual report is relatively detailed I will keep the remainder of my update relatively short and focused on the start of new financial year.

LEADER & STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

3. Whilst attending the Local Government Association conference I was able to have a few brief words with Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and his colleague Heather Wheeler MP, Minister for Housing and Homelessness. Both were interested to hear about the Island case we have proposed as part of the review of the funding of local government and the Minister was also keen to visit the Island to hear more about the work we have been doing and have planned to keep people out of temporary accommodation and off the streets. I Hope this can be arranged in due course

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND HOUSING NEEDS

4. Councillor Mosdell has overseen the success of the 'care closer to home' strategy with rates of admission to permanent residential or nursing care at the end of 2018/19 at their lowest levels for some years at 454.2 per 100,000 population; having reduced by over 50 per cent from the 2016/17 figure of 951.9. This means that the council is already ahead of its ten-year target and performing better than the national average of 585.6; but there is still much more to do.

5. The other key measure of adult social care performance, which is tracked nationally, is that of delayed transfers of care (DToc) from the hospital setting. The health and care system had some challenges in meeting its system wide target at the start of the year but some intensive work by staff within adult social services and at the IW NHS Trust have seen this figure also reduce to below targets over the last few weeks. The performance of adult social care in the last week for example was 1.84 days per 100,000 population (over the age of 18) against a nationally set indicator of 2.6 days.
6. I must commend the substantial amount of work undertaken by our adult social care team in supporting all discharges from the hospital over the last few months. A significant 'system wide' effort has been made to improve the 'flow' of patients through the hospital to ensure that people do not need to stay longer than necessary. I understand that this has yielded some positive results both for the patients and the hospital and the lessons learnt are being incorporated into the standard systems and processes of working across both organisations.
7. The council achieved a huge milestone in May when it was able to report no families in supported bed and breakfast accommodation. This followed a detailed and targeted piece of work by the housing needs team, which improved the council's position to one of the best performing in the country against this statistic. Meeting housing need is an increasing focus of our work and it is good to note that the numbers in temporary accommodation has reduced since the start of the year and in the same period the council has prevented 92 households from being homeless. An important piece of work is currently being completed to improve the council's services for the homeless over the winter period.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

8. I would take this opportunity to commend the work of my colleague Councillor Brading, in leading a very detailed and interactive consultation process about how best the council can deal with the surplus primary places in the West Wight. This work is now at a point where the statutory part of the process has started, having already been through two pre consultation exercises, with a nine week period for responses, rather than the minimum four weeks.
9. The formal consultation relates to the closure of All Saints' Primary School, Freshwater, on 3 April 2020 and future expansion of Yarmouth E Primary School on the All Saints' site once proposed building works are completed there.
10. I and my Cabinet colleagues recognise the emotive and unsettling nature of the potential outcomes from the consultation exercise. We are committed to doing all that we can to minimise disruption to all affected schools and in supporting the staff, pupils and parents with the transition, whatever that may finally be. At the same time we must consider the long term viability of primary schools in the West Wight and ensure that it remains sustainable and effective for the thousands of children who will pass through these schools in the future.

11. I hope members will join with me in welcoming the early provisional data for Key Stage 2 Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) results for 2019 for Isle of Wight schools. These show improved levels of attainment by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at a faster rate than the national average across all three subject areas, including an eight per cent improvement in maths. These are an important set of results for the Island, which although not yet at the national averages, demonstrate the importance of the relentless focus our education teams are leading on these areas of work.

REGENERATION AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

12. I am grateful for Councillor Whittle's support for the council's negotiations with Homes England over the acquisition of land in East Cowes for employment and house building, the most notable facility being the Columbine building (the shed with the Union Jack).
13. I am hopeful that we can reach an agreement with Homes England on a price which offers best value to the council in order to support our aspirations to secure the land for long term marine and maritime employment use, something which could not be guaranteed were the site simply put to the market. We are very keen to protect jobs currently provided on site and in the supply chain by Wight Shipyard, to grow the number of employment opportunities in the area.
14. Proposals for the regeneration of Newport harbour, designed to generate the necessary revenue to invest in its much needed improvements have published for stakeholder and public consultation. They include new living, working, learning and leisure activities including a cycle and pedestrian bridge linking the two sides of the Medina. The comments we receive will help finalise our plans and then we will seek delivery partners for the various elements including a new hotel and a potentially iconic cultural and conference centre worthy of the county town.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

15. Following the traffic problems caused by the catastrophic failure of traffic lights at Fairlee Road at the beginning of the month, I have been assured that robust contingency plans are in place for when the works to the new road scheme at St Mary's roundabout commences. The team overseeing the project have a list of stakeholders they will be working with over the summer to share the plans for the scheme which will commence in late September.

PLANNING AND HOUSING

16. Members may wish to know that the recent changes to the online planning portal were as a result of the supplier ending its support for the system. Therefore, to continue with it could have been costly to the council with the potential for less access to the service from longer periods of down time. The new system is used by the majority of planning authorities and is used by the council to support licensing applications. Whilst it does take some getting used to, it does have more functionality. If any member has a particular issue in

using the system this can be referred to the Planning department and this will inform some additional guidance notes to be produced.

17. Members will be aware that the council is a fifty percent shareholder in iWight Developments, a joint venture limited liability partnership that is now focussed on delivering a a mix of market rent, market sale and affordable rent homes for the Island. The first scheme on Medina Avenue, Newport is due to complete in spring 2020 and over 200 homes are in the pipeline for delivery by iWight Developments across 4 further sites. The company will predominantly utilise modular off-site construction to build 2/3 bed homes. Which reflects our determination to deliver affordable homes for Islanders.

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

18. The Isle of Wight's recognition as a Unesco Biosphere Reserve, the seventh in the UK, is a well-deserved outcome for colleagues in the AONB and rightly recognises the Island as one of the best areas in the world for managed landscapes, where human impact doesn't detract from the natural beauty or wildlife. This is something that was supported by this council and we will now need to consider this important status as we develop future policies and strategies in all areas of the council's influence.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

19. I was disappointed to learn that capacity issues in the Home Office mean that it is unable to consider the application to create a new combined fire authority for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, in time for it to commence in April 2020, as was planned. However, it will progress in due course and in the interim the council will look to continue its work in partnership with Hampshire Fire Authority and to develop sufficient and robust plans for the transition, should it be approved as expected.

CORPORATE RESOURCES

20. The council's primary goal remains to be financially balanced and sustainable. In 2018/19 the council demonstrated an overall saving against planned spending of £0.445 million which is 0.3 percent of the net revenue budget. This demonstrates the challenge the council has in achieving this goal and the need for tight financial controls at all times.
21. As Members will be aware, we are faced with the further challenge of saving £13.5m over the next three years and I can advise members that work has already started to look at possible options for doing so. There remains some uncertainty in government as to whether and when the comprehensive spending review will take place, and if the outcomes of the fair funding review of local government will be implemented as planned in December. However, it is important the council carries on with its budget preparations so that it is in the possible best place to respond appropriately.

WASTE MANAGEMENT, PROCUREMENT AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

22. Members may be aware that, such has been the success of our garden waste collection service, it was necessary to cap the numbers of premises on the scheme at 7000 and implement a waiting list for new entries. Arrangements are being made to acquire another vehicle to service these new premises as the numbers on the waiting list have now reached the tipping point where it is viable to have a second collection round. This is expected to take place in August and we will then open the scheme to new applicants.
23. The council, through its waste and recycling team, is running a campaign across the summer to remind owners and operators of holiday lets of their commercial waste responsibilities. Holiday lets are not, by law, eligible for the free household waste collection service and owners have a duty of care to ensure that they are arranging for the responsible collection of their waste through either the council's trade waste service or a private waste collector

CONCLUDING REMARKS

24. Through my report I have highlighted the range of activities of this administration which support our drive towards our vision of 'ensuring our Island is an inspirational place to grow up, live, work and visit.' I also wish to recognise the hard work by our council staff to deliver our corporate plan and thank all those involved for their commitment and hard work.

APPENDICES

25. [Appendix A – Isle of Wight Council Annual Report 2018 - 2019](#)

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