



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>FULL COUNCIL</b>
Date and Time	<b>WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM</b>
Venue	<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs C Critchison (Chairman), K Love (Vice-Chairman), D Adams, D Andre, J Bacon, M Beston, E Blake, P Brading, G Brodie, V Churchman, I Dore, R Downer, W Drew, S Ellis, P Fuller, A Garratt, S Hendry, C Jarman, P Jordan, J Lever, M Lilley, K Lucioni, J Medland, C Mosdell, J Nicholson, M Oliver, T Outlaw, L Peacey-Wilcox, M Price, R Quigley, C Quirk, Redrup, J Robertson, P Spink, I Stephens, N Stuart and I Ward
Apologies	Cllrs R Redrup

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52. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2023 be approved subject to the additional wording in minute number 51 (Cllr Jarman's question) that the Monitoring Officer advised he would provide the information in writing.

53. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor K Love declared an interest in minute number 63a for legal reasons, he would leave the room during the item.

54. **Public Question Time - Maximum 15 Minutes for Written Questions and 15 Minutes for Oral Questions**

A question was asked by Mr O Goodwin on behalf of Green Bembridge Harbour regarding the role of the planning process on sewage discharge and requested the motion include a commitment through the Island Plan, the Cabinet Member for Planning, Coastal Protection and Flooding advised that he would provide a written response, he understood this was an important issue and policies needed to be in place to protect waterways.

Ms C Courtney asked what plans the Council had to manage storm water on estates, buildings and car parks etc. The Leader (with responsibility for Transport and Infrastructure, Highways PFI and Transport Strategy, Strategic Oversight and

External Partnerships) advised that there was a potential Memorandum of Understanding with Southern Water, there were sustainable drainage schemes being introduced in Newport and Ryde he confirmed a written response would be provided.

Cllr M Smith from Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council asked what the council were doing in response to the Citizen Advice not working properly, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance advised that he had been approached with similar concerns and he would investigate the issues over the next week.

Cllr Smith advised that professionals such as GP's were sending patients to Pan Together due to the lack of service at Citizens Advice, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member advised that a meeting had been arranged.

Cllr Brodie declared an interest as he was a trustee at Pan Together.

#### **55. Chairman's Official Announcements**

The Chairman advised that she had continued to attend Citizenship ceremonies. A visit to Coburg to celebrate 40 years of the twinning agreement had been attended, this included tours of the council offices, royal palace and museums, a visit to the childhood home of Prince Albert was also included. She had also attended the opening of Cowes Police station and the installation of a new vicar for Chale, Niton, Whitwell and St Lawrence churches.

#### **56. Leaders Update Report (20 minutes)**

The Leader introduced his report and expressed his thanks to Hampshire County Council Children's services throughout the ten year partnership, which had helped the Island achieve a good OFSTED rating and left the service in a good place. The new Director of Children's Services would start on 1 February 2024.

A question was asked regarding the importance of ensuring the Military Road is kept open, being an important strategic road and following the recent landslide in Bonchurch. The Leader advised that there was a contractual obligation and work on potential solutions to the issues with the Military Road continued. Landowners had been contacted and discussions were continuing.

The Leader was asked to confirm if the timeframe relating to the town bid and key projects in Ryde were achievable and if the money could be better used for affordable housing. The Leader advised that plans were in place, the money would be used for works to the Town Hall and community safety, he was not aware of affordable housing being part of the funding, however he would investigate.

A question was asked regarding the resources to ensure jobs were not lost following the recent landslide in Bonchurch which had resulted in limited access into Ventnor impacting businesses. Free parking was suggested, the Leader advised that conversations with Ventnor Town Council would need to take place regarding free parking as this could have an impact on their car park income within the town.

A number of Councillors also thanked the work undertaken by Hampshire County Council and asked as some of the services could be bought back could the Leader confirm this would be in place for 1 February 2024, the Leader confirmed this would be in place.

Is there a planned review for Public Health Services contract between the Isle of Wight and Hampshire and would the relevant Committees be involved, the Leader advised that a review would take place with the Policy and Scrutiny for health being informed.

A question was asked regarding the education standards of children on if the Island had improved, and was the Leader confident children were in a better place. The Leader advised that he was confident improvements had been made, and that the new Director of Children's Services would provide and produce ongoing improvements to education.

Concern was raised regarding the money being offered to help flood households; this was supposed to be quick however there were people still waiting for the money. The Leader advised that there had been some delay and misunderstanding regarding the criteria, applications were being processed as quickly as possible.

#### **57. Update from the Future Governance Working Group**

The Chairman of the Future Governance Working Group (FGWG) asked that Full Council note the framework recommendations made to the Audit and Governance Committee in December 2023, the recommendations were circulated to all Councillors.

The intention was to bring to a future Full Council meeting, by 1 May 2024 at the latest a report recommending a politically proportionate Committee system to be implemented by 15 May 2024.

To achieve this the FGWG would work with the Monitoring Officer and relevant senior officers on constitutional changes to enable the transition. A progress report would be provided to Full Council in March 2024.

RESOLVED:

- i. THAT Full Council note the framework recommendations made to the Audit and Governance Committee
- ii. THAT the Future Governance Working Group work with the Monitoring Officer and Senior officers on constitutional changes
- iii. THAT a progress report be provided to Full Council in March 2024.

## 58. Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance

### 58a Local Council Tax Support

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance summarised the report and advised that a consultation had been undertaken and the responses had been included within the report.

A Local Council Tax Support exceptional hardship fund was available to those who might be faced with genuine hardship.

A motion was put forward to accept the recommendations as proposed in the report and was duly seconded.

An amendment to option one of those recommendations was proposed and duly seconded as follows:

THAT Full Council adopts the proposed scheme changes to the maximum level of support for working age cases, to 75 per cent, allowing for minor changes to applicable amounts.

An amendment to option two was made as follows:

That Full Council discontinues the current exceptional hardship policy.

Both the proposer and seconded of the first amendment accepted the amendment to option two.

A short adjournment was called.

Following further debate in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part 4B – Procedure Rules Governing how Full Council, Cabinet, Committees, Sub Committees and Boards Operate section Voting) a named vote was requested by four councillors, the result of which was:

For (22)

Cllrs D Adams, M Beston, E Blake, P Brading, V Churchman, W Drew, S Ellis, A Garratt, S Hendry, C Jarman M Lilley, J Medland, C Mosdell, J Nicholson, M Oliver, T Outlaw, M Price, C Quirk, J Robertson, P Spink, N Stuart, I Ward

Against (15)

Cllrs D Andre, J Bacon, G Brodie, C Critchison, I Dore, R Downer, P Fuller, J Jones-Evans, P Jordan, J Lever, K Love, K Lucioni, R Quigley, S Redrup, I Stephens

RESOLVED:

THAT the amendment was carried.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

- i. THAT Full Council adopts the proposed scheme and changes to the maximum level of support for working age cases, to 75 per cent, allowing for minor changes to applicable amounts.
- ii. That Full Council discontinues the current exceptional hardship policy.

59. **Report Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions**

59a **Review of Polling Places and Districts**

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions advised that the polling places review was undertaken due to the need to amend a number of polling districts, due to the introduction of revised electoral divisions for the Island in 2021.

The recommendation was duly seconded and a vote was taken, the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the Isle of Wight Council adopts the scheme of polling districts and polling places as set out in Appendix 2 (attached). This resolution is to be effective for the purposes of proceedings preliminary or relating to any election to be held on or after 1 February 2024.

60. **Report of Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services, Community Protection and ICT**

60a **Approval of the Statement of Licensing Policy January 2024 - January 2029**

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services, Community Protection and ICT advised that there was requirement to determine the policy every five years, a consultation had been undertaken with local businesses, Town, Parish and Community Councils and a full public consultation had been made available.

It was noted that the Licensing Committee had discussed the policy document and suggested some changes, which had been made.

The recommendation was duly seconded and a vote was taken, the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

THAT Full Council adopt the revised Statement of Licensing Policy 2024 – 2029.

**61. Report of the Monitoring Officer**

**61a Review of Political Proportionality, Alternative Arrangements, Nominations and Appointments**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that this report was triggered due to the recent by election, he had received no notification of any other nominations.

A question was asked regarding vacancies on Committees that had not been filled by a group and what mechanism could be used to fill the vacancy, the Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that he would check the regulations and provide a response.

The recommendations were proposed and duly seconded, a vote was taken the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

- i. THAT the review of political proportionality be agreed as set out in Appendix 1.
- iii. THAT the appointments set out in Appendix 2 be agreed.

**62. Motions Submitted under Part 4, Procedure Rule 9 of the Council's Constitution**

Councillor K Love left the room, for this item.

**62a By Councillor K Lucioni**

Councillor K Lucioni moved the following motion which was duly seconded:

The intimidation and abuse of councillors, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy; preventing elected members from representing the communities they serve, deterring individuals from standing for election, and undermining public faith in democratic processes.

This council notes that increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse is having a detrimental impact on local democracy and that prevention, support and responses to abuse and intimidation of local politicians must improve to ensure councillors feel safe and able to continue representing their residents.

Equally, officers, staff and contractors working for this council should be free to go about their duties without fear of threat and intimidation. The recent assault on a member of our parking team is not acceptable. This council puts people first and will not tolerate abuse of any kind. We appreciate at times services may fall below the standards residents are reasonably entitled to expect. This is why we have a robust complaints procedure where residents can raise concerns, and we will work with them to seek to ensure services are delivered to a high standard.

This council commits to challenge the normalisation of abuse against councillors, officers, staff, and the contractors who work with us and uphold exemplary standards of public and political debate in all it does.

The council will uphold the values of the debate not hate and raise public awareness of the role of councillors and staff in their communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the responses and support for local politicians and staff facing abuse and intimidation.

Resolution: This council agrees to sign up to the Local Government Association's Debate Not Hate campaign. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation.

A vote was then taken, the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

THAT This council agrees to sign up to the Local Government Association's Debate Not Hate campaign. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation.

62b **By Councillor M Lilley**

Due to time constraints this item was not considered.

63. **Member Questions to the Leader and to any other Cabinet Member (30 minutes)**

Due to time constraints this item was not considered, however it was agreed that the written response to the written question submitted by Councillor M Lilley to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions. (MQ 02/24) would be provided.

CHAIRMAN

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## Full Council – 17 January 2024

### Written question from Councillor M Lilley to Councillor J Bacon Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions.

At the IWC Full Council meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the put forward the following motion:

*"Isle of Wight council resolves to reaffirm its motion of 16th January 2019, to reduce child poverty on the Isle of Wight over five years up to 2028, through development of a specific child poverty reduction strategy with targets and outcomes."*

We are now in 2024 and 10 months have passed. On the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024, I will be holding my 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Food Poverty Awareness (Pancake Day) event in Ryde.

One measure of child poverty is free school meals, have the number of children on free school meals on the Island increased or decreased and by what percentage? What is the progress of child poverty reduction on the Isle of Wight and will the new Director of Children's Service have a focus on child poverty reduction?

I raise this issue as nationally the NHS has in December 2023, reported a huge increase in hospital admissions due to poor malnutrition including children. Informally, local food projects such IW Food Bank are reporting a huge increase in use of their services in last 10 months.

## **Response**

In relation to Free school Meals, Isle of Wight has a rate of 25.1% in 2022/23, compared to a national average of 24.78%. The increase from previous years was in line with the national increases.

In respect of the new Director of Children's Services, the statutory duties associated with the role mean there is a focus on all disadvantaged children.

In terms of tackling poverty, school holidays can be pressure points for families in low-income households and can lead to a holiday experience gap for children. The Holiday Activities and Food programme continues to provide a response to this challenge on the Island and, during Easter Summer and Christmas 2023, has provided almost 9,300 holiday scheme places to over 2,500 children.

Through the fourth round of the Household Support Fund, we are targeting Households with children across a number of different initiatives. Food vouchers have been proactively issued to vulnerable groups including young carers, care leavers, children in need registered with Children's Social Care, Early Help and the Disabled Children's Team. We are also targeting every Island household in receipt of Local Council Tax Support with a £50 food voucher issued in October; a number

of which are Households with children. Schools have access to vouchers which can be issued to households they identify as in need, to assist with the purchase of food, weather appropriate clothing, generic school uniform costs or bedding. Households struggling with food and utility costs can apply to Citizens Advice for assistance with both emergency provision and help with utility arrears.

We have opened a fourth Community Pantry (located in Newport) and a mobile pantry to help strengthen the network and reach more households in need of food support. We are strengthening the food supply to the Isle of Wight Foodbank network where we know approximately 85% of those visiting are households with children. We are also helping them to establish a community garden which can be used by those visiting, helping provide access to fresh fruit and vegetables moving forward.