



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
Date and Time	<b>TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2022 COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM</b>
Venue	<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs R Quigley (Chairman), C Quirk (Vice-Chairman), R Downer, W Drew, M Lilley, K Lucioni, J Medland, J Robertson and P Spink
Co-opted (Voting)	Cameron Palin (IWALC)
Cabinet Members	Cllrs D Andre, J Bacon, P Fuller, C Jarman, J Jones-Evans, P Jordan, L Peacey-Wilcox, and I Stephens
Also Present	Cllrs S Ellis, G Brodie and S Hastings  Christopher Ashman, Steve Crocker, Laura Gaudion, Kerry Huddleday, John Metcalfe, Wendy Perera, Christopher Potter, Colin Rowland, Claire Shand, Paul Thistlewood, Megan Tuckwell and Chris Ward

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**63 Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2022 be confirmed.

**64 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Michael Lilley declared an interest in any matters relating to young people as a trustee of the Isle of Wight Youth Trust.

Cllr Chris Jarman declared an interest in any matters relating to adult social care as a family member was a beneficiary of Wightcare system.

Cllr Karen Lucioni declared an interest in any matters relating to adult social care as a self-employed Personal Assistant.

**65 Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

No public questions were received.

## **66 Progress Update**

The chairman presented the report which provided an overview of the progress against outcomes and recommendations from previous meetings. No comments or questions were raised at this stage.

RESOLVED:

THAT the progress report be noted.

## **67 New Council Website**

The Director of Corporate Services provided a verbal update on the progress being made with the delivery of the Council's new website. Discussion took place regarding the complexity of the project, particularly following a period of underinvestment in the current ICT infrastructure which had resulted in significant technical rebuilds and coding needed to deliver a modern and accessible website. It was confirmed that the beta site for the first six service areas was on track to be launched on 31 March 2022, and prior to this date there would be an opportunity for councillors to test and familiarise themselves with the new website.

Reference was made to a series of written questions and responses which had been provided ahead of the meeting (attached). Further queries were raised in relation to device compatibility and risk management. It was confirmed that the design of the new website would ensure its compatibility with devices such as tablets and mobile phones, and the committee were reassured that a risk register for the project was monitored on a weekly basis.

It was agreed that the progress with the Council's new website would be included in the workplan for future review.

RESOLVED:

THAT the update be noted.

## **68 Budget Proposals 2022-23**

Consideration was given to the proposed budget for 2022-23 and reference was made to a series of written questions and responses which had been provided ahead of the meeting (attached).

Concerns were raised in relation to the proposed change in Wightcare fees, particularly that the increase could discourage use (consequently have a knock-on effect to other adult social care services) and that this increase was not consistent with supporting people living at home. The Interim Director of Adult Social Care reassured that behind any funding change a detailed piece of work and risk assessment was undertaken and Wightcare remained considerably cheaper and more cost effective than supported living, residential or nursing care. It was noted that for many years the service has had an annual deficit of about £380,000 and there was a need to ensure that adult social care funds were utilised to discharge its statutory duties.

Questions were raised regarding the use of the £2.5m allocated to the Council's housing company. The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer advised that this would give the housing company the best possible start to be set up properly, and considerations were underway to develop the business case and business plan which were legally required before the company could start trading.

Questions were raised regarding the plans for the £40,000 allocated to facilitate support for town and parish councils. The Cabinet Member advised that the Council planned to work with the towns and parish councils to identify how this money would be utilised.

Questions were raised regarding the proposed planning enforcement pilot project for Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council and whether this would be extended to other local councils. The Cabinet Member advised that the aim of the project was to create a model where the Council's enforcement team could be enhanced to support town and parish councils.

It was noted that the previous budget had allocated funds to purchase mobile average speed cameras however this was no longer the case. The Cabinet Member explained that funding was instead allocated to speed reduction schemes as speed cameras were not available to purchase.

Discussion took place regarding the levelling-up fund, the island deal and progress with the fair funding review.

RESOLVED:

THAT the budget proposals for 2022-23 be noted.

**69 Items due to be considered by the Cabinet:**

**69a The Isle of Wight Council (Horsebridge Hill, Newport) (Traffic Regulation) Order No 1 2021**

This item was not considered as it had been deferred by the Cabinet.

**69b Determining School Admission Arrangements**

Consideration was given to the report which sought the Cabinet's approval of the 2023/2024 school admissions arrangements. No comments or questions were raised at this stage.

RESOLVED:

THAT the proposed recommendations be noted.

**69c Outcome of the Consultation on the Future of Chillerton and Rookley Primary School**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the consultation outcomes and sought the Cabinet's approval to publish a public notice to combine Godshill Primary School and Chillerton and Rookley Primary School with effect from the 31 August 2022.

The views of Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council were shared, and questions were raised regarding whether the decision could be delayed further to enable potential applications from other academies. The Cabinet Member advised that the decision had already been delayed by a year, no applications had been forthcoming, and it was time to give certainty to the children, parents, and staff.

It was agreed that the Cabinet Member and Director of Children's Services would meet with Cllr Spink to discuss the matter prior to the meeting of the Cabinet on 10 February 2022.

RESOLVED:

THAT the proposed recommendation be noted.

#### **69d Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report - Q3**

Consideration was given to the report which sought the Cabinet's approval of the Councils performance and financial position for the quarter ended 31 December 2021.

Discussion took place regarding the reduction in staff sickness absences compared to previous years, and benchmarking against other local authorities. Questions were raised in relation to measuring response times to FOI requests.

Questions were raised in relation to child protection, safeguarding, and the local response to the Government identifying the Island as an education "cold spot" as part of its levelling-up agenda. The Cabinet Member advised that this would be analysed thoroughly, and it was agreed that this would be a matter for the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and Skills.

RESOLVED:

THAT the proposed recommendation be noted.

#### **69e Budget and Council Tax Setting 2022-2023 and Future Years Forecasts**

This item had been previously discussed and no further comments were made.

### **70 Forward Plan**

The committee were invited to identify any item contained within the published forward plan that would benefit from early consideration within the committee's own workplan or that of one of the policy and scrutiny committees. No comments or questions were raised at this stage and it was agreed that the committee would meet informally to discuss the forward plan and workplan.

RESOLVED:

THAT arrangements be made for the Committee to meet informally to discuss the Forward Plan and the development of its future workplan.

## **71 Workplan**

Consideration was given to the current workplan for 2021-22, and the corresponding timelines indicated within the Corporate Plan.

Discussion took place regarding the additional meeting scheduled for April 2022 to consider the draft Island Plan, ahead of its adoption by the Cabinet and Full Council. It was confirmed that the document would be made available five clear working days before the meeting on 12 April 2022.

Comments were made with regards to the Isle of Wight Dementia Strategy which was due for approval by the Cabinet in March 2022, prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care. It was suggested that the chairmen would liaise to discuss the approach to scrutinising the matter.

RESOLVED:

THAT the chairman would liaise with the chairman of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care to discuss the approach to scrutinising the Isle of Wight Dementia Strategy.

## **72 Members' Question Time**

No written questions were received.

CHAIRMAN

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**QUESTIONS (AND RESPONSES) REGARDING THE COUNCIL'S NEW WEBSITE:**

- 1. Will the Council's web site address ([www.iwight.gov.uk](http://www.iwight.gov.uk)) be used on all council communications and advertisements including signage and council vehicles?**

Any future communications or design work will reference the website [www.iow.gov.uk](http://www.iow.gov.uk) which is the current website address. The old website address was by necessity changed to this one in response to central government direction. However, there remains a link for anyone entering the old address to be redirected automatically.

- 2. Can the Council's public access computer sites, e.g. libraries, be configured to ensure defaults to the Council's website homepage? This would raise awareness of the website and encourage greater usage.**

The public computers located in our local libraries have a direct link to the libraries and heritage section of [www.iow.gov.uk](http://www.iow.gov.uk) to promote the types of information and services that people are likely access when visiting their local library. There are and will continue to be easy locatable links that enables other parts of the website to be accessed during their visit.

- 3. Any staff who produces information to be placed on the website should ensure the use of plain English/ writing for the website to ensure that a consistent standard in writing is maintained throughout the website.**

We have a digital content standard that is in line with digital accessibility guidance for readability and a Plain English guide that all content is being aligned to. There are e-learning modules available for all staff to develop their writing skills in accordance with this standard. There are also website digital content managers within our communications team who can also provide guidance and support and manage the final content for publication in line with the above standards.

- 4. The Council should look at ways in which the website might be made more appealing to particular groups of people. It is suggested to encourage visits by young people and new users the website needs to have a 'fun' element. Development of interactive tours and games should also encourage visitors to stay on the site for longer and come back to the site. For example, a virtual tour of Dinosaur Isle, Records Office, Fort Victoria Country Park or other key sites operated by the Council.**

A key feature of our new website will be for it to have an improved transactional focus so that users can efficiently access the service they require, and which has content and transactions designed around the customer, so that they can achieve what they need to do quickly. The website platform will therefore have much less content than previously but will have provision for videos and other types of content media that can be utilised for the purposes of engaging with customers. The content of the website will continue to be reviewed and designed in line with user needs gained from stakeholder feedback and through ongoing engagement with service representatives and service user groups once the BETA site has been launched.

- 5. It is suggested a section should be developed on 'Are you new to the Isle of Wight' which should include maps and directions to key services such as local schools, hospital, doctors, benefit office and other services which a person who has just recently moved into the area will find useful. The website should aim to be the portal for the Island.**

The priority for the newly developed website will be secure the transfer from the existing site of all the current service content and essential information required by our residents and customers as it has been reviewed and refreshed to meet our design principles. Once that is complete, further improvements, such as these that have been identified as being of benefit will be considered on a business case basis for the allocation of resources. This is unlikely to happen before March 2023 however, due to the timetable of existing programmed work.

- 6. How will the search engine be adapted? Will this be so that the most important information is listed first?**

We shall be providing an improved search functionality for the BETA website go live which will aim to provide a better experience in locating the most frequently used information that our residents and customers wish to locate and will use natural language. During the next phase of the website project, this search feature will be further enhanced to include search results for things such as top tasks, articles, relevant documents, previous search and recently added material relevant to the search request.

- 7. Has consideration been given to establishing a youth 'page' on the council website specifically aimed at young people, to include a 'fun' element and educational content on what the council does?**

The youth council already has a dedicated area on the council's website which will be reviewed in the next phase of the website project. There has already been engagement with the youth council during the design and delivery phase of the website and we will endeavour to continue that engagement with these younger representatives as the website progresses.

- 8. In relation to the link to council consultations will this be improved so that the outcomes of consultations are shown as promptly as possible the actions are being taken as the result of these?**

As mentioned above, the priority for the newly developed website will be secure the transfer from the existing site of all the current service content and essential information required by our residents and customers as it has been reviewed and refreshed to meet our design principles. Once that is complete, further improvements, such as these that have been identified as being of benefit will be considered on a business case basis for the allocation of resources. This will however be linked to the considerations for the development and adoption of an engagement strategy for the council.

- 9. It is possible to investigate the inclusion of an online 'quick vote' system to enable the council to consult residents on simple policy and service related matters? A 'quick vote' system would allow people to vote for their favoured approach from a defined list of alternatives and provide a snapshot view (not a definitive view) of residents on key areas of council policy and service.**



As above in point 8, this will be linked to the considerations for the development and adoption of an engagement strategy for the council and will also link with the ambitions of the council's refreshed digital strategy being put forward for consideration by Cabinet in March 2022.

**10. Will there be an ongoing online feedback system to continually review the content and structure of the website to identify areas for improvements? This could regularly test the attraction of the website and to target a high volume of use by local residents and ensure that the contents remain relevant to local residents needs.**

The new website is being launched as a BETA site to allow for continuous feedback to be sought from those who use it. Further feedback and engagement with stakeholders, representative groups and internal services will continue throughout the future development of the website.

**11. Will the website meet all the requirements placed upon public sector bodies and how will this be tested?**

The council is a signatory to the government's local digital declaration in which we commit to:

- design services that best meet the needs of citizens
- challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- protect citizens' privacy and security
- deliver better value for money

All aspects of the new website are also being developed in accordance with the guidelines set by the government digital service together with best practice that has been researched across the sector. There is a technical test which will be sourced to ascertain assurance of requirements.

The requirements of the public sector bodies (websites and mobile applications) (No2) accessibility regulations 2018 are also at the heart of the design and delivery of the new website.

Our user feedback will help us to ascertain whether we are fully meeting these national standards of practice and the government digital service (GDS) monitor public websites and apps on their accessibility and compliance.

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## CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8 FEBRUARY 2022

### QUESTIONS (AND RESPONSES) REGARDING THE INDICATIVE SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2022/23

#### ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PUBLIC HEALTH

- 1. Saving number 2 – Why has there been no annual uplift in charges since April 2018? It indicates that there is an intention to move to a balanced budget over the longer term. What timescale is envisaged and will the annual increase required to facilitate this be included as part of future years budgets?**

Previous administrations did not wish to pursue suggestions to increase service charges. It is proposed that the move to a balanced budget continues to be discussed with the potential to phase the move to a fully balanced budget over the next 3 years.

- 2. Saving number 3 – When in 2022-23 will the system go live? Will this ensure that the income target is achieved. Will the team have the capacity to effectively deal with the anticipated increase in the number of cases?**

The system is in its testing phase at the current time and will be fully live in March 2022

- 3. Saving number 6 – How many clients will be reviewed? What is the timescale for such reviews? Is there an appeal process if the client believes that the outcome of the review will impact upon their level of safe and effective care?**

The discussion in relation to transitioning care and support from 2 carers to a single carer and assistive technology will take place with the person as part of their annual social care review or on their request or the request of the person or organisation providing their care and support. The number of people to be supported by this project is not fixed and there can be no appeal process as the person will need to be in agreement before their care and support can be reviewed as part of this programme.

- 4. Saving number 6 - It refers to Occupational Therapists and adding to their workload. What is not clear is which OT's the Trust's of those employed under contract (NRS) by the Council?**

The occupational therapy support for this project is secured through the council's commissioned community occupational therapy services which is separate from the NHS Trust occupational therapy services.

- 5. Saving number 8 – How many island residents are currently placed at mainland facilities. Will they, or their family, have the choice of where they wish to be placed?**

There are currently 16 people with a primary support reason of learning disability to receive care and support from off Island residential (or nursing) care services. In all cases the council tries to work with people (and their families if they choose for them to be involved) to ensure that their care and support needs are met in line with their own choices, requirements and wishes so far as that is possible.

- 6. Saving number 10 - This could have an impact if the shortfall is not covered by the other funders. It would also have the potential to impact up OT services provided by both NHS and IWC.**

The mechanisms to balance the contributions to this service is already in place. This is largely an accounting exercise within the legal framework of the Better Care Fund. There will be no impact for people using the service or in relation to service delivery. There is no impact for occupational therapy services.

#### CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE, EDUCATION & SKILLS

- 7. Saving number 12 – Have all partners been advised of this and if so what were their comments?**

This was discussed at the Joint Commissioning Board with all partners. No specific comments were made.

- 8. Saving number 20 – Will there be any consultation with users?**

There are no plans to consult service users as the savings will not affect the eligibility or access to services for service users. Savings will be achieved through changes to the transport delivery from operators (vehicle changes in most cases).

#### COMMUNITY PROTECTION, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, HOUSING PROVISION & HOUSING NEEDS

- 9. Saving number 22 – What has the estimated income generation been based on?**

A broad estimate of likely interest in the services, based on interest during the pandemic and a price that is approximately half the national average for the services and taking into account the costs of provision

- 10. Saving number 26 – Is there a risk to service delivery if equipment is not repaired or replaced when faults occur. Is there an overall council policy on funding for ICT repairs and replacements?**

The council has in full use some 1910 laptops; 130 thin clients and 178 desktop devices for staff to conduct the council's business. Devices have a four-year warranty and a rolling programme of replacement through the capital programme to replace equipment as it nears the end of its lifecycle is in place. Within the available ICT staffing resources, approximately 400 laptops are scheduled for replacement each year. However, it is inevitable therefore that there will be occasions where there are equipment failures that may benefit from repair rather than replacement or require an urgent replacement as not scheduled to be within the replacement programme. This budget is a means by which to make contingency for such eventualities. Historically, this budget has not been fully spent, hence the proposed reduction. Front line service needs would take priority in any repair or urgent replacement cases.

#### ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE & WASTE MANAGEMENT

- 11. Saving number 30 – How many rent reviews are to be completed? Is there a programme of rent reviews?**

This is a continuation of the work with town and parish councils, where there is an ongoing programme of town and parishes taking on responsibility for areas within the ground's maintenance contract.

**12. Saving number 31 – What are the likely new streams of income?**

This income will be generated from increased facility hires and smaller general increases from existing income generating activities

**13. Saving number 32 – Have schools been advised of this management fee?**

Yes, school business managers have been informed

**14. Saving number 34 – Is there a timescale for the review and has there been preliminary discussions with the community and voluntary sector?**

Yes it is included in the tender process for the Living Well Service which is just completing

HIGHWAYS, PFI, TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

**15. Saving number 36 – Is there a consultation process required for the increase before it can be implemented from 1 July 2022?**

No – price changes only require the publication of a variation notice which advises the new charges; this is not subject to consultation

PLANNING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**16. Saving number 37 – What is the timescale for this project?**

Project is complete and software implemented

STRATEGIC FINANCE, CORPORATE RESOURCES & TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

**17. Saving number 41 – How many reviews will be undertaken?**

An ongoing programme of rent reviews across all council tenanted property will provide the target additional income from 20 specific reviews in the next financial year

**18. Saving number 42 – Is there sufficient internal capacity to effectively do this?**

Yes

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