



# Notes

**NAME OF MEETING** Inquorate Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration - Informal Briefing Session

**Thursday 6 October 2022, 5PM**

**VENUE** Council Chamber, County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight

**ATTENDEES** Cllrs J Lever (Chairman), C Quirk, I Ward (Committee members)  
Cllrs J Jones-Evans, P Jordan (Cabinet Members)

Paul Thistlewood - Statutory Scrutiny Officer, Mel White – Scrutiny Officer, Sarah MacDonald – Democratic Services Officer; Stewart Chandler – Highways and Client Manager; Chris Ashman – Director of Regeneration; Alex Minns – Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods

Apologies from Cllrs M Beston, R Downer, J Medland

## **BACKGROUND**

The chairman explained that unfortunately the formal meeting of the committee could not proceed as it was not quorate due to the number of apologies received. With the agreement of those attending it was thought that a number of the proposed agenda items could be discussed by way of an informal briefing. Any issue requiring full consideration would be added to the agenda for the next meeting in January 2023. A note of the informal briefing would be included on the agenda of that meeting.

## **KEY POINTS DISCUSSED:**

- **Bus Service Improvement Plan**

The Committee was reminded of the background to the adoption of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. The overall budget available from the Department for Transport had subsequently been reduced and a large number of authorities, including the Isle of Wight, were not awarded any funding. The feedback from this exercise would be used to improve the Plan in readiness for any future Government grant funding.

Mr Paul Walker, Head of partnerships and Strategy at Go South Coast, outlined the work undertaken by the company with a number of other local authorities. There was a reduced level of patronage being experienced since the pandemic including those with concessionary bus passes.

The Committee was advised of issues relating to the company operating electric, hydrogen and bio-diesel vehicles. Mr Walker indicated that emissions from the latest diesel buses were lower than those from a VW car.

The Council's walking and cycling strategy, together with speed limits and parked vehicles, had to be taken in to account when timetabling. There were a number of conflicts within these strategies and the Bus Service improvement Plan

With regard to the Government's recent announcement of a £2 maximum bus fare during January to March 2023 Mr Walker expressed concern that there had been insufficient detail provided as to how this will work. It was likely that this national scheme could present capacity issues.

- **E-Scooters Trial**

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highway PFI and Transport updated the Committee on the E-scooter trial. This was part of a wider project with Solent Transport. During the period of the trial changes and been made to overcome some issues of misuse. There was a discussion on usage of the E- scooters and data showing the number of journeys made and whether there was evidence to show that there were regular users and if journeys made by an E-scooter formed part of an longer journey involving other modes of transport.

The trial had now been extended to include E-Bikes and Bicycles which initially be available in Cowes, Newport and Ryde.

- **Regeneration Strategy**

The Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Regeneration, Business Development and Tourism reported an award received in respect of the Branston Farm project. It was anticipated that people would start moving into houses at the end of October 2022.

The proposal for a new cultural centre as part of the Newport harbour scheme was welcomed. This would provide for a new archive facility. The inclusion of cultural facilities within regeneration schemes had now assisted in building on the Island's heritage and cultural assets.

Updates were also given on the Innovation Centre, Spa Site at Shanklin, Nicholson Road, Ryde and Pier Street, Sandown.