



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND REGENERATION</b>
Date and time	<b>THURSDAY, 2 JULY 2020 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM</b>
Venue	<b>VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS</b>
Present	Cllrs Michael Beston (Chairman), Paul Bertie, Julie Jones-Evans, Chris Quirk, Shirley Smart, Brian Tyndall
Cabinet Members	Cllrs Barry Abraham, Steve Hastings, John Hobart, Ian Ward, Wayne Whittle
Officers Present	Chris Ashman, Sarah MacDonald, Alex Minns, Wendy Perera, Colin Rowland, Paul Thistlewood,
Other Members Present	Cllrs Andrew Garratt, Michael Lilley, Matthew Price

## 1. **Minutes**

### RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 be confirmed.

## 2. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Tyndall declared that he was the Chairman of the Audit Committee, and the item relating to COVID 19 response and recovery was part of that Committee's remit.

## 3. **Public Question Time**

No public questions had been submitted.

## 4. **COVID Response and Recovery**

The Director of Regeneration presented an overview of the council's response to the COVID19 pandemic and recovery plans going forward. The council would continue with its response in the same way but would start to begin recovery in a phased manner over the next year. There was a balance to be struck between the return of businesses and maintaining social distancing. The council's key strategies and plans would have to be COVID proof and the Committee would wish to take an interest in the progress of actions at its future meetings. Mental health and the economic impact of COVID on the island were two important issues. The council's Outbreak Plan had been published the

same week and was a good point of reference for the future.

It was reported that the Fast Cat was not yet running again. This was an important transport link serving commuters and those using sustainable transport. Passengers were being directed by Wightlink to use the Fishbourne to Portsmouth route which was less sustainable and more time consuming for passengers. Visit IW had produced a video for visitors on how to stay safe, to be shown on the ferries. The hovercraft was providing a good service but was not directly linked to the rail network. The local member for Ryde had discussed the matter with the MP. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport would be contacting Wightlink to discuss the matter. A query was also raised regarding the Cross Solent operators' views on temperature testing for passengers similar to that adopted for other forms of travel.

The Director of Neighbourhoods spoke about the short-term measures put in place in town centres to highlight the continuing need for social distancing. The markings were of a type that would eventually wash away.

Additional funding had been received from the government for cycling and walking plans, which were currently being worked on.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) The Director of Public Health to respond the topic of temperature testing of passengers travelling on cross Solent routes.
- b) The Cabinet Members be encouraged to engage with the Committee on the development of the recovery plans.

#### **5. Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation**

The public consultation had recently been completed but the results had not yet been analysed. There had been 1022 responses to the survey, with another 50 emails and 3 hand written letters being received. The Director of Neighbourhoods would report back to the Committee before it was put before Cabinet for a decision. This would enable the Committee to see the type of issues that had been raised by the public to ensure that these were fully taken into account prior to a final decision. It was noted that there were not intended to be many changes to the present situation.

**RESOLVED:**

That a report be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on 1 October 2020.

#### **6. Transport for South East (TfSE)**

The Cabinet member for Infrastructure and Transport gave a briefing on the purpose of the Delegated Decision being taken relating to Transport for the South East (TfSE) which was a proposed body not yet established but it was hoped would be agreed by the Secretary of State. There was currently no

single body to represent local authorities in the South East for transport related issues. The proposal was based on Transport for the North which had become an effective lobbying body to obtain funding from the government. Its main purpose was to look strategically at the SE area. The Leader of East Sussex council had visited and explained how it worked and asked whether the IW council would like to join. A temporary sub-board of six councillors has been set up. The Cabinet Member had raised concern that there had been no mention of the cross-Solent ferries. The IW only had one bus company which has control over fares and services with no competition, whereas across the solent there are several bus companies. TfSE would have the ability to have a South East policy and represent us to the bus companies and also to the Local Enterprise Partnership to obtain funding for transport issues. The proposal had been presented in Westminster and all MPs for the South East had attended and were in support. The Secretary of State was also supportive and had given funding of £1 million to develop the group. The proposal had gone to DfT and although a decision was not expected for several months, they were expected to approve it.

#### RESOLVED:

The proposal to be part of Transport for South East be endorsed and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure be fully supported in his efforts to get the cross Solent ferries included within its deliberations.

### **7. Newport Harbour Masterplan**

The Director of Regeneration shared a presentation on the Master Plan for the Committee to consider the findings from the public consultation. It was proposed to regenerate the area for the benefit of the community and had been carefully crafted to have a balanced mix of affordable housing, conference facilities, hotel accommodation and employment. A cycle/pedestrian footbridge was proposed across the river enabling improved access to then hospital and college. There had already been input from the community following a public consultation, although it had been affected by the pandemic, with public meetings having to be cancelled. It was believed that more feedback was required from local residents.

Consultation had also taken place on the Supplementary Planning Document. 29 responses had been received raising issues of character, cycling access, design, flooding, parking and open space. The Environment Agency had requested a flood risk assessment for each development plot. The Director would be investigating additional funding sources.

The local member Cllr Price read out a letter he had written to the Committee on behalf of a number of local residents regarding the proposed housing in the space at the entrance to Seaclose Park. Cllr Price was supportive of the plan in relation to the harbour, town centre and heritage of the town and making the harbour commercially viable but was opposed to the proposed housing in the area currently used for public recreation and forming part of an open space for the town of Newport. He believed that there were plenty of brown spaces elsewhere that could be used, and that Seaclose Park should be preserved for sport and amenity areas and for the Isle of Wight Festival.

The Director of Regeneration explained that the housing would not be part of the park itself and the site had been identified in the Housing Strategy for affordable housing. There was green space at the entrance to Medina Leisure Centre which could be used for amenity/recreation purposes. It was also noted that the owner of the garage/car showroom was willing to be part of the scheme.

Cllr Price asked the Committee whether they would support an open-minded review into the allocation of land at the entrance to Seaclose Park for housing.

**RESOLVED:**

On the casting vote of the Chairman it was agreed that the relevant Cabinet Members, together with the Director for Regeneration, be requested to meet with Cllr Matthew Price to discuss further his concerns regarding the use of Seaclose Park within the masterplan before the Cabinet considers the matter at its 4 August 2020 meeting.

**8. Housing Strategy**

The Director of Regeneration updated the Committee on the Housing Strategy. The public had been generally supportive of addressing housing needs and homelessness but there were differing views. Low income families struggled to afford expensive homes, especially following the pandemic. It was important to break down the anti-housing lobby and engage with the IW population to find out what their needs are, including then potential for re-using flats over shops in the town A report was due to be considered by Cabinet in September 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

The outcome of the public consultation, together with the revised timeline for adoption of the Housing Strategy be noted.

**9. Committee's Workplan**

The Committee reviewed its workplan in the light of the pandemic and the pause in delivering the key priorities within the Corporate Plan. A number of issues were identified which members considered to be of relevance to be included in the future workplan.

**RESOLVED :**

- a) At the meeting of the Committee on 1 October 2020 representatives from Visit IW and the Chamber of Commerce be invited to attend to provide an overview of the impact of Covid-19 on businesses.
- b) An update be provided on progress with the actions contained within the Digital Island Strategy at the 1 October 2020 meeting.
- c) A report be considered on 1 October 2020 on the housing needs service and implementation of the homelessness strategy, particularly in the light of Covid-19.

- d) The fully costed strategy on the Reduction in the Island's Net carbon Emissions had been delayed but would be submitted to the Committee in due course.
- e) The Committee could now commence its review on speed limits.
- f) The proposed monitoring of the delivery of the cycling and walking strategy be brought forward from the June 2021 meeting to the 7 January 2021.
- g) The Chairman would discuss with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure the appropriate date that the Committee could have a report on the Local Parking Strategy.

10. **Members' Questions**

There were no Members' Questions

CHAIRMAN