

Name of meeting	FULL COUNCIL
Date and Time	WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs C Critchison (Chairman), D Adams, D Andre, J Bacon, M Beston, G Brodie, V Churchman, I Dore, R Downer, W Drew, P Fuller, A Garratt, S Hendry, C Jarman, P Jordan, J Lever, M Lilley, K Lucioni, C Mosdell, J Nicholson, M Oliver, T Outlaw, L Peacey-Wilcox, M Price, R Quigley, C Quirk, R Redrup, J Robertson, P Spink, I Stephens, N Stuart and I Ward
Apologies	Cllrs K Love, P Brading, S Ellis, J Jones-Evans, J Medland and Redrup

38. Minutes

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 be approved.

39. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations received at this stage.

40. Public Question Time

Written public questions were submitted by Mr & Mrs Kinnaird (PQ-41-23) and Mr Hardy on behalf of the Youth Council (PQ-42-23).

41. Chairman's Official Announcements

The Chairman advised that she had attended a number of events which included:

- Best kept village
- Citizenship ceremony
- Steam railway
- Girl Guide visit to the Council Chamber
- Remembrance events

She also advised that the Chairman's Christmas card design received a number of entries, and the winner would be announced the following week. The Chairman thanked everyone who helped during the recent bad weather.

42. Leaders Update Report

The Leader introduced his report and advised that he had nothing further to add.

The Leader was thanked for attending the Mental Health Day event held in County Hall and was asked if he could ensure grant funding from Public Health to continue to support residents, the Leader advised that he was unable to confirm funding however he hoped the Director of Public Health would continue to provide some funding.

43. Report of the Monitoring Officer

44. Appointments to Vacancies on Bodies

The Monitoring Officer advised that a revised version of Appendix 1 (attached to and forming part of these minutes) had been provided prior to the meeting which had been agreed by group leaders.

A change had been proposed by the Alliance group, Councillor C Critchison had resigned from the Isle of Wight Pension Fund Committee, Councillor P Fuller would replace her.

RESOLVED:

THAT the appointments set out in Appendix 1 (Revised) be agreed.

THAT Councillor P Fuller will replace Councillor C Critchison on the Isle of Wight Pension Fund Committee, Councillor C Critchison would become a substitute for the Committee.

45. Report of the Leader

46. Executive Appointments (for noting)

The Monitoring Officer advised that following the change of the Leader the Executive Members were appointed, the report was to confirm the appointments to outside organisations.

Questions were raised regarding the number of organisations and how often a review was undertaken, they were advised that best practice was to review the number of bodies and check their relevance.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Executive Appointments be noted

THAT a review of bodies be undertaken and updates from Executive Members circulated to all members.

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

48. **By Councillor M Lilley**

Councillor M Lilley moved the following motion which was duly seconded:

IW Council notes that:

- In the 1995 Pensions Act, the Government increased State Pension age for women from 60 to 65, with a further increase to 66 in the 2011 Pensions Act.
- The change was not properly communicated to 3.8m women born in the 1950s until 2012, giving some only one year's notice of a six-year increase in their anticipated retirement age. There are approximately 10,950 affected women on the IOW, which is 7.82% of the population.
- The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) has found that the Department for Work and Pensions was guilty of maladministration in its handling of the State Pension Age increase for women born in the 1950s.
- The All-Party Parliamentary Group on State Pension Inequality for Women has concluded that "the impact of DWP maladministration on 1950s-born women has been as devastating as it is widespread. The APPG believes that the case for category 6 injustice is overwhelming and clear. Women have had their emotional, physical, and mental circumstances totally obliterated by a lack of reasonable notice."
- Research commissioned by campaign group WASPI has found that by the end of 2022, more than 220,000 1950s born women have died waiting for justice since the WASPI campaign began in 2015. This includes women dying on the Island.
- WASPI's figures show that over the course of the two-year COVID pandemic, 1 in 10 women who died was affected by these uncommunicated changes and lost both their state pension income and the opportunity to make alternative retirement plans.
- Despite the Ombudsman's findings and the rapid death rate of those affected, the government is choosing to wait for further reports before taking any action.

IW Council resolves to highlight that this injustice has not only had a profound effect on the individuals involved but on the wider community on the Isle of Wight and on Isle of Wight Council, not least because:

- Women who would have looked after older relatives or partners are unable to afford to do so, with a knock-on impact on local social care on the Isle of Wight
- Women who would have retired and engaged in caring responsibilities for grandchildren are having to continue working, increasing the childcare burden on the state locally.

- Women who have been left in poverty are struggling to meet their housing costs, with a knock-on impact on local housing stock.
- There is a broader impact on voluntary services of all kinds locally, which are missing out on able, active volunteers who would otherwise have been able to retire from full-time work as planned.
- Our local economy is negatively affected by the reduced spending power and disposable income the uncommunicated State Pension Age changes has brought about among Island women born in the 1950s.

IW Council supports:

- The conclusion of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on State Pension Inequality that women born in the 1950s have suffered a gross injustice, affecting their emotional, physical and mental circumstances in addition to causing financial hardship.
- A swift resolution to this ongoing injustice before more and more Island women die, waiting for compensation.
- The WASPI Campaign for an immediate one-off compensation payment of between £11,666 and £20,000 to those affected, with the most going to women who were given the shortest notice of the longest increase in their state pension age.

IW Council resolves:

- The Leader of the Council to write to local the local Member of Parliament, and to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to outline the effects of the injustice to 1950s women on the community on the Isle of Wight and to seek their support for an immediate compensation package.

During the debate, the Leader was asked if a copy of the letter and any reply received could be published on the council website. The Leader acquiesced to the request. A vote was taken, the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

THAT The Leader of the Council to write to local the local Member of Parliament, and to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to outline the effects of the injustice to 1950s women on the community on the Isle of Wight and to seek their support for an immediate compensation package.

49. By Councillor N Stuart

Councillor N Stuart moved the following motion which was duly seconded:

Council believes that Isle of Wight residents are unfairly and unequally treated by the UK government compared to mainland residents.

Council recognises that the Islands Forum provides a chance to raise these concerns but believes that it is insufficient to ensure that the Isle of Wight gets the fair treatment it deserves.

Council believes a legislative solution would ensure that the Isle of Wight secures equitable treatment that is long-lasting. Such legislation should include, but not limited to, a system to deliver

1. Fair funding to Isle of Wight Council and other public services
2. Fair approaches for cross-Solent services by way of regulation, service obligation and government subsidy
3. Equal health services on the Island that maximises opportunities for local treatment and minimises the need for residents to travel to the mainland.

The Council will take all steps necessary to pursue central Government to deliver a fair outcome for the Island.

Councillor P Jordan proposed the following amendment which was duly seconded:

Council believes that Isle of Wight residents are unfairly and unequally treated by the UK government compared to mainland residents.

Council recognises that the Islands Forum provides a chance to raise these concerns but believes that it is insufficient to ensure that the Isle of Wight gets the fair treatment it deserves.

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The Council will **continue to** take all steps necessary to pursue central Government to deliver a fair outcome for the Island.

Councillor N Stuart and his seconder agreed to accept the amendment.

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

RESOLVED:

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Council recognises that the Islands Forum provides a chance to raise these concerns but believes that it is insufficient to ensure that the Isle of Wight gets the fair treatment it deserves.

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3. Equal health services on the Island that maximises opportunities for local treatment and minimises the need for residents to travel to the mainland.

The Council will continue to take all steps necessary to pursue central Government to deliver a fair outcome for the Island.

50. **By Councillor I Dore**

Councillor I Dore moved the following motion which was duly seconded:

That Full Council agrees to a more robust commitment to the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Community, and as part of the current budget setting process, councillors consider increasing the financial contribution to the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Day event. This consideration is to be included in any proposed budget they put before full council.

By making this commitment, Full Council is reaffirming its pledge as a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, The Isle of Wight Civil Military Partnership, The Solent Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board, and the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Community as a whole.

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

RESOLVED:

THAT Full Council agrees to a more robust commitment to the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Community, and as part of the current budget setting process, councillors consider increasing the financial contribution to the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Day event. This consideration is to be included in any proposed budget they put before full council.

By making this commitment, Full Council is reaffirming its pledge as a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, The Isle of Wight Civil Military Partnership, The Solent Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board, and the Isle of Wight Armed Forces Community as a whole.

51. **Member Questions to the Leader and to any other Cabinet Member**

Councillor C Jarman asked what the process was for including an item onto the agenda for Full Council and the deadlines that need to be met? The Monitoring Officer advised that the Council's Constitution required improvement, this would need to be conducted with Councillor engagement to ensure decisions were made lawfully.

Councillor G Brodie asked how Island Road's were performing on milestones of the PFI contract? The Leader (with responsibility for Transport and Infrastructure, Highways PFI and Transport Strategy Strategic Oversight and External Partnerships) advised that the 14 contractual milestones set for the first seven years were met in year eight of the contract.

Councillor G Brodie asked a supplementary question on the Leaders view of the standard of performance expected by Island Roads, the Leader advised that there had been some disagreements of service provided, with ongoing discussions.

Councillor M Lilley asked if the money invested in PTEC was still viable and what the current position was.

The Leader advised that he was aware things had progressed however he would provide a written response.

Councillor M Lilley asked if all Councillors could be sent the response, the Leader agreed.

Councillor M Oliver asked if the Leader would meet with the GP's at Newport health centre to help identify new accommodation as the practice was currently working across two sites. The Leader advised that he would welcome a meeting.

Councillor G Brodie declared an interest as he was a patient at Newport Health Centre and the issue had impacted his health care.

Councillor A Garratt asked what the commitment was to bring indicative savings to the public for consultation to enable meaningful responses, the Leader advised that it was difficult to share budget settings at this stage of the process, he welcomed the help received from Cllrs Brodie, Garratt and Quigley and extended the offer to both the Conservatives and Empowering Islanders group.

Councillor C Mosdell asked if Councillor verbal questions and answers could be included in full in the minutes of Full Council and other committees, the Cabinet Member responsible for Democratic Services advised that he would research the matter.

Councillor D Adams asked if the Alliance group would participate to prepare a submission on strategic options for the long-term sustainability of the Military Road. The Leader advised that there was a contractual obligation on Island Roads to find a solution for the Military Road.

Councillor M Price raised concerns that the Military Road would be closed if a solution was not found, the Leader advised that he had been approached by a well known professor who had offered assistance.

CHAIRMAN