

Audit and Governance Committee – 11 December 2023

Written question from Cllr David Adams to the Audit and Governance Committee:

How many disposals of Council assets have occurred during this financial year, what is their aggregate value, and how many and of what aggregate value have not been fully (including value, terms, contract parties etc) publicly disclosed, and does this committee believe that hiding the terms of such disposals of Council (ie public) assets is open and transparent?

Response

Under the current governance arrangements decisions with regard to disposal and use of council assets sit with the cabinet. I will pass this question through to the relevant Cabinet member to provide a detailed response as to the number and value of disposals.

On the general principle of openness and transparency, I would expect Isle of Wight Council to be operating in line with the government's "Local government transparency code". A link is <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-transparency-code-2015>. I note also that the Local Government Association has published guidance at <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research-and-data/data-and-transparency/local-transparency-guidance>. The code and guidance recognises the importance of disclosure of information to the public proactively and in response to enquiries. Both also recognise that information may be confidential and exempt and that there is a statutory basis for non-disclosure.

Once the Cabinet member has provided a response, it will be appropriate for this to be published.

**Update: Response from the Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance:*

There have been three land disposals this financial year. They are:

- Land at Atkinson Drive sold on the 3 May 2023 for £15,000: decision taken by Cllr Hutchinson 12/2/20. Decision published on ModGov ([here](#))*
- Ryde Harbour freehold transfer sold 31 October 2023 for a £1: decision taken by Cabinet 16/12/21. Decision published on ModGov ([here](#))*
- Plot C of the Christ the King site: completion date 23 November 2023. This was a transfer under statute hence there is no requirement for this decision to be published.*

Given the decisions to dispose of land at both Atkinson Drive and Ryde Harbour are published on ModGov I believe the process to be transparent.