

Minutes

Name of meeting	CABINET
Date and Time	THURSDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2024 COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs P Jordan (Chairman), D Andre, J Bacon, P Fuller, J Jones-Evans, K Lucioni, L Peacey-Wilcox and I Stephens
Also Present	Sharon Betts, Laura Gaudion, Wendy Perera and Ashley Whittaker
Also Present (Virtual)	Colin Rowland and Natasha Dix

164. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024 be approved.

165. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

166. **Public Question Time - Maximum 15 Minutes for Written Questions and 15 Minutes for Oral Questions**

There were no public questions.

167. **Chairman's Announcements**

The setting of the budget had been a long process which had now concluded, and it was believed that the budget being put forward was the best offer for residents in difficult times. The proposed budget would be considered at an extra Cabinet meeting on 15 February.

Recent meetings had taken place with local housing providers and builders to look at delivering affordable homes on the Island. Some ideas would be brought forward in the near future.

Discussion had taken place with the National Trust and Highways regarding the potential for re-routing the Military Road.

At the recent Full Council meeting there had been a last minute amendment to the Council Tax Support Scheme, which had taken away the Exceptional Hardship Fund. A motion would be put to the next Full Council meeting to rescind the decision to remove the Exceptional Hardship Fund, to be considered for reinstatement alongside the budget setting.

168. Report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions

168a QPMR Q3 - 2023/24

The Cabinet Member did not wish to highlight anything particular at this stage. Other members highlighted some matters of note, which included that the target of 90% of waste to landfill had been exceeded at was currently at just over 96%. The length of time for planning applications to be determined had reduced as was now on target, helped by the reduction in the number of applications over the winter period. The floating bridge had been operating at 98.6% of its scheduled hours. It was currently at 97% due to software issues during the last quarter. An update regarding the floating bridge would be considered by Corporate Scrutiny at the end of February.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet noted the Performance Report for the Quarter ended 31 December 2023, and the priority report detail as set out in appendices 1-10.

168b Determination of School Admission Arrangements for 2025/26

It was noted that there was no change proposed to the admission arrangements and therefore no consultation had been necessary.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet approves the 2025/2026 admissions arrangements.

169. Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration, Culture and Leisure

169a LEP Integration of functions into Upper Tier Local Authorities

An overview was given of the proposed arrangements for future funding and joint working with Solent Partners (formerly Solent LEP) Southampton and Portsmouth City Councils. Over the next year work would be done on the finer detail, along with a potential commissioning model.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and requested that the disaggregation detail be brought to a future meeting of that Committee.

RESOLVED:

To note that subject to meeting certain conditions, the Government is looking to integrate a number of existing LEP functions into UTLAs.

To note that to meet the conditions, and to maintain a focus on the Solent area, Isle of Wight Council (IWC) will need to work with Portsmouth City Council (PCC) and Southampton City Council (SCC) to take on these functions through the creation of a new joint UTLA Board.

To agree that subject to the 3 Solent UTLA area being recognised by the Government as an area for LEP integration, with appropriate due diligence, IWC should become a Member of Solent Partners, a company limited by guarantee, that is a successor body to the Solent LEP, to help drive economic growth in the sub-region. This agreement to be conditional on PCC and SCC similarly agreeing to become Members of Solent Partners.

To agree that IWC should not appoint a Director to the Board of Solent Partners to ensure that there is no conflict of interest with the wider governance needed for the new LEP integration arrangements. IWC, along with the other two UTLAs will seek appropriate requirements within the articles of Solent Partners to ensure representatives of all three UTLAs are entitled to observe board meetings.

To note the proposed draft governance structure attached as Appendix 1 that shows how IWC should work with partners to achieve our economic growth ambitions which will need to be outlined in an updated Solent 2050 Strategy.

To agree that subject of the agreement of all three partners, PCC are confirmed as the Accountable Body for Solent Partners.

To agree that any existing LEP funding disaggregated to the three Solent UTLAs can be pooled (subject to agreement with PCC and SCC) for the benefit of economic growth of the Solent region.

To agree that IWC, as one of the three UTLAs, will work with partners to develop an agreement on how Solent Partners will deliver economic growth for the functional economic area.

That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, and the Director of Finance and s151 Officer, acting individually or collectively in consultation with the Leader to agree the final details of the transfer of LEP functions to the UTLAs including future governance arrangements.

To agree that IWC should seek to support the creation of a Solent Economic Partnership, inviting adjacent Districts and Boroughs, Hampshire County Council, and other key public sector stakeholders, to enable Local Authorities leaders and leaders within the business community to have a regular opportunity to discuss and support economic growth in the region.

170. Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Transport Infrastructure, Highways PFI and Transport Strategy

170a District 2 TRO Review - Newport and Carisbrooke

The review was one of a number being brought forward on safety grounds following requests from members of the public and Town, Parish and Community Councils over the past 10 years. The proposals had undergone a process of consultation.

Cllr Garrett raised concerns regarding the painting of roads, and suggested that should the council's financial position improve, that consideration be given to physical restrictions rather than simply painting the roads, which would need enforcement.

A request was made that, when consultations have ended, that notices be removed from display in order to tidy up the streets. The Leader confirmed that he would take this up with the relevant Director.

RESOLVED:

That the decision on the proposed parking restrictions in Wellington Road, Newport which are subject to this report in relation to *The Isle of Wight Council (Various Streets, Newport) (Traffic Regulation) Order No 1 2023 is postponed, pending the outcome of the public inquiry.

That all other proposed parking restrictions which are subject to this report in relation to *The Isle of Wight Council (Various Streets, Newport) (Traffic Regulation) Order No 1 2023; *The Isle of Wight Council (Residents' Parking Places) Order No 1 2023; * The Isle of Wight Council (Parking Places) Order No 4 2023 are approved as proposed.

171. Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance

171a Council Tax Premiums on Second Homes and Empty Properties

Local Authorities had been given powers by government to collect premiums for properties which had been empty for more than one year (previously more than two years), to come into force in April 2024, and a discretionary premium of up to 100 per cent on second homes, to come into force in April 2025. There were some exceptions, and an appeal process would be in place. It was believed this would bring in extra revenue of around £88,000 from empty properties and around £4,270,000 from second-home owners. It was agreed that the council should take this opportunity given by government as the arguments in favour of doing so outweighed those against.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had requested an update on empty properties be brought to that Committee in April 2025, and an update on second homes in April 2026.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the following:

To adopt, commencing the billing period starting 1 April 2024, a council tax premium of 100 per cent for all long-term empty properties as defined by amendments to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in force on that date:

To adopt, commencing the billing period starting 1 April 2025, a council tax premium of 100 per cent for all dwellings occupied periodically as defined by amendments to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in force on that date (second homes); and

That the Draft Council Tax Policy for Second Homes, Long Term Empty Properties and determining discounts for certain dwellings be adopted and that the council's Section 151 Officer delegated authority to amend the council's policy of premiums in line with secondary legislation and/or statutory guidance, as and when published in conjunction with the Revenues and Benefits Managers.

172. **Cabinet Member Announcements**

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Corporate Functions reported that the deadlines to apply for school places for the coming year were 31 October 2024 for Secondary schools and 15 January 2025 for Primary schools. The partnership with Hampshire County Council had now ended and the new Director of Children's Services and Service Directors for Education and Children's Social Care were now in post. A more holistic approach to place planning was to be considered. Consultation would take place with members, school governors, parents and other stakeholders prior to any proposals being announced.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Biosphere and Waste reported that the council had won a Green Impact Gold Award, for supporting businesses to improve their environmental performance.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Coastal Protection and Flooding reported that two Supplementary Planning Documents would be coming to Cabinet for approval to address health and flooding issues. There was to be a public meeting later in February with an update on the recent landslips and coastal protection and how the council could support residents. Actions from the planning peer review had resulted in re-introducing 'meet the planners' on Wednesday afternoons, and in the first two weeks 20 people had visited the service. The Agents and Architects forum was also being resurrected, with its first meeting the following day.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance thanked the Chief Executive and Finance team for finalising a balanced budget.

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration, Culture and Leisure reported that various activities were planned for the forthcoming half term holiday, including play days at the Newport Roman Villa and family activities at the guildhall museum. On 20 February there was to be a follow up workshop on the Solent Cultural Strategy. Further funding had been obtained from Historic England for Ryde and a bid was to

be submitted for extra funding for Ryde Greenway. An event to discuss the Cowes and Northwood Place Plan had taken place which the Cabinet Member had attended.

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highways PFI and Transport Strategy, Strategic Oversight and External Partnerships reported that the proposal to increase parking charges from 1 April and to increase the floating bridge charge would not now be taken forward, neither would there be any increase in the charges in the current financial year. This had been included in the budget being proposed.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health reported that a paper would be coming forward regarding the government initiative for a Smokefree Generation, with a range of measures to encourage people not to start smoking and to support people to stop. Disposable vapes had now been banned and the council were working with schools and trading Standards colleagues on this. The Cabinet member had attended a successful wellbeing event for support staff and carers which had been attended by over 150 people.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services, Community Protection and ICT reported that she had been to a meeting of the Youth Commission who were looking for more members aged 14 – 25 to help shape policing and crime decisions. Nine new police officers had been appointed as beat officers for the Island, in addition to the existing neighbourhood and district teams. A letter had been received from the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the submission of bids to the ASB Fund to deal with anti-social behaviour issues.

173. Consideration of the Forward Plan

There was nothing to be added to, or removed from, the Forward Plan, and it was noted that there were some important decisions coming up in the next few months.

174. Members' Question Time

A written question was received from Cllr Lilley (MQ03-24) regarding poverty on the island. A written response had been prepared and would be forwarded to Cllr Lilley.

Councillor Love asked whether, in relation to the new Solent LEP proposals, the cabinet believed that the council was heading for a union with other devolved councils. The response was that it was not, as the ability for the council to make its own decisions was fundamental.

CHAIRMAN