



# Committee Report

## ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL

Date	<b>17 JULY 2024</b>
Title	<b>LEADER'S UPDATE REPORT</b>
Report of	<b>LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>

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Earlier this month the general election was held and the Island now has two members of parliament. The results of the election are always eagerly awaited and my congratulations to Richard Quigley and Joe Robertson for being elected to Isle of Wight West and East respectively. I look forward to working in collaboration with both Richard and Joe. I also want to specifically thank the elections and democratic services teams who support the running of the election, which is a huge effort and this election has come quickly on the back of the police and crime commission election. I am sure that you will join me in thanking those teams and all the council staff and volunteers who supported the smooth running of the poll and the count.

The council, working with Southampton City Council on an innovative technology project funded by central government, were winners in the Service Delivery Project of the Year at the Society for Innovation, Technology and Modernisation (SOCITM) annual awards ceremony. The project has been designed to improve human resource business processes through automation software tools and is expected to bring efficiency improvements not only to our respective local authorities, but to also be replicated by other local authorities across the country who experience similar challenges with gaps in connectivity between software product. A great achievement for the project team.

The HR team hosted an 'Immersive Work Experience' on Monday 8 July for Ryde Academy year 9 students, who visited County Hall to learn about the various careers available at the council and the impact these have on our communities. The experience involved a tour of County Hall, where the students met with colleagues and discussed the career opportunities within the council together with a 15-minute activity and a 5-minute presentation of an overview of each service area.

The fleet team have just purchased eight electric Nissan Leaf's to be allocated to Adult Social Care and Parking services. The transition from petrol/diesel vehicles to electric vehicles is part of the 2021-2040 climate strategy, with the intention to convert the majority of the fleet to electric by 2030. The Leaf's will add to twenty other electric vehicles currently on the fleet which means that 22.6% of the fleet is now electric and it's estimated that 250,000 miles will be driven by electric vehicles, saving 17,087kgs or 17.987 tonnes of CO2.

This year's staff long service awards took place on 10 July in the Council Chamber and staff were thanked for their long service and commitment to service delivery. 65 staff were congratulated for 20 years' service, 33 staff for 25 years and 26 members of staff who had achieved 30, 40 and even 50 years working for the Isle of Wight Council.

As part of the Island work on from harm to hope - the government 10-year drug strategy the council has commissioned a new Specialist Alcohol and Drugs Community Treatment and Recovery Service.

The coastal protection team have been working hard this season to repair much of the damage from winter storms around the Island including repairs to reopen Totland and Colwell promenade, clearing cliff falls, reprofiling the beach at Monks Bay and scooping a regional award for partnership excellence for the restoration of Ventnor Eastern Esplanade! This project is also a finalist for the national award from Construction Excellence to be announced in November.

The beaches team have faced a different challenge this year to remove from amenity beaches the large amount of tree trunks washed ashore from landslides over the winter; in non-amenity and wilder areas we have left these in site as an important part of the beach eco-system.

Our Parks Officer undertook the preparation of Seaclose fields, the arboretum, sporting courts and memorial trees in advance of the Isle of Wight festival. Over the next few months the Park and open spaces will be restored ready for the sporting seasons ahead and open for community use.

The waste service is continuing its excellence in service delivery, we continue to divert over 92 per cent of all household waste away from landfill to be recycled or incinerated for energy production where not recyclable.

Recent months have been very busy for the new Children's Services Directorate, established on 1 February. In addition to supporting children, young people and families on a day-to-day basis, there is a significant amount of transformation work underway, partly to do with service improvement, and partly to do with establishing new systems and processes following the cessation of the partnership with Hampshire. We are very pleased to have the support of colleagues from other local authorities assisting with some of this work, for example via the South East Sector Led Improvement Partnership and the Local Government Association.

The Chief Executive of the Youth Justice Board visited our Youth Justice Service in April, meeting not only with staff but also with some of the young people supported by the team, and their families.

Our Corporate Parenting Board is progressing with new arrangements, and Beaulieu House, our residential home for children and young people with additional needs was inspected by Ofsted achieving a rating of Good.

A new draft Education Strategy for the Island has been published, and comments are welcome on this from everyone over the summer and autumn. Important elements of this draft strategy are improvements to arrangements relating to special educational needs and disabilities support, and changes to primary schools so that outcomes can be improved for all children.

Once again this year emergency services, IWC and the festival organisers have ensured a well run and safe event. This year's activities operated from the Mountbatten Hall at Medina for the first year. The success of this work has come about from good partnership working and colocation at the site has proved invaluable to a successful event. The new venue saw a lot of activity with on-site problem solving with partners over the period working better than ever.

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