



Minutes

Name of meeting	CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date and Time	TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2021 COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM
Venue	VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)
Present	Cllrs R Hollis (Chairman), M Lilley (Vice-Chairman), D Andre, M Beston, V Churchman, S Hendry, J Jones-Evans and C Quirk
Co-opted (Voting)	Sheila Weedall (HALC) H Hewson (IWALC)
Cabinet Members	Cllrs B Abraham, P Brading, S Hastings, S Hutchinson, C Mosdell, G Peace, B Tyndall, D Stewart, I Ward
Also Present	Cllrs G Brodie, K Love Christopher Ashman, Marie Bartlett Simon Bryant, Steve Crocker, Laura Gaudion, Kerry Huddleday, John Metcalfe, Alex Minns, Sean Newton, Christopher Potter, Colin Rowland, Paul Thistlewood, Claire Shand and Chris Ward

50. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2021 be confirmed.

51. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Chris Quirk declared an interest in various items on the agenda as he was a member of the Members Regeneration Board, Members Housing Board, parking Projects Board and Policy and Scrutiny for Neighbourhoods and regeneration who had considered some of the items listed.

Cllr Julie Jones-Evans declared an interest in item ??, Covid-19 response and recovery, as the Director of Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce.

52. **Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

There had been no public questions received.

53. **Budget and Council Tax Setting 2021-2022 and Future Years Forecasts**

A number of questions had been submitted by members of the Committee regarding the budget and responses to these had been provided for the meeting. Members were informed that the Equality Impact Assessment would be contained within the papers circulated for Full Council on 24 February 2021. The Chief Executive confirmed that when proposing the budget, residents who would be most affected had been considered. The full impact of Covid-19 was an unknown and it had impacted on projects, such as the Ryde help centre which had been put on hold.

The Committee asked about the Pier Street toilet development and were advised by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure that there was interest from a developer and work was expected to commence in spring.

The Director of Children's Services advised the Committee that a transformation programme that had been used in Hampshire that led to the reduction of children in care had now commenced on the Isle of Wight, and officers were confident this would contain the growth of the number of children in care.

Questions were raised regarding the proposed work to County Hall as most staff were working at home. They were advised that improving the way staff worked together and giving them a fit for purpose base was important.

The Committee made comments upon a range of elements within the revenue and capital budget but it did not make any formal recommendations to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

The Equality Impact Assessment would be submitted to full Council on 24 February 2021 as part of the budget report.

54. **Update on Current Issues:**

54.1 **Covid-19 Response and Recovery**

The deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Covid-19 Recovery advised the Committee that an update had been provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 28 January 2021. Business support grants continued to be paid as quickly as possible, £139 million had been paid to existing and new businesses to date. Work on infection control was continuing and the take up of the vaccine was doing well.

It was acknowledged that a number of businesses didn't 'fit' the guidelines and were therefore denied access to any funding. The Committee was advised that a discretionary fund had been available with all businesses were being offered advice and if more discretionary funding was made available it would be distributed accordingly.

The Committee were informed that applications had been made for Waterside pool to fill the funding gap during lockdown. It was unknown when the decision would be made.

RESOLVED

The latest position regarding the Council's response and recovery arrangements were noted.

54.2 **Leaders Update**

The Leader advised the Committee that the legal action regarding the floating bridge had been deferred for up to three weeks due to health issues and a new date was expected to be set in February 2021. Talks continued regarding the Island Deal and an update would be provided to full council in due course. He advised that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer was due to retire and he wanted to thank him for all the work he had done.

The Committee asked questions regarding the floating bridge and the Island deal, The Leader advised that he was unable to answer questions relating to the floating bridge due to the legal action, and explained that further talks with government including the Island's MP were still being held.

A request was made for a list of legal actions undertaken or in process by the Council.

RESOLVED:

- i. The legal actions being taken in respect of Cowes Floating Bridge had been delayed but a full report would be presented to the Committee on 9 March 2021. The Leader indicated that he would include in his report any questions submitted to him in advance by members of the Committee.
- ii. A list of legal actions that the Council was currently engaged in would be supplied to Cllr Lilley in accordance with the Access to Information provisions.
- iii. The Leader would provide an update on the latest discussions being held with the Government on the Island Deal at full Council on 24 February 2021.
- iv. It was noted that Mr Steve Apter, Deputy Chief Fire Officer for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight would be retiring in June 2021.

55. **Comments on other items to be considered by the Cabinet**

55.1 **Quarterly Performance Report - Quarter 3**

The Committee asked if there was any further data regarding road traffic accidents on the Island as there seemed to be an increase from September 2020, The Director for Neighbourhoods advised that he would circulate the information.

Questions were raised regarding the housing renewals review and how the reductions had been found, it was explained that this was from people no longer requiring, or eligible, for housing, it was hoped that a review could be done on an annual basis, although it was acknowledged that due to the added pressure Covid-19 had, had on the department this was may not be possible. It was also noted that there had been no children accommodated in bed and breakfast facilities to date.

The Committee sought clarification on the recent recruitment drive for operational firefighters, was the recruitment for both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and how successful had the recruitment been particularly on the Island. The Leader advised that he would provide the figures.

Members were reminded that they could seek clarification form the relevant Cabinet Member and Director on any issues contained within the performance report outside of formal meetings.

RESOLVED

- i. The Director of Neighbourhoods would supply the latest information regarding the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions to Cllr Jones-Evans.
- ii. The Leader agreed to circulate the outcome of the recent recruitment campaign for firefighters on the Isle of Wight.
- iii. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Housing would advise Cllr Hewston of the date when the previous review of housing register renewals was undertaken.

55.2 **Parking Delivery Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure advised that there had been a members briefing the previous evening regarding the plan which had been well attended. It was noted that this was a major exercise.

Concern was raised regarding the visitor permits as there didn't seem to be any incentive for visitors to purchase a longer stay permit as there did not appear to be a financial incentive to do so based upon the daily cost per ticket, it was suggested that when visitors purchased their ferry tickets a parking permit could also be purchased with a discount to encourage visitors, The Committee were advised that this policy was flexible and suggestions would be investigated.

RESOLVED:

- i. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport would review the costs of the Visitor Permit and also whether arrangements could be agreed with the Cross Solent Ferry Operators on helping to market these.
- ii. The Committee formally agreed to support the recommendation to adopt the Parking Delivery Plan.

55.3 Public Health Annual Report

The Committee were advised by the Director for Public Health that they were working with companies and schools to develop active travel plans to help reduce the number of cars on the road, and increase physical activity.

Public Health had liaised with the Local Planning Authority regarding the development of the Island Plan, to encourage public spaces within developments.

RESOLVED:

The report was noted.

55.4 Progress on Housing Strategy Action Plan

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing presented the report and he highlighted that 40 objectives has been achieved, seven were not fully achieved and one had not been achieved, although it was due to be completed prior to the annual review date.

It was noted that work with local developers and planning applications on council land would be needed to help with providing Island residents with affordable housing. The empty property strategy had been implemented with a property in Sandown now being identified for a compulsory purchase order.

Concern was raised around the white paper and the implications on the Island if the Isle of Wight Council were not the Local Planning Authority for the Island.

RESOLVED:

The progress being made was noted.

55.5 Motion referred from Full Council (Cllr Lilley)

It was agreed that the motion would be discussed at the Cabinet meeting and it would be inappropriate for the Committee to make any comment at this stage.

56. Committee's Workplan:

56.1 Forward Plan

No comments were made at this stage.

RESOLVED:

THAT items within the forward plan were noted.

56.2 Workplan

It was noted that Cowes Floating Bridge was not listed on the Committee's workplan.

RESOLVED:

THAT a report on the legal position relating to Cowes Floating Bridge would be included in the workplan for the 9 March 2021 meeting.

57. **Members' Question Time**

Councillor Julie Jones-Evans asked a question regarding the issued guidance for the upcoming local elections, and the fairness to candidates, she was advised that government had issued the guidance.

CHAIRMAN