



Minutes

Name of meeting	ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and time	WEDNESDAY, 26 MAY 2010 COMMENCING AT 6.00PM
Venue	COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, IOW
Present	Cllrs Ian Ward (Chairman), Roger Dixcey, Wayne Whittle
Officers Present	Jonathan Baker, Steve Beynon, Ian Collins, Stuart Love, Peter Hayward, Paul Thistlewood
Cabinet Members	Cllrs Edward Giles
Apologies	Cllr Julie Jones-Evans

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the previous meeting held on [22 March 2010](#) be agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

3. Forward Plan

Members reviewed the Council's Forward Plan for June to September 2010 and in particular those items which fell within the remit of the Panel. The following issues were discussed:

i. Ref No: 918/09 – Transport Policy Review

Members were advised that the item would be put back to Cabinet in September 2010 in order to take into account any possible implications of the recently elected coalition Government's policies on transport and highways issues.

With regard to the residents parking permits, members were advised that Cabinet would form a view once the new system had been operating for a short time. The Panel pointed out that residents were still unsure about the new system and would need clarity as soon as possible.

ii. Ref No: - 1048/10 – Interim Waste Plan – (2008-11)

The Director for the Economy and Environment advised that a report would go to a meeting of the Cabinet in either July or September 2010 and would look at how the Waste Plan would fit in over a period of 25 years in conjunction with the Island Plan.

The Panel was advised that with regard to the recently implemented kerbside refuse collection regulations, whilst some residents still had various concerns with the new policy, many had overcome initial problems. The Strategic Director advised that there had been a significant reduction in the number of complaints received by the council's call centres.

It was also confirmed that there had been no additional street cleansing costs as a result of any litter being left behind after collections.

iii. Ref No: - 1027/10 – Adoption of the Eastern Yar Flood and Erosion Risk Management Strategy

The Panel was advised that the report would be discussed and decided at the meeting of the Cabinet on 1 June 2010 and was as a result of the legal covenant established which placed an obligation on the council to maintain the sea wall within the area.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Forward Plan for June – September 2010 be noted.

4. **Performance Management - Quarterly Performance Management Report - Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2009/10**

A Quarter 4 version of the performance report which provided more updated and relevant information, which would be taken to the meeting of the Cabinet on Tuesday, 1 June 2010, was tabled and members looked at the following items which specifically fell with the remit of the panel.

The Strategic Director for the Economy and Environment advised Members that whilst the new coalition Government had announced a review into PFI programmes and that the Islands Highways PFI would be suspended pending the review, the council was still confident that the award would ultimately proceed. The review was not about saving money in light of the UK's deficit, but more about looking at the system of how the programme would be procured and implemented.

The next milestone of the programme would be to seek government agreement in June 2010; however should the suspension still be in place, the PFI Programme Director along with the Strategic Director for the Economy and Environment would put in place measures to work around any delay.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Performance Management - Quarterly Performance Management Report - Quarter 3 and 4 2009/10 reports be noted.

5. Severe Weather Briefing

The Strategic Director for the Economy and Environment presented to the Panel a report which provided members with a detailed account of the response from the council with regard to the severe winter weather experienced in the first week of January 2010.

The Resilience Manager for Emergency Management advised the Panel that the Emergency Management Team looked at business continuity of all areas of the council, including Fire and Rescue, and carried out measures to ensure that all key areas were able to continue to provide a service to the public during the event of an emergency situation.

Members were informed that communications had received a lot of positive feedback, especially with regard to continuous updates on school closures as well as the interaction with the media and residents. Call Centre staff had also received much praise for the way in which they continued to provide a much needed service and the Emergency Management Team had worked well to provide around the clock assistance in order to keep the Island moving as best as possible.

The Panel was advised with regard to the clearance of primary routes that as the Island was subjected to the same rations of salt as the rest of the UK, routes had to be prioritised so that stocks were maintained. The Strategic Director for the Environment and Economy advised that any future severe cold weather could see key car parks in the main Island Towns also cleared of snow and ice.

With regard to the clearance of snow on Island pavements, the Panel was advised that residents would be encouraged to remove any snow which accumulated outside their homes and businesses. The council would not support any action taken by private individuals seeking to take legal action where an accident occurs through any such clearance operations. Whist street cleaners were employed to clear away as much snow and ice as possible from pavements, the shortage of salt supplies meant that the task of doing so was not as quick as desired.

The Head of Highways and Transport also advised the Panel that the Winter Maintenance Programme for 2010/2011 would feature a plan on how the council dealt with any possible future severe cold weather. Clearance of specific key pavements and footways along with priority roads would be included in the plan and it would also need to take into account the possibility of a limit placed upon salt supplies.

With regard to the provision of gritting bins at certain strategic areas the panel was advised that distributing salt and grit by hand was not a very effective measure. Any salt left in the bins would also deteriorate after a period of time. Given the cost and need to manage salt resources no bins no action would be taken on this.

It was noted that the public spirited nature of Island residents during the crises was very much appreciated by the authority and there were many stories of people assisting others such as 4x4 vehicle owners helping stranded drivers.

Members were also advised that most of the complaints which had been received were post event after the snow and ice had thawed and were primarily about pot holes

which had formed as a result. These were being dealt with and formed a main part of the cost of the crises.

The Strategic Director for the Economy and Environment advised the Panel that the total cost of dealing with the severe weather event was in the region of £680,000, some £200,000 over the winter 2009/2010 budget.

With regard to salt runs, 19 had been budgeted for, but the unexpected severe weather meant that a total of 35 runs had been conducted.

The cost to the Island's economy had not been fully quantified, although no major specific business problems had been identified.

RESOLVED:

THAT the severe weather briefing be noted.

CHAIRMAN.....