



Minutes

Name of meeting	ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and time	WEDNESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2011 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Ian Ward (Chairman), Reg Barry, Roger Dixcey, Paul Fuller, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, Jerry White
Cabinet Members present	Cllrs Barry Abraham, George Brown, Edward Giles
Officers Present	Steve Apter, Kevin Burton, Peter Hayward, Stuart Love, Stuart May, Bill Murphy, Paul Thistlewood

14. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [28 September 2011](#) be confirmed.

15. [Declarations of Interest](#)

Cllr Paul Fuller declared a personal interest in Minute 20 as he was in receipt of a concessionary bus fare.

16. [Public Question Time](#)

Mr Steve Goodman, an Island resident, asked a question in relation to the availability of a Government grant for the fire control. The Strategic Director for Economy and Environment indicated that an appropriate submission had been made within the relevant timescale.

In response to a supplementary question regarding the IT linkage with the Surrey Fire Control Centre the Strategic Director stated that the project team was working on a solution to this issue and hoped to have this in place by early January 2012.

Ms Tanja Rebel, an Island resident, asked a question as to whether the operation of Cowes Floating Bridge was to be privatised. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste advised that it was the policy of

the Council to secure a new vessel and it was not the current intention to charge for pedestrians or pedal cycles.

17. **Adverse Weather Conditions**

(a) **Preparations for Instances of Severe Winter Weather**

The Panel considered a briefing on the Council's arrangements for dealing with any instances of severe winter weather. Members had been circulated with a copy of the [Winter Service Plan 2011-2012](#).

The Strategic Manager - Highways and Transport indicated that the plan had been produced following consultation with a range of partners and agencies. Aspects of the Council's business continuity plans were outlined together with how information would be made available to the media and public.

As the result of recent national experience and the rationing of supplies of salt the Council had reviewed the highway network that would be included in the list of priority routes that would be treated. This now represented 291km (36%) of the network. There was 1,300 tonnes of salt in store which should be sufficient. The previous year the Council had used 1200 tonnes with 750 tonnes being the normal usage. The price of salt was dictated by demand. The key factor in supply was not the cost but the limit placed upon Councils through rationing.

A list of priority footways had also been prepared. The Council's contractors for street sweeping would undertake snow clearing duties when required as part of the contract.

The Panel noted that it was not possible to provide a stock of salt for use by the public at other sites. This was due to rationing and problems with heaps becoming contaminated or solidifying. The Council did have arrangements to deal with other sites when exceptional circumstances required. The Strategic Manager was willing to meet with members to discuss individual queries about the list of highways contained in the priority list.

RESOLVED :

THAT the Council's Winter Service Plan for 2011-2012 be noted.

(b) **Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment** ([Recording 1](#) and [2](#))

Members were briefed by the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services on the content of the draft preliminary flood risk assessment. The Council had a statutory requirement to produce this and submit it to the Environment Agency for approval. National guidance also suggested that the assessment should be reviewed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee.

The Panel was circulated with the Executive Summary from the full assessment document. This detailed the locally significant risk areas ranked by number of people at risk. The data used for the calculations was supplied by the Environment Agency, Southern Water and the Fire and Rescue Service. A national formula was then applied to arrive at the ranking. This also took into account what was termed critical services such as hospitals, nursing/care/residential homes, police/fire/ambulance stations, prisons, sewage treatment plants and key electricity installations.

The draft assessment identified that the Island was not deemed to have a significant flood risk which would affect large populations. This might mean that the Council would not be statutorily required to produce flood hazard and flood risk maps or a flood risk management plan.

It was noted that the flood risk assessment was the Council's responsibility whereas coastal and tidal flooding came within the responsibility of the Environment Agency. Members thought that this added confusion to the public when instances of flooding occurred.

RESOLVED :

- (i) THAT the content of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for the Isle of Wight be noted.
- (ii) THAT arrangements be made to have an item on a future agenda dealing with tidal flooding and the Environment Agency be invited to attend.

18. **Road Traffic Accidents**

At the last meeting members had requested further information on the recording processes for road traffic accidents, how these were analysed and actions identified. The Panel received a [PowerPoint presentation](#) from the Group Manager – Network Management and Improvement which covered these issues.

The Panel was advised of the Council's statutory road safety duty, the reporting process for accidents, Police involvement. The Council could then analyse the data collected to assist in the identification of any common causes, characteristics or cluster sites.

Reference was made to the Road Safety Forum which had been re-established and involved road safety professionals and stakeholders. The Forum looked in detail at regular monitoring reports and discussed options for dealing with specific issues that were able to be identified.

A range of figures and graphs were provided highlighting trends over the previous five years. This included information on vehicle classification, user groups, age and weather conditions. From this trends and cluster sites could be identified. This indicated concerns about the increasing number of accidents involving powered two wheelers and in particular older riders on

larger machines. Additionally there was an increase in accidents involving pedal cycles. There was however an increase in the overall number of people using pedal cycles probably due to the rising price of fuel.

The trend for January 2006 to December 2010 showed higher numbers as the result of either wet roads or snow and ice. This information had led to a specific road safety awareness campaign on driving in winter conditions.

One category causing concern was in relation to the number of bus and coach casualties. There had been 42 during 2010-11 and these were related to separate incidents. The Panel was advised of work being done by Southern Vectis to take steps to reduce and prevent these. The majority of incidents were as the result of passengers not using the hand rails and falling off seats or leaving their seats whilst the bus was moving.

An explanation was given as to how the information on accidents as cluster sites was assessed and options investigated and where appropriate implemented. Smallbrook crossroads was an example of where following an in depth analysis an engineering solution was to be undertaken. The recent works at the Hare and Hounds junction involving the installation of traffic signals had prevented any further accidents taking place at this location.

Members noted that the Head On road safety campaign, which had recently been updated, appeared to be effective in helping to reduce the number of young people killed or seriously injured. It was also intended by the Fire and Rescue Service to re-launch Bikeability which was a campaign aimed at school children using cycles.

In discussing a number of issues the Panel was advised that officers would look at the number of rear end accidents arising from vehicles travelling too close. Additionally the availability of data that may be of interest to members for their local area would be looked at.

The Panel was then given a demonstration of the content of a pilot Crime Report website by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. This enabled the public to view data relating to crime and fire incidents within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It was possible to identify an area and receive updates on incidents.

RESOLVED :

- (i) THAT members be advised of data that can be made available relating to road traffic accidents in their area.
- (ii) THAT details of the Crime Report website be circulated to all members of the Council.

19. Budget and Performance

- (a) [Quarterly Performance Management Report – Quarter 2 2011/12](#)

The full report for Quarter 2 would be available at the next meeting of the Panel. Members did raise questions on youth unemployment and

the availability of appropriate training schemes including apprenticeships. The Cabinet Member for the Economy and Environment advised on the latest initiative being announced by the Council regarding a pre-apprenticeship scheme. It was also noted that there were on-going discussions with the Chamber of Commerce.

The Strategic Director advised on employment opportunities provided by the development at Pan Meadows and also the school re-organisation project.

RESOLVED :

THAT a report on employment opportunities, especially for young people, be submitted to the Panel and relevant stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and Youth Council be invited for this item.

(b) [Budget 2011/12 and 2012/13](#)

The Strategic Director clarified that any under expenditure in 2010-11 would be used corporately. Under expenditures were normally one offs and could therefore not be utilised for other service areas on a longer term basis.

The Panel discussed the areas to be developed for consideration as possible savings for the 2012-13 budget as considered by full Council on 21 September 2011.

With regard to street based services and staff it was proposed to revise the management structure and also avoid any duplication. This would not impact upon service delivery but may involve the reduction in the number of posts. The savings being achieved through changes to procurement and contract management were noted together with the difficulties experienced with the existing waste contract.

In reviewing income generation it was not always possible to benchmark against other authorities. The proposed establishment of an in house business model for leisure centres would assist in reducing the level of subsidy required.

The joint service arrangements being discussed with Southampton City Council would also include the possibility of this authority undertaking services for them.

RESOLVED :

THAT the budget issues be noted.

20. [Forward Plan](#)

Consideration was given to the items contained within the Forward Plan of relevance to the Panel's remit. It was noted that the decision relating to

Newport Harbour would be taken by the Cabinet on 13 December 2011. Members were reminded that there had been an informal briefing on this subject earlier in the month at which a briefing note was made available.

It was indicated that the item on concessionary bus fares dealt with wider public transport contractual arrangements.

Members debated a number of issues related to the proposed decision to be taken regarding the visitor economy. In particular reference was made to the impact of the large music festivals. These placed pressures on the highway network and were reviewed on an annual basis. The Council's involvement with these events was through the licensing function.

RESOLVED :

- (a) THAT the Newport Harbour briefing note be circulated to the Panel.
- (b) THAT an item be included on a future agenda regarding the Council's public transport contractual arrangements.

21. **Progress Report on Recommendations**

Members were updated on the progress with recommendations and actions agreed at previous meetings.

RESOLVED :

THAT the report be noted

22. **Members Question Time**

Councillor Reg Barry asked if the proposed replacement Cowes Floating Bridge would be built on the Island. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste indicated that the contract would follow the Council's normal tendering process.

Councillor Lora Peacey-Wilcox asked if the replacement Floating Bridge would be operated on chains or cable. The Strategic Director advised that these would be an issue within the tender process.

Councillor Lora Peacey-Wilcox asked about a recent seminar held at Cowes Yacht Haven for the agricultural industry. She was advised that this had not been organised by the Council but it did have an attendance there.

CHAIRMAN