

Minutes

Name of meeting	ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and time	WEDNESDAY, 27 APRIL 2011 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM
Venue	COMMITTEE ROOM TWO, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Ian Ward (Chairman), Reg Barry, Roger Dixcey, Paul Fuller, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, Jerry White
Officers Present	Stuart Love, John Metcalfe, Paul Street, Paul Thistlewood
Cabinet members present	Cllrs Barry Abraham, George Brown, Edward Giles
Other members present (non voting)	Cllr David Williams

6. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [2 February 2011](#) be confirmed.

7. [Declarations of Interest](#)

There were no declarations made at this stage.

8. **Public Question Time** ([Recording 1](#) and [2](#))

Mr Goodman asked a question in relation to the costs of the proposed arrangements with Surrey for the operation of the fire control. The Strategic Director for Economy and Environment, together with the Chief Fire Officer, indicated that certain costs could not be released at present as these were commercially confidential but they clarified aspects of costs per call.

Mr Mawhood asked a question as to whether the process for the transfer of the fire control to Surrey had complied with the Council and EU tendering policies. The Strategic Director indicated that all proper processes had been followed.

9. [Economic Strategy – Renewable Technology](#)

The Deputy Director for Economy, Tourism and Leisure gave a powerpoint presentation on aspects of the Council's economic strategy aimed at establishing the island as a centre of excellence in the low carbon economy.

The panel was advised of work being undertaken to maximise opportunities in the green economy arising from the Island's location, abundance of natural resources, its history and experience with renewable energy technology.

An outline was given of offshore wind, tidal, solar and biomass projects and the involvement of local businesses and industries in these. It was highlighted that the proposed offshore wind turbine farm off St Catherine's Point would produce sufficient energy output for the whole Island plus 50% more. The Solent Ocean Energy Centre would have a substantial long term benefit to the Island and engaged a wide range of interested local and national partners.

Discussions had been held at Ministerial level on the Island's role in renewable energy. The island's small ports could play an important role in supporting offshore facilities.

RESOLVED :

THAT the work being undertaken in connection with renewable energy as part of the economic strategy be noted.

10. **Review of Public Convenience Provision**

The Panel was reminded of the decision taken by Cabinet on 1 March 2011 following on from a review of public convenience provision. The Strategic Director indicated that actions were being taken to dispose of the facilities that were no longer required.

Members queried the renegotiated contract for the cleaning of the remaining public conveniences. They asked for details to be circulated of the revised costs and duration of the contract. Some concern was also expressed in relation to the level of contract supervision.

RESOLVED :

THAT the details of the renegotiated public convenience cleaning contract be circulated to the panel.

11. **Performance and Budget**

(a) **Quarterly Performance and Strategic Risk Management Report – Quarter 3 2010/2011**

Consideration was given to the relevant elements of performance that came within the remit of the panel. Where appropriate the Strategic Director gave an outline of the updated position. He also indicated that targets for 2011/12 were being looked at with the relevant cabinet members to make these more qualitative rather than quantitative.

Members discussed the range of actions being taken to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents. These included engineering, educational and enforcement options and these were geared towards specific groups of highway user as deemed appropriate from the accident figures. Particular reference was made to the DVD which targeted young people and had been shown in high

schools. Although the numbers were above target these did not show any particular trends. It was noted that the management of the road safety function had been transferred to the Fire and Rescue Service.

In relation to planning performance targets members were advised that the situation had improved in quarter 4. The previous quarter had been affected by a number of staff being absent due to sickness. Planning targets were being reviewed so that these could reflect the quality of decision made rather than the speed of it. On the matter of enforcement the requirement to ensure that the legal process was adhered to meant that action could take some time to complete.

The recycling and landfill targets had been affected by the unplanned shut downs of the gasification plant. Members were told of the current consultation exercise being undertaken with regard to proposed changes to the waste collection arrangements. It was noted that national recycling targets were for household waste only. The council had no statutory responsibility for commercial waste but there was a view that the government may review this when looking at targets for 2014/15.

RESOLVED :

THAT arrangements be made for the panel to view the road safety DVD.

(b) [Budget 2010/11 and 2011/12](#)

The Strategic Director indicated that from an initial assessment of the outturn for 2010/11 this was likely to be within budget. There would be a regular budget monitoring report to future meetings on the 2011/12 budget.

RESOLVED :

THAT the report be noted.

12. [Fire Modernisation](#)

The Chief Fire Officer gave a presentation on key aspects of the proposed transfer of fire control to Surrey and the fire modernisation project.

An outline was given of the background to the control room being transferred to the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. Action had become necessary following the cancellation of the Regional Fire Control Centres by the government. Due to a range of operational, technical and financial issues a business case had been made for the transfer. This would ensure an increased resilience to deal with incidents together with a more cost effective control function. The timescales involved in the proposed transfer were explained.

The cabinet member explained that he had received a small number of comments regarding the intended delegated decision. The business case had demonstrated the need for the decision being implemented as intended and for this to be done as soon as possible.

The panel noted that consideration had been given to the establishment of a joint control facility with another Island emergency service but this had been discounted on operational, financial and technical grounds. It was believed that the way forward was to have working arrangements with another fire authority. Surrey had taken the decision to upgrade its control facilities and this currently had the capacity to offer these for use to other authorities. A number of other fire authorities were either in the course of progressing their own plans for new control facilities or looking to develop joint arrangements.

Members debated the view expressed that the final decision should not be taken until full council had been given the opportunity to discuss the matter. This did not get the majority approval of the panel. The cabinet member reminded the panel that full council had, at its meeting on 22 September 2010, given an in principle decision on the future of the fire control.

With regard to the fire modernisation project the panel was advised of the location of the stations and the basis upon which these were crewed. The provision of new builds at Ventnor, Newport and the Bay had been put on hold. The location of stations was primarily based upon speed of response rather than population. The service operated on a ridership of five on pumping appliances and this enabled a more capable level of response at incidents. An explanation was given of how the nucleus crew, based at Ryde fire station but covering the Bay area, would operate. The building works at Ryde to accommodate this had been completed.

RESOLVED :

THAT the intention of the Cabinet Member for Fire and Community Safety to proceed with the implementation of the delegated decision on the transfer of fire control to Surrey Fire and Rescue Service be noted.

13. **Forward Plan**

The panel was made aware of items of relevance within the latest forward plan. In relation to the delegated decision on the Nettlesome/Seaview traffic regulation order the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Transport and Corporate Services responded to a query as to the length of time involved in making this.

The background to the proposed delegated decision relating to membership of Portsmouth and Urban South Hampshire Partnership was given by the Strategic Director.

14. **Members Question Time** ([Recording 1](#) and [2](#))

Councillor Fuller asked about arrangements for street lighting on un-adopted and private roads. The Strategic Director said that these were different dependant upon the road involved.

CHAIRMAN