



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
Date and time	<b>THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER 2009 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM</b>
Venue	<b>COMMITTEE ROOM ONE, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs Ian Ward (Vice Chairman in the Chair), Jonathan Bacon, Reg Barry, George Cameron, Vanessa Churchman Paul Fuller, John Hobart, Colin Richards, Margaret Webster, William Wyatt-Millington
Present (non voting)	Cllrs Peter Bingham, Paul Fuller, Edward Giles, Geoff Lumley, David Pugh
Officers Present	Steve Beynon, Dave Burbage, Barry Cooke, Stuart Fraser, Stuart Love, Heidi Marshall, Julie Martin, Paul Thistlewood
Apologies	Cllr Julie Jones-Evans

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15. **Minutes**

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [8 October 2009](#) be confirmed.

16. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations at this time.

17. **Call In of Delegated Decision 37/09**

A call-in had been received in respect of a delegated decision taken on 10 November 2009 relating to telephone masts on Council owned land by the cabinet member for resources, Councillor Bingham.

The lead member for the call in, Councillor Welsford, outlined the reasons behind this action. He advised the committee that the decision had the potential to inflict substantial financial damage to the Council should the effects of mobile telephone masts be subsequently proved to be hazardous to health and legal action taken by employees or members of the public suffering ill health as a consequence of exposure to the effects of masts situated on council property.

Those signing the call in believed that had been little or no opportunity for public debate and comment on the decision. There was evidence that other major institutions had adopted a more cautious stance acknowledging possible future financial risks of litigation, had not been taken seriously.

There was some discussion with regard to the restriction being lifted on or around schools and members were advised that schools had been specifically excluded.

In discussing the points raised it was noted that there was a need to seek clarification about the council's insurance position.

In considering the content of a recommendation to the cabinet member a proposal to retain the moratorium was lost. An alternative proposal to ensure that the cabinet member seeks clarification from the council's insurers about any risk from litigation before any final implementation of the decision was debated.

**RESOLVED :**

THAT the cabinet member be requested to seek clarification about the council's insurance position in relation to any claim that might be made against it on health grounds as the result of mobile phone masts on its land and buildings before implementing the decision.

**18. Concessionary Bus Fares**

Councillor Bacon indicated that it had originally been intended to seek a call in on the decision by the Cabinet made on 17 November 2009 about concessionary bus fares. This had not been possible for a number of reasons but he wished to highlight some concerns that a number of members had in relation to the decision. The views of the Isle of Wight Bus Users Group was not contained within the report. Questions also arose in relation to older people being able to access early morning medical appointments and it appeared there had been no consultation with those providers.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor Giles, advised that he told the Cabinet orally about the views of the Bus Users Group. In addition the council still offered a concessionary scheme beyond the national scheme. It was also possible for patients to request an appointment after 9.30am. He noted the concerns raised since the meeting of the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED :**

THAT the concerns raised by Councillor Bacon be noted.

**19. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Strategy 2010/11 – 2012/13 and Revised Budget Position 2009/10 and Financial Management Report for Quarter 2 (to 30 September 2009) and Update on the Overall Financial Position of the Council**

The Committee noted the reports that had been considered by the Cabinet on 17 November 2009 regarding financial matters. The Director of Resources, by way of

a powerpoint presentation, reported on the budget strategy process and star chamber update.

The impact of the recession, income generation and increased costs in some service areas meant that there was a £10m gap. The medium term financial plan showed how an element of this funding gap would be met but this still left £5m savings to be found.

The key areas for allocation of resources based upon the Corporate Plan priorities were noted. Members discussed the options available and the associated impact of these. The savings that would have to be made should not be over ambitious.

The position with regard to capital was also explained. Members commented on the need to have a programme that was capable of delivery within the set timescales.

The Director of Resources explained the next stages of the budget review. This would involve the outcomes from the budget consultation workshop, residents survey and the budget simulator on the council's website. A brief outline was given of the initial results from the residents survey. This identified the top three service areas, top priorities for allocation of resources and preferred method of increasing income.

It was intended that a special meeting of the committee should be held at the end of January 2010 so that relevant comments on the budget can be made to the Cabinet on 9 February 2010.

**RESOLVED :**

THAT the budget strategy process and star chambers update be noted

**20. Quarterly Performance, Risk and Strategic Programme Management Report – Quarter 2 2009/10**

Members noted the Council's service performance, risk and strategic project position during the second quarter ending 30 September 2009. Points highlighted were :

- Identification of key performance achievements and issues for the Isle of Wight Council;
- Summary of the Council's strategic programme;
- Summary of progress on the Council's key priorities;
- Summary of organisational Health;
- Up to date position of the strategic risk register.

It was noted that targeted intervention was to be reported to the Cabinet meeting due to be held on 10 January 2010, with a review of how fostering and adoption services were provided.

With regard to freedom of information requests it was indicated that the council had a disproportional high level of these compared with other similar authorities.

RESOLVED :

THAT the report be noted.

21. **Forward Plan**

Members noted the Forward Plan for the period December 2009 to March 2010. Councillor Pugh advised that the closure of Chale Primary School had not been included on the Forward Plan, but it was intended that a delegated decision would be taken by the end of December 2009.

CHAIRMAN