



Minutes

Name of meeting

Isle of Wight Council Environment & Sustainability Forum

Date and time

Thursday 19th December 2019 at 17.30

Venue

Conference Room 5, Floor 4 - County Hall

Attendees

Rob Brooker (RB) – Waste & Recycling Contract Manager (IWC)
Emily Crew (EC) – Waste Business Administrator (IWC)

Jim Fawcett – IWC
Kayleigh Richter – IWC

Cllr John Hobart (JH) – IWC
Cllr Steve Hastings (SH) – IWC
Cllr Sarah Talbot (ST) – Fishbourne Parish Council
Cllr Alison Logan (AL) – Niton & Whitwell Parish Council

Ian Boyd (IB) – ARC
Claire Hector (CH) – ARC
Tanja Rebel (TR) – Transition Island
Lester Slade (LS)
Judith Slade (JS)

1.

Apologies

John Metcalfe
Colin Rowland
Natasha Dix
Cllr Chris Quirk
Cllr Debbie Andre
Ollie Boulter

JF advised that he would be chairing the meeting in the unavoidable absence of Natasha Dix.

2.

Minutes from last meeting

Previous minutes agreed.

3. Questions from forum members

Sarah Talbot.

At the Madrid Climate Summit Greta Thunberg stated:

"Our leaders are not behaving as though we were in an emergency,"

"If there's a child standing in the middle of the road and cars are coming at full speed, you don't look away because it is too uncomfortable. You immediately run out and rescue that child.

"And without that sense of urgency, how can we, the people, understand that we are facing a real crisis."

Our Isle of Wight Council agrees that we are in a Climate emergency, so will it clearly demonstrate this commitment with better support for Parish and Town Councils (financial and otherwise) and with more action across the Island? Perhaps our Chief Executive and leader of the council could attend this forum?

The outline structure and proposal for a new IWC Climate and Environment Strategy and Action Plan was presented to the council's corporate management team on Tuesday this week who are all enthusiastic about the deliver of this strategy as a priority.

The plan and associated actions will be reviewed in draft by scrutiny and the Cabinet in February 2020 and taken to full council following this.

N Dix will circulate the outline document.

For example:

2020 is to be the BBCs year of the tree, and the Woodland Trust is giving trees away as part of its Charter for Trees initiative.

Has the Council identified areas where we can plant new trees and ensured that we take advantage of this initiative?

Initiatives such as this will form part of the Strategy and Action Plan.

I realise central government money is used for major road infrastructure, however, I would like to know what mitigation the IOW Council is putting in place to restore all the habitat lost. E.g. on the old St Mary's roundabout and along each side please?

What will happen to the shrubs/trees inside the junction improvement scheme area?

It is necessary to remove some of the existing trees and vegetation to accommodate the new junction improvement scheme, but in developing the new scheme we have tried to keep this to a minimum.

Much of the vegetation within the scheme site has self-seeded over time and grown in a sporadic manner making it unsuitable for replanting, however wherever possible any vegetation removed will be mulched and recycled to create compost that can then be re-used. Any wood that can be reused from trees removed from the site will also be recycled.

Our planting scheme is being developed but we will be looking to replace indigenous trees and vegetation on a like for like basis as far as it is reasonably practical to do so, while continuing to ensure road users' safety within the new scheme area. Any planting would take place in the autumn of 2020, outside of the bird-nesting season.

Tanja Rebel.

When adopting renewable energy, can the Isle of Wight Council ensure that it will not resort to so called "smart" green-wash solutions which will increase Electro-Magnetic Radiation pollution?

The Isle of Wight Council (IWC) has been asked questions recently about plans to introduce the new generation of mobile phone technology, known as 5G, onto the Isle of Wight. It is understood that there are some residents with concerns regarding the safety of this technology.

The ability of the council to influence the roll-out of mobile technology is limited by central government regulations. The council does however have a vital role to play in the development and regeneration of the Isle of Wight, which includes facilitating and supporting digital connectivity required by our residents and businesses.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) have set out the positive benefits of 5G in providing mobile networks that enable millions more devices to be connected at the same time has the potential to transform the way we live and economic productivity. By enabling businesses and communities to operate more efficiently the next generation of mobile technology will allow the live management of high volumes of data so that we can manage traffic flows, control energy usage and monitor air quality in real time.

Public Health England take the lead nationally for the provision of health information associated with mobile technology. PHE have set out that the current exposure to residents from 2G, 3G and 4G base stations fall well within the guidelines set out by the International Commission on non-ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), which underpin the health protection policies in the UK and Europe. PHE have set out that It is possible that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area. However, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and, as such, there should be no consequences for public health. In compliance with PHE advice, mobile network operators have

committed to follow the ICNIRP guidelines. DCMS have determined that Ofcom will carry out audits of mobile base stations on an ongoing basis to ensure that ICNIRP guidelines are not exceeded and publish the results of these audits on Ofcom's website.

4. **Presentation – Jim Fawcett: Renewable Energy.**

Please see presentation notes attached.

Questions:

ST asked if there was a target date for the councils aim to be self-sufficient? JF advised target date is the period of the relevant planning document – the Island Plan runs until 2033/34.

CH asked how the IW CO2 emission levels compare to the rest of the UK? JF advised that he did not have the figure to hand, but suspect above average, although not at top of league.

TR asked re other types of emissions? We use less energy, and issue less CO2 but has this been replaced by other types of emission or pollution such as 'smart' pollution? JF advised the focus is on greenhouse gases. This is a bigger reduction (35%) as decarbonising grid and cars have become more efficient.

TR asked if electric vehicles is a wise direction to go? as Tesla are being sued because materials are collected by slave labour in an un-environmentally friendly manner, we need to look at more intelligent solutions, e.g. public transport. JF advised that this presentation is not giving answers but providing trends. RB advised battery technology is changing and improving all the time. TR commented that technology cannot solve anything, it may be creating another problem as industry just want to make money. LS commented that to dispel that myth, the metal referred to is cobalt and the majority of industrial use is to take carbon out of fuel.

AL commented that if the majority of cars switch from petrol/diesel to electric, are we sharing a portion of damage done by power stations? There is a need to look holistically. ST commented better public transport; TR cycle paths.

LS asked if the proportion of renewable energy includes burning wood? Referring to a power station that uses imported wood to reduce their theoretical CO2 output. JF replied that it can be done but needs to be done at the right scale. There is a huge amount of unmanaged woodland on IW, could have wood and improve woodland, but need to be careful and use right scale at right places. TR – forests in Sweden destroyed for paper, we have ancient forest in UK, horrible to use trees like that, it is precious. If small scale and local can be ok. JF – every technology has its problems, none are perfect, just trying to improve on what we have now.

LS asked if there was a proposal for wind turbines? JF replied not as far as he is aware. The 2% is a consent scheme in Limerstone but has not gone ahead. Historically applications are largely refused, but couple of small ones have been granted.

AL queried fracking, and what is happening on the Island? Banned in lot of places, should be here. JH replied that he went to a presentation a couple of days ago, and the answer was that fracking is definitely not taking place– there is drilling as in Surrey/Sussex, it has not affected any water supplies as work is well below the aquifers. (heated debate followed regarding fracking)

TR – learn from mistakes re oil drilling, and not make future mistakes with other forms of pollution.

5. **AOB.**

JH commented that he would like to see an increase in use of alternate forms of transport, would like to see footpaths and cycleways taken more seriously and taken into account in design of new housing developments.

IB stated that opportunities for cycling and walking, particularly in Newport and Ryde, would be good to see.

CH raised the benefits of having green space in and around your building, effects on heating and cooling.

TR advised that Transition Island have planted kale in the flower beds, but it is not coming up yet. TI are glad to have offer of speaking for IWALC in February and are hoping to inspire other parish councils to introduce growing schemes to be the 'incredible edible' island.

AL stated that she wants to see what she can take back to the Parish Council from these meetings – something demonstrable that the Parish Council can do, not necessarily local authority but more individual

LS commented that all of the proposed savings, cycle ways, are all pointless if we are willing to allow more oil onto the market from the island which will just keep oil going.

The next meeting will be Thursday 16th January 2020 at 17.30 – Conference Room 5, Floor 4, County Hall.

Presentation: Joel Bateman, AONB: Isle of Wight Biosphere