



Name of meeting

Minutes

Isle of Wight Council Environment & Sustainability Forum

Date and time

Thursday 18th July 2019 at 17:30

Venue

Conference Room 5, Floor 4 - County Hall

Attendees

Natasha Dix (ND) – Principal Manager Waste & Recycling (IWC)
Emily Crew (EC) – Waste Team Business Administrator (IWC)

Kayleigh Richter (KR) – Sustainable transport officer (IWC)

Cllr. Steve Hastings (SH)
Cllr. Chris Quirk (CQ)
Cllr. John Hobart (JH)
Cllr. Sarah Talbot (ST)

Stephen Ashman (SA) – Island Roads
Dina Jung (DJ) – Bus User group

1. **Apologies**

Colin Rowland (IWC)
Rob Brooker (IWC)
Alex Minns (IWC)
Cllr Marianne Sullivan
Nikki Wood

2. **Minutes from last meeting**

Minor amendment under agenda item 5 (Updates from forum members) for clarification; agreed and minutes approved.

3. **Action points from the previous meeting**

It was agreed that a start time for the forum of 5.30pm was reasonable. SH asked for clarification as to whether future forums are to be held on the third or last Thursday of the month. ND advised that they would be on the third Thursday of the month, with the exception of August which has been moved to the 22nd (fourth Thursday) to accommodate the guest speaker from Plantlife who is addressing the AONB meeting at the Riverside at 2pm on the same day.

ND suggested that as the forum has evolved since its inauguration, the name

be changed to reflect that – proposed name: Environment and Sustainability Forum; this was agreed.

ND further advised that it is hoped to agree a long programme of speakers in advance; Kate Petty from Plantlife in August, and hopefully Professor Robert Nichols in September (still to be confirmed), and we would like to invite AONB to discuss the UNESCO designation.

4. **Presentation – from Kayleigh Richter: Sustainable transport.**

KR introduced herself to the forum; she is IWC Active Travel Officer and manages sustainable transport. She also works as a freelance consultant.

Current project: Connect 2 Work (www.connect2work.info) is funded by the Department of Transport and is aimed at workplaces to help facilitate sustainable transport, both for employees and on an operational level. A site audit is completed looking at factors such as: are facilities adequate e.g. bike racks, pedestrianisation in the area, bus stops that are in the right place, accessible and safe. A survey is created for employees, and the results are used to create a travel plan. This is essentially an action plan that businesses can use to implement changes e.g. facilities for cyclists, or pedestrianisation of the site.

There is also a new option for a travel policy – to help businesses run sustainably and save money e.g. if they are spending too much money on business travel, the reason is identified, and suggestions made on how to reduce spending e.g. travel to meetings by bus, do more business in conference rooms, Skype meetings. Other elements considered include: travel sharing, car parking, EV charging, fleet management, corporate travel discounts e.g. with Southern Vectis.

The scheme provides assistance for job seekers and apprentices – a recycle scheme in partnership with Aspire – ‘ReCycle’ repairs and repurposes old bicycles to be sold at minimal price. The scheme also assists with ‘Dr Bike’ sessions, vouchers for repairs, and cycle skills training.

KR mentioned schemes to promote challenges and events, for example the workplace walking challenge which involves issuing pedometers, with the individual/s with the highest steps winning prizes; and the ‘Pedal aid’ app, which tracks rides – the longer the distance ridden, the more money donated to charity.

KR is responsible for managing the Electric cargo bike project for the IWC; the grant prospectus is live, closing date is 31st July. The grant is for a sum of £30k for a business to provide deliveries by bicycle to reduce van and car deliveries.

With her background in sustainability and green impact, KR is liaising with ND and starting ‘Green Impact’ within the Council, promoting corporate social responsibility, so that IWC are setting an example.

Working with comms team on sustainability projects

QUESTIONS:

ST asked what green impact is? ND replied that it was an award-winning scheme introduced in 2017 with NUS, UNESCO whereby businesses can register and work towards improving their credentials and work towards awards – there are sections to complete – e.g. water: repair a dripping tap, or ensure rates are on the right tariff – so simple things that can be done to work towards the awards – bronze, silver, gold.

CQ commented that he had previously lived in Milton Keynes, which was built with cyclists in mind, which keeps them safely away from main roads, and that many businesses had showers and lockers, so staff can cycle to work, shower and change – this is a big barrier to people cycling to work and needs to be built into schemes. KR advised that this is why she works with businesses, to look at what facilities they have and what they need to provide. BAE used the plan well and implemented changes which resulted in an increase in cyclists and bus users.

DJ commented that the roads on the Island are dangerous compared to other places that she has lived, and not suitable for walkers or cyclists; and asked whether something could be done so that there is suitable space on roads for walkers/cyclists. KR replied that this could be a possibility as part of the re-shaping Newport project, so this is something on the list for the future. Walking and cycling audits have been completed to try and improve this, so it is being addressed but is ultimately a monetary issue. ND commented that in Santa Cruz, California the city government for the area, in order to promote sustainable transport, have painted lines on pavements – one for walkers, one for cyclists, and one for skate boarders.

CQ stated that we need to be realistic – in West London, cycle lanes cause disruption to traffic, but are only used by a small number of people so not really considered to be worth it. KR replied that we need to facilitate behaviour change – ‘if you build it, they will come’. SH commented that space was an issue as the majority of pavements are not wide enough to accommodate this. ND replied that on the Island, we are working with an existing infrastructure that developed from farm tracks.

ST raised an issue with existing cycle tracks that are not well maintained, and not designed for ease of use – for example Fishbourne to Ryde has overgrown areas, and seven gates across it in a stretch across the golf course. KR advised that she has received comments from members of the public regarding this, further adding that a study has been done, but the price tag affects what can be done. ST also state that it would be good for children to be able to cycle to school, but parents do not allow this as it is not safe. KR mentioned projects that are designed to encourage children to travel to school in a sustainable way – ‘Shift It’. JH commented that this may work in urban areas, but in rural places the paths need to be up to standard as if they are muddy and unsafe parents will just drive.

SA stated that as previously mentioned by ND, the Island has an evolved infrastructure, not planned. There are a lot of narrow roads, with a lack of footpaths as a result. To add footpaths would not leave room for cars without

additional land take either side. Two out of the top ten most dangerous roads in UK are on IW (A3055 and Military Road). Island Roads investigate kill or serious injury incidents; 30% involve motorbikes, and 60% involves cyclists or pedestrians. The investigation looks to see if there is a road or signage fault, but this is a rare occurrence, it is normally found to be people's behaviours that create the problems. Fixing this is an educational thing – challenging behaviours. People who speed don't care about the speed limit, it's a behavioural thing so we need to make the environment suitable to the speed you want people to achieve. On a big wide road with 20mph limit people will speed but add traffic calming measures and this will bring the speed down. This is a challenging thing to fix, but the IW strategy is right – trying to get funding for cycle routes independent of highways; focused in East Wight to begin with, hopefully soon in West Wight too.

SH commented that in his ward, just outside the village, there are 30mph signs coming in, but going out it is national speed limit, but there are still houses – with gates straight onto road, no pavement. He has asked for the signs to be moved to the extent of village, but apparently this is not easy – statistical, surveys, huge task. SA replied that Anthony Cooke is the council officer responsible, Island Roads can make a recommendation to him, but he has the ability to override. For clarity – IR are a contractor not a part of the council – they can only advise the council on legal requirements and it is down to council if they take the advice or choose to do something different. DJ suggested that this should be in all villages – a parameter of slowness – all villages are 'home zones' so the speed limit automatically drops to 20mph. JH and SH liked this idea; ND suggested it is proposed to cabinet.

SA advised that there are developments in Newport; Julie Jones-Evans is promoting the shaping Newport scheme; two approaches are being discussed: a 20mph zone or 20mph speed limit. The speed limit requires repeater signs, the zone need signs on entry, and then circles on the road, and will also be expected to have traffic calming features such as chicanes, or table tops at junctions. These will all need to tie back to legislation or they cannot be enforced. CQ commented that the police have a strong view that 20mph without traffic calming does not work. SA replied that zones are preferred as they have traffic calming measures.

KR added that she is talking to shaping Newport about other items such as car free days, and play streets but it is very early in discussions

DJ mentioned an issue with vehicles parking on pavements causing an obstruction. SH advised that he is trying to deal with this issue, and it has been talked about in full council. Enforcement is required, but the police do not want to know, they say it is a council matter. ND commented that vehicles are getting wider, and that there have been recent incidents where a bin truck has not been able to get past, and if a bin truck can't neither would a fire engine; ND further added that sustainability and being safe go hand in hand. SH stated that he has had a conversation with ICT, and they are in the process of producing an app where this can be reported immediately, and a photograph uploaded. SH further added that a similar app had been developed in Portsmouth that could be used for reporting many issues such as graffiti, parking, fly tipping. ND expressed concerns re allowing the anonymous reporting of fly tipping as this would effectively allow individuals to fly tip and then report. SA suggested this could be addressed by requiring people to register details to use the app.

No further questions; ND thanked Kayleigh for her presentation.

5. **Updates from Forum members**

ST questioned farmers baling straw in metres of black plastic – what happens to it? ND replied that agricultural plastic is difficult – it is the most economical way for farmers to work, and we are looking on IW for this to be able to go into recycling, but long term the industry is looking at alternative. Energy recovery as an option. JH asked if black or green plastic is better? ND advised that there is no difference; although the old optical sorting equipment struggled to identify black plastic from the black conveyer belt, the new plant identifies the polymer base, not colour. ND further advised that in terms of colour, blue plastic is virgin as it cannot be made from recycled plastic, but green, brown, and black tend to be made from recycled material. We might start as energy recovery, then move to another option, but are aware it is a big thing on the island. SA commented that the crop wrapped in black is usually winter feed, and disposal would also depend on how a farmer stores it – if stored outside you will get UV degradation on the plastic which makes it harder to recycle.

JH asked what happens to tyres? ND advised that they go to the mainland, where they are stripped and recycled e.g. into pencil cases and rulers. ST commented that with the UNESCO biosphere designation, the IW needs to move towards zero waste, citing a Countryfile programme regarding a place in Wales. ND stated that this would be good for tourism and sustainability, and that she would like to see supermarkets adopting a policy of grouping recyclable items together e.g. in Christmas aisles to have all recyclable cards and paper in one place. ST added that she would like to see plastic free aisles that do not charge more for no packaging.

ST stated that it would be an ideal to have a beautiful Island that people wanted to visit, that had sustainable transport so that they did not need to use a car. JH replied that this could be a target to work towards, as the UNESCO designation can be withdrawn – education is needed.

6. **AOB**

Please note that for next month only the meeting will be held on the fourth Thursday of the month – Thursday 22nd August. The forum will return to the usual pattern of the third Thursday of each month in September – Thursday 19th September.

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Thursday 22nd August 2019 at 18.00 – Conference Room 5, Floor 4, County Hall.

Presentation: Kate Petty from Plantlife.