

Report to Full Council Meeting 3 June 2019

IWALC

I attended an IWALC Executive Meeting on 16 May 2019. The focus of the meeting was a presentation by the Director of Neighbourhood Services (Colin Rowland) and head of Highways and Transport (David Evans), IW Council (both new appointments).

Colin Rowland reported on changes to service provision resulting from cuts to the Island Roads PFI agreement. The main points made were:

1. *Overall direction:* The main aim of the cuts is to move from a fixed, standard service to a more flexible needs-based one.
2. *Phasing:* The cuts will be introduced in three phases: April 2019; October 2019; April 2020. The following information relates to the first phase.
3. *CCTV:* Live monitoring of CCTV cameras ceased on 17 May. The cameras will however remain in place and be maintained and footage will be available to the Police (or other users) if required. Many other local authorities are making similar cuts.
4. *Street cleansing:* Frequencies have been reduced from 7 May but will still meet national standards.
5. *Bin emptying:* There are three separate contracts for bin emptying, depending on type and location of bin. Those on esplanades will continue to be emptied twice daily in summer but the need will be monitored. There will be no change in dog bin emptying, but the need for special bins will be reviewed.
6. *Grass cutting:* Frequencies have been reduced (no details provided) but are still within national standards.
7. *Street furniture and signage:* Needs will be assessed and any items not needed will not be replaced.
8. *Street lighting:* Modifications will be made to the intensity and/or timing of some lights.
9. *Events:* Operators of major events (but not carnivals) will be required to pay for Council support services.
10. *Overtime:* This will be reduced.
11. *Consultation with town/parish councils:* There was not time to consult over the first phase. However, some changes were made following a recent meeting with local council representatives and Colin Rowland would welcome enquiries and comments from individual councils.
12. *Contributions from local councils:* There is scope for local councils to make contributions to all or most of the above services in order to retain previous service levels.

David Evans reported on changes to the Network Integrity Register. The main points made were:

1. The register is now called the Highways Safety and Improvement Register.

2. The number of projects on the register has been reduced to 358 and these have been divided into categories on the basis of urgency. Projects prioritised by local councils have been included but most of these have been classed as relatively low in priority. However, if local councils can fund these projects, they can be done sooner.
3. Smallbrook Roundabout is top of the priority list because of safety concerns.
4. Two examples of costs were given: 500m double yellow lines: £8,000; pedestrian crossing £120,000.

There was little time for other agenda items. However, two items were discussed briefly:

1. *Representation of local councils on Scrutiny Committee*: It was reported that, at the Full Council meeting held on 15 May, the proposal to change from an IWALC representative to someone representing all local councils was deferred. Cllr Dave Stewart (who attended the whole meeting) invited IWALC to propose how all councils could be adequately represented. It was suggested by several members that the answer was for them to join IWALC.
2. *Housing targets*: In relation to a letter that Northwood Parish Council had received from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Cllr Stewart said that, in response to general public concern about housing targets, the Planning department is reviewing housing needs.

SERCAF Meeting on Island

On 17 May, I attended a meeting of the South-East Region County Associations Forum (SERCAF), which was held in Newport. Points of interest included:

1. Need for local councils to be proactive, use precepts to maintain and improve service provision and put more emphasis on social/wellbeing issues.
2. Need for clustering to increase viability of small councils.
3. Need for incentives to encourage councillors to attend training.
4. Need for councils to consider ways of benefiting from new housing and other developments, rather than simply objecting to them.
5. Reservations about value of neighbourhood plans.

Following the meeting, three training sessions were organised. These were open to all councillors and staff on the Island. Cllr Phil Jordan and I were the only participants from RTC. We both attended the one on 'partnership working', which was run by David Carden, former Burgess Hill town clerk. He gave an inspiring account of how Burgess Hill and two smaller councils in Sussex have utilised their resources to become highly successful local authorities. Keys to success include: a shared vision of what the council can achieve; building on its strengths; a supportive staff team; and working in partnership with the local community. We both felt that there is much that RTC can learn from this.

Age Friendly Island, Ryde Public Forum

On 16 May I attended a meeting of the Ryde Age Friendly Island Forum, which is held three times a year. This meeting included a useful presentation on Southern

Housing's proposed supported housing project known as Ryde Village, which will provide 75 rented and 12 shared ownership flats, all of which will have access to 'extra care' services.

Age Friendly Island Champions Meeting

On 29 May I attended a meeting of Age Friendly Island town and parish council representatives (known as Age Friendly Island champions). We are one of eleven councils that have signed (or are about to sign) up to the Age Friendly Charter. However, only three other councils (Newport and Carisbrooke, Shanklin, and Nettlestone and Seaview Community Partnership) attended the meeting.

The main focus of discussion was how to sustain the various initiatives developed under the Age Friendly Island project when funding ceases in March 2020. Three main proposals are being developed:

1. An Age Friendly website, which will provide resources, case studies and links to relevant sources of information and support, and an accompanying film.
2. Regional forums of Age Friendly Island champions (not necessarily councillors) to share experiences and resources. At the suggestion of the Nettlestone and Seaview representative, this will be piloted in the north-east region. I expressed reservations about this, given our experience with the My Life a Full Life Forum.
3. Some way of following up the regional public forums – yet to be decided.

We were informed that there is some money available to document and publicise successful Age Friendly town or parish council initiatives. If any councillors know of any such projects in Ryde, please let me now and I will pass this information to the Age Friendly Island team.

Diana Conyers
30 May 2019