

IOW Councillor Report October 2019 for Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council



St. Mary's Roundabout Controversy

At a Newport and Carisbrooke Parish Council Meeting recently there was a vote to stop the scheme going ahead although the proposers are not qualified engineers nor did they have any advice from an engineer against the scheme.

I voted against the proposal to stop this scheme in its tracks because any further delays will cost tax payers more money with further losses from the £9.6m which is strictly for the St. Mary's roundabout only and as it has been delayed already for a year the value of the Government grant has reduced to the tune of £0.5m and I don't want to see that grant further devalued. This money was awarded for this section of the scheme due to the future development of Camp Hill and cannot be used for any other purpose so if we don't go ahead with this we would have to hand the money back to the Government. The start point was deemed necessary at St. Mary's due to potential development at Camp Hill which would need updated infrastructure to cope at that point and often we get complaints over developments coming forward without having the infrastructure in place first.

The traffic lights will also be intelligent and synced with those at Coppins so that it will keep the flow of traffic towards Coppins and allowing traffic through by traffic lights at Coppins cooperating with the flow.

This is but one part of the whole scheme and Coppins will be dealt with as part of that scheme as well as St. Georges Way.

The Cabinet Member Cllr Ian Ward sent a letter to all Councillors for their information on September 12th and members have attended briefings on this subject as well as a consultation-taking place.

When this scheme was given approval at a Cabinet Meeting there were no objections from members.

Cllr Brodie stated that he did not feel qualified to pass on information he received from engineers in a members briefing and wanted engineers to come to a public meeting with residents and on this I agree it should happen however Cllr Brodie then proposed that the scheme should be stopped but still with no engineering qualification or competence.

I have asked the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to please organise a public meeting to explain the scheme to residents and I am hopeful this will go ahead.

I am told there will also be full-page notices of explanation placed into the County press and the Observer.

I could not say whether this is going to work or not as I am not a qualified engineer either but as a Cabinet Member, when making a decision you have to state what is a required outcome and then rely on the professionals that we employ to design a scheme for that outcome.

I can imagine some people would ask, what like the floating bridge but the truth is we were starting to get problems with floating bridge five and this was due to the change in tides and not boat design although there have been some design faults that are being addressed and most have now been sorted out so that most of the time recently it has been running at 100% efficiency.

Of course when this administration came to County Hall the floating bridge had already been designed and ordered and we just had to deal with what was in front of us which we have done and a final solution is in sight.

I hope this helps for residents understanding of my position with this particular proposal at the Newport and Carisbrooke Parish Council Meeting.

Island Plan and Housing Numbers

It was good to have residents attend recent public meetings at both Rookley and Brighstone alongside our MP Bob Seely.

Bob is right when he says we should have an opt out on the methodology used for housing numbers as we have special circumstances to overcome with regard to affordable housing due to being an Island.

I feel that if Scottish Islands can have an opt out because they can only be reached via a ferry then what part of only being able to be reached by a ferry don't the Government understand about the Isle of Wight.

I am reminded of a Benny Hill sketch when Benny said he was going abroad and his sidekick asked him where he was going and he said the Isle of Wight to which the sidekick stated but that's not abroad and Benny retorted, well you try walking there cookie boy!

I think we do have a good case and I am pleased that Councillors and our MP are now working together through a process to reduce numbers in the plan and to get the right affordable homes built in the right places to reduce our housing waiting list of Islanders needs.

Parking on Military Road

There is an issue on the Military Road at the Brook and Compton car parks with parking on the verge and sometimes part on the road, which narrows the road causing dangerous situations.

Meanwhile the car parks remain half empty so we are looking at a possible Traffic Regulation Order here as it is a clearway and no parking is allowed on the road. This would mean that cars would have to use the car parks provided rather than parking on the verge/edge of road making it safer for all road users.

This work is on the Safety Improvement Register and is marked as high priority as it scored highly but is awaiting capital bids from a two-year rolling program 20/21.

Speed Sign on Main Road Brighstone

At the last Brighstone Parish Meeting it was noted that the speed sign on Main Road was not flashing when cars go past.

I have reported this to Island Roads and it has now been added to their list of works for the next 28 days to be re-powered.

I have also had talks with the police recently about Speed watch and they are keen to get a new machine for this purpose, which can be shared with other Parish Councils across the Island.

I have asked that this be brought to the attention of members of IWALC so that it could be purchased as a group of parishes and passed out as required.

These machines cost around £3000, which would be a burden to one Parish and most of the time it would be in storage and used periodically, but it could be a small amount per Parish and in use most of the time somewhere on the Island.

I look forward to hearing how this is received at IWALC.

With best wishes,

Steve