

Isle of Wight Councillor for Central Wight Report for June 2018 parish meeting

Hello fellow residents of Central Wight. This report covers some of my recent activity and future matters.

Resurfacing Works

Firstly it is good to be getting the Main Road resurfaced; however this has caused considerable disruption to resident's daily travel in and out of the village.

I wish to show my appreciation to Parish Councillors, led by your excellent Chairman, Gillian Belben for their efforts in helping those who need help getting to the diverted bus route stops and other help given.

We did meet with Island Roads and Southern Vectis to try and get some special measures in place during the works but they were fairly intransigent unless the Parish Council paid extra for the privilege, which of course would not be fair on taxpayers.

At the time of writing I am hearing that all is going well with these arrangements so well done all involved.

Fire Service review

There is a very important matter before the council at present which I have been involved with both in Full Council and Scrutiny Committee, which is the Fire review, and the Combined Authority.

These are two different matters, one that involves the operation day to day and the other which is a decision to join with Hampshire Fire and Rescue along with Portsmouth and Southampton in a Combined Authority or continue as Isle of Wight only with the council as the Authority. This is such an important matter that we decided as the Administration to create the full business case first and then put it to residents in a consultation to find out what residents of the island feel would be best for them and I urge you all to take part in this when it comes out. **No decision has been made on this, nor would it until residents have had their say.**

Isle of Wight Day

I was very pleased to attend the launch of Isle of Wight Day recently at the Ryde Pavilion. This year the main events will be held in Cowes on Saturday 22nd September and there will be lots to do and see.

The main theme for this year is plastic removal and their mascot, Nipper will be visiting the whole Island throughout the year to show how we can all help to remove plastics from our beaches and streets, Nipper is a rather large crab with large pincers to help with litter picking and the children will enjoy him being around I'm sure, so look out for him this summer.

It is hoped that on Isle of Wight Day, 22nd September all the beaches of the Island will be cleaned and rubbish collected by the council, this will be a difficult one to coordinate so I will be having discussions with the cabinet member to see how it will be handled.

Brighstone Viaduct

Residents will be pleased to note that the Brighstone Viaduct is now fully opened and resurfaced. Island Roads have done a very good job here and restored the bridge sympathetically to the original and used wooden barriers rather than metal to suit our AONB. I will be attending the opening ceremony along with Cllr Ian Ward, the Cabinet member for Transport and Infrastructure shortly.

Military Road

I recently set up and chaired a meeting at County Hall regarding the potential loss of the Military Road due to erosion. We invited all relevant stakeholders to the meeting and it was very constructive.

The idea was to have a plan for eventual loss and how to deal with it and where to redirect, as the National Trust owns the land to either side. The result of this meeting was both National Trust and the Head of Place will have discussions during the summer and bring

some ideas and possibilities back to a further meeting in the autumn with the aim of getting something sensible into the new Island Plan.

Speeding Meeting

We recently held a public meeting at the Methodist Church in Brighstone regarding speeding on the Military Road and elsewhere.

This was useful to get different perspectives on speed and the accident rates from the police with potential action to take. We will be setting up a CARS group for the area, which is Community Action to Reduce Speed. This will involve setting up, with the help of the police Speed Watch sessions possibly in Main Roads where radar equipment is used to catch speeding vehicles. These will not be prosecuted but will be written to with a warning to hopefully discourage a recurrence of the offence.

We also had some interesting discussions around speeding cycles and their interaction with motorists which was quite enlightening, especially after the weekend of Randonnee where there were more bikes than cars on the Military Road.

Boundary Review 2018

The Isle of Wight is this year in the midst of a boundary review, which we do have some input to but ultimately the commissioners will make the decision as to where boundaries are drawn. Most of the potential changes seem to be with the more urban areas like Newport, Ryde and Sandown. As far as I can tell at this time there should be no changes within Central Wight especially as we are very rural with distinct parishes that form communities of their own. I will keep residents informed should there be any changes forthcoming.

Presentation of award

I was very pleased to present an award recently to the owners of Caffè Isola of Newport. This was an award for building design presented by Newport Parish Council's planning committee in my role as a Parish Councillor for Newport Central. This was a very well deserved award as I am sure you would agree if you have spent time in their premises.

Isle of Wight Council AGM

I have joined the Scrutiny Committee and Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee also I am a regular member of the Planning Committee. We are of course at year-end and we have had our AGM at County Hall in May at which time the Chairman and Vice Chairman were elected and new roles for Councillors was discussed and members elected. Cllr Lora Peacey-Wilcox was once again elected as Chairman with Cllr George Cameron as Vice Chairman for the municipal year ahead.

During the AGM, I was voted in as the Chairman of the Policy and Scrutiny committee for Regeneration, Housing, Planning and the Environment which I think will keep me very busy as of course this covers a lot of important areas of council business within the strategic plan. I have now also been asked to join the Policy and Scrutiny committee for Children's Services with my first meeting on 7th June which I am looking forward to.

I look forward to seeing some of you through the summer at various events.

With best wishes to you all,

Steve

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