

Isle of Wight Councillors Report for February 2010

Paul Fuller

Independent Isle of Wight Councillor

for Cowes West and Gurnard.

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Surgeries:

I am happy to meet residents at their convenience, alternatively I hold surgeries on the following occasions:

6 - 6.30pm, Wednesday 3rd March at Northwood House, Ward Avenue, Cowes.

5 - 5.30pm, Tuesday 9th March at the Isle of Wight Community Club, Park Road, Cowes.

6 - 6.30pm, Tuesday 9th March at the Portland Inn, Worsley Road, Gurnard.

11 - 1130am, Wednesday 17th March at the Woodvale Inn, Princes Esplanade, Gurnard.

Planning Applications

The application to develop permanent residential units on the **Solent Lawns** site was approved by the Planning Committee. Incorporated within the plans was a reduction in density from 15 units to 14, removal of overlooking from second door balconies and the potential for a permissive path through the site, overcoming some of the objections highlighted by residents.

When agreed, the path will link Worsley Road with the Village Green through woodland subject to agreement with residents from Worsley Lane and Worsley Road. The path will then connect with the public footpath to Solent Middle School.

This application demonstrates how residents views can positively impact upon new developments for the village.

Street Mapping.

I am meeting with The Head of Highways and Parish Clerk, Rusty Adams, to further priorities from the Street Mapping Exercise undertaken recently by the Police.

The Top priority that I was asked to look into is parking. **Albert Road** was the one specific road in Gurnard where problems were highlighted. I would welcome and support residents in addressing these parking issues and if we find between us a consensus that can be agreed, I will try to ensure this is progressed.

Other priorities that I am looking in to include improving **Street Lighting** for Winding Way (14 votes received) Gurnard Seafront (11 votes), Cockleton Lane (11 Votes) and Cow Lane (4 votes). I have also been requested to investigate options to improve the **local bus service** for the village.

In the meantime, please contact me with your ideas and suggestions!

Baring Road

With recent Planning Applications being approved in Egypt Hill and Baring Road, I am hoping to fix up a meeting between the Police's Road Traffic Unit, Highways Officers and Solent Middle School to agree a route for construction traffic accessing. At the same time, I am looking forward to acting upon concerns flagged up by the school in relation to its Green Travel Plan particularly at Roundhouse.

This I hope will assist residents who have complained to me about the Baring Road and Park Road junction.

Gurnard Gas Main.

There was some disturbance caused by the recent closure of Cockleton Lane, to enable survey work to be undertaken by SGN last month. Prior to this, I worked with Wightbus to ensure disruption to the bus service was kept to a minimum for bus users. This was achieved by emailing regular users who in turn passed on news about the inevitability of delays and ensuring Joe the driver was kept informed in advance. Thank you to all residents who spread the news!

At the Exhibition being held on 25th February, I am looking forward to hearing the views of residents, which I am happy to take up if required.

Dog Mess and Pot Holes

Potholes in Shore Road, Princes Esplanade, Ward Avenue and Whitehouse Road and overhanging hedges have been reported as has the dislodged sign at the top of Solent View Road.

Cllr Edward Giles, the Cabinet Member with what seems like the Pot Hole portfolio, (rather than the portfolio for the Environment and Transport) reported in some circumstances, that road damage has been so severe that sections of road will require reconstruction as patching is not always cost effective. Resources are being targeted towards the Strategic Road Network, in the first instance.

If you come across any Pot Holes, please report these to the IW Council's Call Centre on 01983 821000, report it on line or let me know. It is helpful if you could record the address of any pot holes (eg: nearest house)

Gurnard School Site Asset Transfer.

The second meeting of the Working Party was called to progress suggestions for any potential Community Asset Transfer of this site. The purpose of this Working Party was to explore any potential for Community Projects, should the IW Council consider the Gurnard School Site, surplus to its requirements once the school relocates.

Members are balancing the viability of options and once these are agreed and the Council is supportive, future consultation will be necessary.

The next meeting will be held at **6.30pm, Monday 22 March**, at Gurnard School and due to be discussed is the Family Learning Centre, Grant Aid potential and the possibility of working alongside Gurnard Parish Council on progressing this.

Members Allowances.

IW Councillors supported the findings of the Independent Remuneration Panel which increased members allowances from £481,965 by 1.6% to £489,865.

During the election a number of residents complained Councillors were paid too much. Following the non-acceptance of a resolution to freeze allowances, I felt I could not accept any increase. Accordingly I was the only IW Councillor to vote against the Panels recommendations.

Wightbus Service:

The contracts for 'local' bus services 30 & 32 are due to be renewed later this year, and despite limited funds available I am interested to know your views on these services, and how (or if) these can be improved. Please contact me at **74 Wyatts Lane, Cowes** by **21st March**, with your views.

Isle of Wight Council Budget 2010

On setting this year's budget, I have real concerns that the level of cuts to services and increases proposed for raising charges are likely to have a wide-ranging impact upon residents.

Having discussed this with other Councillors, I fully recognise that members do not take these decisions lightly and I will in the coming weeks be scrutinising options which I consider maintains a prudent increase, whilst minimising any impact this is likely to have.