



Delivering for the Island

A six-month Review

What we said we'd do:

After the local government elections in May this year, the Conservative Group of members of the Isle of Wight Council were tasked with forming an administration. That Conservative Administration hit the ground running and is already delivering results for the Island. This note summarises the progress we have made as we approach, on 17th November, the first six months of our service to our community.

We set out our pledges clearly in our Manifesto. We made no false promises. We said we'd:

- deliver opportunities for all
- create economic growth & prosperity
- preserve our environment
- plan for our future needs
- protect our community
- provide sound financial management

What we've done in our first six months:

As a team, we hit the ground running and already we've:

- ✓ Turned around the inward looking, negative approach of the Council, bringing a new dynamism to the way it operates and setting out our ambitions in our Corporate Strategy, Our Island: Our Vision
- ✓ Created up to 600 new jobs at Ascensos
- ✓ Saved secondary education in Sandown by persuading the Government to let us replace the sponsors AET so the school is governed by and for the community
- ✓ Set out in detail our plans for delivering educational excellence through which all schools will be good or better, securing the continued involvement of Hampshire Council in driving up standards
- ✓ Held or planned seminars on the digital economy, regeneration, education and heritage & environment to secure investment and seize opportunities
- ✓ Consulted on our vision for a once-in-a-lifetime regeneration of Newport Harbour and the Medina Valley
- ✓ Done what our predecessors said was impossible in setting a lawful and balanced Budget, keeping key services intact
- ✓ Begun to consult on changes to school term dates to give greater holiday flexibility to parents should they want it and to improve school attendance and outcomes
- ✓ Kicked off a major review of the Fire and Rescue Service

- ✓ #agreed up to £100 million of investment, the returns on which will help preserve essential services
- ✓ Tackled head-on the problems of the Floating Bridge we inherited from the previous administration, so it'll be back in service soon
- ✓ Sustained funding for footpaths and bridleways by better use of existing budgets
- ✓ Secured £9.5 million for road improvements between Cowes and Newport
- ✓ Restructured and reformed the provision of Adult Social Care, with the determination to make our service one of the best in the country
- ✓ Won £400,000 in grants to support flood defences in vulnerable areas such as Monkton Mead
- ✓ Introduced a garden waste collection scheme for those who want it, and at a knock-down price
- ✓ Worked up a new strategy for Residents' Parking Zones to be published imminently
- ✓ Commenced a review of the Island Plan so we can have the kind of residential, leisure and business development we need, where we need it
- ✓ Set up a Task and Finish Group to review our housing policies so that in future we can have more affordable homes for Island residents
- ✓ Created an Infrastructure Task Force to improve transport to the Island and on it
- ✓ Listened to residents and changed the rules on trailers and vans using the household waste recycling centres
- ✓ Slashed the Call Centre average waiting time by half, down to 2 minutes
- ✓ Delivered a small business rate support scheme to help small businesses cope with changes – securing an additional £845,000 of national Government funding
- ✓ Worked with the Salvation Army to improve provision for rough sleepers

What we'll do next:

But, despite everything we've delivered already, we've hardly begun the huge task of turning around our Island's fortunes and aspirations. From the economy and the jobs market, to education and adult social care; from the environment and housing to our health service and transport infrastructure, there remains a huge amount of work to do. Island residents can count on the Conservative Team at County Hall to listen to their priorities, to respond positively to them, and to deliver a professional and ethical service regardless of party politics. Our residents deserve their public services to be among the best in the country, and to achieve that remains our ambition.

"I want our public services to be among the best in the country, and I'm determined we'll achieve that ambition."

Dave Stewart

Leader, The Conservative Group of Isle of Wight Councillors

e: councillordave@outlook.com

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