



LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

13 AUGUST 2012

The purpose of this Report is to inform members about the proposals in the Isle of Wight Council's recently successful bid for £3.95M from this fund and subsequent discussions about it.

No. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

- a) The government launched this £560M in January 2011 *to help build strong local economies and address the challenges of climate change.*
- b) The Isle of Wight Council submitted an Expression of Interest in June 2011 and met the deadline for a final application in February this year.
- c) The 26-page application mentions Ventnor only once: as one of the destinations of the *Island Coaster* as its main focus is stated as: *the delivery of transport and related improvements which would increase the attractiveness of the Island as a green tourism destination and grow this sector of our market.*
- d) To this end, it says: *It is proposed to establish seven strategic Island transport hubs located at key tourist arrival/departure/interchange points ie Cowes, Ryde, East Cowes, Yarmouth, Sandown, Shanklin and Newport.*
- e) A copy of the Summary version of the bid is attached to this report and the full bid is available by clicking [this link](#).

2) RESPONSES

- a) In a routine meeting with the town's County Councillors, Susan Scoccia and Chris Welsford, the Mayor and Clerks highlighted the absence of significant investment through this fund in Ventnor and asked them to explore the matter with the appropriate officers and Members.
- b) The Ventnor Business Association (VBA) also took the matter up with the two County Councillors in a letter dated 24 July, copied to the Town Council.
- c) The VBA have kindly forwarded to the Town Council the response they have received. Their email to us includes a response for Cabinet Member Councillor Edward Giles to Councillor Susan Scoccia's approach to him:

Thank you for letting me have a copy of the Ventnor Business Association's letter in which they explain their perception that Ventnor will not benefit from investment secured through the local sustainable transport fund to the same degree as other parts of the island and suggesting a number of options. I hope that I will be able to help explain the position.

The local sustainable transport fund grant for the Isle of Wight will provide a wide range of initiatives, island wide, as part of its primary objective to promote "Sustainable Access to Tourism".

The integrated transport hubs are those locations where we have a primary interchange between different modes of public transport i.e. bus/rail, bus/ferry or rail/ferry. The only exception to that will be the Newport bus station where there are multiple numbers of connecting bus journeys. There is no such interchange facility in Ventnor and consequently no sensible location or need for an integrated transport hub kiosk. Having said the mobile phone application which will be developed to provide real time information for public transport services is intended to provide an island wide coverage of such information and should be available at all bus stops so will benefit Ventnor.

Whilst a number of the key initiatives will be at ferry terminals and transport hubs, no part of the island falls outside the scope of the proposals that continue to be developed at this time; all tourist destinations, attractions and accommodation providers will have the opportunity to contribute and be part of the future sustainable tourism market. Detailed proposals for each town are still being developed but in the case of Ventnor the upgrading of the Shanklin to Wroxall cycle route and the installation of new directional signs highlighting the cycle route to Ventnor via Rew Lane will ensure that cyclists are provided with a route into the town. Self-evidently the route will not be attractive to all users and it is for this reason the entire cycle network will be promoted in a colour coded format so that visitors are aware of the likely terrain that they will encounter.

As for the promotion of the town itself and various attractions and facilities available, the DMO (destination management organisation) will play a key role in the promotion and marketing of the Island as a whole and, with local partners, and the aid of a sustainable travel co-ordinator secured as a part of this initiative, will develop specific visitor/ travel information for the area. The establishment of a commercially sustainable cycle hire in the town, real time information for buses, new tourist and travel mobile phone applications and creation of an effective luggage transfer scheme will further aid the sustainable traveller and promote green travel choices.

The fund will also support some new tourist related bus services but these do need to be sustainable beyond the period of the funding. As such the local bus operator will be central to the development of new routes as they have committed to maintain them without financial support beyond 2015. Where possible new services will accommodate cycles and surf boards.

Whilst we will not be able to satisfy all of the demands for improvements to sustainable travel facilities I am confident that initiatives established through this project will help the Island as a whole become renowned as sustainable tourist destination and Ventnor will of course benefit as part of this.

3) ACTION

The VBA Secretary has asked if the Town Council will lobby the County Council formally.
