



# Council of the ISLES OF SCILLY

## Midpoint assessment of Corporate Plan 2022-2026 promises

Councillors carried out a self-assessment of the 22 promises made to the community. They concluded that they had moved further away from 8 of the promises. However, they were reassured that the remaining 15 promises had been upheld or improved.

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
We retain our independence as a local authority			X	<p><b>Chairman of Governance Committee:</b></p> <p>Members felt that we were good at making sure our voice was being heard in regional and national conversations which meant we were represented well in the right forums. But we acknowledge that some processes are now more aligned with mainland authorities - this is shaped by local budgetary pressure and policy decisions from government. We also acknowledge that the amount of mainland-based employees has doubled in the last 2 years and that the effects of this need to be carefully managed.</p> <p>Members are also aware that any failures to show competence in relation to statutory functions could also result in the loss of those functions and become a risk to independence.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
We retain on-island residential care	<b>X</b>			<p><b>Lead Member for Adults:</b>            Since 2022 we have progressed to safeguard our on Island Residential Care Home. Work is progressing on the Health and Social Care Integration Project with the NHS. Work has started on the Hospital site which will include a new Residential Home.</p> <p>Park House renovations are nearly finished. The rooms for our Residents are improved as are the bathrooms.</p>
We support independent living			<b>X</b>	<p><b>Lead Member for Adults:</b>            Adult Social Care policy is to keep residents in their owns homes with support as long as possible. A Care Strategy to improve this will be considered in the next 2 years. Members are aware that there are always ways to improve care.</p>
We retain a viable airport and transport infrastructure		<b>X</b>		<p><b>Lead Economy, Tourism and Transport:</b>            Costs have risen but income has dropped due to changes in the market outside of the council's control. The situation is very volatile with challenges presented by new providers. Future airport charges will have to reflect these new challenges.</p>
We retain a viable on-island Fire and Rescue service	<b>X</b>			<p><b>Chairman of the Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service:</b> The appointment of an experienced Chief Fire Officer has helped fill the void around strategic management that had created a weakness. It has also introduced the discipline around regular reporting.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
Children and adults in need of care and support are safeguarded		X		<p><b>Lead Member for Children:</b> Safeguarding services for children were inspected by Ofsted in July 2023 and were judged to be "Inadequate." The Council accepted the findings and has been working to address the failings. A cross-partnership Children's Services Improvement Board has been established and an Improvement Plan produced. Since the first inspection, two further Monitoring Visits have been undertaken. External challenge and support has been forthcoming from the Department for Education and the Local Government Association, as well as Ofsted. The Council has invested in additional resource to ensure the right team is in place to create sustainable long-term outcomes for children.</p> <p><b>Lead Member for Adults:</b> After the CQC test of Assurance all issues have been looked into and are moving forward satisfactorily. Staff are having safeguarding training amongst a lot of training on a wide selection of subjects.</p>
We continue to enable all children and families to access any help they need at the earliest stage and in the easiest way possible.		X		<p><b>Lead Member for Children:</b> The Children's Services Improvement Board recognises the need to address improvements in a holistic way. As part of this the Council continues to lead a review of the Partnership Early Help System and the role staff and partners play in supporting children, young people and families. The Council recognises that, in order to meet the needs of our children and families, working effectively and holistically as a multi-agency partnership is essential.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
The needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are met		<b>X</b>		<p><b>Lead Member for Children:</b> The Council has commissioned an external review of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services led by the Local Government Association (LGA). SEND provision has also been included within the remit of the Children's Services Improvement Board. Findings and recommendations from the LGA report are to be considered by partners in July 2024.</p>
We deliver on the objectives of, and apply the policies in, our Local Plan.			<b>X</b>	<p><b>Lead Member for Regulatory Services:</b> Out of the 177 planning applications in this period, 38 have been presented to committee. Only once have members voted against the policies of the Local Plan. Members acknowledge that some of the policies need reviewing, and this process is underway. Members are also aware that the delivery side of the Local Plan is a difficult target to complete – work is ongoing, but viability and finance make this a challenging target.</p>
We prioritise projects which demonstrate clear community benefit and keep our community updated on them	<b>X</b>			<p><b>Chairman of Council:</b> In the Council's budget setting process, it clearly identifies the Council's major projects and how they align with the Corporate Plan objectives. There is regular reporting to members on the projects at key milestones, as well as being included in the quarterly finance report. Also, the implementation of a capital projects board is being investigated.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
We maintain our buildings and facilities to a high standard			X	<p><b>Lead Member for Housing and Corporate Estate:</b></p> <p>We do regular stock condition surveys on all our properties to ensure they are all safe and fit for purpose. This helps us to create a 30-year rolling programme of maintenance which enables us to budget more efficiently for the future.</p> <p>We have created a Capital and Property Board to help us to focus on priorities for the future use of our buildings and land to make sure they fit our ongoing needs.</p> <p>Cost and contractor availability continue to be an issue, but we are working with partners to try to make better use of contractors. We are trying to package the work in ways that make it more attractive to contractors and create more interest in tendering for the works.</p> <p>We have completed repairs to the airport and we are close to completing the refurbishment of Park House.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
We balance the needs of the islands with the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions		X		<p><b>Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Climate Change:</b></p> <p>The Environment department has been lacking in capacity to meet our ambitions of monitoring the carbon emissions of the Council. Our priority has been to focus on improving the sustainability of our services and infrastructure and improve active travel options.</p> <p>Attempts to include an environmental impact section of reports have not found support amongst the officers, which is essential for it to succeed. Whilst we are lacking reporting of data on our emission ambitions, we have taken steps to improve energy efficiency of Council properties and assets – a big step towards decreasing our emissions. However, we have not done as much as we hoped and without evidence to back this up we can only conclude we have moved away from this promise.</p>
Performance management is visible and good audit trails are enabled	X			<p><b>Lead Member for Finance, Governance, Risk &amp; Performance:</b></p> <p>Regular performance management reporting to Full Council continues, as does strong audit and financial reporting. Work on personal development plans is progressing.</p>
Council decision making is transparent and can be understood by the whole community			X	<p><b>Chairman of Governance Committee:</b></p> <p>In this time period, the Governance Committee has been created to ensure that "Council decision making is transparent and can be understood by the whole community." The committee continues to work towards its goal. Audit structures have improved over the period, whilst Risk Registers and process are now a focus of improvement.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
We provide excellent customer service		X		<p><b>Lead Member for Finance, Governance, Risk &amp; Performance:</b>            We are working to improve points of contact following the loss of landline numbers. Website improvements will make a significant difference. We are aware this is a work in progress. One Stop Shop staff provide an excellent service.</p>
Our reputation as a trusted organisation [is protected or enhanced]			X	<p><b>Chairman of Council:</b>            The Council acts openly and transparently in its business. It has used the Scrutiny Committee to publicly share reports from the statutory regulators, improvement plans and state of readiness for further inspections with action plans. In terms of transport, it facilitated a special scrutiny committee to allow the operators to formally present their plans for the future. We continue to work with all partners across all service areas to help benefit the residents of the islands.</p>
On-island employment [is protected or enhanced]		X		<p><b>Lead Member for Finance, Governance, Risk &amp; Performance:</b>            This is a challenging area as we balance increasingly complex skill set needs with availability of applicants and housing needs.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
The character of the islands [is protected or enhanced]	<b>X</b>			<p><b>Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Climate Change:</b></p> <p>The National Landscapes Partnership has employed a planning consultant to provide support in assessing the impact of significant planning applications on the Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Council also considers the impact of each planning application on the SAC itself.</p> <p>Work is undergoing to create an Open Spaces and Street Trading Policy to ensure the character of Hugh Town is protected as well as other licensing policies being considered for review. The Council has assisted with the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grants which have enabled local farmers to increase their sustainability and accessibility through projects such as rainwater harvesting, farm tours and modern machinery which supports regenerative practices. We feel that we continue to protect the character of the islands through the actions of this Council.</p>



Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
Our islands' terrestrial and marine biodiversity [is protected or enhanced]	<b>X</b>			<p><b>Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Climate Change:</b></p> <p>The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority has continued to carry out research projects monitoring the health of our marine areas as well as continuing to work towards introducing bye-laws to help protect our fisheries. We have recently appointed a new Chief Fisheries Officer to ensure we continue this work.</p> <p>The Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust maintains its work across the islands to protect and enhance our flora and fauna, especially those species that are of national or international significance. The Duchy of Cornwall has received grant funding for a project to improve biodiversity across the islands, as a partner of the NLP we will help where we can.</p> <p>Alongside Cornwall Council we have continued to work on our Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which is tailored to the islands specifically. National policy now requires planning applications to contribute towards Biodiversity Net Gain. This will hopefully stimulate funding for projects that arise from the LNRS.</p> <p>The Councils Climate Adaptation Scilly project which includes sea defence work, Rainwater Harvesting Grants and the creation of the Resilient Islands Strategy has concluded, with a report still to come to the Scrutiny Committee. Work on St Agnes and St Mary's has been critical in protecting two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which are also critical to the ground water supplies which are vital for both our biodiversity and human activities.</p>

Promise made in 2022	Closer	Further away	No change	Lead Member narrative
Our islands' historic environment [is protected or enhanced]			X	<p><b>Lead Member for Regulatory Services:</b>            We continue to work with our statutory consultees to ensure all relevant bodies are consulted on the effects of new developments. We receive a grant from Historic England to employ Cornwall Archaeological Unit as our historic environment consultants. Currently (2024) we have 42 locations defined as Heritage at Risk, in 2022, this number was 37.</p>
The Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	X			<p><b>Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Climate Change:</b>            With the continued support of the Council the NLP is in a stronger position than it was and better able to protect and enhance the AONB.</p>
The availability of genuinely affordable housing [is protected or enhanced]		X		<p><b>Lead Member for Housing and Corporate Estate:</b>            Genuinely affordable housing is arguably only available through our social housing stock with their associated low rents. This social housing stock is decreasing through the national Right to Buy policy over which we have no control.</p> <p>Work is ongoing with Ennor farm, but things have not progressed as quickly as we would have liked.</p> <p>More housing is in the pipeline with LiveWest's development of the old school site (which has now been submitted for planning). This development will be for local use and will be built to modern building standards ensuring it is energy efficient, resulting in much lower household energy bills.</p>