

Constituency Meeting Notes – Kingshurst Community Centre

Date: 22 July 2026

Chair: Hon. Robert Midwinter

Attendees: 4 Constituents, and Acting Chief of Police Mr Julian Pezzanni



1. Welcome

The chair welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. He introduced the Acting Chief of Police who was in attendance to give an update of their Community Policing initiatives.

2. Community Policing Engagement

The meeting opened with an update from the Acting Chief of Police Mr Julian Pezzani on current policing priorities and community engagement. It was explained that a dedicated neighbourhood policing team is now in place, supported by additional temporary officers, with an emphasis on visibility, community interaction and frontline policing. Recruitment of local officers remains a priority, although attracting suitable young people into the service continues to be challenging. A new recruitment process is underway, and the intention is to increase the number of locally recruited officers and strengthen the experience of younger personnel.

The Acting Chief reported that current policing priorities remain focused on crime prevention, tackling crime, delivering justice, protecting vulnerable people, improving public confidence, strengthening the police service and improving road safety. Online fraud and other forms of cyber-enabled crime were identified as an emerging concern, particularly where offenders gain access to social media accounts and target individuals from overseas. The community was encouraged to remain vigilant, protect personal information and avoid accepting unknown contacts online. The police are working with national agencies to identify offenders, although prosecution can be difficult where perpetrators are based overseas.

It was advised that anti-social behaviour remains an area of concern but has not increased significantly compared with previous years. Violent crime has recently reduced, while reported sexual offences remain broadly stable. The overall crime detection rate was reported at approximately 60%, with a significantly higher rate of 86% for cases progressing to court. These figures were considered encouraging and were attributed in part to the island's relatively low volume of reported crime, allowing officers to undertake more detailed investigations.

Discussion then turned to the relationship between the police and the community. Constituents stressed the importance of officers being visible, approachable and willing to greet and engage with residents in the street. It was noted that positive everyday interaction can encourage residents to share information and assist investigations. The Acting Chief acknowledged the concern and said that more experienced officers had been brought in to mentor younger officers and demonstrate appropriate community engagement. The police leadership was also emphasising the importance of acknowledging mistakes, providing explanations and apologising where appropriate.

The role of schools and young people was discussed at length. The police confirmed that the neighbourhood team would support school visits and safety programmes, working closely with education, social services and other agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to safeguarding. Visits by younger children to the police station and work experience opportunities within the emergency control centre were highlighted as useful ways of building positive relationships. An emergency services cadet scheme is also being explored, potentially involving policing, fire and rescue and sea rescue, with the aim of giving young people constructive activities, promoting safety and exposing them to future employment opportunities. The meeting also noted the importance of encouraging healthy relationships and personal safety among young people.

3. Review of Action Points from previous meeting

The meeting then moved to outstanding matters from the previous constituency meeting: Immigration legislation – was passed in the House on Friday 17 July 2026 and now awaiting on enactment.

3.1 Fresh-produce offloading from the supply ship

It was clarified that the cruise ship was not prioritised on that occasion, and fresh produce is generally offloaded as quickly as possible, depending on cargo loading arrangements and staff availability.

3.2 Privacy screens at the immigration service desk and the possibility of establishing a satellite immigration facility in Jamestown

Privacy screens have since been installed, and discussions are ongoing about establishing a satellite immigration desk in Jamestown. In the meantime, assistance for completing forms is available at the Career Access Office and Public Library.

3.3 Mirror at Friars turning

Due to budget constraints and maintenance requirements, the installation of a mirror was not considered necessary following an inspection. However, assurances were given that vegetation would be regularly cut back to maintain clear visibility. Residents noted that the vegetation in the area had been cut back and appreciated it but remained concerned as the request for a mirror is due to the blind turning and not the overgrown vegetation and requested that the matter be followed up.

3.4 The impact of the minimum wage on the private sector

It was noted that this was raised and the majority present at the last meeting was to leave it unchanged for the time being, the Employment Rights Committee recommended increasing it to £4.85, while the private sector continued to experience recruitment difficulties. Constituents informed that Select Committee 1 would be doing a live hearing on Labour Market Strategy if anyone want to feedback on that, they were invited to make submissions by 31 July.

4. Topics raised

4.1 Budget

The recently approved budget and wider financial position was discussed, where the core budget had increased, with additional funding through EDIP and BIOT under a multi-year settlement, and with additional funding for meeting conditionalities. Areas for investment included bulk fuel storage, renewable energy, prison infrastructure and sewage treatment facilities.

4.2 Bulk fuel Storage

Concerns raised on the importance of bulk fuel storage because of fuel availability, and where the cost will affect transport, electricity, and food supplies.

4.3 Renewable Energy

Renewable energy was also identified as a priority, with plans to extend existing solar capacity, and introduce battery storage.

4.4 Scrutiny of EDIP

Concern was expressed about the limited ability of local representatives to scrutinise EDIP projects funded directly through external UK government programmes. It was explained that such projects remain subject to the relevant UK government accountability arrangements, although there has been progress in securing greater local scrutiny over certain central support services and locally delivered projects.

4.5 Businesses operating outside the tax system

Concerns were raised about individuals and businesses operating outside the tax system and that recipients who lease agriculture lands should be registered with the tax authorities. The need for more effective tax compliance was acknowledged, and it was noted that additional resources had been allocated to strengthen tax compliance and pursue outstanding debts.

4.6 Tax Structure

The current tax structure was also discussed; the view was expressed that the system should be reviewed to provide greater relief at lower income levels while ensuring that higher earners contribute proportionately. The broader objective should be to expand the tax base through economic growth rather than simply increasing taxation. Increased visitor numbers and future tourism bookings were noted as positive signs for revenue growth.

4.7 Agriculture and food security

Concerns raised about the availability of agricultural support, access to technical expertise, including agronomy, soil management and environmental knowledge, maintenance of agricultural infrastructure including rabbit-proof fencing and polytunnels whose coverings require replacement and the loss of specialist knowledge through retirement. The forthcoming Agricultural Policy was discussed; it was stressed that any policy should be supported by adequate funding and practical measures to help farmers develop their businesses. It was agreed on the need to ensure that agricultural development is properly supported, particularly given the wider objective of improving food security and reducing the island's dependence on imports.

4.8 Youth Employment and Apprenticeships

The discussion then turned to youth employment, apprenticeships and social benefits. Concerns were raised that where young people are expected to work substantial hours, the allowance should be considered against the minimum wage. Constituents advised that the matter is expected to be examined as part of the post-16 review and the wider labour market strategy.

4.9 Road Traffic Regulations

The outstanding Road Traffic Regulations; constituents queried the status of the RTO, it was reported that work was continuing on a number of minor regulatory changes, including matters relating to driving age limits and medical requirements. The implementation of two-hour parking restrictions and other road traffic measures was expected to take longer because of the need to establish the appropriate enforcement framework, including how the fixed penalty notices would work in practice. Environmental and fisheries-related offences may be addressed separately through fixed penalty arrangements while the broader road traffic provisions are developed.

4.10 Utility Billing

A final major discussion concerned Utility billing and the recent changes from quarterly to monthly billing. Residents reported receiving unexpectedly high or apparently inaccurate bills, particularly where estimated readings had been used. It was acknowledged that the transition had experienced problems, including gaps between estimated and actual meter readings. The utility provider had indicated that it was working to resolve the backlog and that customers experiencing financial hardship should contact the provider for assistance. Residents who preferred to remain on quarterly billing were advised to contact the provider directly to discuss their circumstances, although the main difficulty was said to relate to commercial rather than residential customers.

Post-Meeting Note: "Following the meeting, this matter has been reviewed and noted that representation had been made through the URA on behalf of individuals who wished to continue making quarterly payments. However, it was confirmed that the URA did not support this approach, as operating two separate billing systems would reportedly create difficulties for Connect. As a result, Connect is only able to offer monthly payment arrangements. Apologies to the attending members for the misinformation and for any inconvenience or confusion this may have caused".

4.11 Water Increases

The reported 10% water price increase was also discussed. It was explained that the increase formed part of a multi-year adjustment required by the utility regulator and was not, at that stage, directly attributable to increased diesel costs. No increases in electricity had been advised yet, and any future electricity price movements would depend on the cost of imported fuel as there was now an agreed pricing model in place between Connect and the URA. The meeting noted that improved fuel storage capacity and reduced shipping requirements could help manage costs, although the island remained vulnerable to international fuel price fluctuations.

4.12 Pensions

The meeting concluded with a discussion about the UK Pensions, Chair advised that he had advocated for a greater debate and action on increasing the Basic Island Pension in line with inflation and although there was a commitment in the Budget speech to consider the issue at a later stage, he would have preferred the increase to have been implemented immediately. It was argued during the Budget Session by Cllr Midwinter that the funds allocated for the proposed £150 tax free allowance increase could instead have been used to provide a 2.2% increase, which he felt would have been a more beneficial approach.