

Joe Robertson MP

Isle of Wight East



House of Commons

London SW1A 0AA

Alison McGovern MP

Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Via email

20th January 2026

Dear Minister,

Thank you for meeting me on 13th January to discuss your Department's proposal to cut funding to the Isle of Wight Council by £13.4 million over the next 3 years. As you are aware our Council Leader has written to you setting out the severe consequences for the Isle of Wight and requesting an urgent meeting with you. I endorse the contents of his letter.

Over many years, as a Council, we have been arguing for an uplift in funding to take into account the additional costs of delivering services on an island with 140,000 people reliant on unregulated, private ferry providers. In its last two years in office, the previous Government gave us an annual uplift of £4 million. It was not enough but it was a start. In the first two years in office the current Government will do the opposite. It will refuse to recognise our unique challenges and leave us worse off.

This decision comes at a time when the most urban councils are projected to receive 41% more in government-funded spending power per head than rural councils.

The Government said that it would be using data published by the Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods (ICON) to deliver its "5 missions" which include growing the economy and opportunity for all. Indeed, ICON was launched in September 2024 with the support of your own Minister for Local Growth. ICON's report on left behind neighbourhoods found that Isle of Wight East scored second worst in the entire country. The Isle of Wight Council subsequently put forward evidence based on ICON data but your Department decided to use alternative data which favours urban areas. I met with ICON last week to discuss the independent work that they have done.

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I urge you to reconsider the data on which you will base your final decision for funding for the Isle of Wight Council over the next three years. In particular:

1. Have you considered the impact of unregulated private ferry companies on the cost of delivering services and the movement of people including workforce.
2. Why have you superseded ICON data with alternative data.
3. What data have you used, and please will you publish it as applied to the Isle of Wight.

I look forward to your urgent reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Robertson".

Joe Robertson MP