

# BUDGET 2017

Madam Chairman, Councillors, and Members of the public,

I would like to start by thanking the Executive for all their hard work and support. I would also like to thank the Chief Ex and Directors and Ms Gobey of course.

*What a year that was out of Europe new P.M.  
UKIP more Leaders than you can shake a stick at.  
Labour wishing they could copy.  
WHO SAID POLITICS IS BORING*

Over the past couple of years the Government has set us a tough task - but we have risen to the challenge. We have taken a number of proactive steps to further improve the efficiency of our services, developed fruitful partnerships, and are making smart investments.

The confirmation of the financial settlement is a strong indication from Government that our approach to financial management is sound.

This approach is also reflected in strategic direction for the next three years - *Platforms for our Places*. The plan we adopted at the end of last year sets out the Councils' ambitions for the prosperity of our places and our communities. In addition to delivering and developing our services, it's about developing the Platforms - the essential elements of our places - with businesses, individuals, community groups, so we can do great things for Adur.

And we are starting from a strong position.

## **OUR FINANCIAL ECONOMY**

We are seeing significant interest from businesses and developers looking to invest in Adur.

Ricardo's showed their ongoing commitment to the district with the opening of their Centenary Innovation Centre . Futureform, a modular building company, are making an initial £5 million investment, creating 300 skilled jobs in Shoreham; Higgldy pies are doubling in size and workforce. while IKEA are proposing to build its Sussex branch in the district - we are are getting popular. But this is just the start.

And the Council have been taking steps to ensure the investment continues and our financial economy develops. We have been successful in securing £5.7 million investment from the Government in the New Monk's Farm Development. This investment will be helping us unlock up to 600 new homes and over 700 new jobs by dramatically improving the road network around the site.

We have driven forward with the gigabit coast Broadband project, securing project support and funding from our County, District and Borough partners. Procurement is now in progress to bring ultrafast speeds to Adur for the benefit of our council, schools, businesses and ultimately our residents. We are talking about not 200MB as the best now but Gigabit speed.

Over the next year we are also expecting progress on the Adur Civic Centre Site. This redevelopment will help secure jobs in the area, deliver housing and provide the Council an ongoing revenue stream. Elsewhere in Shoreham we are seeing

progress on the Ferry Car Park and the Adur Tidal Wall. The Ferry road site has unfortunately had to pause because the Tidal Walls is running behind. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Head of Planning and staff for their work on the local Plan. in case members are unaware the Housing numbers were agreed by the CPRE and House builders the first time the Inspector had known this. In Adur we have to build 180 houses a year. In Mid Sussex the number they have been told is 1026 in Arun 1200 that is a year.

## **OUR SOCIAL ECONOMY**

In Fishersgate we have taken back control of the Community Centre to deliver better services to the Fishersgate community. As part of taking control we carried out landscaping works and reconstructed a new recreation play area.

The refurbishment of the Fishergate recreation area was part of the annual play areas refurbishment programme funded through a combination of capital and external funding and

developer contributions. Looking forward to next year we will continue with our playground refurbishment programme.

I am very proud that we will see the first new social housing being built in Adur in many years at Albion Street. This is a great example of looking at new ways of getting things done and working with partners, in this case a private developer, to deliver for our communities. And we are not going to stop there, we have been successful bidding for HCA funds to support future HRA development.

There has been a reinvigoration within our housing team, who continue to improve the condition of Adur Homes properties with a number of schemes including a rolling programme of new kitchens and bathrooms. A new contract worth over £1 million was signed last September and to date we have installed over 60 new kitchens and 53 bathrooms alongside some other minor improvements. Each week the number of installations increases and customer satisfaction is very high.

And prior to the winter, 46 properties in Test Road benefited from the installation of new, energy efficient heating systems after Southern Gas Networks extended the gas main in this area.

However we can't be complacent we has seen an increase in demand of homelessness services, and have been looking for sustainable solutions to meet the needs of those seeking temporary accommodation and who are vulnerable to Homelessness. This includes purchasing properties to allow people to stay closer to their community. We have also been successful in two bids to Government to support those at risk and long-term rough sleepers.

We have also been successfully working with partners and leveraged funding to improve the health of our community. Our Health and Wellbeing teams have supported 1,828 people in Audr through our Wellbeing programmes.

We launched the Going Local Referral Project - a groundbreaking project linking health professionals and communities together around the needs and

wants of local people. 53 of the 72 referrals to date have been Adur residents.

We have worked with the British Heart Foundation we have developed a health and wellbeing programme in schools, which is now live in nearly all Adur primary schools and with Worthing school now getting in on the act.

## **STEWARDING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES**

Part of remaining fit and healthy is getting out into our natural environment. Our parks team hosted 84 events in the districts parks and open spaces across the course of the year. We also have seen an increase in the number of community groups actively involved in the management and maintenance of these places.

In partnership with The Conservation Volunteers we now have 14 active groups across Adur, with others being set up with the support of the Council's Community Park Rangers.

The Council supports these groups through staging training sessions on risk assessments,

external funding bid applications, specialist equipment training, first aid training etc. We have also successfully set up a green space partnership forum to connect the groups together, exchange of knowledge and resources, buddying up and mentoring, discuss funding opportunities.

Building on our good relationships with the community and business, AWCS have championed a highly successful and innovative behavioural change and engagement programme to improve the quality of our recycling collection. Partners across the county are looking to replicate our success as part of their waste collection strategies.

The Council is also doing its bit for mother nature, we have strengthened our approach to sustainability and have developed an action plan to deliver energy efficiencies and better use of resources, including making progress with solar panels on the Shoreham Centre.

## **SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS**

The Council is also continuing to invest in ensuring that our community get the best quality of service.



We have invested in new contact centre telephony, which not only ensures that members of the community are responded to in timely and reliable manner, but also provides improved data and customer insight so we can better map how customers use our services and proactively improve processes. This has been supported by our digital programme, which continues to deliver against £200,000 savings targets, and transform key services.

We also finalised a partnership with the Post Office allowing Council accounts to be paid via the Post Office - making easier for the community to do business with the Council.

Looking to the future we will see the replacement of our refuse fleet, and bring Adur revenues and benefits inhouse, which will provide foundation for more consistent universal offer, earlier engagement with vulnerable residents, and improved collection of tax when consolidated with Worthing's in-house function.

Our staff work hard to identify and generate additional revenue so that we can continue provide

services. Our Legal and Treasury Management staff are providing their quality service to other district and boroughs - bringing in additional revenue. While the Customer and Commercial board encourages all staff to share ideas to improve customer's experience and services. In its first two years, the Board has delivered additional income in excess of £600,000 each year.

All this combines to ensure we providing quality services which are financially sustainable.

## **LEADERSHIP OF OUR PLACES**

Despite many of the uncertainties that our communities face - that could be what is happening with Brexit or when is my next bin collection - this council is working to ensure that our community has confidence in their local places. From through maintaining and improving basic council services through to positioning our places for the opportunities resulting from Brexit and developing our local economy. We look forward to working with our partners to make our places prosper and thrive.

I commend this budget to the Council.