



Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by Executive Members and the Joint Strategic Committee since the last meeting of Council

A Decisions Taken by Individual Executive Members

Listed below is a summary of decisions taken by the individual Executive Members since the despatch of the agenda for the last ordinary Council Meeting . Full details can be found on the Executive Members and Portfolios, Reports and Decisions webpage.

www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/committee/agendas-minutes.htm

Leader

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Executive Member for Regeneration

REG/007/18-19 Consultation on Main Modifications to the Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan

JAW/014/18-19 Supporting a vibrant seafront with regional appeal - Giant Observation Wheel (Worthing)

Executive Member for Resources

JAW/011/18-19 Council IT Hardware Refresh

JAW/015/18-19 Bringing Forward Capital Funding from the 2019/20 budget to the 2018/19 budget

Executive Member for Customer Services

JAW/016/18-19 Acquisition of land and conversion of property for use as Temporary Accommodation

Executive Member for the Environment

JAW/013/18-19 Impulse Leisure, Old Barn Way, Southwick - Car Parking Review

Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing

JAW/012/18-19 Adur & Worthing Community Transport Grants - Allocation of funds for 2018/19

JAW/018/18-19 Adur Community Grants - Allocation of Funds for 2018/19 - Third Round

JAW/019/18-19 Award of Contract for the Conversion of 101 North Road, Lancing

B. Decisions Taken by the Joint Strategic Committee on 8 January 2019

JSC/077/18-19 Council's Tax Strategy for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital & Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 5.

The report set out the proposed tax strategy statement for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council.

Members noted that legislation within the Criminal Finances Act 2017 stated that failure to prevent tax evasion was a corporate criminal offence. The potential risk for local authorities could not be overlooked and, although not a mandatory requirement for Councils at present, it was recommended by government that authorities develop and publish a tax strategy statement.

A Member sought clarification regarding the locality and cost of the external tax consultants. Officers advised that due to the specialist nature of the advice, the consultants were not local and the annual subscription cost £2.5k.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee approved the Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council Tax Strategy statements.

JSC/078/18-19 Citizens Advice - supporting local residents with advice and information

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 6.

Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council currently had a three-year 'community advice services' contract with Citizens Advice. The contract was procured by West Sussex County Council on behalf of Adur and Worthing Councils and the remaining district and borough councils in West Sussex.

The report updated the Committee on the progress of the current contract and provided details on the proposal to commission a new community advice services contract from the 1 April 2019.

The Committee discussed the data on page 19 of the report, identifying that although there were fewer clients using the service in Worthing they presented a greater number of issues.

Members sought clarification as to the reasons for this trend. Officers agreed to investigate and feedback on the findings.

A Member referred to paragraph 5.4 of the report which highlighted that the most expensive part of Citizens Advice was the face-to-face service, therefore additional awareness could be carried out to highlight the areas where people can self-serve. The Member questioned the effectiveness of the self-serve option. Officers advised that raising awareness of self-service was important as it was the most cost effective and efficient way of Citizens Advice helping clients.

Another Member sought clarification regarding funding from the Department for Work and Pensions for Citizens Advice to support residents with Universal Credit as outlined in paragraph 4.5. Officers advised that currently a project officer, working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), was funded by Adur and Worthing Councils. Nationally, Citizens Advice had been awarded a contract by the DWP to provide such advice across the country. The Councils were working with the DWP to understand how that additional resource would input into local job centres to support people accessing Universal Credit.

The Committee were notified of an amendment to recommendation 2.1. The duration of the new contract would run from April 2019 to March 2021 (not March 2022 as stated in the report).

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

1. agreed that Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council continue to be part of the contract, led by West Sussex County Council (in partnership with the other District and Borough Councils in West Sussex), which was intended to be procured through a tender process for a further two years from April 2019 until March 2021. This was subject to confirmation of the level of West Sussex financial contribution in year two of the new contract (2020/21);
1. noted that this would provide an independent and comprehensive community advice service with the organisation 'Citizens Advice in West Sussex - North, South and East' and that work would take place over the next two years to further adapt this model and approach;
2. agreed that the Councils provide an ongoing annual funding contribution of £83,824 for Adur and £79,829 for Worthing for this

service for the duration of this contract (2019/20 and 2020/21), subject to Adur and Worthing full Councils approving the 2019/20 budget - and uplifting this sum in line with the consumer price index calculated on the anniversary of the agreement.

JSC/079/18-19 Start Well, Live Well, Age Well: shaping the next phase of the Wellbeing Hubs 2019 - 2022

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 7.

The report outlined the strong progress of the Adur and Worthing Wellbeing Hubs and asked Members to consider this progress and approve the next three year Partnership Agreement with West Sussex County Council 2019 - 2022 and to accept the proposed funding allocation into the budgets.

A Member asked whether care leavers were referred to the service as a group or individually or whether they were targeted specifically. Officers replied that care leavers were a challenging group to reach. The service had experience of working with key workers who worked with care leavers as their trusted source. Usually, trusted sources referred care leavers to the wellbeing hubs rather than care leavers coming to the service directly. A drop in service had been trialled as part of the find it out service but there had not been any take up.

Another Member questioned how the 'measures of success' were tracked. Officers replied that every client that came through the service was contacted 3 months after the end of their intervention. For clients accessing wrap around sessions which had been commissioned externally, quarterly monitoring face-to-face meetings were held in order to assess the key success measures. The programmes were evidence based and followed NICE guidance.

Clarification was sought regarding the process of reporting data about the service to the West Sussex Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and whether it was possible for the service to focus on prioritised need. Officers advised that they were working in partnership with West Sussex Public Health (WSPH), meeting with them on a quarterly basis, completing monitoring returns for each of the projects and providing feedback on key performance indicators and success measures. The Committee was also informed that although the budget was quite small, a lot of work was done with it. Work was undertaken with WSPH to identify priority needs and a business plan was developed annually which sought to address them.

The Committee acknowledged the excellent work being undertaken and congratulated the team on its success so far.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

1. delegated authority to enter into the Adur partnership agreement and the Worthing Partnership Agreement with West Sussex County Council, as set out in paragraph 3.6, to the Director for Communities in consultation with the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing;
2. agreed to receive the proposed funding allocation from West Sussex County Council of £441,695 a year, subject to revision, for three years until March 2022 and recommended that Adur and Worthing Councils amend their revenue budgets accordingly;
3. approved the ongoing partnership between Adur and Worthing Councils and West Sussex County Council develop and deliver the Wellbeing Hubs programme over the next three years (April 2019 to March 2022), subject to funding being agreed on an annual basis.

JSC/080/18-19 Improving health and wellbeing outcomes using our Green Spaces - Growing Communities Project

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 8.

The report provided an overview of the progress made on our *Growing Communities* partnership with the Conservation Volunteers. The programme aimed to support communities, improving their health and wellbeing, through the use of natural spaces across Adur and Worthing.

This project provided a platform for our communities to utilise our natural environment to promote health and wellbeing, which was a key commitment in Platforms for our Places.

The Committee was informed that there had been 1,650 individual attendees at Growing Communities activities and events which significantly exceeded the targets agreed with the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund of 1,500 individual attendees over the 3 year funding term. It was noted that regular attendees were targeted for interviews to feedback on the service.

A Member questioned whether it was possible to extend the project to other areas. Officers advised that the lottery funding was specifically for the project in Eastbrook and Northbrook over the next 3 years. However, support was also being provided to the Green Space Partnership and the Councils Park Rangers in order to deliver outside of these areas.

Resolved,

That the Joint Strategic Committee noted the progress and the strong partnership with the Conservation Volunteers around health and wellbeing and natural spaces.

Full details can be

found: www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/committee/cab-docs-joint-strategic.htm

Items relating to Worthing Borough Council are not reproduced on this agenda

C. Decisions Taken by the Joint Strategic Committee on 31 January 2019

JSC/086/18-19 Platforms for our Places Progress Report (July to December 2018)

Before the Committee was a report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 5.

The report provided the Joint Strategic Committee with an update on the Councils' progress in delivering the ambitions and commitments set out in *Platforms for our Places* for the period July to December 2018, and highlighted areas of strategic importance.

All of the commitments adopted by both Councils originally in January 2017 (and then refreshed in July 2018) were progressing. One was complete, 72% of activities were on track (green) and 27% were at potential risk (amber).

The report provided an opportunity for JSC to report to both Full Councils and Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee on progress.

The Committee noted that the 140 or so commitments were not everything the Councils do, as whilst progressing the platforms agenda, the Councils continued to provide a full portfolio of universal services to the communities they served.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following strategic themes:-

- Housing (supply and demand);
- Out town centres;
- Mobilising resources behind the agenda;
- Dealing with uncertainties; and
- Looking to the future.

Members welcomed the update on progress made and the challenges experienced.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

1. noted the progress made and challenges experienced in the implementation of *Platforms for our Places* over the period July to December 2018;
2. requested a further update report in July 2019 detailing progress over the next 6 month period; and
3. agreed to refer this report to Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.

JSC/087/18-19 Final Revenue Budget Estimates for 2019/20

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital & Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 6.

The report was the final budget report of the year and the culmination of the annual budgeting exercise, which asked members to consider:

- the final revenue estimates for 2019/20 including any adjustments arising from settlement; and
- an updated outline 5-year forecast; and

The budgets reflected the decisions taken by members to date in relation to agreed savings proposals and any committed growth.

Members were also asked to consider the proposals to invest in services outlined in Appendix 2, which were also included in the individual Councils budget reports.

The Committee noted that the budget was analysed by Executive member portfolio. In addition, the draft estimates for 2019/20 had been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (except in relation to pension cost adjustments that did not impact either on the Budget Requirement or the Council Tax Requirement).

The respective Adur and Worthing 2019/20 Estimates and Council Tax setting reports were due to be considered by the Worthing Executive on 4 February 2019 and the Adur Executive on 5 February 2019. Both the estimates for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council included their respective share of the cost of the Joint Strategic Committee.

It was noted that updated copies of appendices 2 and 3 to the report had been circulated electronically and hard copies were tabled at the meeting.

The Committee sought assurance that the additional senior planning officer post was required. Officers informed the Committee that the larger planning applications placed greater demands on the planning service and the calibre of individual was important reputationally. It was noted that increased fees would help to subsidise the post.

The proposed grant funding to support culture and arts development in the local community and to assist in unlocking Arts Council grant funding was discussed.

Members requested that additional information regarding the Arts Council funding and any associated guarantees, be provided at the Adur Executive meeting.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (a) considered and approved the proposals to invest in services which related to Joint Services outlined in Appendix 2;
- (b) agreed to the proposed 2019/20 budget detailed in Appendix 3 subject to the inclusion of the approved proposals to invest in services.

Full details can be found: www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/committee/cab-docs-joint-strategic.htm

Items relating to Worthing Borough Council are not reproduced on this agenda

D. Decisions taken by the Adur Executive 5 February 2019

A EX/008/18-19 Housing Revenue Account – Budget 2019/20

The Executive had before it a joint report from the Director for Digital and Resources and the Director for Communities, attached to these minutes as item 4.

The report outlined the financial challenges for the Housing Revenue Account and asked Members to set the rent levels and service charges for 2019/20. The report also considered some of the strategic challenges facing the Housing Revenue Account over the next few years and the impact that these would have over the next 30 years.

The rent limitation announced in 2015/16 continued to have a profound effect on the financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account. However, it was expected that this would end in 2019/20 allowing the HRA's budget to become more sustainable in the future.

A Member sought clarification regarding the Depreciation value of £4,021,000 shown in the table under paragraph 5.1 of the report. Officers advised that depreciation was a measure of how the value of an asset changed over time. In respect of the

Council's housing stock, it was assumed that there was a lifetime of about 40 years for a new building, which was periodically reassessed. In accordance with good accounting practice, the Council needed to set aside for the reduction in value over time. The depreciation was transferred into the major repairs reserve and was used to fund the capital programme of the HRA. In effect, it was an appropriation to a reserve based on a calculation of change in value.

An additional charge of £35k by Legal Services, due to volume of work undertaken, was highlighted by the Committee. Officers advised that this charge related to additional tenancy policy work for the HRA account and work supporting the delivery of the affordable homes group.

A Member questioned the proposed level of rental increase for Council Garages (3.3%), suggesting that a number of garages were in a state of disrepair. Officers advised the Committee that the Council was undertaking a review of all garage sites as part of the hidden homes initiative. Some garages were in need of repair, however, a number were not fit for purpose due to their size, being too small to accommodate modern cars. A number of garages were being used for cheap storage rather than as conventional garages.

The Committee sought clarification regarding the number of empty garages in the District. Officers agreed to provide a written response to the request.

Decision

The Executive

- (i) approved the Housing Revenue Account estimates for 2019/20;
- (ii) noted that the rents of Council Dwellings would decrease by 1.0% reducing the average council dwelling rent by £0.91 to £89.76 per week (average rent currently £90.72 per week);
- (iii) determined the level of associated rents and charges with effect from week one of 2019/20:
 - (a) **Rents of Council garages** – agreed an increase of 3.3% to £10.29 (currently £9.96 per week, plus VAT for non-Council tenants);
 - (b) **Service Charges** - delegated to the Head of Housing and Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Executive Member for Customer Services, the setting of the service charges;
- (iv) approved the HRA Treasury Management Strategy contained in Appendix 3.

Reason for Decision

To set the rent level for 2019/20

Alternative options considered

As outlined in the report.

E. Urgent Executive Decisions Taken

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2000 as amended.

The following is reported to Council:

HofMP&I/013/18-19 - Purchase of a property for the Strategic Property Investment Fund for Adur District Council

<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/media.152191.en.pdf>

JAW/015/18-19 Bringing Forward Capital Funding from the 2019/20 budget to the 2018/19 budget

<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/meetings-and-decisions/committees/joint/cabinet-member-decisions/committee.152077.en.html>

JAW/019/18-19 Award of Contract for the Conversion of 101 North Road, Lancing

<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/meetings-and-decisions/committees/joint/cabinet-member-decisions/committee.152382.en.html>

Councillor Neil Parkin
Leader of the Council

Local Government Act 1972

Background papers

Reports and Record of decisions of various are available on the Council's web site www.adur-worthing.gov.uk or as indicated in each of the paragraphs above. Some of the reports may contain exempt information and not fully published on the websites.