

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Joint Strategic Committee of
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea**

Tuesday 7 January 2014

Councillor Neil Parkin (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

Councillor Pat Beresford
*Councillor Keith Dollemore
Councillor Angus Dunn
Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor Julie Searle
*Councillor David Simmons

Worthing Borough Council:

Cllr Daniel Humphreys
Councillor Mary Lermite
Councillor Clive Roberts
Councillor Bryan Turner
Councillor Paul Yallop
Councillor Tom Wye

*Absent

Other Members Present

Councillors WBC: Roy Barraclough, Charles James & Vino Vinojan
Councillors ADC: Brian Boggis, Carson Albury, Rod Hotton & Liza McKinney

JSC/075/13-14 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bryan Turner declared personal interests in item 7 as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

The Strategic Director (AG) declared a pecuniary interest on behalf of all staff directly affected by Item 10.

The Chief Executive declared that all staff were indirectly affected by item 10 and therefore (with the exception of those advising the Committee) they should also leave at the commencement of that item.

JSC/076/13-14 Public Question Time

Mr Steve Waight of 28 Furze Road, Worthing asked a question in two parts. The first concerned a figure included in paragraph 3.39 of the report to be considered at item 10 on the agenda, 'that after year 3 the full £680,430 per annum saving is once more effective'. Mr Waight asked if this figure was correct.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the figure should have been £226,810.

The second part of Mr Waight's question concerned the period of payback outlined in paragraph 3.39 and whether this met Worthing Borough Councils 3 year payback objectives.

Officers confirmed that the payback for each of the voluntary redundancies was less than 3 years, the details of which were outlined in exempt appendices 3 and 4.

JSC/077/13-14 Minutes

Resolved, that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 3 December 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman;

JSC/078/13-14 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no urgent items for consideration.

JSC/079/13-14 Joint Overall Budget Estimates 2014/15

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Financial Services, 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 represented the culmination of the annual budget exercise and asked members to consider the following:

- the final revenue estimates for 2014/15;
- an updated outline 5-year forecast;

The Committee noted that the respective Adur and Worthing 2014/15 Estimate and Council Tax setting reports would be presented to the Worthing Cabinet on Monday 3rd February 2014 and the Adur Cabinet on Tuesday 4th February 2014. Both the Estimates for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council will include their respective share of the cost of the Joint Strategic Committee.

Members considered the non-committed growth items outlined in Appendix 3 and supported in principal:-

- an increase in the hours of the Senior Information Officer;
- the computerisation of the recruitment process;
- an annual valuation of the Museum Collection, subject to confirmation as to whether an annual valuation of the Museum Collection was required or whether a periodic valuation would suffice;
- an Events Coordinator post, subject to a report detailing the nature of activity associated with the role;
- an additional Senior Estates Surveyor for two years to move forward the large number of expected simultaneous major sales;
- an additional engineer to support a variety of revenue projects including the Adur River Walls project and the Brooklands lake options;

The Committee did not support the inclusion of the *ASB - Safer Communities Team* non-committed growth item as Members believed this should continue to be funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) approved the savings set out in Appendix 2;
- (ii) considered the non-committed growth items outlined in Appendix 3 and indicated that the items identified above, would be supported in principal when the overall budgets for each Council were considered;
- (iii) agreed that the budgets for 2014/15, outlined in Appendix 4, be adjusted by any agreed growth items.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17th January 2014.

JSC/080/13-14 Planned Maintenance Programmes for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council 2014/15 Onwards

Before the Committee was a report by the Strategic Director (AG), copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 6.

The report sought the Joint Strategic Committee's approval of the 2014/15 five year property, land and equipment maintenance programmes for Adur and Worthing Councils.

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council confirmed that the increased cost of backlog maintenance was attributed to Worthing Borough Council being responsible from the 1st April 2014, for the operation and maintenance of the multi-storey and surface car parks within its ownership following the end of the 10 year NCP contract. He confirmed that future maintenance of the car parks would be funded from the income generated by the car parks.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee considered the report and agreed the planned maintenance programmes proposed for 2014/15 and beyond for both Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council.

Call-in:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17th January 2014.

JSC/081/13-14 Change of Order to Agenda Items

The Chairman announced that agenda item 8 'Early Help and Think Family Neighbourhoods' would be taken as the next item of business.

JSC/082/13-14 Early Help and Think Family Neighbourhoods

Before the Committee was a report by the Strategic Director (JM), copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 8.

Officers from West Sussex County Council, Amanda Radley, Early Help Strategic Commissioning Manager and Georgina Bouette from Early Help, attended the meeting for this item of business.

The report outlined two key programmes for the Joint Strategic Committee's consideration:

- i) the West Sussex Early Help Action Plan, which Members were asked to sign both Councils up to; and
- ii) the West Sussex Think Family Neighbourhoods, which Members were asked to note, along with the funding attached to the programme.

The Committee was also asked to approve an application to be a Community Budget pilot area under the Our Place programme in the New Year.

Members expressed support for the two key programmes and noted their strategic importance.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) considered and noted the West Sussex Early Intervention Action Plan;
- ii) approved signing up to and supporting the Action Plan;
- iii) considered and noted the background to the Think Family Neighbourhoods Programme and the progress made in Adur and Worthing;
- iv) approved bringing the Think Family Neighbourhoods funding into the Councils' Revenue Budget for the financial years 2013/14 and 2014/15;
- v) delegated responsibility for the management of the Think Family Neighbourhoods budget to the Strategic Director (JM) or successor post, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Health and Wellbeing;
- vi) considered and approved the application to be a Community Budget Pilot area.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17th January 2014.

JSC/083/13-14 A countywide approach to improving the management of Unauthorised Encampments

Before the Committee was a report by the Strategic Director (JM), 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 proposed that Adur and Worthing Councils (“the Councils”) work in partnership with the other Local Authorities in West Sussex to jointly fund the provision and running costs of a Transit Site for Gypsies and Travellers.

The Committee were informed that currently there were no public transit sites in West Sussex and, without such a site, the powers open to Sussex Police to move unauthorised encampments on was very limited. It was noted that Adur and Worthing Councils have been at the forefront of seeking a solution to this problem.

Early in 2013 all the West Sussex authorities jointly commissioned an independent study into the pros and cons of providing a Transit Site in West Sussex. The Study recommended that the West Sussex authorities should develop a Transit Site as a County-wide resource; that the partners, together with Sussex Police, develop a holistic, multi-agency way of managing both the Transit Site and unauthorised encampments; and that the West Sussex approach should be based on the East Sussex model.

The Committee were advised that unauthorised encampments cost the Councils both financially and their reputations.

Members expressed their reluctant support for the proposals as they were going to cost the Councils a significant amount of money. However, it was acknowledged that the proposals would return savings in the long term.

Concerns were expressed about the capacity of the transit site and the continued cost to the Councils of clearing up after unauthorised encampments. Officers advised that the experience of authorities with transit sites is that they rarely fill up but in the unlikely event that it did, the police would then be unable to use their powers. It was noted that the evidence suggests Hampshire, Dorset and East Sussex are progressively getting fewer unauthorised encampments since establishing transit sites.

Members expressed their gratitude to Chichester District Council for taking a lead on this and acknowledged the importance of working in partnership to tackle this issue.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) agreed that Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils should enter into a multi-partnership arrangement for the effective management of unauthorised encampments across West Sussex;
- (ii) agreed that the Strategic Director (JM), or successor post, be given delegated authority to agree the details of the multi-partnership arrangements with counterparts across West Sussex;
- (iii) noted that the proposed Transit Site is located in Chichester District and that West Sussex County Council will be responsible for the management of the site once developed;
- (iv) agreed that Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils shall contribute up to £15,000 each to the running costs of the Transit Site and that this becomes part of the base budget for both Councils from 2015/16 onwards;

- (v) recommended to Adur District Council the inclusion in the Capital Investment Programme 2014/15 a sum of up to £162,500 as the Councils contribution to the capital costs of the Transit Site to be funded from the Capacity Issues Reserve;
- (vi) recommended to Worthing Borough Council the inclusion in the Capital Investment Programme 2014/15 a sum of up to £162,500 as the Councils contribution to the capital costs of the Transit Site to be funded from the Capacity Issues Reserve.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17th January 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/084/13-14 Declaration of intent of the English Channel Local and Regional Government Organisations on Shipping Incidents and Maritime Pollution

Before the Committee was a report by the Strategic Director (AG), copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 9.

The report informed the Committee that it was usually local authorities that found themselves in the front-line when a shipping incident resulting in marine pollution occurred. This was the case for Adur and Worthing Councils with the Ice Prince incident in 2009. The role that the local authorities played was not well known or appropriately acknowledged yet considerable time and effort was devoted to assisting with the shoreline clean-up of the timber from the Ice Prince. Although in that case the cost of the clearance was met by the Insurance Club in many cases it isn't so clear cut and much of the cost befalls Local Government and its tax payers.

The report recommended agreement to a Cross Channel Declaration with partners on the English and French coasts to act together to press for change in policy and legislation to safeguard the coast and protect coastal communities.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee endorsed the Chief Executive, or delegated Officer, to sign the Declaration of the intent of the English Channel Local and Regional Government Organisations on Shipping Incidents and Maritime Pollution.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17th January 2014.

JSC/085/13-14 Organisational Change 2014: “Catching the Wave”

Before the Committee was a report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 10.

The report set out proposals for organisational change to ensure both Councils had the officer leadership required to meet medium and longer term challenges, the Chief Executive's views of the context and current organisational capacity (as identified by various stakeholders across Adur and Worthing), it identified the structural changes required, the processes to be followed and provided an outline timetable.

The Joint Strategic Committee were asked to endorse the proposed changes and agree the voluntary redundancies and processes set out and a recommendation to both Councils to approve the recommendations and release up to £358,000 from reserves to fund the necessary transitional costs.

The Committee were advised that the vacant post identified in the current management team structure (appendix 2) was the subject of an appeal. Any costs associated with that process were not included within the figures provided in the report.

Members considered the contents of the report and made the following observations:-

- that the proposals outlined in the 'Catching the Wave' document outlined a new strategic direction for both Councils;
- the proposals would enable the Councils to save money through considerable reductions in senior management costs;
- that Councillors would like to see a comparison between the costs of the proposed senior management structure and those prior to partnership working;
- that the proposals provide an opportunity to significantly change the culture of both Councils and that the Chief Executive would be charged with ensuring its implementation;
- that 'wealth generation' would be a key outcome of the proposals;
- that the proposals would have been a good idea even if they had been cost neutral;

Members wished to place on record their thanks to those staff identified within the report who had cumulatively given 135 years of service to the Councils.

Clarification was sought in relation to what union consultation had taken place. The Chief Executive confirmed that the proposals had been shared with Unison and that their representation intimated that changes were required.

A Member sought clarification over the number of officers that would sit on the proposed Councils Leadership Team (CLT). It was confirmed that the CLT would comprise the Chief Executive and 4 Directors. The three 'Head of' level 3 roles and additional posts outlined in the report would report directly to either the Chief Executive or 4 Directors and they would not form part of the CLT.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) endorsed the direction of travel for Adur & Worthing Councils contained in Catching the Wave at Appendix 1;
- ii) considered the Chief Executive's (as Head of Paid Service) proposed future structure for the organisation as set out in Appendix 2; noted the approach and draft timetable set out in the report and recommended the approval of the structure to both Adur and Worthing Councils;
- iii) approved the 5 voluntary redundancy applications, as set out in Appendix 4 to the report, subject to the approval of the draft structure and the release of redundancy costs from reserves, by both Adur and Worthing Councils;
- iv) recommended to both Adur and Worthing Councils the release of up to £358,800 from reserves to fund the redundancy costs of the individuals concerned which is to be funded as follows:
 - a) Adur District Council's capacity issues reserve £124,100;
 - b) Adur District Council's Housing Revenue Account reserve £137,500;
 - c) Worthing Borough Council's capacity issues reserve £97,200.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17th January 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.28pm, having commenced at 6:30pm.

Chairman