

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Joint Strategic Committee of
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

Gordon Room, Town Hall, Worthing

Tuesday 22 July 2014

Councillor Paul Yallop (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

Councillor Pat Beresford
Councillor Keith Dollemore
Councillor Angus Dunn
Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor Neil Parkin
Councillor David Simmons

Worthing Borough Council:

Councillor Daniel Humphreys
Councillor Mary Lermite
*Councillor Clive Roberts
Councillor Bryan Turner
Councillor Val Turner

*Absent

Other Members Present

ADC – Cllr Carson Albury, Cllr Brian Boggis and Cllr Liza McKinney
WBC – Cllr Keith Sunderland

JSC/013/14-15 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were recorded:

Cllr David Simmons declared a personal interest in relation to Item 14 as a member of the Governing Body for the Sir Robert Woodard Academy.

Cllr Bryan Turner declared a personal interest in relation to Item 9 as a member of West Sussex County Council.

JSC/014/14-15 Public Question Time

Mr Alan Rice stated that West Sussex County Council provided a 'performance dashboard' on their website and asked if Worthing Borough Council would be producing something similar to include the budget?

Cllr Paul Yallop advised that the Council would take Mr Rice's comments on board and consider this request in connection with the Council's performance reporting process.

JSC/015/14-15 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 24 June 2014, be approved and signed by the Chairman.

JSC/016/14-15 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JSC/017/14-15 “Catching the Wave” - A progress update on organisational change

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

The Committee were updated on the work undertaken over the past six months (January to June 2014), noting the progress made, challenges faced and lessons learned. The report also outlined the next phase of organisational change activity required.

Members were advised of the need to create a new role of Head of Organisational Development, to design, deliver and evaluate the next phase of learning, development and cultural change work required to ensure the Councils became the adaptive organisations required.

The Adur Consultative Forum (ACF) representative questioned why there had not been any consultation regarding the new Head of Organisation Development post to explain the benefits of the new post. She also sought clarification of the contribution Adur Homes already made to Learning and Development.

Officers advised that these were exciting times for Adur Homes as the service's finances were in a strong position providing an opportunity to start building homes. The service would need to provide a neighbourhood management role which would require a skilling up of staff. Officers did not have the figures for the contribution currently made by the service to learning and development but agreed to provide them following the meeting.

Members sought clarification of the contribution to be paid by Adur Homes towards the new post, as outlined in paragraph 8.1 of the report. Officers confirmed that the percentages identified in the report (25-40%) were indicative figures and that Adur Homes would only pay for the services it received.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- noted progress in the Catching the Wave programme for the period January to June 2014;
- agreed the creation of the new role of Head of Organisational Development as outlined in the report;
- authorised the Chief Executive and the Councils Leadership Team to take forward the next set of organisational changes reporting back to Members of JSC on progress in a further 6 months;
- approved an initial virement of £42,000 from the Learning & Development budget and £14,000 from the Adur Homes budget to the Organisation Development salary budget.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/018/14-15 Outline Forecast 2015-16 to 2019-20 and Budget Strategy

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital and 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.

Officers informed Committee that the General Election in 2015 threw some uncertainty over future forecasts and Officers outlined the options for addressing the budget gap in 2015/16 which were also detailed in paragraph 5.0 of the report.

Members expressed concern that although shows being performed in Worthing's theatres were sold out, the service was still running at a loss. Officers acknowledged that the profit margin on performances was a key issue as was catering.

The Committee noted that catering in theatres would be the subject of forthcoming scrutiny and officer reviews.

Decision:

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- a) noted the report and the outline 5-year forecast in Appendix 3;
- b) approved the proposed budget process as set out in section 8 of the report;
- c) recommended to Adur and Worthing Councils approval of the Budget Strategy for 2015/16 outlined in Section 10 of the report.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

There is no call in on the recommendation to Council.

JSC/019/14-15 Capital Strategy 2014/17

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

The Committee sought clarification in respect of the allocation of £100,000 for essential replacement of ICT desk top equipment and local network equipment in both Councils. Officers confirmed that the Councils would need to replace old equipment over the next couple of years.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee recommended the approval of the Capital Strategy for 2014/17 to both Adur and Worthing Councils

Call-in:

There is no call in on recommendations to Council.

JSC/020/14-15 ICT Position Statement

Before the Committee was a report, presented by the Director for Digital and 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 8.

The report highlighted the problems being experienced with basic telephony and ICT services and the urgent actions being taken to improve these business critical services. It also outlined the proposed initial steps for developing a digital road map which would allow the councils to harness the benefits of cloud technologies for a range of stakeholders in our council areas, through the buying or building of next generation local government digital services, keeping users at the heart of the design/specification process.

The Committee were informed that telephony was the most urgent priority and that testing of alternatives to the Unify system would be undertaken. Members noted that discussions had been held with Mid Sussex and Horsham Councils regarding the service levels provided by CenSus ICT and a Disaster Recovery Plan and Business Impact Analyses were being produced with completion of the former expected by the end of July.

The Committee noted that a Digital Projects Board would be set up to establish strong governance over projects to ensure decisions were taken in light of emerging strategy and that overlaps in spend and effort were addressed.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted and agreed the immediate actions being taken by the Director for Digital and Resources and Census ICT to address the urgent issues with telephony and ICT services;
- (ii) approved the Methods Discovery Consultancy work;
- (iii) approved the staged approach to creating a digital road map for the Councils, agreeing the emergent nature of the strategy and the commitment to developing it with a range of stakeholders.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/021/14-15 Arrangements for the Enforcement of Unlawful Encampments

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 9.

At the Joint Strategic Committee on 7 January 2014, the Committee delegated authority to Officers to agree details of a multi-partnership arrangement with counterparts across West Sussex, in order to facilitate the development of a Transit Site located in the District of Chichester, with West Sussex County Council (WSSC) being responsible for its management.

The multi-agency partnership had evolved from developing the transit site, to enabling the County Council to take the lead in managing and carrying out all of the enforcement and legal work in connection with all unauthorised encampments across West Sussex.

To facilitate this, Adur and Worthing Councils' Enforcement Procedure for Unauthorised Traveller Encampments and Standard Operating Procedures for Unauthorised Encampments needed revising, the enforcement work would need outsourcing to the County Council, and the associated legal work would need to be delegated from each Council to the County Council to carry out this work on behalf of Adur and Worthing Councils.

The Committee commended the excellent performance of the Councils Legal Services in dealing with enforcement of unauthorised encampments. Concerns were raised that WSSC would not have the resources to deal with unauthorised encampments to the same level of efficiency and that the procedure conducted by WSSC would not have the same 'local' emphasis.

Members also raised concerns in regards to the access times to the transit site (9.00am to 5.00pm Mon-Fri); whether the Councils would incur additional costs on top of the proposed £15k a year payment for the service outlined in the proposals and the length of the agreement being 60 years.

Officers confirmed that these key points required clarification.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report to its next meeting on 2nd September 2014.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/022/14-15 Events Co-ordinator Post

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, 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 10.

The report informed Members about the current organisation and co-ordination of events and recommended that a new Events Co-Ordinator Post be created. The new post would assist in extending the events programme in the area, with the direct impact of increasing the number of visitors providing a positive impact on the local economy.

Members expressed support for the post and the benefits it would bring in relation to the identification and co-ordination of a number of small budget pots whilst acknowledging the importance of money coming into the local economy.

The Committee sought clarification over the process for setting the salary level of the post. Officers explained that the post would need to go through the job evaluation process to set the salary level.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee approved the release of funding to enable the recruitment of an Events Co-Ordinator.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/023/14-15 Localising Support for Council Tax in England

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Customer 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 11.

The report advised that Members had previously determined, in respect of 2013/14, that the localised schemes for both Adur and Worthing should replicate the previous national scheme and that the Councils would fund the reduction in subsidy received by utilising the new Council Tax Freedoms. Following consideration of a report by the Joint Strategic Committee on 4th July 2013, both Councils agreed that the localised scheme should remain unchanged for 2014/15.

The Committee were informed that when the Council Tax Scheme for the forthcoming financial year is varied from the previous year's scheme, the Councils are obliged to consult with residents. Although no changes were implemented in respect of 2014/15, Members had requested that possible variations to the 2015/16 Council Tax Support scheme were included within the "Your chance to be the Chancellor" consultation that was undertaken during the summer of 2013.

The report asked Members to consider whether the localised scheme should be changed or remain unchanged for 2015/16.

The Committee noted that collection rates were falling nationally with the common trend being that reduced support resulted in a reduction in collection rates. Both Horsham and Mid Sussex had applied reductions and were indicative of the losses that might be experienced.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (a) supported considering making changes to the 2015/16 schemes for Adur and Worthing Councils subject to the outcomes of the consultation;
- (b) agreed that residents should be consulted about the options over the Summer;
- (c) agreed that the restrictions detailed in paragraph 4.8 with the exceptions of (ii) and (iii) should be included in the budget consultations;
- (d) agreed that war widows and widowers should continue to receive the same level of protection as they do at present;
- (e) agreed to consult on a 2 year residency restriction.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/024/14-15 Building Services Invest to Save Procurement of Vehicles

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 12.

The report requested approval for an Invest to Save scheme for the procurement of 9 vehicles for Building Services. The proposal had been prepared in accordance with the capital strategy requirements and criteria for Invest to Save schemes. It was a capital proposal which was expected to comfortably produce revenue savings that exceeded the cost of prudential borrowing by at least 10% over the life of the investment.

The proposal supported the increase of work being undertaken by the in-house Building Services team following the award of new contracts, and required the employment of 8 additional staff and the procurement of 8 medium sized vehicle vans and 1 tipper vehicle.

A Member raised concerns regarding staffing levels within Building Services in relation to the significant increase in contracted work during the past 18 months. Officers confirmed that the workforce was sufficient to manage current contracts.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee approved the 'invest to save' proposal to procure 9 vehicles funded by prudential borrowing as detailed in paragraph 3.8 of the report.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/025/14-15 Lower Beach Road Car Park and Ferry Road Enhancement Project

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, 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 13.

The report updated the Committee on progress towards implementing the enhancement schemes for the Lower Beach Road Car Park and Ferry Road projects. The report highlighted the delays to the project caused by the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process and a shortfall in funding that needed addressing. The report recommended that additional funding be made available from the sale of the Surrey Arms Public House to ensure that the enhancement schemes can proceed as planned without compromising the quality of the enhancement projects.

Members welcomed the filling of the financial hole whilst expressing frustration at the delays incurred.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee approved the release of up to £75,000 towards the cost of the enhancement scheme for Lower Beach Road Car Park from the ring-fenced sale of the Surrey Arms Public House.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/026/14-15 Preferred location for the provision of an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) in Adur

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, 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 14.

The report considered the various options available for the provision of a new Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) in Adur utilising the s106 agreement funding provided in connection with Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club's (B&HAFC) new training facility in Lancing.

The possible sites had been considered with regard to the recently completed Playing Pitch Strategy prepared by Consultants KKP. The report recommended the preferred location to be the Sir Robert Woodard Academy, although the report acknowledged that this would be subject to satisfactory negotiations with the Academy and a detailed financial appraisal being undertaken.

Members expressed support for the location of the pitch acknowledging that it would provide a superb facility for the children of Lancing during the day and would be generating income during the evenings.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) agreed in principle to pursue the option of a 3G pitch at Sir Robert Woodard Academy,
- ii) supported the development of a detailed financial appraisal and management agreement in partnership with the Academy setting out future arrangements for maintenance, management and future revenue streams for Adur Council in consultation with the existing Member Working Group;
- iii) noted the Working Groups initial thoughts on the use of the remainder of the Brighton and Hove Albion s106 funding as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/027/14-15 Adur's Pot of Gold 2015

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 15.

Following the success of the Pot of Gold (POG) project over the last five years, the report sought Member's opinions on a further revamp of the process and a release of funds.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) approved that all of the £50,000 be released from Capacity reserve;
- ii) agreed the proposed timetable;
- iii) delegated the approval of the Working Group's report on a revamped 'Pot of Gold' process for 2015/16 to the Leader of Adur District Council.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

**Adur District Councillors Neil Parkin, Angus Dunn and David Simmons left the meeting at 8.32pm.*

JSC/028/14-15 Worthing's The Money Tree 2015

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 16.

After the success of the last two years Money Tree project, the report sought member's opinions on a further revamp of the process and a release of top-up funds.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) approved that all the £16,000 be released from Capacity reserve;
 - £15,000 to top up the grants pot
 - £1,000 to put on the event
- ii) agreed the proposed timetable set out in the report;
- iii) approved that £10,000 be released from the Insurance reserve to be put towards a 'seaside improvement pot'.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/029/14-15 Worthing Borough Council MSCP Off-Street Parking Charges

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, 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 17.

The report updated Members on the financial and occupancy impacts of the reduced tariffs in Worthing Borough Council's three key multi-storey car parks (High Street, Grafton and Buckingham Road) following the 3 month tariff trial from April to June 2014 and proposed extending the trial for a further 3 month period.

The Committee were also informed of the positive response from the business community in response to the trial.

Members welcomed the results of the trial so far and were pleased to see the Councils marketing the car parks through a variety of media channels.

Clarification was sought in regards to the maintenance position for the multi-storey car parks. Officers advised Members that there was nothing to indicate any financial risks in relation to maintenance.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted the decision by the Leader and Cabinet Member for the Environment to continue with the tariff trial for a further 3 months;
- (ii) authorised Officers to report back to the Leader and Cabinet Member for the Environment on the results of the tariff changes on a monthly basis with an additional report going to the Joint Strategic Committee on 2nd September.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/030/14-15 Worthing Planning Policy Review – Housing

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, 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 18.

The Committee were advised that changes to the planning system at the national level have had a significant impact on how local authorities need to plan for housing. The report outlined these changes and the implications for Worthing. It provided a brief summary of the previous system, the requirements of the new system and how this was likely to influence future Plan making in Worthing.

The report set out the next steps proposed and recommended to Members that work commence on a full review of the existing Worthing Core Strategy and the development of a new Local Plan.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted the changes to the planning system and the implications that this has had on the timetable for Plan-making in Worthing;
- (ii) approved that work commence on a full review of the existing Worthing Core Strategy and the development of a new Local Plan for the Borough;
- (iii) noted that the detailed work programme for this review would be established within a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) to be considered by Members in the autumn.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

JSC/031/14-15 Decoy Farm Contaminated Land Survey

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, 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 19.

The report updated Members on a recently completed Contaminated Land Survey undertaken on the Decoy Farm site. The report identified that the extent of contamination was not significant and it was considered that the site had development potential.

As a result of the recent survey, the report requested that further funding be released to undertake additional survey work required to help to bring the site forward for employment use.

The report also updated Members on the recent bid for funding via the Strategic Economic Plan produced by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in partnership with Local Authorities which sought up to £2.3 million to help pay for the remediation work necessary on the Decoy Farm site.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) agreed that bringing forward Decoy Farm as an employment site was a priority project for Worthing Borough Council;
- (ii) recommended that Worthing Borough Council fund survey work costing up to £150,000 from the Capacity Issues Reserves;
- (iii) supported the establishment of a Corporate Project Board and agreed that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration be part of the Board;
- (iv) agreed to the submission of an outline planning application for the Decoy Farm site;
- (v) agreed to the marketing of the site on the basis that planning permission is granted.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 5th August 2014.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.51pm, it having commenced at 6.30pm.

Chairman