

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

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

Tuesday 2 December 2014

Councillor Neil Parkin (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

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

Worthing Borough Council:

Councillor Paul Yallop
Councillor Daniel Humphreys
Councillor Mary Lermite
Councillor Clive Roberts
Councillor Bryan Turner
Councillor Val Turner

*Absent

Other Members Present

WBC – Councillors Charles James, Louise Murphy, Luke Proudfoot, Keith Sunderland & Hazel Thorpe

JSC/068/14-15 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Neil Parkin and Paul Yallop declared pecuniary interests in Item 13 'Proposal for a Shared Legal Service – Proceeding to develop a full business case', as Non-Executive Directors of iESE.

Councillor Bryan Turner declared a personal interest in items 10, 12 & 16 as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

JSC/069/14-15 Minutes

Resolved, that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 4 November 2014 and the Adur Cabinet meeting on the 30th September 2014, be approved and signed by the Chairman.

JSC/070/14-15 Public Question Time

Caroline Perry, of Portsmouth, made the following statement and asked questions 1 and 2 below:-

The Legal Service is keen to see the continued success of the Councils. As your legal advisers and because we have an active interest in continued improvement, we feel obliged to raise relevant questions on the proposals contained in the Legal Services Report. We would like to assure members we are not averse to change, and confirm the

changes arising from the merging of both councils have produced a knowledgeable and professional legal team. These questions are raised for clarification purposes.

1. It would appear from the report that only the preferred option of the Teckal Company, is to be the subject matter of a business case. Can the committee confirm that all the options contained in the report will be considered as part of the business case each option analysed to ensure the most advantageous outcome for the councils is achieved?
2. IESE is the proposed joint owner of the Teckal and has itself prepared the report recommending the formation of the company. Can the committee please confirm that an independent advice will be taken on behalf of the Councils which analyses and considers fully:-
 - a) The business case on each proposed option and
 - b) The formation of a Teckal Company with anon-local authority partner?

Penny Cronin, of Worthing, asked the following question:-

3. An IT system with fast reliable connections is essential for an efficient company, more so when staff rely on remote working to underpin their productivity. As the expected benefits of changes to IT will be levered in over 2-3 years, will the IT systems be good enough in September 2015 for us to set up a new company? Has this been considered?

Michele Wilkinson, of Brighton, asked the following questions:-

4. In a private law firm, a Solicitor's hourly rate will range between £180 and £250 plus VAT although the profit incurred by the firm will be low, free pro-bono work is a rarity and usually only when there is a commercial value in carrying it out. Many law firms continue to go bust, finding they can no longer realistically or commercially jump through the hoops of intense regulatory pressure, the additional costs of compliance and extortionate indemnity insurances, all the things which an in house service is presently protected from. If legal services are outsourced to a company required to be self-sufficient, are Members aware that there will be an impact on the large amount of low cost or no cost legal work currently carried out by legal services which benefit the social sector and many community groups?

How would Members address this issue?

5. There will inevitably be some disconnection arising from the proposed remote working with a lack of the beneficial daily face to face contact with colleagues, Members, and instructing officers. Do the Members consider this may potentially impact on the quality of legal advice given? Legal services shall be more reliant on communicated well drafted instructions, losing the benefit of additional information which arises naturally from daily contact. Will the client departments be consulted on the proposed changes and if yes at what stage will that consultation occur?

Michaela Sauerteig, of Worthing, asked the following question:-

6. Legal services are excited for future changes and streamline services with Aylesbury but wish to highlight the following: By moving from working within the

provisions of the Local Government Act to a Teckal company, this will mean a loss of flexibility to our excellent service already provided.

For example, currently a Legal Assistant can be delegated under the Local Government Act to attend County Court and Magistrates Court. This tool is very useful especially taking into consideration the frequency of incursions of travellers that Adur and Worthing experience and for work such as debt recovery and housing possession work for Adur Homes.

In future, only Solicitors will have rights of audience in Court and therefore be able to carry out this work for the company, thus a loss of flexibility to our excellent service.

How will a company or Teckal company in the future be able to meet our current service and provide the same, if not better service?

Joanne Lee, of Worthing, asked the following question:-

7. A Teckal company is limited to carrying out only 20% of its total work for non-members of that company, whereas under present legislation a local authority can carry out any amount of work for any public body. Given that benefit, and the potential costs of the Teckal company would it not be preferable to make improvements to our existing in house service, become more entrepreneurial, and market ourselves as a centre of excellence?

The Chairman advised that the 7 questions would be addressed during consideration of Item 13 on the agenda.

JSC/071/14-15 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JSC/072/14-15 “Surf’s Up” : a 2-year programme to deliver the Catching the Wave ambition

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 sought the approval of the Joint Strategic Committee to a programme of activities to take forward the Catching the Wave agenda over the next 24 months.

The Committee were informed that “Surf’s Up” sought to identify the key elements and activities needed to progress the three identified “Wave Catchers” namely:-

- Supporting our Wealth Generators
- Cultivating Enterprising Communities
- Becoming Adaptive Councils

A fourth element had been added, "Waxing the Board", which set out a range of organisational must do's in order for the other three Wave Catchers to be successfully advanced.

Members welcomed the report, the schedule of commitments and the ambitious nature of the proposals.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee

- 5.1.1 noted and endorsed "*Surf's Up*" as a prioritised 2 year programme of strategic activity for officers to deliver;
- 5.1.2 requested 6-monthly updates on progress against the commitments (allowing at each 6 month review for the refresh of commitments that have been completed or where circumstances have changed);
- 5.1.3 requested that the Communications Team turn "*Surf's Up*" into a "living document" that is widely and skilfully communicated internally to all staff and Members and to key external stakeholders.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

JSC/073/14-15 Outline 5-Year Forecast and Savings Proposals

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 updated Members on the latest financial forecast for 2015/16 to 2019/20 and proposed options for meeting the projected budget shortfall in 2015/16.

Members were asked to consider the potential efficiency and other savings that had been identified and confirm which savings proposals should be pursued, taking into account the results of the budget consultation and the options for growth.

The Committee were advised that savings attributed to the proposed restructuring of the organisation, outlined elsewhere on the agenda, were not included in the savings proposals.

It was noted that a number of strands of financial work were still to be completed which would influence the final 2015/16 budget, including:-

- the Business Rate Retention Scheme
- a review of rental incomes from commercial properties

A member raised concerns regarding the proposals for the rationalisation of staffing levels in the cleansing residential team. Officers advised Members that the proposal would result in a more reactive service whilst service standards would be protected.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted the current 5 year forecast;
- (ii) approved the proposed savings as set out in appendix 3.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

JSC/074/14-15 Capital Investment Programme 2015/16 – 2017/18 Adur District Council, Worthing Borough Council and Joint Committee

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital and Resources, 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 7.

The report recommended the schemes for inclusion in the overall Capital Investment Programme for the three years 2015/2016 - 2017/2018 for Adur District Council, Worthing Borough Council and the Joint Strategic Committee.

The report informed the Joint Strategic Committee of the resources available for future capital investment, and updated Members about the financing of the proposed three-year programmes.

The Capital Strategy had been amended in 2014 to include resources for the development of a Digital Strategy which was the subject of a report elsewhere on this agenda.

Members had been consulted on the capital bids to be included in the draft programmes and their comments had been included in the report. It was noted that the final recommendations for the capital programmes would be made to Worthing Council on the 16th December, 2014 and Adur Council on the 18th December, 2014.

A Member highlighted the lack of female changing facilities at the Hill Barn Recreation Ground and asked if there were any forthcoming proposals to address this. Officers agreed to undertake a review of the facilities as it was an important site.

The inclusion of the renewal of lifts in the Grafton Multi Storey Car Park in 2016/17 was questioned. Members were informed that the Committee would have the opportunity to consider this scheme again in future years whilst being advised that the condition report stated that the work did need to be done before parts became obsolete.

Clarification was sought regarding the clubhouse at Brooklands and the use of capital receipts from E.ON to finance the proposed works. Officers advised that they would liaise closely with the Executive Member for Environment regarding the proposals.

The replacement of defective boilers at Southwick Leisure Centre was challenged as it had been suggested that the existing boiler had been incorrectly installed by Adur Leisure Trust. Members sought assurance that the matter would be investigated and the item would be brought back to Committee for further consideration. Officers advised that a report would be brought back to Committee in relation to this scheme.

It was noted that the dates in recommendation 11.1 (d) should be amended to read 'the 18th December 2014 and 16th December 2014'.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee

- (a) considered the three General Fund Capital Investment Programmes for the three-year period 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 and confirmed the schemes to be included as detailed in Appendix 2, 3 and 4;
- (b) agreed the Adur Housing Renovation Programme for the three-year period 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 as detailed at Appendix 5;
- (c) agreed the amendments and additions to the reserve lists as detailed in Appendices 6 and 7;
- (d) recommended the 3 Year Programmes for approval by the respective Councils on the 18th December 2014 and 16th December 2014.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/075/14-15 Getting in Shape : Organisational Changes 2015

Before the Committee was a report which was presented 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 8.

The report outlined proposals for the second tranche of organisational change to ensure both Councils had the officer leadership required to meet medium and longer term challenges.

The Committee were updated on the outcome of a review of the "third tier" of managers across the Councils and the proposals of the Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service) to reduce the number of third tier managers and reshape roles by expanding the span of operations for managers at that level. The report identified the steps taken to achieve the structural changes required, the processes followed and provided an update on progress and likely outcomes.

The report sought the Joint Strategic Committee's comments on the implementation of the proposed changes; an agreement to the voluntary redundancies proposed; a

recommendation to both Councils to release up to £370,000 from Capacity Issues Reserves to fund the necessary departure costs and a recommendation to both Councils to note the Chief Executive's proposals in respect of the appointment, management and organisation of the Councils' officers.

It was noted that in order to allow transparency and public debate on the proposals and avoid going into closed session, the report had been written aggregating anticipated costs and potential impact on individual employees, rather than seeking to put substantive amounts of information into a "Part B" agenda.

Members were advised that the proposals sought to replace 24 existing posts at tier three with 12 new posts. The associated financial implications would cost between £420k and £425k which would require just over 4 years payback. The Committee noted that there may be 7 staff falling into this category with a combined public service total of 196 years.

A Member sought clarification in regards to where planning services would sit within the new organisational structure. Officers confirmed that the Head of Growth would oversee both planning policy and development management.

The Chief Executive acknowledged that organisational change created uncertainty and praised the professionalism of those staff involved in the process.

Decision

That the Joint Strategic Committee

- i) noted the proposals outlined in the report;
- ii) recommended to each Council that £370,000 be released from the Capacity Issues Reserves to fund the departure costs associated with the management restructure split as follows:
 - Adur £166,500
 - Worthing £203,500
- iii) recommended to both Councils that they note the Chief Executive's proposals in respect of the appointment, management and organisation of the Council's officers;
- iv) delegated to the Chief Executive approval of any redundancies associated with the restructure in consultation with the Leaders provided that the costs can be contained within the overall budget released.

Call-in:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/076/14-15 Investing in New Technology: The Springboard to Excellent Customer Experience and Business Efficiency

Before the Committee was a report by the Directors for Digital and Resources and 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 9.

The report updated Committee on the work undertaken over the summer with a disaster recovery consultant to develop documentation and procedures relating to IT systems recovery. It was noted that the project was now in a second phase involving the production of detailed technical recovery procedures for key scenarios.

Members were advised that the Director for Digital and Resources had pursued contractual meetings with the Councils telephony provider Unify, which had escalated through two formal warning letters regarding breach of contract, setting a deadline for resolution of the end of December 2014.

It was noted that 'key officers' had been involved in soft-market testing for fixed telephony, contact centre systems and mobile device strategy, strategically linked to the digital strategy work with Methods. Plans were in place to finalise the Councils overall telephony strategy in January 2015 in light of the outcome with the current telephony provider. This would be undertaken through a hands-on exploration of overall system design and fit and looking at the integration of telephony with the new cloud platform(s), if approved.

Officers were looking at the viability of adopting a predominantly mobile model (more staff with mobiles), with a significantly reduced number of fixed VoIP lines and a highly effective contact centre solution. It was anticipated that proposals would be brought forward to the Joint Strategic Committee in February 2015. Officers would also develop proposals for much improved wi-fi coverage across Council buildings for February 2015 as the service was currently poor.

The Joint Strategic Committee had previously received a report on the findings of the Discovery work which had identified three strategic areas of focus for further investigation during the blueprint phase. These were:

- i) productivity (email/documents);
- ii) platform (customer service and business process functions); and
- iii) infrastructure (how we host our applications).

The Blueprint phase work was undertaken in October / November and involved a more detailed investigation into the Councils infrastructure service, examination and recommendations around overall digital governance, soft-market testing across productivity, platform and infrastructure, and the development of principles, practices, resources and the investment profile needed to achieve the vision of a new enterprise architecture to help enable rapid business transformation.

This work had now been completed and the findings were outlined in the report.

Members welcomed the report and the direction of travel.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) approved the proposed investment in new technology;
- (ii) approved the governance arrangements as set out in paragraph 2.12 and 3.8 and in more detail in the appendix;
- (iii) recommended that both Councils approve the release of funding from the Capacity Issues Reserves as follows:
 - Adur District Council £249,560
 - Worthing Borough Council £374,340

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/077/14-15 2015/16 Council Tax Support Scheme

Before the Committee was a report by the Directors for Digital and Resources and 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 10.

Adur and Worthing Councils now have the freedom to set a local Council Tax Support Scheme which would apply to 'working age' customers. Both Councils opted to retain the national scheme for the past two years and Members were asked to consider what they would like to do for 2015/16.

Members were asked to approve one of two Council Tax Support Schemes. The first option was similar to that approved in the past and mirrored the national 'default' scheme. The second option sought to ensure that every resident would pay an element of Council Tax. This would be achieved by ensuring that every resident pays at least £5.00 per week.

To help inform the decision, a public consultation exercise had been undertaken with the final results being tabled at the meeting (a copy of which is attached to these minutes).

The Committee discussed and evaluated the options outlined in the report giving consideration to a number of points, including:-

- the ability of households to pay;
- fairness of the schemes;
- concerns for residents who were unable to prioritise outgoings and the risk of them accumulating large debts;
- room for discretion in the options proposed;
- a public consultation which suggested that a majority of residents supported a reduction in the amount of financial support given to residents by the Councils.

Officers advised that it was difficult to identify specific hardships, so, these would be evaluated on a case by case basis. However, it was feasible for the Councils to set aside a limited fund to assist those in most need of support.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) recommended that Adur District Council approve Option 1 for the Council Tax Support scheme for 2015/16;
- (ii) recommended that Worthing Borough Council approve Option 2 for the Council Tax Support scheme for 2015/16;
- (iii) recommended that both Councils consider whether the preferred option should form the basis of the scheme for 2016/17 and 2017/18 subject to consultation and formal approval in each year;
- (iv) requested that a report be brought to the Joint Strategic Committee considering Discretionary Council Tax Support Payments.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/078/14-15 Rethinking Parks: A Framework for the Future Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities in Adur and Worthing

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 11.

The report provided a summary of the “Review of Open Space, Sport and Indoor Sport Facilities Study” which had been prepared by external consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Pace (KKP) on behalf of both Councils.

The study covered three areas:-

- Open Spaces
- Playing Pitches
- Indoor Built Facilities

The review updated the original Open Space, Sport and Recreation Studies, which included Playing Pitch strategies, had been produced in Adur in 2005 and Worthing in 2006 and had been partially reviewed in 2009.

If approved, the review would be adopted to form the direction and guidance for the future provision of accessible, high quality, sustainable open spaces, playing pitches and indoor built facilities in both Adur & Worthing.

The Committee noted that one of the recommendations from the Playing Pitch Strategy was to improve existing changing rooms across Adur and Worthing, with Buckingham Park being a key site in terms of meeting a range of sports provision in Adur District.

Shoreham Rugby Club had sought £350k of funding from the Rugby Football Union (RFU). A match funding contribution of £150k from the remaining s106 contribution would help to secure the RFU funding to provide a clubhouse, changing rooms and a new Café to serve the Rugby Club and users of the Park.

Officers proposed that no change be made to the Bowls facilities at Field Place for the 2015 season and further consideration be given to the proposals put forward by the Chairman of West Tarring Bowls Club.

It was proposed and seconded by Members that recommendation 24.5 be amended to include the following additional wording 'but the future provision of Bowls at Field Place will include the provision of 1 Club Room and 1 Green'.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) noted the Open Places, Sport and Recreational Strategy for Adur and Worthing Councils;
- ii) agreed that the Strategy be adopted as background evidence for the emerging Adur Local Plan and the Worthing Local Plan and the recommendations used to prioritise future provision and improvements to existing provision;
- iii) agreed in principle, £150,000 of Adur District Council s106 funding to be used as match funding to help secure RFU funding towards a replacement of the Pavilion building at Buckingham Park and to recommend that Adur District Council approve its inclusion in the Capital Investment Programme;
- iv) noted the consultation that had taken place with the Bowling Clubs based at Field Place;
- v) delegated to the Director for Communities, in consultation with the Worthing Executive Member for Environment, authority to agree the arrangements for the future provision of Bowls at Field Place, which will include the provision of 1 Club Room and 1 Green.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

JSC/079/14-15 Tackling the Community Impact of Gypsy and Traveller Unauthorised Encampments in Adur and Worthing

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 provided a review of Gypsy and Traveller Unauthorised Encampment activity in Adur and Worthing in 2014 including changes to Council practices and updated Committee on the introduction of a West Sussex Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site in Chichester.

The Committee noted the progress report on the production of a Management Agreement for the Transit Site, enforcement procedures and legal work and a revised West Sussex Multi-Agency Enforcement Protocol.

Officers outlined the financial impact of Gypsy and Traveller Unauthorised Encampments including Capital works expenditure in 2014/15 and additional works that were proposed to take place in Adur.

It was noted that West Sussex County Council sought to learn from the approach adopted by East Sussex and benefit from a reduction in incursions as a result.

The Committee was advised that this was not a 'no change' option and that the Councils partners would be entering into the agreement. Officers opined that Adur and Worthing Councils would not want to alienate themselves by not entering into the agreement.

A Member raised concerns with the proposals in relation to the outsourcing of legal services and enforcement work on Unauthorised Encampments, in particular, the political accountability of legal services staff in West Sussex County Council and how the Councils could terminate the contract if it did not meet their needs.

Officers advised that the Councils would enter into the agreement looking to succeed rather than fail, that there would be bi-annual meetings to review performance of the service and that it was in all of the partner's interest for the proposals to work. It was also noted that no concerns had been raised by the Councils partners in regards to the legal service provided by West Sussex County Council. It was anticipated that enforcement action would reduce if section 62A was being used more effectively and that directions to transit sites would not be regularly taken up.

Members were pleased to note that a £630k grant had been awarded by the Home and Communities Agency which would reduce the contribution required by each partner to £46,250.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted the actions being taken to tackle the community impact of Gypsy and Traveller Unauthorised Encampments in Adur and Worthing;
- (ii) delegated authority to the Director for Communities, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council and the Chief Finance Officer, to approve, and enter into, the agreement relating to the management of a Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site at Westhampnett, and the Enforcement and Legal proceedings relating to unauthorised encampments, on behalf of Adur and Worthing Councils;
- (iii) delegated authority to the Director for Communities, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council and the Chief Finance Officer, to approve the West Sussex Multi-Agency Enforcement Protocol on behalf of Adur and Worthing Councils;

- (iv) approved a virement of £37,500 from the West Sussex Local Authority Transit Site scheme in the Adur Capital Investment Programme to the Traveller Exclusion Measures scheme;
- (v) delegated Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council's legal services function, in so far as they relate to the enforcement of unlawful encampments, to West Sussex County Council.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

** The meeting was adjourned at 8.36pm and was reconvened at 8.41pm.*

JSC/080/14-15 Change of Order to Agenda Items

The Chairman announced that agenda item 16 would be taken as the next item of business.

JSC/081/14-15 WSCC Tender for the Provision of Telecare Services across West Sussex: A Service and Business Development Opportunity

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.

The report set out details of a Tender exercise undertaken by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) for the provision of Telecare Services within West Sussex. Adur District Council (ADC) was part of a group called Telecare West Sussex (TWS) which included Worthing Borough Council, Worthing Homes, Horsham District Council, Chichester District Council (CDC), Arun District Council and Crawley Borough Council. On behalf of this group, CDC submitted a bid for the provision of the services to WSCC.

If CDC was the successful bidder, it would be awarded the contract by WSCC. It was then proposed that CDC would grant sub-contracts to members of the TWS, which would include ADC and would enable ADC to provide the Telecare services in its area. It was unlikely at the time of the report, that Worthing Borough Council would be required to enter into a sub-contract as it was envisaged that Worthing Homes would cover the local area not covered by ADC.

The purpose of the report was to explain to the Committee how the scheme would work and to ask for approval to enter into a sub-contract with CDC, should CDC be the successful bidder. All other authorities within the TWS had confirmed their commitment to the scheme.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted the contents and proposals contained within the report and approved Adur District Council entering into a sub-contract with Chichester District Council for the provision of Telecare Services with the terms set out in the report, in the event that the CDC bid submitted to WSCC is successful;
- (ii) acknowledged and approved Adur District Council taking part in the cross-boundary Telecare West Sussex Group work that was being undertaken to deliver the Telecare Services contract within West Sussex;
- (iii) agreed that in the event that it was desirable for Worthing Borough Council to enter into a form of sub-contract with CDC for the provision of the Telecare Services on the same terms and for the same purpose, such a sub-contract be approved;
- (iv) approved the creation of a budget to hold the costs and income associated with the Telecare subcontract.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

JSC/082/14-15 Proposal for a Shared Legal Service – Proceeding to develop a full business case

[Councillors Neil Parkin and Paul Yallop had declared pecuniary interests in this item of business and left the room during its consideration. Therefore, the Deputy Leader of Adur District Council chaired the meeting for this item.]

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 13.

The Committee were informed that as part of the response to current and future changes and challenges faced by Local Government, Adur and Worthing Councils (A&W) and Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) shared an ambition to take new and transformational approaches to service provision in order to manage costs while increasing resilience and service quality. With this in mind, the Councils wished to explore with iESE the options and viability of creating a new Shared Legal Service (SLS).

A review which sought to examine the possible options, assess and evaluate the economic business case, provide recommendations and produce a route map for implementation had commenced and was ongoing.

The report provided Members with an options appraisal, recommended a preferred option, and sought a decision in principle. If Members were agreeable, the project work would continue with a full business case being brought to the Joint Strategic Committee meeting in February 2015.

The Committee raised concerns that a Teckal company would be limited to carrying out only 20% of its total work for non-members of that company, which could place a

restriction on income. Officers advised that this issue would be considered and appraised, along with alternative business models, in the business case.

A Member requested that written answers to the questions raised during public question time be published and made available to Members. The Solicitor to the Council advised the Chairman that Council Procedure Rule 11 stated that a question, if not answered at the meeting, required a written response. The Director for Digital and Resources advised that he would seek to answer the questions raised as promptly as possible.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted the contents of the report and its appendix;
- (ii) agreed to receive a further report and detailed business case in February 2015;
- (iii) agreed in principle to change the way in which the Councils' legal service was provided, subject to Joint Strategic Committee approving the business case;
- (iv) agreed to the implementation of the transitional arrangements of the Councils working together with iESE and Aylesbury Vale District Council, including the secondment of staff, as identified in appendix 1 of the report.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

JSC/083/14-15 *Building Engagement through vibrant communications* : A Communications Strategy for Adur & Worthing Councils

Before the Committee was a report presented by the Head of Communications, 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 sought the approval of the Joint Strategic Committee of three key papers, developing the future of the Communications function across Adur and Worthing Councils:

- The Communications Strategy 2015-2018
- Visual Identity Guidelines
- Social Media Policy

The Committee were advised that the Communications Strategy set out the 'broad brush' strokes of the direction and approach which would be taken to create a modern, vibrant communications function, supporting the Councils' ambitions as set out in both 'Catching The Wave' and 'Surf's Up'. The Strategy provided a framework for bringing Directorates, initiatives and activities together to create cross-organisation stories, showing the Councils and the local communities at their best.

The strategy would be supported by the new Visual Identity Guidelines to help the Councils' Officers ensure that customers and audiences could more easily identify those

activities or initiatives run or supported by the Councils, and to provide an easily understood 'minimum standard' for printed communications.

The Social Media Policy had been revisited to simultaneously promote and protect the Councils' reputation online, as well as safely helping Officers become more directly involved with customer facing communications. The Policy set out both the expectations the Councils have of Officers, and what help, advice, support and guidance those Officers can expect in return.

A request for further training on Social Media for Members was acknowledged by Officers who confirmed that training would be provided.

A Member asked whether the Social Media Policy needed to be revised to cover the Conduct of Members. Officers agreed to give this further consideration.

It was suggested by a Member that a precis of the reports coming before the Joint Strategic Committee would be useful for the public, enabling greater public engagement. Officers confirmed that this was a critically important area of work, alongside social media interventions and was currently being developed by communications staff.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) noted and endorsed the Communications Strategy 2015 – 2018 as the framework for the development of the Councils' communications function;
- (ii) approved and adopted the revised Social Media Policy, allowing Officers to effectively expand the use of social media in a structured, managed way for the benefit of the Councils, and the Councils' customers;
- (iii) approved the Visual Identity Guidelines to guide the Councils' improvement of the way that customers relate visually to the work of the organisations, officers and partners.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

JSC/084/14-15 National Network of Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (2017 to 2022)

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 15.

The report brought Members up to date with the actions of Officers to secure continuance of the Southeast Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (SSCRMP) through the National Network of Regional Monitoring Programmes (National Programme).

This was a high profile National initiative promoted by the Officers of Adur and Worthing Councils, Coastal Groups, Environment agency (EA) and led by New Forest District Council (NFDC). The programme had been successfully executed by the Coastal Monitoring Survey Team within the former Technical Services Team of Adur and Worthing Councils since 2002 and full costs would continue to be met via a Service Level Agreement with NFDC.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) confirmed and continued its support for the National Programme;
- (ii) delegated authority to the Acting Head of Technical Services or his successor in consultation with the most appropriate Executive Members to deliver the programme in the most advantageous manner within the limits of the SLA and funding stream; and
- (iii) recommended that Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council amend their Revenue Budget accordingly, to include the expenditure and funding as detailed in paragraph 7.3.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 12th December 2014.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9.18pm, it having commenced at 6.30pm.

Chairman