

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

Gordon Room, Town Hall, Worthing

Tuesday 12 September 2017

Councillor Daniel Humphreys (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

Councillor Neil Parkin
Councillor Angus Dunn
Councillor Brian Boggis
*Councillor Emma Evans
Councillor Carson Albury
Councillor David Simmons

Worthing Borough Council:

Councillor Kevin Jenkins
Councillor Diane Guest
Councillor Heather Mercer
Councillor Mark Nolan
Councillor Val Turner

*Absent

Councillor Simmons arrived at 7pm just prior to item 7 'Council Tax Support'.

The Chairman advised the usual clerk of the meeting, Neil Terry, was absent on paternity leave as his wife had given birth to a baby boy. The Committee joined the Chairman and congratulated them both on their new addition to the family.

Members were also advised that it would be Cllr Mark Nolan's last Joint Strategic Committee meeting as he was due to begin a new job in London and would be stepping down as Worthing Executive Member for Resources. On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the Councillor for his contributions to the Committee.

Other Members Present

Adur District Council:
Councillor Kevin Boram

Worthing Borough Council:
Councillors Beccy Cooper, Hazel Thorpe, Louise Murphy, Paul Westover and Paul Yallop.

JSC/027/17-18 Declarations of Interest

None were made.

JSC/028/17-18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 11 July, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

JSC/029/17-18 Public Question Time

There were no questions from members of the public present at the meeting.

JSC/030/17-18 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were two urgent exempt matters that needed to be considered at the meeting. A copy of the first report, written by the Director of Communities, had previously been circulated to Members of the Committee. A copy of the second report, written by the Director for the Economy, had been circulated shortly before the meeting.

The Chairman agreed to take both items in accordance with the urgency provisions, and advised Members they would be numbered 14 and 15.

The Chairman advised the meeting would need to go into closed session to consider both items and would take a vote at the appropriate part of the meeting.

JSC/031/17-18 1st Quarter Revenue Monitoring

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 provided the Committee with an update on the latest expenditure and income projections for each Council in the current financial year 2017/18, compared to the Revenue Budget approved by both Councils on 23 February 2017 (Adur District Council) and 21 February 2017 (Worthing Borough Council).

Members were referred to the summary of the 1st Quarter Budget Monitoring report which showed the projection currently was Adur having a £55,000 overspend and Worthing an underspend of £58,000 against budget. The Officer explained this was after transferring costs from the Joint Services.

The Officer highlighted areas with potential risks which included homelessness, due to increasing demand and changes in funding, and the crematorium, due to a rebate paid earlier in the year and an increase in demand for delivery only cremations which reduced the number of full cremations being taken.

Members from the Committee and public gallery raised a number of queries and concerns, which were clarified by Officers, these included:-

- the overpayment of subsidy - Adur Housing;
- closure of The Par 3 Golf Course since works started on Rampion wind farm;
- the fixed flexible Homeless Support grant; and
- Revenues & Benefits - a shortfall in court cost income.

Resolved,

The Joint Strategic Committee noted the report and projected outturn position for the Joint, Adur & Worthing Revenue Budgets and proposed use of reserves.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

JSC/032/17-18 1st Capital Investment Programme & Projects Monitoring 2017/18

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 the Committee on the progress and expenditure position for the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programmes for both Adur District Council, Worthing Borough Council and the Joint Services capital schemes included within these programmes.

The Officer updated Members on the improvement work that was being undertaken to ensure that the Councils' delivery capacity was increased to meet high demand within the Capital Programme, both in Adur Homes and corporately.

An Executive Member questioned why within the Worthing Customer Services portfolio on the Capital Monitoring Summary 2017/18, the budget reprofiled to and from 2018/19, had decreased to £1,826,500. The Officer responded to the Executive Member's satisfaction.

Following a question from a Member in the public gallery regarding the section 'Issues for Consideration' (Brighton and Hove Football Club 3G Pitch), within the report, an Officer assured the Member the decision to release the £630,000 contribution to the Sir Robert Woodard Academy, funded from S106 receipts, would be controlled and openly reported as part of the democratic process.

Decision,

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (a) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme of **Adur District Council** -
- (1) noted the reprofiling and likely reprofiling of the Adur District Council capital schemes as advised in paragraphs 2.1.1 and 2.2.2 and Appendix 3;
 - (2) approved the amendment to the 2017/18 Street Scene Budget to include the grant of £2,000 received from West Sussex County Council for the purchase of benches within the District as detailed in paragraph 2.1.3 i);
 - (3) approved the Ferry Road Footpath Access to Shoreham Beach Landscaping Scheme, funded £20,500 from Rampion Offshore Wind Ltd and the balance from the underspend on the Ferry Road Improvements Scheme as advised in paragraphs 2.1.3 ii);
 - (4) **recommended** to Council the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include the contribution of £630,000 to the Sir Robert Woodard Academy for the construction of a 3G pitch, funded from S106 receipts, as detailed in paragraphs 2.1.3 iii) of the report; and
 - (5) **recommended** to Council an increase of £190,000 in the 2017/18 General Fund Budget for Affordable Housing Grants to Registered Social Housing Providers, funded by Right to Buy receipts and S106 Affordable Housing Receipts received by the Council, and to delegate approval to allocate this funding as schemes are

identified to the Head of Housing, Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Member for Housing, as detailed in paragraphs 2.1.3 iv) of the report.

- (b) With respect to the Capital Investment of **Worthing Borough Council** -
- (1) noted the reprofiling and likely reprofiling of the Worthing Borough Council capital schemes as advised in paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, and Appendix 4;
 - (2) approved the use of £50,000 of the estimated underspend on the Brooklands Park Environmental Improvements to provide further enhancements and infrastructure improvements to the park as detailed in paragraph 2.2.3. i);
 - (3) approved the use of £70,000 of the contingency budget carried forward from 2016/17 to fund the anticipated overspend on the replacement of the service pipe work and ancillary works as detailed in paragraph 2.2.3.ii); and
 - (4) **recommended** to Council an increase of £590,000 in the 2017/18 General Fund Budget for Affordable Housing Grants to Registered Social Housing Providers, funded by set aside Right to Buy Receipts or S106 Receipts received by the Council, and to delegate approval to allocate this funding, as schemes are identified, to the Head of Housing in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Member for Housing, as detailed in paragraphs 2.2.3 iii) of the report .

Call In:

The call-in deadline for decisions will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/033/17-18 Council Tax Support - the impact of the 2017/18 schemes plus public consultation questions to be used in respect of the 2018/19 schemes

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Customer Service, 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 contained an analysis of the cost of the 2017/18 Council Tax Support schemes and provided details about the proposed questions to be included in the public consultation in respect of the 2018/19 schemes, specifically that

- a) Adur may introduce and Worthing may retain the £5.00 weekly restriction; and
- b) for both Councils the rules for Council Tax Support should remain the same as the rules for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.

The Officer also requested Members confirm the period they would like the consultation to run for, and suggested a two to three week period.

A Member in the public gallery requested clarification as to the methods of engaging with the public and was assured by the Officer that contact included working closely with Adur Homes colleagues, the Communications team, and the Customer Services team, as well as social media.

Compared to other local authorities, the Officer advised it was a relatively straightforward consultation, and explained it was a requirement to consult annually with residents. It was necessary to explain to the public what was required and what potential options were, without making the consultation questions too complex. The same questions were used in Worthing last year and the Officer believed in Adur the questions were similar, but welcomed any comments or suggested amendments from the Members.

The Worthing Executive Member for Customer Services advised she had worked closely with the Officer on the consultation and had received no comments or complaints last year.

There was a general discussion around suggested amendments to the consultation questionnaires which included, levels of income; a 7 day period advertising the questionnaires before the consultation commenced; better definition as to whether addressed to Adur or Worthing; replacing question 2 - 'How old are you?' with boxes giving age ranges and under 'Next Year's Scheme' swapping the yes and no tick boxes.

The Adur Members agreed to delegate all accepted amendments to the consultation questionnaires in consultation with the Leader and the Officer.

For Worthing, it was agreed to delegate all accepted amendments to the consultation questionnaires in consultation with the Executive Member for Customer Services and the Officer.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (1) noted the content of the report;
- (2) agreed the proposed questions shown in appendices one and two should form the basis of the public consultation to be conducted in respect of the schemes for 2018/19 for:
 - (a) Adur District Council
 - (b) Worthing Borough Council.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

JSC/034/17-18 Business Rates Discretionary Relief

Before the Committee was a report from the Director for Customer Service, 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 the Committee with details about additional financial support that was being provided to Business Rates payers and sought approval for the wording of a public consultation in respect of the criteria to be applied for the local discretionary schemes to be implemented in Adur and Worthing.

A Member from the public gallery raised the issue of discretionary rate relief for Charities and requested Officers investigate further those charities formed, he believed, to avoid business rates. The Officer informed the Member a review had not taken place for some time but would be carried out however, this issue was not part of this consultation.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- 1) Noted the contents of the report;
- 2) noted that a further report would be provided to the Joint Strategic Committee (to include the responses to the public consultation) in order that the final criteria for the 2017/18 local schemes can be determined;
- 3) agreed that the public consultation be undertaken for a period of three weeks;
- 4) agreed agree that the text and questions contained in appendix five should form the basis of the consultations.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

JSC/035/17-18 Adur and Worthing Response to the A27 Worthing and Lancing Improvement Scheme

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 9.

The report set out details of the current consultation on the proposed improvements to the A27 from Worthing to Lancing. The report recommended that both Councils should object to the proposals on the basis that the consultation does not provide any options for the public to consider and in view of the lack of available budget would not deliver any material benefits to users of the A27 or the local economy.

The Committee discussed the current consultation at length and unanimously agreed the report's conclusions and recommendations. Members also agreed to lobby Central Government for further funding and highlight issues regarding air pollution.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee objected to the current consultation on the grounds that:

- i) the proposed A27 improvements does not provide any significant improvement to the current congestion problems, secure any significant reduction in journey times or improvement in air quality;

- ii) the lack of funding allocated to the project means that the consultation failed to meet the original scope of the Road Investment Strategy which was to test the scope for 'full dualling' of the A27 through Worthing; and
- iii) the consultation failed to provide any alternative options for the local community to consider;
- iv) the limited improvement in capacity in the short term will not meet the Government's future objectives for meeting housing demand in the area or support economic growth of the sub-region; and
- v) the piecemeal approach to consulting on the A27 improvements failed to take a holistic view of the problems along the length of the A27 corridor nor assess in sufficient detail the cumulative impact of improvements (or decisions not to proceed with certain improvements).

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

JSC/036/17-18 HRA Capital Programme 2017-2019

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 10.

The report informed Members of the HRA Capital Investment Programme for two years combined - 2017/18 and 2018/19. It contained information about the planned investment in the housing stock owned by Adur District Council and managed under the name of Adur Homes. Approval was sought for the release of the budget in compliance with Financial Regulations.

The investment allocated in the Housing Revenue Account for 2017/18 was £4,700,000 and 2018/19 was £5,200,000.

Officers were commended for the excellent work carried out, detailed within the report.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee approved the revised HRA Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2017/18 and 2018/19 and to release the budgets.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

*** At 8pm Councillors Neil Parkin, Angus Dunn, Brian Boggis and David Simmonds left the meeting prior to consideration of Items 11, 12, 14 & 15.*

JSC/037/17-18 Match funding request for Museum Redevelopment

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 11.

The report advised Members that Worthing Museum were completing an application to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for £1.2 million to redevelop the museum to create a high quality visitor destination that celebrated both the collections and the architecture of the building. The bid required match funding of £77,000 by the Council. Authorising the match funding would enable Worthing Museum to start the application process with an expression of interest by the end of September in line with the Platforms for Places timetable. Without match funding from the Council they could not apply for the external funding. The Officer advised Members there would be further updates on the situation to follow.

Members welcomed the report and gave their full support.

Decision,

That the Joint Strategic Committee authorised the release of £77,000 match funding from the Museum Reserve to enable the Heritage Lottery Fund bid for £1.2 million.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

JSC/038/17-18 The future for Teville Gate Car Park

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 12.

The report recommended Members approve the demolition of Teville Gate multi-storey car park site to save the ongoing expense of repairing and maintaining the car park for a further period of 77 years under the existing lease, whilst retaining the area of land demised by the lease to create a surface car park to meet current demand for spaces. The cost of the demolition and associated works was to be funded by the Local Growth Fund (LGF).

A Member extended thanks to all Officers who had contributed to the detailed and delicate negotiations carried out over a number of months.

A Member in the public gallery wished clarification on the cost of the Tenancy at Will with regard to National Car Parks (NCP) and questioned whether professional fees or a separate item. The Officer clarified there were no costs as this was a separate arrangement between the company and the freeholder.

In conclusion, the Members unanimously agreed the Officer's recommendation.

Decision,

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) approved the closure and demolition of the existing multi storey car park (MSCP) at Teville Gate, subject to obtaining consent from the freeholder;
- ii) approved the commissioning of groundworks on completion of the demolition in order to provide a temporary, surface car park for use by members of the public;
- iii) approved the addition of £60,000 to forward fund the initial consultancy fees, relocation of a store under the car park, and erection of hoardings to be eventually funded by Local Growth Fund grant;
- iv) approved a direct award to consultants to enable the project to proceed at pace as outlined in paragraph 6.5; and,
- v) **recommended** to Worthing Borough Council that the demolition and resurfacing element of the scheme be added to the Capital Programme subject to funding from the Local Growth Fund being formally confirmed.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 September 2017.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/041/17-18 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee was advised that in the opinion of the Proper Officer the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the remaining items of business.

Resolved,

‘that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act indicated against the item’.

JSC/040/17-18 Potential purchase of a block of flats for the provision of temporary accommodation

Before the Committee was an urgent exempt report by the Director for the Economy, copies of which had been circulated to all Joint Strategic Committee Members prior to the meeting. A copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 14.

The report provided the Joint Strategic Committee with a business case to bid for the purchase of a 24 bed property, in the centre of Worthing, which was shortly to be sold at auction, and requested they agree to release funds.

The potential purchase would ease the pressure on the Councils' housing teams, in particular, pressure to place individuals and families in emergency and temporary accommodation.

Members agreed that the provision of local, cost effective temporary accommodation would have a significant positive benefit on those who would otherwise have to be placed out of the area.

The Joint Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been contacted and agreed that due to the urgency and the other circumstances explained in the report; call in should be waived for this item.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- 1) agreed to release the Temporary Accommodation budget to fund the acquisition and refurbishment of the property detailed in the report;
- 2) noted that given the timescales involved, the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Chairmen had agreed that the call in be waived for this decision;
- 3) **recommended to Worthing Borough Council** that the overall budget for temporary accommodation be increased by up to £446,140 to fund the refurbishment in the event that additional funds were needed.

There is no call-in for recommendation No 3 to Council.

JSC/041/17-18 Strategic Property Acquisition

Before the Committee was an urgent exempt report by the Director for the Economy, copies of which had been circulated to all Joint Strategic Committee members prior to the meeting.

The Joint Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been contacted and agreed that due to the urgency and the other circumstances explained in the report, call in should be waived for this item.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- 1) Agreed that the property acquisition should be progressed using local growth funding as outlined in the report; at the same time property and legal matters outlined in the report would be progressed; and
- 2) **recommended** that Council release the funding for the purchase from the Local Growth Fund.

There is no call-in for recommendation to Council.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9.00pm, having commenced at 6.30pm.

Chairman