

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

**QEII Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea**

**Tuesday 7 November 2017**

Councillor Neil Parkin (Chairman)

**Adur District Council:**

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

**Worthing Borough Council:**

Councillor Daniel Humphreys  
Councillor Kevin Jenkins  
Councillor Edward Crouch  
Councillor Diane Guest  
Councillor Heather Mercer  
Councillor Val Turner

\*Absent

**Other Members Present**

Adur District Council:- Councillor Lee Cowen

Worthing Borough Council:- Councillors Rebecca Cooper & Bryan Turner

**JSC/055/17-18      Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Edward Crouch declared a personal interest in matters relating to Adur Homes as a 'critical friend' to the Adur Homes Management Board.

**JSC/056/17-18      Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 10 October, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**JSC/057/17-18      Public Question Time**

The following question was received from Margaret Harris, a Worthing resident:-

*A recent 'Child Poverty Action Group' review found that the Council Tax Support Scheme had forced many of the lowest income families into debt.*

*In fact, over the last 4 years, in London alone, since the abolition of council tax benefit:*

- *317 052 of the lowest income working-age families have been charged £34.7 million in court costs and,*
- *67 712 have had their debts referred to bailiffs for enforcement\* from the Child Poverty Action Group 2016 "Too Poor to Pay"*

*You will agree that these are shocking headlines.*

*So before Adur Councillors decide to implement this scheme, will the Executive share with them (and me) a detailed evaluation of the impact of the policy for the lowest income, working-age families in the Worthing District?*

The Chairman replied:-

*That a report was being prepared for the Joint Strategic Committee meeting on 5 December 2017 that would include details of the current household compositions for residents in receipt of Council Tax Support.*

*He advised that when a £5 weekly restriction was introduced in Worthing, a discretionary budget had been introduced to provide support to residents in severe financial need and officers proactively ensured that use of the budget was maximised.*

*The Revenues & Benefits Service, in conjunction with the Customer Service Team, adopted a flexible and empathetic approach to Council Tax collection particularly in respect of residents in receipt of Council Tax Support. The use of Court Summonses and referrals to Enforcement Agents (bailiffs) was only utilised where absolutely necessary.*

A supplementary question was asked which sought assurance that Adur Councillors would examine the evidence regarding the impact of such schemes, including their cost effectiveness, as identified in several national reports.

The Chairman advised that a report would be coming to the Joint Strategic Committee on the 5 December and that Adur Councillors would consider this carefully as they had done in previous years.

The following question was received from Jillian Guest, a Worthing resident:-

*My question is about the Public Consultation for the changes to Council Tax Benefit in Worthing & Adur.*

*The Consultation started on the 1st October 2017 and ended on the 18th October 2017 ( 18 days )*

*Can you tell me the outcomes of the Public Consultations and how many residents responded and how many of those were currently receiving Council Tax Support?*

The Chairman replied:-

*The Councils Officers were currently reviewing and analysing comments received during the consultation and a report would be presented to the Joint Strategic Committee in December.*

*The report would include details about the responses that were received and the number of residents who currently received Council Tax Support.*

A supplementary question was asked regarding the continuation of council tax exemptions for residents receiving benefits.

The Chairman invited the questioner to attend the Joint Strategic Committee meeting in December to which a report would be brought.

The following question was received from Pauline Fraser, a Worthing resident:-

*I note from Agenda Item 4.7.3 Housing Management (page 9 in your documents) that demand for emergency and temporary accommodation has significantly increased in Worthing during the past year, from 47 cases in September 2016 to 76 cases currently.*

*In addition a further budget pressure has resulted from a Tory government change in housing benefit subsidy. This has resulted in an anticipated shortfall of £125,000.*

*Will the Executive make representation to the appropriate national Government Department, alerting it to this detrimental effect and insist that it is rectified?*

The Chairman replied:-

*Senior officers and senior politicians from both councils met with both the local MPs last month to go through in some detail the impact of various aspects of Government policy and new legislation to ensure that the local MPs were fully aware of some of the unintended consequences of national changes on local circumstances in Adur and Worthing.*

*This included discussions on welfare benefit reform and the Homelessness Reduction Act.*

*The Councils had identified capital funding for both areas to support the acquisition of temporary accommodation (emergency provision and private sector leased properties) to address the shortfall in provision for homeless households. Additional properties had been leased using this funding and these were now being occupied by families, single people and couples who would otherwise be in bed and breakfast accommodation. This was already assisting the Councils' budgets.*

A supplementary question was asked in relation to the supply of emergency accommodation and whether the government should take action to prioritise the need for emergency accommodation before the profit of developers in the private sector.

The Chairman replied that it was unlikely.

## **JSC/058/17-18      Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions**

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

## **JSC/059/17-18      2nd Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/18 (Q2)**

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 updated the Joint Strategic Committee with 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 the 23 February 2017 (Adur District Council) and 21 February 2017 (Worthing Borough Council). The projected outturn positions as at quarter 2 were underspends of £176,000 in Adur District Council and £117,000 in Worthing Borough Council.

The Committee noted the improvements on the quarter 1 positions when an overspend of £55,000 was forecast in Adur and an underspend of £58,000 was forecast in Worthing. The areas that had contributed to the net movement were highlighted in the report and appendix 4(b) and included; External borrowing costs, investment income, Minimum Revenue Provision, Waste and Recycling and income from Environmental Services, Development Management, Building Control and property investments.

Whilst the 'spend to date' was the position as at the 30 September 2017, the forecast position reflected the latest information available to ensure an up-to-date forecast was presented.

A Member questioned the shortfall in Building Control and Land Charges predicted income budget and sought assurance that the changes proposed in paragraph 4.7.8 of the report would address the shortfall by the end of the financial year. Officers advised that they were looking very closely at the budget and the introduction of new revenue streams to correct the position. Members noted that it may also be necessary to introduce some efficiencies into the service to ensure that it remained within budget.

A Member raised the issue of competing demand amongst local authorities for emergency accommodation, of which there was limited availability, and suggested that there was an opportunity to work with other local authorities to try and resolve this issue. Officers advised that there was an ongoing active discussion, with colleagues from other local authorities, to see how we can work more collectively on the procurement and management of temporary accommodation.

### **Decision,**

That the Joint Strategic Committee noted the report and projected outturn position for the Joint, Adur and Worthing Revenue Budgets and proposed use of reserves (Appendix 1b and 2b).

## **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decisions will be 5.00pm on 17 November 2017.

## **JSC/060/17-18      2nd Capital Investment Programme and 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 Joint Strategic Committee on the progress made on the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programmes for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council. The programmes included schemes which supported the delivery of services by the Joint Strategic Committee.

## **Decision:**

The Joint Strategic Committee

(a) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme of Adur District Council

- 2.1 noted the reprofiling and likely phasing of the Adur District Council capital schemes as advised in paragraphs 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3, and Appendix 3.
- 2.2 approved the refurbishment of the Mill Lane Cemetery public convenience funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme as detailed in paragraph 2.1.4 i).
- 2.3 approved the procurement of a cricket roller for the Parks Joint Service funded from the proceeds of the sale of an Arboriculture vehicle, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this purchase as detailed in paragraph 2.1.4 ii).

(b) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme of Worthing Borough Council.

- 2.4 noted the reprofiling and likely phasing of the Worthing Borough Council capital schemes as advised in paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, and Appendix 4.
- 2.5 approved the upgrade of the seafront lighting to LEDs to reduce energy costs, funded from a contribution of £25,000 from the Worthing Borough Council Planned Maintenance Budget, and to amend the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme as detailed in paragraph 2.2.3. i).
- 2.6 approved a contribution of £12,500 to the Shoreham Air Crash Memorial funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and to amend the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this contribution as advised in paragraph 2.2.3.ii).

- 2.7 noted the proposal to ring-fence £383,860 available underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to fund essential capital works in 2018/19 as advised in paragraphs 2.2.3 iii).
- 2.8 approved the purchase of a cricket roller for the Parks Joint Service funded from the proceeds of the sale of an Arboriculture vehicle and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this purchase as detailed in paragraph 2.2.3 iv).
- 2.9 noted the reduction in the reported overspend arising from the replacement of service pipework at Worthing Leisure Centre to £33,000 as advised in paragraphs 2.2.3 v).

**Call In:**

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17 November 2017.

**JSC/061/17-18 Temporary Accommodation Placement and Procurement Policy**

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

The report outlined the strategic and operational commitments, as set out in the Housing Strategy and Platforms for our Places, and provided information to support the adoption of a Temporary Accommodation Placement and Procurement Policy. By developing this policy, the Councils sought to address two related issues:

- i) ensuring that both customers and communities were aware of the criteria that would be used for the allocation of temporary accommodation placements, and
- ii) the plans for securing temporary accommodation to meet this need.

The Committee was presented with a draft Temporary Accommodation Placement and Procurement Policy and requested to agree to refer the Policy to Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils for adoption with immediate effect, subject to the outcome of a consultation process.

**Decision,**

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- I. approved the draft Temporary Accommodation Placement and Procurement Policy;
- II. noted that the Head of Housing would be undertaking consultation with stakeholders and partners on the draft Policy for a period of 6 weeks;
- III. delegated authority to the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Executive Members for Customer Services, to make minor and/or consequential changes to the draft policy arising from the outcome of the consultation process, in order to finalise the Policy;

- IV. recommended to both Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council the adoption of the Temporary Accommodation Placement and Procurement Policy, subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

**Call In:**

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17 November 2017.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

**JSC/062/17-18 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved,**

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

*\*\* At 7.03pm Councillors Angus Dunn, Brian Boggis and David Simmons left the meeting prior to consideration of Item 9 in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.*

**JSC/063/17-18 Grafton Multi-Storey Car Park Redevelopment**

Before the Committee was an exempt report by the Director for the Economy, copies of which had been circulated to all Members as Item 9.

The report set out a proposed approach to the redevelopment of the Grafton multi-storey car park and adjoining land. It set out the options available to dispose of the site and recommended a procurement process to secure a preferred developer.

The report outlined the requirements to ensure a viable development and requested the necessary authority and funding to enable marketing of the site.

**Decision,**

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) agreed the preferred option for the marketing and subsequent disposal of the site to secure its redevelopment;
- ii) approved a budget virement of £94,850 from the Treasury Management (Minimum Revenue Provision) Budget to ensure that the costs of marketing the site and associated legal and agents fees were fully funded;

- iii) approved the release of £819,000 of funds from the Strategic Property Investment Fund for the purchase of any associated property, pending alternative funding being sought from the LEP;
- iv) delegated the decision to purchase any associated property to the Director of Economy in consultation with the Leader of Worthing Borough Council;
- v) delegated the decision to market the site to the Director of Economy in consultation with the Leader of Worthing Borough Council having regard to the outcomes of further detailed development appraisals and the Worthing Town Centre Car Parking study;
- vi) noted that a further report would be submitted to the Joint Strategic Committee following the initial marketing campaign setting out the precise details of any emerging land deal and seeking the formal agreement for the appropriation of the site for planning purposes. Furthermore, at the appropriate time, approval would be sought from Worthing Borough Council to authorise the demolition of the structures on the Site.

**Call In:**

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 17 November 2017.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7.14pm, having commenced at 6.30pm.

**Chairman**