

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

QEII Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

Tuesday 6 March 2018

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:- Councillor Rebecca Cooper

JSC/095/17-18 Declarations of Interest

Councillor David Simmons declared a personal interest in Item 11 as the Chair of Governors at Sir Robert Woodard Academy.

JSC/096/17-18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 1 February 2018, the Adur Executive meeting held on the 6 February 2018 and the Worthing Executive meeting held on the 5 February 2018 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairmen.

JSC/097/17-18 Public Question Time

The following question was received from Adur resident Jo Crockett:-

Having spent a huge amount of public money tearing down the Civic centre, a 30 year old building, we see an immediate rush to look to sell off this site to the private sector. Does the committee agree that councillors are custodians of publicly owned assets not owners of them.

We have a long housing waiting list with very few other opportunities to build housing offering affordable rents and permanent secure tenancies for people on local wages. Here is

the perfect opportunity. Please could the council resist the so called 'compelling' argument to cash in on public land and at least wait to see if the government removes the borrowing cap? Especially given the land won't even be vacant until 2019.

The Leader of Adur District Council replied:-

The former Civic Centre building was vacated and demolished for sound economic reasons, that had protected public funds. Transferring staff to consolidated premises in Worthing, had saved significant money for both Authorities and continued to keep combined overheads low. Site clearance had reduced Business Rates and maintenance liabilities, and had enhanced the value of this publicly owned land.

The Council was keenly aware of the acute housing need in the District and the Head of Housing recently provided some data and statistics to members on housing need in Adur District in response to a previous question. The Civic Centre site was in a sustainable location where there was the scope to deliver high density housing and the Council would only sell the site on the basis that any redevelopment delivered the 30% affordable housing required by the recently adopted Local Plan.

The Council was exploring the opportunity to bring forward a mixed use development that supported the local economy, represented best value and delivered new market and affordable homes through a conditional disposal.

A capital receipt or ongoing revenue stream would support and service the Council's current borrowing strategy. At the same time the Council was undertaking further feasibility work to bring forward new affordable housing on surplus land, such as vacant garage sites and looking at new infill developments to bring forward new affordable rented apartments and family housing.

JSC/098/17-18 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JSC/099/17-18 3rd Quarter 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 5.

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.

A Councillor queried why the 'summary of the progress of all schemes in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme' was available on the intranet but hadn't been included with the report. Officers advised that this would be shared electronically in future.

Highlighting the delay to car park improvements at the Riverside (Lower Beach) Car Park resulting from the Coast Protection Tidal Walls Scheme, a member asked if the £50,000 compensation to the contractor should be paid by the Environment Agency rather than Adur District Council. Officers advised that there had been discussions with the Environment Agency, who had agreed in principle, to provide a refund for the delays caused to the car park project.

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.
 - 2.2 approved the replacements of 4 town centre CCTVs funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme.
 - 2.3 approved the purchase of 4 vans for the delivery of the new public convenience cleaning contract funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme.
 - 2.4 approved the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include the external funding grant of £50,000 from Sport England towards the expansion of the changing rooms at Wadurs Swimming Pool.
 - 2.5 approved the additional funding of £20,000 for the Parks and Open Spaces water stand pipes upgrades funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme.
 - 2.6 approved the purchase of vibration safety equipment for Parks employees at a cost of £4,900 funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme.
 - 2.7 noted the possible £50,000 overspend on the Riverside (Lower Beach) Car Park improvements scheme.
 - 2.8 agreed the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include the Environment Agency Grant of £7,442.50 for the Adur Beach Management Plan.
- (b) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme of Worthing Borough Council
 - 2.1 noted the reprofiling and likely phasing of the Worthing Borough Council capital schemes.

- 2.2 approved the replacements of 14 town centre CCTVs funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme.
- 2.3 approved the purchase of 4 vans for the delivery of the new public convenience cleaning contract funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme.
- 2.4 approved the purchase of vibration safety equipment for Parks employees at a cost of £7,300 funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme.
- 2.5 approved the replacement of the Town Hall fire alarms at a cost of £25,000 funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme, and the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include this scheme.
- 2.6 noted the estimated overspend of £100,000 on the removal of the asbestos from the Town Hall roof space funded from underspends in the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme.
- 2.7 agreed the amendment to the 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme to include the Environment Agency Grant of £7,442.50 for the Adur Beach Management Plan.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for decision will be 5.00pm on 16 March 2018.

JSC/100/17-18 3rd Quarter Revenue Budget 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 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 Committee noted the projected outturn positions as at quarter 3 which were underspends of £14,000 in Adur District Council and £46,100 in Worthing Borough Council. This was lower than anticipated in quarter 2 when underspends of £176,000 and £117,000 were being forecast in Adur and Worthing respectively.

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, Homelessness and income from Environmental Services, Development

Management, Building Control, and property investments. Income and expenditure would continue to be monitored against budget.

Whilst the 'spend to date' would be the position as at the 31 December 2017, the forecast position would reflect the latest information available as at 31 January 2018 to ensure an up-to-date forecast was presented.

A Member highlighted the vacancy saving target outlined in paragraph 4.11 and queried how many posts were vacant and the impact this was having on capacity. Officers advised that the vacancy provision was based on approximately 3% of the salary budget, which although a large figure, was a small percentage. Provision was based on the natural recruitment lag the Councils had when a post became vacant, it may take up to 3 months to fill it.

Decision,

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

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 16 March 2018.

JSC/101/17-18 Fairer Funding Review

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 7.

Funding allocations to Local Government as outlined in the local government finance settlement were based on an assessment of individual council's relative needs and resources. The current allocations were based on formulas which were introduced over 10 years ago and which had not been updated since the introduction of the 50% business rate retention system in 2013/14. Consequently the allocations were now significantly out of date.

In the intervening time, changes to demographic pressures had impacted on the cost of delivery of services, particularly those services aimed at older persons. The Government announced a review last year to address concerns about the fairness of the local government funding allocations in recognition of the fact that the allocation of funding no longer reflected current demography and cost pressures.

The funding allocations not only influenced the amount of Revenue Support Grant that the Councils received, but also the amount of business rate income that could be retained via the Business Rate Retention Scheme (BRSS).

The report outlined the proposed response of the technical consultation on the fairer funding review (FFR). The consultation focused specifically on potential approaches that had been identified to measure the relative needs of local authorities. The consultation was released

on the 19 December 2017 as part of provisional settlement and was due to close on the 12 March 2018.

A Member suggested the following:-

- the response to question 8 could have included visitor numbers to Worthing;
- the response to question 18B could have made reference to the cost of housing, building land and the shortage of both; and
- the consultation response should include a general comment about the unfairness of the funding review with the Councils lobbying for a special safety net with transitional provisions and equalisation.

Officers advised that the inclusion of visitor numbers had been considered, however, these generally benefited cities rather than districts because of the inclusion of commuters. In regards to the key cost drivers, the Committee were advised that the relationship between local housing allowance and the local housing market was the most important. This was illustrated by the higher cost pressures in Worthing resulting from the relatively low housing allowance in comparison to high market rents. In addition, Officers advised that it was highly likely that there would be some sort of transition arrangement and two further consultations were due on this matter. One of these would inevitably look at transition arrangements for moving from one funding system to another and would provide a better place to start to lobby for what the Councils would like to see.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee approved the draft consultation response detailed in Appendix 1 and delegated any final amendments to the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Executive Members for Resources.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 16 March 2018.

JSC/102/17-18 Brighton Mainline Alliance - supporting our Regional Infrastructure properties

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 8.

The Coast to Capital LEP area, which runs from South London to Brighton and across the coast to Chichester, needed significant long-term rail investment to support a growing regional economy and maintain its competitive advantage, protecting the economic potential of the region and the contribution made to the wider economy.

Network Rail had identified the Brighton Mainline (BML) as the top priority for investment in the region and had proposed upgrades that included enhancement to the Windmill Bridge Junction, just outside East Croydon Station, and a major redevelopment of the station itself.

The Windmill Bridge Junction scheme would deliver a significant increase in regional rail capacity. Unlocking the bottleneck at Windmill Bridge Junction would enhance connectivity, capacity and resilience, and drive both growth and productivity throughout the region. Greatly improving links to London and international connectivity.

Coast to Capital LEP was leading a regional campaign to target Government investment in the rail infrastructure in Croydon, specifically targeting a Government commitment to the detail of the project at Budget 2019. The campaign, called the Brighton Mainline Alliance, had strong cross-party support and was backed by regional businesses and business organisations. Included within these was the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

The scheme was costly, complex and of national significance, and Government had recently commissioned further work to develop the business case. Funding could be taken for granted, with many other regions in the UK proposing their own railway schemes for development. A joined up commitment to the development of the region through local authority and business voices, via the BMA, would encourage the Government to support economic growth in the Coast to Capital area.

Members expressed their support for the proposals acknowledging that other infrastructure, including the A27, needed improvement too.

Resolved,

That the Joint Strategic Committee:-

- endorsed Adur & Worthing Councils adding their support to the Brighton Mainline Alliance in their advocacy for vital investment to infrastructure through the Windmill Junction Scheme;
- noted there were no resources required in the Councils' support of the Brighton Mainline Alliance.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 16 March 2018.

JSC/103/17-18 Worthing Crematorium Improvements

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities and 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 9.

The report sought approval for the virement of underspends from this year's Capital investment programme to the scheme for improvements to Worthing Crematorium.

Following consultation with the Head of Environment and Crematorium staff the original remit was revised to take into account the future needs of the service. A revised estimate was subsequently carried out by external consultants also taking into account out of hours working, which has indicated a shortfall of £144,500 within the current approved budget.

Members expressed their support for the proposals.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee approved the virement of £144,500 from the underspends in the current 2017/18 Capital Investment Programme.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 16 March 2018.

*** At 7.10pm Councillors Edward Crouch, Diane Guest, Kevin Jenkins and Val Turner left the meeting prior to consideration of Item 10 in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.*

JSC/104/17-18 Redevelopment of former Adur Civic Centre - Phase II Marketing

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 sought approval to allocate a valuation, appraisal and marketing budget to facilitate the disposal and redevelopment of the former Adur Civic Centre site, south of Ham Road, Shoreham.

A Member queried whether it was the right time to spend this £150,000, suggesting that the Council could wait to see if there was movement by the government on borrowing to build. He also asked whether a public / private partnership had been considered. Officers advised that it was imperative to find the right scheme for the site and would explore a number of different options to achieve that aim. Different development models were being explored with potential development partners in order to identify a scheme that delivered the right regeneration benefits for the site.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee recommended to Adur District Council that it approved a valuation, appraisal and marketing budget of £150,000 which will be funded from the capital receipt generated from the sale of the site.

Call In:

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council

JSC/105/17-18 Use of s106 Funding to enhance Sport and Recreation Facilities 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 11.

The report recommended allocating £15,000 of the s106 funding secured in connection with the Brighton and Hove Albion Training Ground as a contribution towards the provision of a covered swimming pool at the Globe School, Lancing.

The School had been fund raising for some time and the financial contribution would help to deliver the project to benefit children at the school but also the local community. The report considered whether it was a good use of the funding and the extent to which the local community would benefit from the facility.

The report also recommended the allocation of a further £5,000 towards the provision of CCTV cameras at Sir Robert Woodard Academy to improve security in connection with the new 3G pitch currently under construction at the site.

The report also provided an update on other projects which had secured funding and the amount of funding still available to be allocated to worthwhile projects that enhanced sport and leisure activities across the District.

Members expressed their support for the proposals.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee

- agreed to the request for a £15,000 contribution towards the provision of a covered swimming pool (subject to the school entering into a community use agreement as part of any grant funding agreement) and a grant of £5,000 towards CCTV at Sir Robert Woodard Academy and agreed to amend the Capital Investment Programme accordingly; and,
- agreed that the decision to enter into the relevant grant funding agreements be delegated to the Head of Planning and Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 16 March 2018.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7.26pm, having commenced at 6.30pm.

Chairman