

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

QEII Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

Tuesday 10 April 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 Les Alden

Worthing Borough Council:- Councillor Hazel Thorpe & Bryan Turner

JSC/106/17-18 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Edward Crouch declared a pecuniary interest in Item 9 as a landlord in the Borough of Worthing and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

The Chief Executive declared a pecuniary interest in Item 6 as a member of Boom Credit Union and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

JSC/107/17-18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 6 March 2018, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairmen.

JSC/108/17-18 Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

JSC/109/17-18 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JSC/110/17-18 Delivering our Housing Strategy - Review of Progress 2017-2018

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 5.

The Adur and Worthing Councils Housing Strategy 2017-2020 'Housing Matters' outlined a vision for our communities where everyone could have a place they could call home. The Councils recognised that having a secure and safe home, not just a place to sleep, was one of the most important factors in enabling local communities to be ambitious, prosperous and resilient.

The report updated Members on all of the activities and outcomes that had been achieved to date in delivering the strategy, as well as highlighting challenges and opportunities for the future. The Committee noted that the strategy had three broad areas of focus; preventing homelessness, developing the supply of new homes and improving Adur Council's role as Landlord. It was also noted that the biggest change in legislation to impact statutory housing services had also now been implemented, the 'Homelessness Reduction Act'.

The report provided details of work that had been undertaken over the past year, including work to secure Emergency and Temporary accommodation and to deliver the repairs and maintenance programme. The latter included a project to deliver a digital tool for reporting and managing the delivery of repairs.

A Member asked a question regarding 'Temporary Accommodation and engagement with Private Sector Landlords'. Officers agreed to provide a response following the meeting.

The Committee was advised that the Albion Street project would deliver houses towards the Council's housing quota whilst also providing brand new social housing. Residents had shown a real interest, with a 150 of them attending a recent public meeting about the project. It was noted that Cecil Norris House was the next project in the pipeline following completion of work at Albion Street.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee noted and commended the contents of the report.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for decision will be 5.00pm on 20 April 2018.

JSC/111/17-18 Supporting our Communities - Welfare Reform and Financial Inclusion

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 6.

The report outlined how the Councils had responded to and prepared local people and communities for, continuing Welfare Reform, in order to best support and enable resilient communities. The Councils roles were both providers of services but also creator of opportunities for communities to improve their skills across a range of areas such as; financial management, digital inclusion and skills whilst also supporting those in need to access affordable credit.

The Committee was advised that the 2017 Autumn Budget announced some significant changes to how Universal Credit would be administered and sought to address many of the issues and concerns that had been raised in relation to full service UC. The changes were outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report including from January 2018, an advance of up to 100% of expected benefit would be payable and stretching of the repayment over 12 months would be possible.

Officers advised that the Boom Credit Union provided loans to Adur and Worthing residents and requested that the Committee approve further investment in the Credit Union to support ongoing financial inclusion measures.

Members expressed their support for the proposals.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- noted the contents of the report;
- approved the investment of an additional £25k, via the purchase of deferred shares, by Worthing Borough Council in Boom Credit Union which was to be added to the capital programme and funded by a revenue contribution as outlined in paragraph 7.3;
- recommended that Worthing Borough Council approve the amendment of the Annual Investment Policy and Strategy document to allow the investment in the Credit Union to be increased to £50,000.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 20 April 2018.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/112/17-18 'Start Well, Live Well, Age Well' - Public Health at the local level - A refresh of our strategy to encourage the good health of all our citizens

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 supported the presentation of the Councils' refreshed and re-aligned Public Health Strategy 2018-2021. The refreshed strategy would support the work of the Councils across a number of areas to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities, whilst highlighting the Councils' leadership role in the sphere of public health and identified links to wider health and wellbeing agendas.

Members welcomed the strategy, acknowledging that the Councils were punching well above their weight in this area of work which provided benefits for all residents of Adur and Worthing. The strategy recognised all the good work that had been done, clearly set a direction of travel and provided numerous opportunities to work with communities.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee

1. recommended to Adur and Worthing Full Councils that they adopt the refreshed Public Health Strategy 2018-2021, as outlined in 3.5 - 3.13. and Appendix I;
2. delegated final approval of the Delivery Plan (to be developed) to the Director for Communities in consultation with the Executive Members for Wellbeing;
3. agreed that the Delivery Plan on Public Health, reports to the Public Health Strategy Delivery group, chaired by the Director for Communities and that this be reported to each Council on an annual basis.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 20 April 2018.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

*** At 7.14pm Councillor David Simmons left the meeting prior to consideration of Item 8 in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.*

JSC/113/17-18 Brooklands Park - Update on the actions made to date

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 8.

The report updated the Committee on the progress made on the project to dredge Brooklands Lake and also the associated environmental enhancements of the islands, margins and Valley Gardens section of the Teville Stream. It was noted that weather conditions had not been favourable since the commencement of the project. As a result, the completion date had been delayed by two months.

The report provided information on the successful formation of a Friends of Brooklands Park group and also the creation of a Master Plan, following a public consultation exercise to set out the Council's future aims and objectives for the park.

Members welcomed the update, acknowledging that communication regarding the project had significantly improved and the success of the 'friends of Brooklands Park' group.

Resolved,

That the Joint Strategic Committee noted the progress made on:-

- the dredging of the lake and associated environmental enhancements of the islands, margins and Valley Gardens section of the Teville Stream;
- the revised date for for the completion of the above project;
- the successful formation of a Friends of Brooklands Park; and,
- the creation of a Master Plan, following a public consultation exercise to set out the Council's future aims and objectives for the park.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 20 April 2018.

*** At 7.28pm Councillors Brian Boggis, Angus Dunn and Emma Evans left the meeting prior to consideration of Item 9 in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.*

JSC/114/17-18 Motion on Notice from Worthing Borough Council - Ethical Landlord Scheme

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 9.

Councillor Hazel Thorpe attended the meeting and presented the motion to the committee.

The Committee was asked to consider the details of a Motion on Notice, submitted by Councillor Thorpe, referred from the December 2017 Worthing Borough Council meeting. The Motion had been proposed and seconded and was attached as Annex A.

It was for the Committee to consider and determine whether to accept the Motion as submitted, the background paper provided by Councillor Thorpe was included as Annex B. If the Committee accepted the Motion, Officers would be tasked with producing an outline proposal for a future meeting of the Joint Strategic Committee. If the Committee did not accept the motion, no further action was required.

Members thanked Cllr Thorpe for the motion but raised concerns regarding the cost of the feasibility scheme, how the proposals would bring added value and what work would have to stop in order for the proposals to be implemented. It was suggested that a considerable amount of the work was being done already but it was not the right time to do something on this scale.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee agreed to follow '*Option 1: Continue with current activities to strengthen relationships between the private rented sector and the Councils*' in response to the Notice of Motion, taking into account the information provided to the Committee in the report.

Call In:

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

JSC/115/17-18 Worthing Borough Council's Relationship with Worthing Homes

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 10.

The report advised the Committee of the statutory changes affecting the relationship between Worthing Borough Council (WBC) and Worthing Homes Limited (WHL).

The Committee was asked to note the impact of the statutory changes on Board Membership and voting rights and authorise and instruct the Director for Communities to renegotiate the contractual agreement between WBC and WHL in light of the changes, ensuring continued engagement and the promotion of a positive relationship between WBC and WHL.

It was noted that WHL were actively considering converting their status to that of a Community Benefit Society (CBS) with Charitable Objectives. A CBS was not a company despite sharing many characteristics with a company. It was a body corporate and its assets were vested in the organisation itself with the shareholders having limited liability. CBS's were almost always formed for not-for-profit purposes. They were governed by the

Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. A charitable CBS must have entirely charitable objectives.

In order to convert, WHL would need to call and hold a general meeting of its shareholders and would need a majority vote of 75% to convert from a company to a charitable CBS.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- 1.1. noted the statutory changes impacting on Worthing Borough Council's relationship with Worthing Homes Ltd as a result of the new Regulations effective from 16 May 2018;
- 1.2. delegated to the Director for Communities, in consultation with the Leader of Worthing Borough Council, to negotiate with Worthing Homes Ltd and enter into contractual arrangements relating to the number of Worthing Borough Council Elected Members on the Board, the position of the Council in relation to attendance / feedback from shareholder meetings, and any other matters that were pertinent to the future of the relationship;
- 1.3. noted the change to be made to the Scheme of Officer delegations by the Monitoring Officer under her delegated powers removing the Head of Housings' authority to cast the Council's vote at meetings of WHL with effect from 16th May 2018, and delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to make other consequential amendments to the constitution.

Call In:

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

JSC/116/17-18 Colonnade House Digital Hub

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 set out the preferred approach for the development of a Digital Hub at properties No 5 and 7 High Street, Worthing, which would be operated alongside Colonnade House to create a combined Creative Digital Hub, providing additional flexible workspace for small and start-up digital / tech companies.

Members expressed their support for the proposed project.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee

- i) agreed the preferred approach for the creation of a Digital Hub for Worthing;
- ii) approved a budget envelope of up to £140,000 to purchase the freehold of No. 5 High Street, Worthing (and associated costs) to complete the site assembly for the project;
- iii) agreed to amend the Worthing Borough Council capital programme to include the new scheme.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 20 April 2018.

JSC/117/17-18 Union Place 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 12.

The report provided details of a proposal to work in partnership on an innovative approach to delivering redevelopment of the Union Place site. A confidential appendix to the report contained the Heads of Terms of the proposed agreement, together with associated financial, procurement and legal advice.

The Committee was advised that Union Place was a site of vital importance to the future of Worthing, where a suitable intervention could make all the difference. It was noted that Worthing Borough Council had successfully bid to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership for £5.6m toward Town Centre regeneration and some of this money had been used to purchase Union Place. The acquisition of which was completed in January 2018.

A number of potential development vehicles were available and the report set out a number of the risks and opportunities and pros and cons. The particular benefits of a partnership approach, in terms of sharing risk and pooling resources, were highlighted. The proposed partner was London and Continental Railways (LCR), a 100% government owned company with a mandate to pick up the Government's drive for new homes and jobs who had considerable experience of unlocking complex developments.

Members were informed that the benefits of working with LCR included the potential access to equity from high profile development partners and access to specialist skills and resources that were not readily available elsewhere.

The Committee was informed that the proposed model of land pooling was both a sensible way forward and an innovative approach to sharing both risk and reward. The Council would

benefit from an upfront injection of resource and both partners were incentivised to work at pace to deliver a good outcome for Worthing.

It was noted that there were risks and if the partnership did not work out, the leased land would revert back to the Council and costs would be apportioned between the partners.

Members welcomed the proposals and the opportunity to work with LCR who would provide expertise and bring specialist skills into the town.

Decision,

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- 2.1 agreed to delegate to the Director for the Economy, in consultation with the Leader of Worthing Borough Council and Executive Member for Regeneration, the authority to enter into a Land Pooling Agreement, in accordance with the Heads of Terms set out in the Exempt Appendix 1 for the purpose of securing the development or sale of the combined Union Place Site,
- 2.2 agreed to delegate to the Director for the Economy, in consultation with the Director for Digital and Resources, the authority to continue to negotiate terms of the draft Heads of Terms set out at the Exempt Appendix 1 and to make minor amendments;
- 2.3 agreed to delegate to the Director for the Economy in consultation with the Leader of Worthing Borough Council and Executive Member for Regeneration the authority to dispose of land known as High Street Car Park to London and Continental Railways Ltd at a value to be agreed, subject to an independent valuation and in accordance with the Council's statutory best value obligations;
- 2.4 appointed the Chief Executive and the Director for the Economy to sit on a jointly established Strategic Board with Senior Officers of LCR and to act as the Council's representatives, and to have the authority to exercise all Executive functions, (subject to paragraph 2.5 below) relevant to the development of the Site, on behalf of Worthing Borough Council, subject to them acting within approved budgetary limits and legal, constitutional and governance arrangements;
- 2.5 requested that a report be brought back in October 2018 to update the Committee on progress and developments, to consider an options appraisal for the Site and to consider and approve a Development Strategy for the Site;
- 2.6 requested that a report be brought back in due course with any proposals in respect of other Sites being incorporated into a Wider Land-pooling Agreement.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 20 April 2018.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.08pm, having commenced at 6.30pm.

Chairman