



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee  
9 October 2018  
Agenda Item 8

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: Goring & Selden

## **Increasing the number of Beach Huts available on Worthing's foreshore**

### **Report by the Director for Communities**

#### **Executive Summary**

##### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. To outline a proposal to increase the number of both council owned and privately owned beach huts along Worthing's foreshore, and request approval to proceed (subject to planning permission being granted).
- 1.2. This proposal is based upon a full review of the Beach Hut offer for Adur and Worthing's residents, that confirmed there continues to be a significant and increasing level of demand to own or rent a beach hut on Worthing's seafront.
- 1.3. The review also concluded that there are a number of suitable locations to site additional beach huts in Worthing, without affecting the visual appeal or enjoyment of the foreshore.
- 1.4. As indicated, this review also covered Adur's foreshore, however, whilst there is demand, the review did not identify any new/additional locations on the Adur foreshore that would allow for an increase in the number of private beach huts.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. That the Joint Strategic Committee grant approval to increase the number of both council owned and privately owned beach huts in Worthing, subject to planning permission being granted.
- 2.2. That the Joint Strategic Committee recommends to Council to approve an increase to the current budget for the purchase and installation of beach huts of £317,140 funded partially through a capital receipt generated by the sale of pitches (£80,000) and partially funded via prudential borrowing as outlined in paragraph 11.1 as an invest to save initiative..
- 2.3. That the Joint Strategic Committee note, that should approval be granted, planning permission to site and erect the beach huts at the location(s) proposed would still need to be gained.
- 2.4. That the Joint Strategic Committee delegate authority to the Director of Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration to approve the final procurement and award the contract to install the Council owned beach huts, up to the value contained in the Invest to Save capital bid, to be allocated within the 2018/19 Capital programme year subject to the grant of planning permission.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. There are 129 council owned beach huts available for annual rent in Worthing. These are located on the foreshore between west of Heene Road and east of King George 5th Avenue.
- 3.2. In addition, there are 289 privately owned beach huts sited on Worthing's foreshore, for which an annual licence fee is charged by the Council granting permission for the beach huts to remain on the foreshore for a 12 month period, renewable each year.

- 3.3. The private beach huts are located on the foreshore between the west of King George 5th Avenue, Worthing and east of Sea Lane cafe, Goring.
- 3.4. In 2013 six planning applications were submitted for 57 beach huts along Worthing promenade. Planning permission was granted for 5 beach huts opposite the Esplanade (AWDM/0460/13) and 20 beach huts opposite West Parade, East of George V Avenue (AWDM/0466/13), however, the remaining applications were withdrawn following objections from local residents. The 2013 permissions have now expired.

#### **4. Current Demand**

- 4.1. As of September 2018, there are 676 people on the list to rent a council owned beach hut. This represents a 90% increase since March 2015 when there were 377 on the list when a Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed a Financial Options Appraisal report present by the former Director for Communities. Thus demonstrating that demand to rent a beach hut from the Council has not diminished over the following three years.
- 4.2. The average waiting time for those on the list to obtain a hut is 7.5 years, from application to being offered a council owned beach hut to rent. In addition, Environmental Services Officers who manage the administration of beach huts, advise that there has been a steady increase in enquiries for the opportunity to own a beach hut on the foreshore, alongside enquiries to rent a Council owned beach huts.

#### **5. Opportunities to meet demand**

##### **5.1 Proposal**

- 5.2 In view of the demand, a review has been carried out in order to identify what opportunities are available to increase the number of beach huts on both Adur & Worthing's foreshore. The review took into account advice from the Council's Planning and Coastal Protection teams on the potential sites for new beach huts to be located, and all recommendations are subject to planning permission being applied for and considered in the future.
- 5.2 The review determined that in Adur there were no new opportunities for

more beach huts to be sited.

- 5.3 In Worthing, the review identified that from Esplanade Court (east of Worthing Pier) to Sea Lane Cafe, there was the potential for a total for 166 new beach huts. Table 1 shows the existing and potential new beach hut numbers:

**Table 1**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Potential New</b>
Between Esplanade Court and Clarence Court	0	32
West Parade between Sea View Road and Heene Terrace	72	22
End of Grand Avenue near Canadian War Memorial	17	8
Opposite Marine Gardens	16	2
East of King George V Avenue	20	8
West of King George V Avenue to Sea Lane Cafe	288	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>166</b>

- 5.4 Whilst the study identified potential sites for up to 166 new beach huts, the recommendation of this report, is to take a measured approach to increasing the supply of huts on the Worthing foreshore, by increasing the number in phases, reviewing each phase as it is completed, before any further phases are agreed.

- 5.5 It is also recommended that any new sites for beach huts should complement and not detract from or prevent alternative opportunities which are likely to be contained in the Council's planned Seafront Investment Plan.

## **6. Proposed Phase One Installation**

- 6.1. It is proposed in Phase One to install:

- 6.2. 32 new Council owned beach huts available to rent between Esplanade Court and Clarence Court, Worthing, located in the Selden Ward (Appendix 1)**

- 6.3. This location previously had beach huts installed until they were destroyed in the great storm of 1987. It is not known why they were not replaced immediately after the storm.
- 6.4. The proposed inclusion of new beach huts in this location would add to the growing vibrancy in this area, adding to East Beach Artist Collective, Splash Pad water feature and Splashpoint Leisure Centre.
- 6.5. Our Technical Services colleagues have reviewed the specification of the beach huts previously installed and are recommending that a higher specification beach hut be provided. This will specifically address maintenance issues arising for existing beach huts, whilst moving forward our provision.
- 6.6. The higher specification proposed would lead to increased build costs, however, this option presents overall better value for money for the Council and our residents who wish to rent the huts as they will be of a higher quality, and provide a better return on investment as they will require less ongoing maintenance, certainly in the early years.
- 6.7. If approved, it is proposed to offer these new beach huts to the people at the top of the current waiting list.
- 6.8. It is proposed that the construction of these 32 new beach huts is financed through the Council's Invest to Save capital programme, buy providing opportunities for eight new, private beach huts.
- 6.9. **Eight new locations for private beach huts to be sited, east of King George V Avenue to Sea Lane Cafe in the Goring Ward (Appendix 2)**
- 6.10. The Council would provide the location for a newly privately owned beach hut to be sited on the foreshore. The owner of the beach hut would be required to construct the base and new beach hut strictly to the specification provided by the Council, at their own cost.
- 6.11. The locations for these proposed new eight beach huts have been identified by infilling some of the present gaps between the existing private beach huts. It is intended however, to ensure that adequate gaps between huts are maintained to protect the visual outlook and viewing lines along and onto the foreshore.

- 6.12. As these proposed beach huts would be sited next to original beach huts, it is recommended that the design and specification will be the same as the existing huts to maintain consistency of the visual aspect.
- 6.13. The opportunity for individuals to erect a new privately owned beach hut would be advertised for sale individually. Recently, privately owned beach huts in this area have been sold for between £10,000 and £15,000.
- 6.14. It is estimated that the Council could realise a capital receipt of between £80-£120k from this initiative, and that this will fund the build of the Council owned, for rent huts.

## **7. Future Phases**

- 7.1. It is proposed if approval for Phase 1 is given, for a review of this phase to be carried out upon completion, before any further phases are considered for implementation.

## **8. Issues for Consideration**

- 8.1. The requirement to gain Planning approval has been considered, and the planning team have been consulted to gain their views on potential suitable locations for new beach huts to be installed.
- 8.2. Technical Services Officers who oversee the Council's coastal protection works were also consulted to ensure that the proposed new locations did not impact on the Council's ability to protect its coastline from flooding.

## **9. Engagement and Communication**

- 9.1. If approved, it is intended that there will be an opportunity for local residents to express their views for consideration through the planning application process.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1. The current budget for the installation of beach huts is £34,220. However the proposal to install 32 beach huts will require substantially more budget than is currently included within the capital programme:

		£
Estimated cost of scheme		351,360
Less: Existing budget		-34,220
Additional budget required		317,140

10.2. The capital receipts received from the sale of the opportunity to erect a privately owned beach hut on the foreshore would be used to offset the capital funding needed to purchase and install the council owned beach huts, available to rent.

10.3. The proposal will generate a surplus on the cost of investment once the beach huts are constructed as follows:

	2019/20	
	Per beach hut £	Total cost £
Capital cost	10,980	351,360
Less: Average income from sale of pitches		-100,000
Net borrowing required		251,360
Income:		
Annual rental income for Council owned beach huts	1,113	35,620
Licence fee for private beach huts	521	4,170
Total income	1,634	39,790
Less : Associated costs		
Allowance for initial annual maintenance	150	4,800
Annual business rates payable	306	9,790
Total costs	456	14,590
Net operational profit	1,178	25,200
Less: Debt charges (2.5% interest and 15 year life)	-630	-20,300
Initial profit	548	4,900

- 10.4. Over the longer term, the net profit from the beach huts will increase and the cost of investment will be recouped within 10 years and provide an internal rate of return of 8%.

## **11. Legal Implications**

- 11.1 Section 232 Public Health Act 1936 provides the Local Authority with the power to provide beach huts on its land and states “a Local Authority may provide huts or other conveniences for bathing on any land belonging to them or under their control, and may make charges for the use thereof”.
- 11.2 The erection of any beach hut, whether privately owned or Council owned, would be subject to the usual planning regulations.

### **Background Papers**

- [Appendix 1 - Map detailing 32 new Council owned beach huts available to rent between Esplanade Court and Clarence Court, Worthing, located in the Selden Ward](#)
- [Appendix 2 - Map detailing 8 new locations for private beach huts to be sited, east of King George V Avenue to Sea Lane Cafe in the Goring Ward](#)
- Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 12 March 2015 - Agenda Item 14

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## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

- If approved, the provision of additional beach huts will generate additional income for the Council supporting a wide range of services which benefit the local community.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **3. Environmental**

- The need to be able to continue to carry out coastal protection works without reduced access has been taken into account when determining where to site additional beach huts.

### **4. Governance**

- The provision of additional beach huts on Worthing's foreshore will help to contribute to the following Council Platforms for our Places.
  - Our Financial Economies
  - Stewarding our Natural Resources