



WORTHING BOROUGH
C O U N C I L

17 December 2024

**Worthing Council Meeting
17 December 2024**

Council Chamber
Town Hall, Chapel Road,
Worthing

6.30 pm

Agenda

13 December 2024

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL are hereby summoned to attend for the following business:

Part A

Item 7E - Updated (Pages 5 - 6)

Item 8 - Leaders Report - Updated (Pages 7 - 14)



Director for Sustainability and Resources

Director for Sustainability and Resources:
Paul Brewer
Adur & Worthing Councils,
Town Hall, Chapel Road,
Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1HA

Recording of this meeting

The Council will be voice recording the meeting, including public question time. The recording will be available on the Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting. The Council will not be recording any discussions in Part B of the agenda (where the press and public have been excluded).

For Democratic Services enquiries relating to this meeting please contact:

Neil Terry
Democratic Services Manager & Deputy
Monitoring Officer
01903 221073
neil.terry@adur-worthing.gov.uk

For Legal Services enquiries relating to this meeting please contact:

Joanne Lee
Assistant Director and Monitoring Officer
01903 221134
Joanne.lee@adur-worthing.gov.uk

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Council
17 December 2024
Item 7E

Extract from the minutes of the Joint Strategic Committee - 10th December 2024

JSC/057/24-25 Joint Mid Year Treasury Management Review 2024/25

The purpose of treasury management reports that are submitted during the year was to ensure that proper scrutiny was undertaken of the treasury and capital expenditure activities of the Councils and that the activities were conducted in a prudent manner in order to safeguard the financial position of the Councils.

Councils were required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce a mid-year treasury management review of activities; and a review of performance against the prudential and treasury indicators for the year.

The key message arising from the report was that both Adur and Worthing Councils had complied with the approved policies and the indicators agreed prior to the start of the financial year.

This report asked Members to note the Treasury Management mid-year performance for Adur and Worthing Councils at the 30 September 2024, as required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.

Decision:

- 1) That the report be noted and forwarded to the Worthing Borough Council Meeting on 17th of December 2024 and Adur District Council 19th of December 2024 for noting

(Link to the [report](#) on the website - Joint Strategic Committee on 10 December 2024)

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Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by Cabinet Members and the Joint Strategic Committee since the last meeting of Council

A Decisions Taken by Individual Cabinet Members

Listed below is a summary of decisions taken by the individual Cabinet Members since the dispatch of the agenda for the last Ordinary Council Meeting. Details can be found on the Cabinet Members Decisions webpage.

Leader

None.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration

None.

Cabinet Member for Resources

JAW/015/24-25 Grafton Multi-Storey Car Park - Structural Repairs
JAW/016/24-25 Commerce Way Roof Covering

Cabinet Member for Housing and Citizen Services

JAW/013/24-25 Temporary Accommodation Contract Award - 6 x HMO's
located in Brighton
JAW/014/24-25 Temporary Accommodation Contract Award - HMO's located in
Bognor and Worthing

Cabinet Member for Environmental Services

None.

Cabinet Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Community Safety

None.

Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Leisure

JAW/017/24-25 Release of Worthing s106 funds to the NHS

** The Worthing Cabinet Member abstained as this was a matter relating to Adur District Council*

B. Decisions taken by the Joint Strategic Committee on 12 November 2024

Details can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

The matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:-

JSC/44/24-25 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions - Worthing Pier Update

Worthing Pier was a well-loved heritage asset which had suffered weather-related damage, causing the first significant closure in 25 years on October 9th 2024. A damaged pile had to be removed and an independent structural engineering assessment clearly advised closure was necessary for public safety reasons. The administration had given a clear direction that the works to the pier be prioritised because of the pier's importance to the town.

Officers had been working hard on a temporary fix, enroute to a more permanent repair, and the report before members updated the committee on work to date, the implications of the short term closure and the proposed next steps. The council's engineering and health and safety teams were working with specialist contractors on a temporary support structure to be installed in the November tidal window with the aim re-opening of the pier in time for Christmas, in support of the key local businesses based there.

Owing to the nature of the damage it was necessary to install a supporting gantry in advance of a permanent fix and this solution is outlined in this report. Once this was successfully installed the next step would be to develop the programme of works needed to deliver the permanent fix as well as consider the funding approach needed to support that work.

Members supported the report and commented that there has been a year on year increase in funding for the pier over the previous two years.

Decision:

1. That it be noted that under a pre-authorized and pre-existing NEC Terms Service Contract for Pier Maintenance the Contractor has prepared, developed and is implementing a plan for the urgent repair works to to stabilise the existing structure and with the goal of enabling the pier to re-open and to avoid further secondary structural damage or loss to business.
2. That the Financial Implications in this Report be noted and the proposed cost of the urgent stabilisation work be authorised to ensure the urgent work can be completed, rather than the Chief Executive rely on the use of the delegated urgency powers within the Scheme of Delegations found at Part 4 of the Councils' Constitutions.

3. That the total cost of the urgent works be approved and the provisions proposed by the Chief Finance Officer and the creation of a contingency fund as set out at paragraph 9.2.3 of the report be authorised.

JSC/45/24-25 Organisational Design Programme

The report updated on the progress of our Organisational Design Programme, designed to create an organisation that supported staff to thrive, collaborated with our communities, and found creative ways to fund services.

For 2024/25, there was a savings target of £2.2 million, with an additional £1.8 million for 2025/26. The Councils had made important strides in redesigning key areas like Digital, Housing, Neighbourhoods and Resident Services. Other services were being supported to finalise proposals before Christmas. The Councils had prioritised a set of big shifts needed to make to redesign how we work and meet our financial challenges.

Whilst challenging, continued progress was being made towards these targets at the same time as managing considerable in-year budget pressures which were reported elsewhere.

Throughout the journey, focus was being kept on what matters most: people. The redesign was not just about cutting costs—it was about rethinking how we deliver services in a way that truly benefited communities.

Decision: That the Committee agree the progress of the programme, including

1. Objectives
2. Update on the Organisational Design Programme
3. Progress on delivery of the overall programme
4. Savings forecast
5. Building blocks
6. Risks and mitigations
7. Governance

JSC/46/23-24 Update of Work Programme Progress and Quarter One 24/25 Performance Update

The Annual Performance updated Members on the current work programme for Adur & Worthing Councils; Outline initial progress on the work programme; Provided updates on the Quarter one performance of council services and outlined the governance for how programmes and performance would be managed.

Decision:

1. That progress on the work programme for Adur & Worthing Councils be noted.
2. That the mitigations on those showing significant issues be agreed.
3. That the performance of council services be noted
4. that the mitigations on areas at risk be agreed
5. That the governance for managing programmes & performance be noted

JSC/47/23-24 Annual Treasury Management Report 2023-24 for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council

The purpose of the report and the other treasury management reports that were submitted during the year was to ensure that proper scrutiny was undertaken of the treasury and capital expenditure activities of the Councils and that the activities were conducted in a prudent manner in order to safeguard the financial position of the Councils.

Councils were required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities; and a review of performance against the prudential and treasury indicators for the year.

The key message arising from the report was that both Adur and Worthing Councils had complied with the approved policies and the indicators agreed prior to the start of the financial year.

Decision:

1. That the annual treasury management report for 2023/24 be noted.

JSC/48/23-24 Procurement Strategy 2024-2027

The Councils were undertaking strategic reviews across a number of core areas, aligned to the development of the medium term financial strategy. These reviews aimed to align policy and practice to the delivery of administration priorities in key areas including asset management, capital investment and programming, external funding and investment and procurement and contract management.

There were significant opportunities to steer the annual revenue spend of both councils with third party suppliers towards important outcomes such as local economic growth (the use of local suppliers), and environmental and social outcomes.

The updated Procurement Strategy 2024-27 had been developed to steer council spend towards those goals, whilst ensuring value for money. It also prepared the councils for alignment to the Procurement Act 2023 and the legislation expected to come into effect in February 2025.

The strategy would continue to be developed to align to national frameworks and guidance, but also as a result of new opportunities that may emerge with local public sector partners (aggregation), local suppliers and local communities. The three year strategy would be fully reviewed in November 2027

The Committee supported the Strategy and explored ways in which the strategy would help Small and Medium enterprises and how definitions of local worked.

Decision:

1. That the updated Sustainable Procurement Strategy be approved and adopted

JSC/49/23-24 Strategic Property (non residential) Asset Management Plan 2024/ Asset Strategy

The report set out the proposals for an integrated asset management strategy to cover all the non - residential property assets (the estate) held by the Councils. Over the proceeding three to five years the Councils would achieve a right sized and appropriate estate, with a clear focus on reducing the revenue burden. It would be an estate that could be managed and maintained within risk appetite and within agreed fiscal and human resources.

It was proposed that the Councils embarked on a 'flight to quality', in which the Councils took a whole asset view in light of changing risk appetite, legislative changes, and Council and Community needs. It therefore sought to own and look after a higher quality, less risky and more sustainable estate.

The strategy set out how the Councils intended to align the estate to specific goals and objectives (asset tiers) based on each asset's rationale for ownership, to address opportunities for improved Biodiversity Net Gain and to meet energy efficiency regulations.

The strategy met the challenges of managing an ageing estate, changing community and social needs, and the ability to maintain net income levels while seeking to reduce costs (or total cost of ownership).

Decision:

1. That the contents of the report be noted actions set out in the attached report be authorised, empowering the Assistant Director for regenerative development to implement the proposals in the report.
2. That the associated Disposals Strategy Process document be approved and the Assistant Director for regenerative development be authorised to implement the strategy.
3. That funds raised by implementing this strategy are reinvested to i) focus on reducing the revenue burden; and ii) add to the estate, and to repair, upgrade and improve retained assets.
4. That the revised financial limitation to paragraph 3.10.3 of the Scheme of Delegations be approved which is proposed at paragraph 3.26 - 3.28 of this report and the amendment to the each Councils' Constitutions be recommended to the Joint Governance Committee in November and then to both Full Councils in December.

C. Decisions taken by the Joint Strategic Committee on 10 December 2024

Details can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

The matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:-

JSC/58/23-24 2nd Quarter Revenue Monitoring Report 2024/25

The report updated the Committee with the latest expenditure and income projections for both Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council for the financial year 2024/25, compared to the Revenue Budget approved by both Councils in February. Whilst the 'spend to date' would be the position as at the 30th September 2024, the forecast outturn position reflected the information available to ensure an up-to-date forecast was presented.

The outturn projection for the 2024/25 financial year for the Worthing Borough Council General Fund was a net overspend of £511k and for Adur District Council General Fund was a net underspend of £333k. Those projections reflected the assumption that the budgeted contributions to rebuild reserves within the councils budgets would not be possible unless there were underspend outturn positions and surplus funds to transfer. A breakdown was set out in section 4.4 of the report.

The report showed that the councils were absorbing most of the considerable pressure of housing needs which had risen beyond the budget allocation which had in term been increased for 23/24, but the overspend in Worthing reflected the challenges that this had caused.

Decision:

- 1) That the report and projected outturn position be noted for the Joint Committee, Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council against the approved revenue budgets and proposed use of reserves (Appendix 2b and 3b).

JSC/59/23-24 Joint 2nd Quarter Capital Investment Programme & Projects Monitoring 2024/25

This report updated the Committee on the progress made on the delivery of the 2024/25 Capital Investment Programme for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council. The programme included schemes which supported the delivery of services by the Joint Services Committee.

Included within the report was information about the prudential indicators which provided a link between the Councils' revenue budget and capital budget. Quarterly monitoring of these indicators was a requirement of the prudential code

Decision:

- 1) That the reprofiling of the Worthing Borough Council capital schemes as advised in paragraph 7.2.1 and appendix 2 be noted;
- 2) That the Kingston Beach urgent virement be approved retrospectively as requested in 7.11;
- 3) That the virement of grant funding to Splashpoint GSHP project be approved as requested in 7.2.2;
- 4) That as at 6.3.1 that financial decisions in relation to Worthing Pier be considered as part of another report;
- 5) That the budget amendments to both the Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council 2024/25 capital programmes detailed in appendix 3 be approved following the programme review referenced in sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 of the report

JSC/60/23-24 Financial Strategy and Budget Update 2025/2026

The report presented an update on the budget setting process for 25/26 for both councils as well as updating on the progress of the implementation of the new financial strategy.

Progress on the new strategy was progressing well and was showing mid-term benefits, the short term budget pressures caused by external factors were considerable. As a result neither council was as yet able to show a balanced budget and the report showed the steps being taken to achieve this.

The Local Government Finance Policy Statement indicated a significant change to the approach to the settlement process and as such a likely material change to the budget position. The government had committed additional funding to local authorities, however the allocation across individual councils would not be visible until the provisional settlement. This is suggested by the focus on housing needs which was the main driver of the challenges in both Councils' position. The statement was currently being reviewed and will be reflected in the next budget update alongside the updated funding levels for both councils.

Despite this, and despite the considerable work being done to redesign the organisation and implement a more resilient and sustainable financial strategy, it was clear that it was unlikely to provide the funding required to close the significant budget gap in Worthing and so the proposed route for requesting exceptional funding support which is outlined in the policy statement was also welcome. Members were being recommended to request the Chief Executive formally wrote to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to request this support for Worthing.

Decision:

- 1) That the contents of the report including the working 5 year forecasts be noted as at appendix 1
- 2) That the Chief Executive writes to MHCLG in order to request exceptional financial support for Worthing in order to get the help needed to balance the budget during this period while the new financial strategy is being implemented

D. Urgent Decisions taken by the Cabinet

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions - Worthing Pier Update (see details above under section B).

Local Government Act 1972

Background papers

None.

**Councillor Sophie Cox
Leader of the Council**