

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

Remote Meeting via Zoom

12 January 2021

Councillor Daniel Humphreys (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

*Councillor Neil Parkin
Councillor Angus Dunn
Councillor Brian Boggis
Councillor Kevin Boram
*Councillor Emma Evans
Councillor Carson Albury
*Councillor David Simmons

Worthing Borough Council:

Councillor Kevin Jenkins
Councillor Edward Crouch
Councillor Heather Mercer
Councillor Elizabeth Sparkes
Councillor Val Turner

*Absent

JSC/95/20-21 Declarations of Interests

Councillor Kevin Boram declared personal interests in Items 5 and 6 as a Member of West Sussex County Council and senior adviser to the WSCC Cabinet Member for the Environment. He also declared a personal interest in Item 8 as a Member of West Sussex County Council, in Item 9 as the WSCC Representative on the Southern Region Flood & Coastal Committee and in Item 11 as he sat on the JOSC Working Group looking at Adur Homes Repairs and Maintenance.

Councillor Val Turner declared a personal interest in Item 12 as a Member of the South Downs Leisure Trust Board.

JSC/96/20-21 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 1 December 2020, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

JSC/97/20-21 Public Question Time

There were two public questions received in advance of the meeting.

1. Question from Gabrielle Crisp

With the built environment contributing 15% of carbon emissions (1), retrofitting the existing housing stock represents a key step in reaching carbon zero. Whilst supporting the “talk of appointing a lead for Adur Homes retrofitting” (2), will the council seize the opportunity to enable the growth of a local retrofitting industry through skills development, training and apprenticeship opportunities and business leader engagement, working in partnership with further education and other agencies?

- (1) <https://www.carbonbrief.org/uk-homes-shockingly-unprepared-for-climate-change-says-ccc>
- (2) *Item 6: Section 4.8 of Response to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny review of Climate Change Report by the Director for Digital Sustainability & Resources(2)*

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council replied that this was a pertinent question identifying the urgent need to develop skills, training and apprenticeship opportunities in the retrofitting sector, which the Committee on Climate Change has said needs “urgent funding”, including from the Treasury.

The councils were involved in several consortium programmes to support retrofit of housing. These included the West Sussex Affordable Warmth Partnership which was a countywide strategic group supporting the development of retrofit programmes for householders such as

- LEAP, the very successful energy and money saving advice service, and
- the Warmer Homes programme (Local Authority Delivery) through which residents on low incomes can access free installations of heat decarbonisation measures such as air source heat pumps and solid wall insulation.

Adur & Worthing Councils were also working with Warmer Sussex and Retrofitworks who aimed to build capacity and delivery in the Retrofit sector and were collaborating with other housing providers across Greater Brighton Economic Region to deliver retrofit measures at scale.

Adur Homes would be developing a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy and action plan, which would include actions towards achieving better energy efficiency and reaching Carbon Zero. The plan would align with ongoing actions in this regard within the Council and included actions to ensure that the right expertise was available to achieve this ambition.

Following the Climate Assembly, a programme of engagement was planned. One area of focus was with businesses, organisations and education providers to support decarbonisation across the area. This would include promotion of housing and commercial retrofit and would include championing the development of skills and capacity across all sectors as well as the delivery of programmes and projects for decarbonisation.

Ms Crisp asked a supplementary question regarding upskilling and retraining and how this could be put in place by September 2021.

The Leader recognised that there was a skills gap for people coming in to do this work and the need for upskilling and / or retraining. He also advised that the LEP was looking at this issue and was working with partners to move this forward.

2. Question from Kirsten Wild

We commend the council's decision in July 2019 to declare a climate emergency, making maintaining community green spaces and increasing biodiversity top goals. Yet the Council is currently consulting to change the designated use of an open access green

space in Shoreham to a fee-paying facility made of a plastic 3G surface with toxic rubber infill. The council's own expert commissioned Feasibility Study says professionally re-laid grass will meet all curricula and club needs of the nearby Primary school and grass also maintains open access to the whole park for the town's fast-expanding population.

Please can you confirm how the change to a plastic 3G surface with toxic rubber infill and resulting 50% reduction of open access to parkland supports the council's stated green space goals? We ask that proposals are urgently reconsidered to avoid loss of rare townland green space, forever.

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council replied on behalf of the Adur Executive Member for the Environment;

The consultation related to options available to improve the current surface at the meads. It was not a proposal for a "fee paying 3g pitch". Adur Council was not pushing a preferred option for the area demised under lease to Swiss Gardens School via WSCC. The Council appreciated that there are conflicting wants and needs for this space, which in its current state was not fit for its intended purpose. The Council appreciated that it was an emotive matter, and as such had devoted a lot of time and resource into getting engagement on this matter right.

Options other than artificial surfaces - not just 3g - were being considered. Improved drainage with new grass was one of the potential options. As outlined in the consultation, the Council had to set that against the needs of the school within their demised area, which was daily use, several times a day, and the Council accepted that only an artificial surface would be able to withstand that high impact use. The Council also accepted that there was a mobilised community presence that believed that the meads should remain as grass.

To be clear, the current consultation was a user/stakeholder engagement piece to balance public feeling with community need on i) better drained grass, or ii) an artificial surface. The Council knows what is possible for the space, and wanted to know what people thought about these options.

In terms of the Council's green space goals - these did not just relate to The Meads only, it was a holistic approach to the District. The Council had taken steps to secure large acreages of land to safeguard them for future generations, sequester carbon, and provide valuable habitats. This did not mean that central green spaces were less important, and indeed where the Council made any changes to landscapes, it would endeavour to create a net biodiversity increase. This would be the case with any development of the meads regardless of whether the ultimate decision was to go with grass, or an artificial pitch. But to be clear, any decision made would be based upon public feeling set against user need in a "greater good" context.

Ms Wild asked a supplementary question regarding the s106 money being used to deliver the project. In the words of West Sussex County Council, S106 is normally a capital fund, which suggests that there is some wiggle room and the ability for it to be delivered as revenue funding which would enable the maintenance of this space. Will anybody, even named individuals, commit to pursuing / talking to WSCC about delivering this s106 money, not just as a capital fund but delivering part of it as a maintenance fund. There is precedence for this in other forward looking Councils like South Gloucestershire, who say that you can have a capital fund and a revenue fund alongside to look after the

capital project and the delivery. That would enable the grass to be delivered and leave a huge pot available as a revenue fund for maintenance and groundskeeping, which is what the school say, will be needed to make the grass work. At the moment this is not on the table at all. When the consultation ends, Ms Wild would like there to be a realistic proposal for the use of grass on the table.

JSC/98/20-21 Items Raised under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JSC/99/20-21 Adur & Worthing Climate Assembly: recommendations and next steps of the journey

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & 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 Committee received a report back on the highly successful and innovative online *Adur and Worthing Climate Assembly* which, following approval by Joint Strategic Committee in January 2020, engaged local residents on the community response to climate change.

The *Adur & Worthing Climate Assembly Recommendations Report* produced by DemSoc and Adur & Worthing Councils was appended to the report and the recommendations were presented by Climate Assembly member Mary Frankland.

Assembly Members had considered the question: *How can we in Adur and Worthing collectively tackle climate change and support our places to thrive? What does this mean for the way we live and for our local environment?*

At the end of the process, members put forward 18 recommendations they felt necessary for communities, organisations and the councils to take forward. These were presented to Committee members.

The report outlined the deliberative process and proposed a series of next steps to follow through on the Assembly recommendations.

Forty Three Assembly members from a variety of backgrounds and ages representing all communities of Adur and Worthing took part in the Assembly. They went through an exacting process over three months, learning about climate challenges and opportunities from expert speakers drawn from national and local organisations.

A Survey of Assembly Members confirmed the Assembly had been a positive experience and would have positive ongoing impact:

- 97% felt inspired by what was achieved by working together
- 83% feel they have more knowledge about climate change
- 89.5% felt the Climate Assembly will lead to positive changes and will support our places to thrive
- 67% want to now get involved in actions to help tackle climate change
- 97% were happy they took part

During consideration of the item, Members discussed the ACOM report, the continued promotion of cycling and walking, publication of the Councils' Carbon Audits and availability of resources in future to fund the delivery of this work.

Members thanked all of the Climate Assembly Members for their participation and welcomed the ambitious recommendations.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Daniel Humphreys, seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

- i. noted the success of the Climate Assembly and recognised the extraordinary commitment shown by Assembly Members during the 3 month Assembly process;
- ii. formally received the Assembly recommendations, in particular those which fell within the remit of the councils to take forward; and
- iii. approved the proposed next steps (Appendix 5) to start working up the response to the recommendations.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/100/20-21 JOSC Review of Climate Change

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & 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 provided a response and recommendations to the Joint Strategic Committee to the recommendations contained within the Joint Overview and Scrutiny working group review of Climate Change initially presented to this committee in November 2020.

The report by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Working Group produced 10 recommendations. The very fast moving nature of work on the climate and sustainability agenda through *Platforms for our Places* and *SustainableAW* had seen several of the recommendations implemented since the Working Group concluded.

The recommendations already actioned include:

- 1.1.1 The publication of the annual report on council carbon reduction;
- 1.1.2 Learning from best practice at other councils through the *UK100 Cities* network, the vanguard group local authorities leading on climate best practice
- 1.1.3 The development of the *Sustainable Procurement Strategy* and *Sustainability Code of Practice*;
- 1.1.4 The development of a *Sustainability Checklist for Planning*;

- 1.1.5 A new *Sustainable Energy Supplementary Planning Document* requiring submission of the energy and carbon strategy of new development;
- 1.1.6 The draft *Worthing Local Plan* has developed energy and carbon standards in advance of national standards; and
- 1.1.7 The allocation of funding for active travel to the County Council, Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council to enable greater promotion of active travel to the community.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Daniel Humphreys, seconded by Councillor Carson Albury and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

- I. In relation to Recommendation One - agreed that officers add the Fairtrade Directory once updated to the council website under SustainableAW pages;
- II. In relation to Recommendation Three on Adur Homes - agreed that officers ensured decarbonisation and energy efficiency opportunities were considered in future Adur Homes capital investment plans.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/101/20-21 Sustainable Procurement Strategy - driving local, social and environmental value through procurement

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & 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.

The procurement strategy was last approved in 2017 with an intended life of three years. The report introduced a new Sustainable Procurement Strategy which highlighted the need to continue to transform the Councils approach to procurement in order to deliver the aspirations in *Platforms for our Places: Going further* and greater environmental impact and social value. The Strategy illustrated how improved procurement activity would help deliver the Councils corporate ambitions for *Platforms*.

The Committee gave consideration to the forms of measurement proposed, the Action Plan and Benchmarking against other authorities. Benchmarking was already proposed with Brighton & Hove City Council and members suggested that further benchmarking should also take place with other District / Borough Councils. Members also discussed the make up of the Procurement Working Group and method of implementation.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Daniel Humphreys, seconded by Councillor Val Turner and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

- i. approved the Sustainable Procurement Strategy;
- ii. noted the action plan; and
- iii. approved the sustainability code of practice.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/102/20-21 An overview of the Adur and Worthing Public Health Strategy

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 provided a high level overview of the progress that had been made on the Councils Public Health Strategy, which was due to come to an end March 2021; discussion of the significant work that had been underway in relation to Covid and the challenges the Councils faced to build back in a post-pandemic world, especially around tackling inequalities and being more inclusive; and a starting point for the development of a new strategy during 2021 which would engage partners and communities.

Members welcomed the report acknowledging the impressive range of work that was being undertaken.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Daniel Humphreys, seconded by Councillor Val Turner and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee noted the contents of the report and strategically supported the proposal to develop a 'place based' approach to tackling health inequalities to meet local needs.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/103/20-21 Partnership Working - National Network of Strategic Coastal Monitoring Programme (2021 to 2027)

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 9.

The report brought Members up to date with the actions of the officers to secure continuance of the Southeast Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (SSRCMP) through the National Network of Regional Monitoring Programmes (National Programme). Both Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council delivered this service on behalf of partner organisations.

As part of the SSCRMP the Coastal Monitoring Survey Team within Technical Services had successfully executed the monitoring programme for the coastal frontage between Selsey Bill and Beachy Head (Coastal Cell 4d) since 2002. The current National Programme tranche was due to end on 31st March 2021.

The National Programme led by New Forest District Council (NFDC) sought continuance funding through the Environment Agency as a Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) project. If successful, the full cost of the monitoring programme would continue to be met via a Service Level Agreement with NFDC. Confirmation of funding was expected in January/February 2021.

The monitoring programme provided freely available data for the justification, design, performance and impact monitoring of any coastal intervention (defence and protection works), monitoring of coastal change (flood and erosion risk) and the wider benefit of an increased understanding of the effects of climate change.

Members welcomed the report, recognising the added benefits of this long lasting partnership. Consideration was given to the options outlined in paragraph 6.3 of the report and the recommendations put forward.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Daniel Humphreys, seconded by Councillor Brian Boggis and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

- confirmed its continued support of the National Programme subject to the confirmation of grant funding; and
- delegated authority to the Head of Facilities & Technical Services to continue to deliver the programme within the limits of the Service Level Agreement and funding stream referred to at Clause 3.9.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for the decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/104/20-21 Review of decision making in relation to staffing matters

Before the Committee was a report by the Monitoring Officer, 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 requested that Members consider existing governance arrangements surrounding staffing matters and recent practice.

The Committee was advised that this situation had been remedied with Heads of Service being reminded of the correct procedure.

The recommendations in the report were unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee noted the contents of the report.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for the decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

*** At 8.22pm Worthing Councillors Crouch, Jenkins, Mercer, Sparkes and Turner left the meeting in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.**

JSC/105/20-21 JOSC Review of Adur Homes Repairs and Maintenance Service

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 11.

The report provided JSC with a response to the JOSC review of Adur Homes repairs and maintenance services and an update on actions taken so far in relation to the recommendations of the JOSC Working group.

The report was welcomed by the Committee and the ACF representative applauded the changes proposed and the improving communication provided.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Carson Albury, seconded by Councillor Brian Boggis and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

That the Joint Strategic Committee

- I. noted the contents of the report;
- II. agreed that a timeline for the implementation of the recommendations was provided to the JOSC Working Group by 31 March 2021.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/106/20-21 Update on the future of Adur Leisure contract award

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 updated the Committee on progress toward the Direct Award of the provision of leisure services in Adur to South Downs Leisure Trust and to secure agreement to the Council providing a financial indemnity to South Downs Leisure Trust to reflect the risks associated with operation of the leisure facilities.

A decision was sought on the provision of an indemnity in excess of the limit associated with delegated authority. The outcome resulting from this decision would be the finalising

of the Direct Award and the re-opening of the leisure facilities in Adur at the soonest opportunity.

A Member questioned the increase in membership prices and requested that they be kept as reasonable as possible. Officers advised that pricing rested with the operator, however, it was noted that South Downs Leisure had held a successful opening event and frozen the membership rates for previous members under ACL.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Angus Dunn, seconded by Councillor Kevin Boram and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

- i) noted progress toward the Direct Award of the provision of leisure services in Adur to South Downs Leisure Trust; and approved the contractual and appropriate financial indemnity (the commercially sensitive details of which are set out in detail in a confidential appendix under item 16 of this Agenda) to South Downs Leisure Trust to reflect the risks associated with operation of the leisure facilities; and
- ii) noted that in the event this liability arose, the Council would have to draw down from the working balance to fund those costs; with the Council having the contractual ability to recover either in whole or in part any payments made under the indemnity from the contractual risk reserve at the end of the 5 year period.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for the decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

JSC/107/20-21 Motion referred from Adur District Council

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 13.

The report set out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Adur District Council on the 29th October 2020.

The Joint Strategic Committee was asked to consider and determine the Motion and could either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members could reject the motion.

The Committee acknowledged that the situation had changed and that Housing Targets would not change locally. Representation had been made in response to the consultation and the Council would wait for the revised paper.

A recommendation to reject the motion was proposed by Councillor Angus Dunn, seconded by Councillor Brian Boggis and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision:

That the Joint Strategic Committee rejected the motion.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 22 January 2021.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.45 pm, it having commenced at 6.30 pm

Chairman