

Minutes of a meeting of the  
Worthing Council  
19 October 2021  
at 6.30 pm

Councillor Lionel Harman (Chairman)  
Councillor Richard Nowak (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Hazel Thorpe	Councillor Martin McCabe
Councillor Noel Atkins	Councillor Sean McDonald
Councillor Roy Barraclough	Councillor Dr Heather Mercer
Councillor Mike Barrett	Councillor Richard Mulholland
Councillor Ferdousi Henna Chowdhury	Councillor Louise Murphy
Councillor Russ Cochran	Councillor Jon Roser
Councillor Rebecca Cooper	Councillor Helen Silman
Councillor Dan Coxhill	Councillor Dawn Smith
Councillor Edward Crouch	Councillor Sally Smith
Councillor Jim Deen	Councillor Robert Smytherman
Councillor Cathy Glynn-Davies	Councillor Elizabeth Sparkes
Councillor Karen Harman	Councillor Emma Taylor
Councillor Margaret Howard	*Councillor John Turley
Councillor Daniel Humphreys	Councillor Nicola Waight
Councillor Charles James	Councillor Steve Waight
Councillor Kevin Jenkins	Councillor Carl Walker
	Councillor Rosey Whorlow
	*Councillor Steve Wills

\*Absent

**C/26/21-22 Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor had received apologies for absence from Councillors John Turley and Steve Wills.

**C/27/21-22 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Dawn Smith declared an interest in item 10 as a member of West Sussex County Council.

**C/28/21-22 Confirmation of Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2021 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Mayor.

**C/29/21-22 Questions from the Public**

The Mayor advised that a number of questions had been received in advance of the meeting that were substantially the same, in relation to former councillor Tim Wills.

Councillor McCabe proposed a motion without notice, under Council Procedure Rule 15.1(p), to suspend Council Procedure Rule 11 so that the 30 minute time limit for public questions could be suspended. The motion was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman and unanimously supported by Council.

A statement was read out by the leader by way of response to the questions received:-

The Leader responded that a number of questions had been received prior to Mr T Wills resignation, asking why he had not resigned, had he been asked to resign, would he be forced to resign etc. The Leader advised that Mr T Wills had now resigned and all the political groups that made up the Council had contacted Mr T Wills to say that he should resign. This was the least he could do in the circumstances and that a by-election for that vacancy was the right way to move forwards.

The Mayor invited those who had submitted questions, to ask a supplementary question.

Supplementary questions were received from

*Susan Pepper - Tim Wills, in his postings, mentioned others in the Conservative Party who were onside. What investigations were planned to ensure there were no other white supremacists on the Council?*

The Leader replied that he hadn't got the foggiest idea what he was talking about, if he had said that, and that he had absolute faith in the rest of this group that no one else was onside with those views.

*Margaret Harris - Tim Wills resigned because he is a racist and white supremacist, can you detail the lessons learned and reassure us that you will review your selection procedures and monitor social media accounts to ensure that this type of incident will never happen again, within Worthing Borough Council.*

The Leader replied that he did not get a vote or say in who was selected to be a Conservative candidate and did not know what the process was in other parties. Although that was not a matter for this Council, he had no doubt that political parties around Worthing, and wider, are considering their approach to selection and scrutiny of those candidates.

*Andrew Whight - You alluded in your earlier comments that you had made a call for Mr T Wills to resign. When and where did you make a public call for Mr T Wills to resign?*

The leader replied that when he had first heard about these allegations, he contacted Mr T Wills. When Mr Wills didn't deny the allegations, he explained the party's disciplinary procedures to him and he was immediately suspended from the Conservative Group. When, a few days later, the Leader had still not received any form of denial, he followed up with an email stating that if Mr T Wills was not going to deny the allegations, it was the group's view that he should resign.

The Mayor advised that 4 questions had been received in advance of the meeting.

**1) Question submitted to the Leader of the Council by Vicki Wells, a Worthing Resident**

*As the leader of this Council, how are you ensuring that those associated with far right hate groups have no place representing the constituents of Worthing.*

The Leader responded that the Council itself had no administrative powers to remove a Councillor from office.

The councils had mandatory training for all members of staff to be able to identify and report any concerns about extremism and radicalisation. The Council liaised with West Sussex County Council to keep abreast of new and emerging ideologies and to be able to spot the signs. The Council regularly audits its PREVENT duties and had implemented all required measures.

The Safer Communities Partnership had Community Cohesion as a priority and from November the Council would have increased its anti social behaviour and hate crime resource from one to two full time members of staff.

The Council worked closely with West Sussex Victim Support to ensure it was aware and supported communities impacted by hate and intolerance.

*The Leader was asked to clarify when he had formally sought Mr Will's resignation as a supplementary question.*

The Leader responded that the whip had been removed on the 6th October and the call to resign (as Mr Will's had not denied the allegations) was made on the 11th October.

**2) The Mayor read out a question on behalf of Irena Stupar, a Worthing Resident**

*How does the council engage with underserved, deprived people in regards to climate emergency. Just to give one example: where we live people don't have recycling bins. Also we live in flats and we have less opportunity to plant trees, grow plants, easily to feel excluded in what we can contribute (except through purchasing power). There are other types of neglect in our society which can result in people feeling powerless or discouraged in how they could contribute to climate emergency response.*

*Also, Adur & Worthing Climate Assembly asked the council to make a strong commitment in opening a one stop shop where citizens would access easy to understand information about climate emergency. Is there a plan in place how this will be delivered? Information on <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/sustainable-aw/> are very valuable. However, one stop shop would make practical information, such as grants, tree planting schemes, events readily available for everyone.*

The Leader replied that the Council recognised that there was particular challenges for some residents and communities in being able to respond to the climate emergency, and their ability to feel they could contribute and get involved.

In July this year an update report was provided to the Joint Strategic Committee outlining the substantial community engagement the Council's sustainability team undertook following on from the Climate Assembly held in late 2020. The team found a highly active community and identified 60 actions underway across a network of 200 organisations, now reflected in the refreshed SustainableAW strategy.

The Council would be very happy to help connect community members with opportunities to get involved in its wonderful community organisations.

In particular, with regard to trees, gardens and growing, the Council would highly recommend Adur & Worthing Green Spaces Partnership and their GreenTides website could help connect people with opportunities. The Council could see there might be a role for the council in making these opportunities more accessible online, and would be looking into this.

The Council was developing an initiative for a new kind of shared collaborative community space called Fabric, and the Council intended to make the climate emergency and biodiversity loss key themes that would inform how Fabric was delivered, and the information and activities that were provided there. The Council very much agreed that physical spaces to learn and discuss climate change issues was vital.

The Council aimed to provide comprehensive recycling facilities to all its residents and the vast majority of flats had easy access to recycling bins. In a small number of locations it was difficult to locate bins as buildings were not designed with enough storage capacity. Again in a minority of cases the Council had had to remove bins where there had been problems with high levels of contamination despite targeted communication and engagement. Contamination risks whole loads of recycling having to be disposed of.

The Council was currently carrying out a review of recycling facilities in flats to find solutions with landlords and residents. As part of this work a member of the Waste & Recycling Team would be happy to meet with the questioner on site to look at the situation in relation to where the questioner lived and work on possible solutions.

### 3) Question submitted to the Leader of the Council by Mr Conell Loggenberg, a Worthing Resident

*In light of the fact that the Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities and that **Council Members** have a central role to play in **ENSURING** that **EQUALITY ISSUES** are **INTEGRAL TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S PERFORMANCE** and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and **PUBLIC COMMITMENT** to **EQUALITY** across public services...*

*Would it not be prudent for THIS COUNCIL, with a perceivable **INHERENT "PROBLEM"** in representing fairly the Rights and Needs of People of Black and Asian Ethnicity...to engage **Positive Action** pursuant to Section 158 (1)(a)(b)(c) and subsection 2(a)(b)(c) of the Equality Act 2010, to **ENSURE** that a Person or Persons of Black Ethnicity is:*

*Enabled and Supported to Actually Become an Elected Member of Council, by removal of the barrier of people of white ethnicity simultaneously standing for office particularly in Marine Ward in view of the evident unacceptable already in the public domain, on grounds of the evident disproportionate lack of representation or participation in the role of Councillors and the very real disadvantage People of Black Ethnicity suffer on account of their protected characteristic, to be in such roles?*

The Leader replied that the planning and delivery of elections was the responsibility of the Returning Officer. It was not a responsibility of the Council and therefore this was not a question that could be answered by a member of this Council. Ensuring electoral processes are fair, transparent and accessible is a key responsibility of the Returning Officer to whom your question has been forwarded.

Councillor Martin McCabe proposed a motion without notice, under Council Procedure Rule 15.1(e), requesting the following:-

That the Council appoints an 8 person Committee arising from Mr Connell's question, a Committee for Community Cohesion, tackling harmful ideologies and radicalisation in our community, chaired by Councillor Hazel Thorpe. The proposed remit of the Committee would be to liaise with and consider suggestions from Community Groups, Outside Bodies and Political Parties on issues pertaining to tackling harmful ideologies and radicalisation in our community. As well as advising the Council's Leadership on the implementation of those recommendations that fall within their remit.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman and unanimously supported by the Council.

*Mr Loggenberg asked a supplementary question in regards to those being able to stand in a by-election in Marine Ward.*

The Leader replied that the running of elections was not determined by Councillors and therefore the question would need to be directed to the Returning Officer or the Electoral Commission.

**4) Question submitted to the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing by Mr Conell Leggenberg, a Worthing Resident**

*According to Section 45E (1) of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, regulations for domestic or international purposes cannot require a person to undergo medical treatment...and medical treatment under subsection 2 of the same section includes vaccination and other prophylactic treatment.*

*Everybody, whether you're a patient or a worker in Hospital or a Care Home or a Member of the General Public, has the Right to Bodily and Psychological Integrity and not to be subjected to any medical or scientific experiments and or treatments without your informed consent.*

*Currently available information by National Government and the manufacturers of injections against Covid-19, confirms that these injections do NOT prevent or*

*absolve the person injected with these substances from becoming infected with Corona Virus Disease or being a carrier of the said virus — that obviously raises separate questions about efficacy which I won't go into on this occasion.*

*Informed consent must be inclusive of information about other treatment options and one's right to decline treatment — such options are barely specified or promoted by either National or Local Government.*

*Given the suggested threat by some Social Care Service Providers requiring, and in many cases qualifying as coercion, that their staff be injected with these substances to retain employment...despite the fact that many people having been injected with these substances having suffered severe adverse events attributed to these substances as reported on the UK Medicines Regulatory Authority's Yellow Card Reporting System, and some business premises suggesting to require proof of having been injected with these substances as a condition of service...*

*What is Worthing Borough Council's position on the Rights of People, be they patients in Hospital or Care Homes or any person Living and Working in Worthing who choose Not to have any of these substances at any time and what is the Council doing to ensure that such persons do NOT suffer direct or indirect targeted disincentives, exclusion from opportunities to work or participate in social and economic activities in Worthing as an equal representation of their rights and needs?*

The Leader responded that the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) was an independent expert advisory committee that advised United Kingdom health departments on immunisation, making recommendations concerning vaccination schedules and vaccine safety.

Currently both the JCVI and the Government encouraged the uptake of vaccinations due to the wide benefits on public health. The Council encouraged everyone who was eligible to take up the offer of vaccination, especially vulnerable groups, to improve the public health of its communities and reduce the risk of Covid-19.

However, the Council respected the informed decisions of those who chose not to.

To date, the Government had not legislated for the COVID-19 vaccine to be mandatory for anyone. The Government guidelines on vaccinations said that individuals must be given enough information to enable them to make a decision before they could give consent. This was therefore entirely an informed decision for local people to make for themselves

*Mr Loggenberg asked a supplementary question seeking clarification as to whether the Council would obstruct or withhold entry to the Council Chamber for persons who had not received a vaccine.*

The Leader replied that the Council was not restricting entry if an individual had not taken up a vaccine.

Additional public questions were received as follows:-

*Kelly Hannah-Rogers sought to ask a question which had been rejected prior to the meeting.*

The Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer advised that the Council had to be very careful not to make any defamatory comments, that an investigation was ongoing and it was not possible to make any comment in relation to that matter.

*Kelly Hannah-Rogers asked whether Worthing Borough Council would review all decisions that Mr Tim Wills had been involved in with a view to ensuring he has not discriminated against the residents he feels not to be worthy.*

The Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer advised that there was no legal reason for looking again at decisions which had been democratically made in this chamber.

*Maureen Purcell asked whether the Leader of the Council had asked or had not asked Mr Tim Wills whether he was going to deny the allegations made against him.*

The Leader of the Council replied that he had sent Mr Wills an email which said, if you are not going to deny the allegations, we think you should resign your seat on the Council.

*Maureen Purcell asked the following supplementary question; as members of the public cannot trust your, Cllr Humphreys, ability to identify if there is a Conservative Councillor who holds racist views, as in this case. Can you now reassure us that there will be an independent investigation where pertinent questions are asked of all the Conservative Councillors.*

The Leader replied that as Mr Wills was no longer a Councillor, there was nothing more we can do in that regard. The Conservative Party was conducting an investigation and that was not a matter for this Council.

Councillor McCabe proposed a motion without notice, under Council Procedure Rule 15.1(d), to request that the issue raised under Maureen Purcell's supplementary question, be referred to Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The motion was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman and following a vote, approved by Council.

**\* The meeting was adjourned at 7.21pm and reconvened at 7.35pm**

Following an adjournment to request legal advice, the Mayor advised that the vote on the previous motion stands, with the matter being referred to JOS. Accompanying the referral would be legal advice that the review, as requested, would be in relation to all Councillors, not just the Conservative Councillors, in order to comply with the Equalities Act.

*Samuel Baeza asked whether the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services would say that he was wrong to support Mr Wills on a public platform during the previous election.*

The Executive Member replied that clearly, knowing what we know now, he regretted any support previously offered to former Councillor Tim Wills. He had called out and would critique the comments as being abhorrent, if true, so it was not a matter for him to say anything other than hindsight was a great thing and clearly he would remove himself from any association with Mr Wills, whose views he did not share.

*As a supplementary question, Mr Baeza asked why Cllr Crouch didn't say this when he found out?*

The Executive Member replied that the matter was under consideration and that statements had been put out by the Conservative Party and the Leader of the Council. He was happy to condemn the comments, which were wrong and abhorrent.

### **C/30/21-22                      Announcements by the Mayor, Leader of the Council, Executive Members or the Head of Paid Service**

The Mayor placed on record the Council's condolences in the event of the tragic death of MP Sir David Amess and asked that a minute's silence be held to enable a moment of reflection.

The Mayor also paid tribute to two Past Mayors/Honorary Alderman Michael Parkin and Brian McCluskie who had passed away and said that their contribution to the council would not be forgotten; the Council's condolences were sent to their families.

The Mayor informed council that the past few weeks had been challenging and reminded all members that they were elected to serve the people of Worthing with fairness and equity and to act in a way that did not bring the Council into disrepute.

The Mayor had undertaken several civic duties, including:

- opening the Salvington Mill Fun Day;
- hosting the High Sheriff of West Sussex and his wife to a Town Hall tour and tour of the town centre;
- meeting members of Worthing Shakers, a support group for people who suffer from Essential Tremor Symptoms;
- unveiling two Blue Plaques: one at the Dome for Carl Seebold who originally opened the Dome as an entertainment centre and the other was outside the Town Hall building for Ellen Chapman the 1st female Mayor of Worthing. The latter had been a project that had involved both the Mayor and Mayoress and he thanked the Town Hall team and the Worthing Society for their help and support and all those who contributed to their crowdfunding campaign to pay for the plaque;
- launching the Worthing Mental Health Awareness week.

The Mayor and the Mayoress had also attended several Military Commemorations and events. These were:

- the drumhead service outside the Town Hall to dedicate the Worthing Veteran's Standard and to remember 3 Royal Naval veterans that "passed over the bar";
- the Canadian Memorial Day;



- the RBL Lantern Relay in Shoreham;
- the Battle of Britain Service;
- the 80th anniversary memorial for the sinking of HMS BROADWATER; and
- a very successful first Worthing Veterans' Dinner/Dance.

The Mayor raised awareness of the recent Baby Loss Awareness Week and asked that the Council consider marking and recognising this event in the future.

The Mayor had been approached by Worthing College to provide the council with an overview of the Colleges Week 2021; a nationwide week of celebration organised by the Association of Colleges that shone a spotlight on Further Education colleges, highlighting the work achieved by students and staff - as well as campaigning for fairer funding for education. It was noted that Worthing College looked forward to welcoming the councillors to get involved in celebrating their local college and to remind them of the outstanding education offered to students in the Worthing Area.

The Mayor asked members to support Worthing Symphony Orchestra and their concerts; as WSO was a real asset for Worthing.

The Mayor announced that he was holding a New Year's Bash in support of his mayoral charities and asked members to support the event.

There were no announcements from the Leader, Executive Members or the Interim Chief Executive.

#### **C/31/21-22                    Items raised under Urgency Provisions**

There were no urgent items raised under the urgency provisions.

#### **C/32/21-22                    Recommendations from the Executive and Committees to Council**

Council had, before it, recommendations from the Joint Governance Committee, the Joint Strategic Committee and the Joint Senior Staff Committee.

Extracts of these minutes had been circulated as items 7A(i) and (ii), 7B(i) and (ii), 7C, and 7D.

#### **Item 7A(i)                    Joint Governance Committee - 29 July 2021**

##### **Joint Governance Committee Appointments: Parish Councillors**

The Chairman of the Joint Governance Committee, Cllr Roy Barraclough, presented and proposed the recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee meeting held on 29 July 2021.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman.

Following a vote (For 20, Against 0, Abstentions 14) it was

**Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council approved the nomination from Lancing Parish Council of the appointment of Cllr Mike Mendoza as a Co-opted Member of the Joint Governance Committee for 2021/22.

**Item 7A(ii) Joint Governance Committee - 29 July 2021**

**Conferment of Honorary Alderman - Paul Baker**

The Chairman of the Joint Governance Committee, Cllr Roy Barraclough, presented and proposed the recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee meeting held on 29 July 2021.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman and unanimously supported by the Council.

**Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council approved that a special meeting of the Council be arranged, under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act, for the specific purpose of conferring the title of 'Honorary Alderman' to Paul Baker.

**Item 7B(i) Joint Strategic Committee - 7 September 2021**

**Downview and Rowlands Road update**

The Leader presented and proposed the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 7 September 2021.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Heather Mercer and unanimously approved.

During debate, a member raised concerns about the budget overspend and initial survey work. The Leader responded that the problems identified couldn't have been known about until the building works commenced and that he remained reassured.

Councillor McCabe expressed his support for the project and wished to place on record his thanks to Councillor Thorpe for her work on the Ethical Landlord Scheme.

**Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council approved the Registration of Worthing Borough Council as a Registered Social Landlord and authorised the Monitoring Officer to make consequential amendments to the Constitution arising from the registration.

**Item 7B(ii) Joint Strategic Committee - 7 September 2021**

**Protecting our Coastline - Worthing Coastal Protection Scheme**

The Leader presented and proposed the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 7 September 2021.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Kevin Jenkins and following discussion in relation to both the outline business case and consultation, was unanimously supported by the Council.

**Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council approved the amendment of the 2021/22 Capital Investment Programme to include the revised Phase 1 capital project for structural works to the groynes and shingle nourishment work.

**Item 7C                      Joint Strategic Committee - 7 October 2021**

**Towards a Safer Adur and Worthing- Introducing the Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership Strategy (2021-2024)**

The Leader presented and proposed the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 7 October 2021.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Roy Barraclough.

Members wished to place on record their thanks to officers for their work on the strategy and following a vote, was unanimously supported by the Council.

**Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council approved and endorsed the strategy.

*\* Dr Catherine Howe left the chamber before consideration of Item 7D.*

**Item 7D                      Joint Senior Staff Committee - 8 October 2021**

The Leader presented and proposed the recommendation from the Joint Senior Staff Committee meeting held on 8 October 2021.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Beccy Cooper.

Following a vote (For 31, Against 0, Abstentions 3) it was

**Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council approved the appointment of Dr Catherine Howe as the Chief Executive of Adur and Worthing Councils on the following terms and conditions:-

- i. The JNC (Joint Negotiating Committee) conditions of service for Chief Executives will apply;
- ii. The salary will be £134,000 plus Returning Officer fees;

- iii. The appointed person shall be the Councils' Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer; and
- iv. In line with the Councils' employment policies, the post attracts casual user allowance and membership of SOLACE.

*\*\* Dr Catherine Howe returned to the chamber prior to the consideration of item 8.*

**C/33/21-22                      Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by the Executive and the Joint Strategic Committee since the last meeting of Council**

The Leader of the Council presented his report on decisions taken by the Executive since the last Ordinary meeting of the Council, which were detailed in Item 8.

Questions were received in relation to HealthyAW, the Worthing Leisure Centre Hammer Throws Cage, retention of the TTRO in Montague Street, the Denton Gardens Petition and Carbon Neutral 2030.

**C/34/21-22                      Decision Making following a change to the membership of the Conservative Group**

Before the Council was a report by the Interim Director for Communities, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 9.

The report before members highlighted a change to the membership of the Conservative Group and consequently, a change to the political balance of the Council and advised in regards to the re-calculation of political balance.

The report further outlined decisions required to ensure that committee appointments were determined according to the relevant legislation.

The following nominations were received:-

1. Cllr McCabe proposed that Cllr Hazel Thorpe be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Joint Governance Committee. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Daniel Humphreys.
2. Cllr Humphreys proposed that Cllr Nicky Waight be appointed as the 15th member of the Worthing Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Steve Waight.
3. Cllr Beccy Cooper proposed that Cllr Jon Roser be appointed as the 15th member on the Worthing Licensing & Control Committee 'A & B'. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Daniel Humphreys.
4. Cllr Beccy Cooper proposed an amendment to Appendix B, that Cllr Carl Walker be replaced by Cllr Rosey Whorlow, on the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The recommendations in the report and the nominations outlined above, were proposed by Cllr Daniel Humphreys, seconded by Cllr Beccy Cooper and unanimously approved by the Council.

## **Resolved,**

That Worthing Borough Council noted the revised political balance of the Council as outlined in paragraph 3.4 of the report and appointed to the Committees in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups, as set out above and detailed in Appendix B, as amended.

### **\* The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8.55pm and it was reconvened at 9.05pm C/35/21-22                      Members Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12**

The Mayor announced that the Proper Officer had received 12 questions from Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12. He advised that one supplementary question could be asked which must arise out of the original question, or, the reply.

Questions would be asked in rotation of the Groups represented in the Chamber and there were 30 minutes allowed for questions with 5 rotations of speakers possible. At the end of 30 minutes the Mayor explained that he would extend the time to conclude the current rotation of questions.

The Mayor announced that the following Councillors had submitted questions:

Councillors Sally Smith, Louise Murphy, Dawn Smith, Rosey Whorlow, Dan Coxhill, Henna Chowdhury, Russ Cochran, Charles James and Noel Atkins.

#### **First rotation:**

#### **Question 1 from Councillor Sally Smith to the Executive Member for Resources**

*Current Public health data show that our young population In Worthing has a lower level of obesity than the national average. However, this trend does not continue into the adult population, where levels of obesity are higher than the national average, with the attendant health risks? How can the Health and Wellbeing team address this discrepancy?*

The Executive Member responded that the Wellbeing programme worked with people around healthy lifestyles through 121 support. The Council knew from the data that obesity rates were correlated within areas of deprivation. The Wellbeing programme was targeted in areas of deprivation and provided tailored support for adults who were contemplating and / or ready to make changes to their lifestyle, including weight management. The team worked with people with a BMI 25 -30 and would work with those classed as obese - BMI 30 - 40 as long so long as there was no co morbidities.

Through motivational interviewing (focusing on the person and their strengths and motivations) the Advisors helped people to make respective changes to their lifestyle and where appropriate connected them up to other services / community led provision. Whilst the majority of those the Council worked with (through self referral and GPs) were women, the Council was also focused on working within workplaces to help reach more men.

#### **Question 2 from Councillor Louise Murphy to the Executive Member for Customer Services**

*Could the Executive Member please inform the council how much government funding has been received to assist with our homelessness prevention work this year and how that has been used?*

The Executive Member advised that Worthing Borough Council had received £361,732 in homelessness prevention grants and £620,212 specifically to reduce and prevent rough sleeping.

Since the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the number of households presenting at risk of homelessness especially single vulnerable people with complex needs. Furthermore, the number of working people moving into the area had made renting privately more difficult as they were able to pay rent making it more difficult to prevent and relieve homelessness as landlords were reluctant to accept social welfare benefits.

The Council had been working with small scale developers to increase the number of private rented accommodation available to those at risk of homeless. The scheme currently had 66 properties and the Council had reached an agreement with a landlord to provide 21 new refurbished properties to the scheme. To increase the number of move-on accommodation available to single vulnerable people, the Council had pioneered an arrangement with private sector landlords to lease empty HMO properties to the Council for a short period of time. At the end of the short lease, the residents were 'floated off' with the landlord on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy.

The Council had recruited 2 additional staff to assist with homelessness prevention and relief.

The Council does a lot of joint work with WSCC Early help and DWP, and the Council has now extended that to Mental health hospital, Probation and Prisons, Worthing and Brighton Hospitals and social services to improve the number of people it prevents from being discharged into homelessness. The Council was part of a multi-agency young persons panel that collaborated on preventing young people from becoming homeless.

Since the 'Everyone In' Scheme ended the Council had created specialist temporary accommodation (TA) for single people with complex needs. This accommodation provided Out-Of-Hours security for single vulnerable people placed in TA on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and at adhoc times during the week. This had reduced the amount of antisocial behaviour in these accommodation and also improved the prospect of these single people being rehoused as they could demonstrate that they could sustain accommodation independently.

The Council also provided visiting support for all households in temporary accommodation.

The Council funded an Employment and Skills worker to connect those who were either at risk of homelessness or who had experienced homelessness into employment opportunities.

The Council had established referral pathways with registered social landlords so that they could refer their tenants at risk of eviction to the Council for joint prevention work.

The Council provided support including funds to prevent those at risk of homelessness from losing their homes and the Council contributed to funding floating support with WSCC to support households of any tenure or age to sustain their accommodation.

## **Second rotation**

### **Question 3 from Councillor Dawn Smith to the Executive Member for Regeneration**

*Does the Executive Member for Regeneration have any plans to enhance the street scene of Broadwater Bridge as the gateway to our town centre?*

*I ask this as the Cabinet Member for Highways at West Sussex County Council has suggested there may be an 'appetite' by the Borough Council to invest in the bridge. This was relayed to myself and Cllr Turley, after we asked about the state of the Bridge on behalf of many local residents in Broadwater and Gaisford who consider it to be an eyesore as it currently presents.*

The Executive Member responded that now that the Council had acquired the Teville Gate site, there was indeed a great opportunity to improve this important gateway to the Town.

In the immediate term, the Council would be replacing hoardings at the southern end of the bridge and tidying up the site. The Council was also advertising to bring forward leisure based meantime uses to bring activity and interest at Teville Gate and to create a safer environment.

The bridge itself is part of a key route for our Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP) and presented a significant opportunity to work with the County Council to improve the walking and cycling connections with the town centre.

Partnership work with the County Council was already underway to improve Railway Approach and this would form a natural extension of the programme to upgrade and improve the public realm.

Funding to deliver public realm and cycling and walking improvements would benefit from development of the wider Teville Gate site and the investment it brings.

### **Question 4 from Councillor Louise Murphy to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services**

*With recycling rates having risen to such impressive levels in recent years, does the Executive Member have any plans to enable household collections of other items that can't currently be collected for recycling?*

The Executive Member replied that the Council was continuously looking for opportunities to minimise waste and to increase reuse and recycling in line with the waste hierarchy in its drive to become more sustainable. The Executive Member was pleased to say that the Council's recycling rate had continued to rise from 41.7% for the period April - September 2020 to 47.2%, for the same period this year, an increase of 13%.

The Council currently offered a comprehensive recycling service, collecting a wide range of materials including paper, card, cans, glass, foil and cartons as well as an optional

garden waste collection. In addition, in the next few months, the Council would be launching a collection service for waste electronic equipment. Electronic items contain materials which have high value if recycled, but which also have an adverse impact if disposed of with residual waste.

As part of the new service residents would be able to place small domestic appliances such as kettles, toasters, hair dryers and remote controls alongside their refuse or recycling bin and these items would be collected separately.

Through a communication campaign the Council would encourage residents to donate higher value items which can be reused or repaired (such as phones, laptops and larger appliances) to local charities and repair cafes to give them a new lease of life.

The Council would be sharing further details in the next few weeks regarding the launch of this service.

### **Third rotation**

#### **Question 5 from Councillor Rosey Whorlow to the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing**

*Health officials have expressed concerns about the capacity of the NHS to cope this winter, given the possibility of both covid and flu circulating freely. Additionally, many hospitals nationally are experiencing severe staff shortages.*

*Can the Executive member for health update us about the position in Worthing?*

The Executive Member responded that the Council had asked the NHS for this information and was awaiting a response.

#### **Question 6 from Councillor Dan Coxhill to the Executive Member for Regeneration**

*Member please update the council on the plans to purchase and redevelop Teville Gate?*

The Executive Member was delighted to confirm that the Council had now purchased the site for a sum (£7m) - well within the budget set out in a report to the Joint Strategic Committee and Council earlier in the year.

### **Fourth Rotation**

#### **Question 7 from Councillor Rosey Whorlow to the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing**

*There had been a significant increase in the use of e-scooters across the town, but particularly in the town centre and on the promenade.*

*Nationally, e-scooter sales have risen 232%, they are sold as reaching up to 50mph. but are not fitted with any safety features such as audible warnings.*



*However public awareness of the law around e-scooters is low. Most are unaware that it is against the law to ride an e-scooter on a public road or pavement, with up to £300.00 fines and driving licence penalty points for those who break this law.*

*A YouGov survey recently discovered that 92% people who have encountered e-scooters have done so on the pavements. Half of those surveyed said that the e-scooters were being driven unsafely.*

*When used in public spaces shared by pedestrians, accidents involving e-scooters are 10X that of cyclists.*

*E-scooters are fast and silent, and people with disabilities such as vision impairment have little or no warning that they are approaching.*

*The charity 'Guide Dogs', state that guide dogs and other service dogs are particularly at risk of near misses and other incidents, with research demonstrating that 68% of the visually impaired felt far less confident to leave home due to their perceived risk of an e-scooters related incident.*

*Taken together; the lack of safety features, noise, weight, speed and frequency of which they are used on pedestrianised public spaces such as the town centre, e-scooters pose a significant risk to pedestrians, but to people with sight loss in particular.*

*How much success has there been in the regulation of illegal e-scooter use to protect pedestrians in the town centre and on the promenade?*

The Exec Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that he had been chairing a Task & Finish Group for West Sussex County Council.

He advised that the Council was working with West Sussex County Council, as the highways authority, to determine a proactive approach to manage e-scooters across Worthing. It was noted that e-scooters were completely illegal for use on the road, the public highway. They should only be used legally on private land. The responsibility for enforcing the legislation laid with the police, however, this was not happening across Sussex.

The Exec Member acknowledged that the e-scooters were a nuisance but at the same time, a fabulous alternative form of transport.

E-scooters were being considered in the context of the Council's commitment to delivering Bike Share, as national conversations were emerging around e-scooters as another form of sustainable travel. The Council would continue to work with county colleagues, the police, and other services to assess and deliver an appropriate approach.

### **Question 8 from Councillor Dan Coxhill to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services**

*Can the Executive Member provide an update on the work to improve Brooklands Park, in particular with regard to the new playground equipment and cafe that have been promised?*

The Executive Member advised that the tender for all landscape works to include the play area, paths, cafe, bins benches, new planting and new cafe was currently 'live' with final bids due in two weeks' time.

Once the bids were in, the Council would then be undertaking an evaluation process to ensure value for money and quality to find the best contractor to build the scheme with a view to getting on site as quickly as possible to deliver this major project for Worthing.

The Executive Member was very pleased to confirm that the new playground had been designed with an emphasis on accessibility for all and that the cafe would incorporate a changing places facility.

## **Fifth Rotation**

### **Question 9 from Councillor Henna Chowdhury to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services**

*Does the Executive Member agree with me, that in order to encourage and improve recycling, we need to make available and accessible more than the existing SMALL NUMBER of recycling bins in public spaces such as Parks, Town Centres and General walkways.*

The Executive Member was pleased to say that the Council's recycling performance continued to improve in Worthing. In the first six months of this year the Council's recycling rate increased to 47.2%, up from 41.7 % for the same period last year, an increase of 13%. This fantastic achievement was down to the efforts and commitment of all its residents and its waste and recycling teams providing the service.

Recycling bins on the Council's sea front and in public spaces could contribute further to its performance. However the Council's own experience and much of the experience across the rest of the country was that it was notoriously difficult to prevent contamination in these bins. Sadly a minority of people will throw non-recyclable waste into the recycling bins. When this happens it risks the whole load on a collection vehicle being rejected and having to be disposed of.

Despite these concerns the Executive Member was pleased to say that the Council's recent trial with six recycling bins on the seafront had been very positive so far, with very low levels of contamination. Since the bins were installed in mid-August the Council had collected just over a tonne of recyclable materials in them. The Council would continue to monitor the performance of these bins and use the lessons learnt to inform roll out to other areas.

*Cllr Chowdhury asked when the Council would collect food waste as a supplementary question.*

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services advised that the Council was collecting commercial food waste and was working with West Sussex County Council (disposal authority) as a key partner. There was a need to provide residents with options, such as composters or caddies.

## **Question 10 from Councillor Russ Cochran to the Executive Member for Regeneration**

*With planning permission having been granted, when can we expect more news on the construction of the 152 new homes at Fulbeck Avenue?*

The Executive Member was delighted to say that the Boklok team had moved onto the Fulbeck Avenue site and were completing some of the initial site set up works and the installation of a sales office.

1. The site security and Sales cabin would be delivered in the next two weeks;
2. In early November site works commence with infrastructure works;
3. Foundations would be installed early in the new year;
4. 1st Modular homes start to arrive in March 2022;
5. The Affordable apartments and Phase 1 of the open market sales will complete in 2022;
6. Phase 2 will complete in Spring 2023.

*A supplementary question was asked in relation to the status of the planned park adjacent to the site.*

The Executive Member replied that it did link into the wider West Durrington Estate. The phase 1 development of the site included provisions for a full size football pitch, changing facilities and a community centre at the north of the site.

### **C/36/21-22                      Motion on Notice**

Before the Committee was a report by the Interim Director for Communities, which had been circulated to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed version of these minutes.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Margaret Howard and seconded by Councillor Emma Taylor.

**Resolved,**

In accordance with the Constitution, the Motion was noted and immediately referred to the Joint Strategic Committee.

### **C/37/21-22                      Motion on Notice**

Before the Committee was a report by the Interim Director for Communities, which had been circulated to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed version of these minutes.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Helen Silman and seconded by Councillor Emma Taylor.

The motion was unanimously supported by Council.

## **Resolved:**

That Worthing Borough Council notes that:

1. In May 2019, Parliament approved a Motion declaring an Environment and Climate Emergency.
2. In July 2019 this Council declared a Climate Emergency.
3. This Council organised a Citizens' Assembly, held between September and December 2020, and accepted the 17 recommendations of the Assembly, notably one calling for action to enhance habitats and biodiversity.
4. The Council has direct control over Global Warming Gas emissions only in its own estate and operations, but also notes that it can lead others to change and respond to climate change by setting the best possible example and by cooperating and enabling others to do the same.
5. The Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill is currently before Parliament, it is supported by 115 members in the House of Commons and some 30 peers drawn from 8 political parties. 112 Local Councils including Adur District Council, have already noted it.
6. If the Bill becomes law it will ensure:
  - a) that the Ecological emergency and the Climate emergency are tackled together with equal commitment to both.
  - b) that UK Governments will legislate to ensure that greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to a level consistent with a global temperature increase on pre- industrial levels not exceeding 1.5%.
  - c) that the Leaders' Pledge for Nature becomes legally binding to ensure that the UK's ecosystems are protected and restored focussing on biodiversity, soils and natural carbon sequestration such as occurs in peat lands and forests.
  - d) that the UK takes responsibility for the whole of our greenhouse gas emissions' footprint (including those from consumer goods, shipping, flights and land based transport ) by incorporating into the calculations for UK emissions those that occur overseas in the manufacture, transport and disposal of the goods and services we import into the UK.
  - e) that the UK takes full responsibility for our ecological footprint so that we protect the health and resilience of ecosystems along our domestic and global supply chains.
  - f) that an independent, temporary Climate and Nature Assembly is formed, representative of the UK's population, to engage with the UK Parliament and Government to contribute to the development of an emergency strategy to meet the Climate and Ecological Emergency confronting us.

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The Mayor closed the meeting at 10.01pm.

Mayor