

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

**QEII Room Shoreham Centre**

**7 December 2021**

Councillor Neil Parkin (Chairman)

**Adur District Council:**

Angus Dunn  
Carson Albury  
Kevin Boram  
Emma Evans

**Worthing Borough Council:**

Kevin Jenkins  
Edward Crouch  
Sean McDonald  
Elizabeth Sparkes

**\*\* Absent**

**Other Members Present**

Adur District Council:- Councillor Lee Cowen

Worthing Borough Council:- Councillors Beccy Cooper, Jim Deen, Margaret Howard, Cathay Glynn-Davies, Helen Silman and Vicki Wells

**JSC/60/21-22          Declarations of Interests**

Councillor Angus Dunn declared a personal interest in Item 8 as a member of Southwick Community Association.

**JSC/61/21-22          Minutes**

**Resolved**, that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 November 2021, were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**JSC/62/21-22          Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public.

**JSC/63/21-22          Items Raised under Urgency Provisions**

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

**JSC/64/21-22          2nd Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (Q2)**

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 report updated the Joint Strategic Committee with the latest expenditure and income projections for each Council in the current financial year 2021/22, compared with the

Revenue Budget approved by both Councils in February. Whilst the 'spend to date' would be the position as at the 30th September 2021, the forecast position would reflect the latest information available to ensure an up-to-date forecast was presented.

As at quarter 2, the current projection for the 2021/22 financial year were net operational budget overspends of £260k in Adur and £1.479m in Worthing. Government funding in the form of grants and the Income Guarantee Scheme would offset this and it was currently estimated that the outturn position would be a net overspend of £42k in Adur and a net overspend in Worthing of £211k. A breakdown was set out in section 4.4 of the report.

A Member asked questions about overspends in respect of waste and recycling agency staff costs and the expected increase to disposal costs associated with commercial food waste. Officers advised that the market for HGV drivers had required the payment of market supplements in order to attract and retain existing employees. It was noted that HGV drivers were essential in the running of a waste collection service and the additional costs had been built into the budget for 2022/23. Whilst they presented a cost pressure during the 2021/22 financial year, they would cease to be a cost pressure in 2022/23. In relation to agency staff, there were two factors to consider, the first was Covid which had created higher absence rates than usual and need for increased use of agency staff to maintain staffing levels and the second was that the use of street sweeping operatives to crew up on waste when there were absences had not proven to be a successful initiative.

The recommendation as set out in the report was unanimously supported by the Committee.

### **Decision**

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

### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for the decision will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021.

### **JSC/65/21-22            2nd Quarter Capital Investment Programme & Projects Monitoring 2021/22**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and 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 updated the Joint Strategic Committee on the progress made with the 2021/22 Capital Investment Programmes for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council. The programmes included schemes which supported the delivery of services by the Joint Strategic Committee.

A member asked questions about the scheme referenced in paragraphs 6.1 and 7.1.1 of the report, the IT / Digital Programme, in relation to the additional cost of transferring material to the cloud and whether this money was due to be paid to Capita. Officers confirmed that the money was due to be paid to both Capita and for additional support to

the team to assist with the migration. It was a significant system which every resident could potentially be affected by if the Council did not do this work well. The migration work had taken longer and been more complex than initially anticipated.

The recommendations as set out in the report were proposed by Councillor Angus Dunn, seconded by Councillor Emma Evans and unanimously supported by the Committee.

## **Decision**

The Joint Strategic Committee:

### **(a) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme of Adur District Council**

- i) noted the reprofiling of the Adur District Council capital schemes as advised in paragraphs 7.2.1 and Appendix 3;
- ii) approved the increase in the Disabled Facilities Budget in line with the forecast expenditure funded from Better Care Fund Grant as detailed in paragraph 7.2.3;
- iii) approved the virements totalling £45,000 to fund the anticipated overspend on the Lancing Manor Leisure Centre Car Park access reconstruction and security improvements as detailed in paragraph 7.2.4;
- iv) approved the virement of £32,600 to fund the anticipated overspend on the land drainage scheme to realign the ditch and stabilisation of banks in the vicinity of Larkfield playing field, Lancing as detailed in paragraph 7.2.5;
- v) approved the virement of £164,750 to fund budget pressures in the joint services ICT digital programme as detailed in paragraph 7.1.1;
- vi) approved the use of capital receipts to increase the 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Equipment Replacements Budget to £147,100 as detailed in paragraph 7.1.2;
- vii) approved the use of the Section 106 receipts to fund recreational equipment at Buckingham Park as detailed in paragraph paragraph 7.2.6.

### **(b) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme of Worthing Borough Council**

- i) noted the reprofiling of the Worthing Borough Council capital schemes as advised in paragraphs 7.3.1 and Appendix 4;
- ii) approved the increase in the Disabled Facilities Budget in line with the forecast expenditure funded from Better Care Fund Grant as detailed in paragraph 7.2.3;
- iii) approved the amendment to the Portland House replacement of windows and balcony doors and ancillary works budget to include the Salix funding and match funding as detailed in paragraph 7.3.3;

- iv) approved the virement of £164,750 to fund budget pressures in the joint services ICT digital programme as detailed in paragraph 7.1.1;
- v) approved the use of capital receipts to increase the 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Equipment Replacements Budget to £147,100 as detailed in paragraph 7.1.2;
- vi) approved the use of the Section 106 receipts to fund recreational equipment at Bourne Close and Northbrook Recreation Ground and the amendment to the 2021/22 Capital Investment Programme to include the scheme as advised in paragraph 7.3.4;
- vii) approved the use of the Building Maintenance Reserve to fund the urgent replacement of play equipment at Gull Island and the amendment to the 2021/22 Capital Investment Programme to include the scheme as detailed in paragraph 7.3.5.

### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decisions will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021.

### **JSC/66/21-22                      Towards a sustainable financial position - Budget development update**

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 report provided members with a progress report on the delivery of our financial strategy for 2022/23, along with details of the proposals that would help deliver a balanced budget for the next financial year and beyond.

The report outlined the medium term financial challenge through to 2026/27 and updated members on government funding proposals.

Contained within the report were specific budget proposals to increase income, to deliver efficiency, and other savings initiatives for 2022/23. Members were asked to support the savings proposals.

It was noted that the report had been to the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee and that the Committee had not raised any comments in relation to the proposals contained within the report.

The recommendations as set out in the report were proposed by Councillor Angus Dunn, seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Sparkes and unanimously supported by the Committee.

### **Decision**

The Joint Strategic Committee

- (i) noted the current 5 year forecasts at appendix 1;

- (ii) noted the committed growth items as set out in appendix 2; and
- (iii) approved the proposed savings as set out in appendix 3.

#### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decision will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021.

#### **JSC/67/21-22 Investing in our Places - Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25**

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 8.

The report recommended the investment programmes for both Councils which supported both the strategic ambitions of the Councils, and the vital regular investment toward the upkeep and improvement of their public assets.

For the past few years the Councils had approved a two year capital programme on a rolling basis. This time last year the Councils approved a two-year programme for 2021/22 to 2022/23. However in the light of the pandemic, it was now proposed to review the proposed programme for 2022/23 and only set an indicative programme for 2023/24 which would be reviewed next year in the light of the new Councils strategy which was due to be developed. Members were now asked to approve the new schemes for 2022/23. This report recommended:

- the schemes for inclusion in the overall Capital Investment Programmes for 2022/23; and
- an indicative list of schemes for 2023/24 which would be confirmed next year.

The report also informed the Joint Strategic Committee of the resources available for future capital investment, and updated Members about the financing of the proposed programmes.

The Committee welcomed the report and requested that the following items be starred to ensure consultation as indicated below:-

1. Item 27 - Cemeteries - Lancing and Sompting, hard landscaping of land to be used for the extension and also installation of a new boundary fence - in consultation with the ADC Leader and Executive Member for Resources;
2. Item 28 - Parks and Open Spaces Art Work - in consultation with the ADC Executive Member for the Environment; and
3. Item 37 - Contingency provision for urgent / priority schemes, inflation and unavoidable overspends - in consultation with the ADC Leader.

#### **Decision**

The Joint Strategic Committee

- a) considered the General Fund Capital Investment Programmes for 2022/23 and 2023/24 and confirmed the schemes to be included as detailed in Appendix 2, 3 and 4;
- b) recommended the full programme detailed at Appendices 5 and 6 for approval by the respective Councils on the 16th December 2021 (Adur) and 14th December 2021 (Worthing); and
- c) noted the amendments and additions to the reserve lists as detailed in Appendices 7 and 8.

### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decisions (a) and (c) will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021. There is no call-in for recommendations (b) to Adur and Worthing Councils.

### **JSC/68/21-22                      Mid Year Review of Treasury Management 2021-22, Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the 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 9.

The report asked Members to note the Treasury Management mid-year performance for Adur and Worthing Councils at the 30 September 2021, as required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.

A member sought clarification regarding the role of Link Treasury Services Ltd, whether their report (appended to the Committee report) was mandatory and how much their service cost. Officers advised that the report was not mandatory and that Link were the Council's current Treasury Management Consultants who's key function was to advise on risk associated with the Council's counterparties. The Councils were due to go out to the market shortly to tender for this service, although it was noted that the contract was relatively small at £7k per year.

The recommendations as set out in the report, were unanimously supported by the Committee.

### **Decision**

The Joint Strategic Committee

- i. noted the contents of the report and approved the recommendations for additions to the counterparties contained in section 4.3;
- ii. noted that the contract for Treasury advice was due for renewal on 1 April 2022 and that the Chief Financial Officer would be re-procuring the contract.

### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decision will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021.

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 10.

Members were asked to recommend to their respective Full Councils the Council Tax Support Schemes in respect of 2022/23.

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council noted the report and its recommendations but wished to propose that for Worthing Borough Council, the Committee did not accept the recommendations to keep the Council Tax Support Scheme as proposed but explore a new scheme that did not include the £5 minimum per week for working age households. He therefore wished to propose an amendment to the recommendations if possible.

Officers advised that in relation the timeline for delivering the change, consideration had been given to the delivery in 2022/23. Having assessed the timeline, there was a technical possibility that the change could be implemented in 2022/23 but the advice was that it ran a number of significant risks. They were:-

- notification to precepting authorities would be required by the end of the week (10th December), delivering a notice period of just 14 days;
- the revised scheme and proposed consultation would need to be presented to the Joint Strategic Committee on 11 January 2022, providing a public consultation period of just 14 days;
- a material shock to West Sussex County Council and Police partner budgets and an impact on their budget setting processes;
- the estimated £875k reduction in income would be shared by the County, Police and Borough, with an estimated impact on the County Council of £670k and the Police of £88k;
- a significant impact on partner relations going forward in relation to such an immediate change; and
- the risk of Judicial Review for lack of fair notice.

Therefore, Officers advised the Committee that in light of the risks identified and in order to allow sufficient time to implement the proposed changes, the introduction of a revised Council Tax Support Scheme in 2023/24 be considered. A report would be brought to the Joint Strategic Committee in January 2022 to outline a timeline for the proposed changes and to explore any other salient matters.

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council proposed the following amendment to the recommendations:-

- c. With respect to the Worthing Borough Council working age Council Tax Support Scheme, that the Joint Strategic Committee:
  - i. Agrees that the £5 weekly restriction be removed as soon as possible;
  - ii. Notes that on the advice of officers that the risks of changing the scheme at this point mean that we cannot now change for 2022/23 due to the timescales available to develop and consult on a revised scheme;
  - iii. Recommends to Worthing Borough Council:

1. That the discretionary budget to support those in severe financial difficulties should be retained;
  2. Given the inability to change this scheme for 2022/23, that it should be based upon the scheme for 2021/22 with the £5.00 weekly restriction retained; and
  3. No other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit
- iv. Requests that a scheme be developed for 2023/24 which removed the £5.00 weekly restriction and started the consultation process with the precepting bodies as soon as possible.
  - v. Notes that a report outlining the options for the new scheme, the consultation process and associated timescales to be presented to members in January 2022.
  - vi. Requests that officers investigate the feasibility of a discretionary hardship scheme for 2022/23 similar to the current scheme of £150 per household with a report to be presented to the Joint Strategic Committee by March. 2022.
  - vii. Requests officers to investigate other measures to alleviate hardship and consider how to fund this as part of the budget process.

The proposed amendment was seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Sparkes and supported by the Committee.

## **Decision**

That the Joint Strategic Committee

- a) noted the contents of the report;
- b) recommended to Adur District Council that the Council Tax Support scheme for Adur District Council in respect of working age customers for 2022/23
  - i. Should be based upon the scheme for 2021/22 with no restrictions; and
  - ii. No other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit.
- c) with respect to the Worthing Borough Council working age Council Tax Support Scheme:-
  - i. agreed that the £5 weekly restriction be removed as soon as possible;
  - ii. noted that on the advice of officers, the risks of changing the scheme at this point meant that we cannot now change for 2022/23 due to the timescales available to develop and consult on a revised scheme;
  - iii. recommended to Worthing Borough Council:
    1. That the discretionary budget to support those in severe financial difficulties should be retained;
    2. Given the inability to change this scheme for 2022/23, that it should be based upon the scheme for 2021/22 with the £5.00 weekly restriction retained; and



3. No other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit
- iv. requested that a scheme be developed for 2023/24 which removed the £5.00 weekly restriction and started the consultation process with the precepting bodies as soon as possible;
- v. noted that a report outlining the options for the new scheme, the consultation process and associated timescales be presented to members in January 2022;
- vi. requested that officers investigate the feasibility of a discretionary hardship scheme for 2022/23 similar to the current scheme of £150 per household with a report to be presented to the Joint Strategic Committee by March 2022; and
- vii. requested officers to investigate other measures to alleviate hardship and consider how to fund this as part of the budget process.

### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decisions (a), (c) (i), (c) (ii), (c) (iv), (c) (v), (c) (vi) and (c) (vii) will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021.

**\* At 7.22pm, Councillors Boram, Dunn and Evans left the meeting in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.**

**JSC/70/21-22            Teville Gate next steps and London & Continental Railways (LCR Property) Partnership**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 11.

The report updated the Committee on the financial implications of completing the purchase of the site, on a workstream to open up a footpath crossing the site, and to deliver meanwhile uses while the permanent development is being brought forward.

Approval was sought to continue negotiations with London & Continental Railways Property for them to invest in the site and to jointly work with them on the development.

Approval was also sought for the proposed approach to delivering development on the site.

A member sought clarification about the climate aspects of the development, including temporary use of the site, and the £300k set aside for improvement works. Officers advised that a climate budget had not yet been calculated but that it would be considered as part of the planning process. The £300k was the budget envelope covering a number of things including the footpath, bringing utilities onto the site, lighting and replacement hoardings.

The Committee welcomed the report and the proposed partnership approach. Members expressed their support for the temporary usage of the site whilst encouraging officers to consider permanent locations for the temporary uses.

### **Decision**

## The Joint Strategic Committee

- I. noted the update on access and meanwhile uses set out in Section 4;
- II. Delegated authority to the Head of Major Projects & Investment in consultation with the Leader of Worthing Borough Council and Executive Member for Regeneration, to enter into an Agreement, in accordance with the Heads of Terms set out in the Appendix C for the purpose of securing the development of the Teville Gate Site;
- III. Delegated authority to the Head of Major Projects & Investment to continue to negotiate terms of the draft Heads of Terms set out at the Appendix C and to make any required amendments; and
- IV. noted and agreed to the Development Strategy summarised in Section 6 and in full at Appendix D.

### **Call In:**

The call-in deadline for decision will be 5.00pm on 17 December 2021.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7.44 pm, it having commenced at 6.30 pm

### **Chairman**