

**Minutes of a meeting of the  
Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

**Council Chamber, Worthing Town Hall**

**17 March 2022**

Councillor Charles James (Chairman)  
Councillor Richard Nowak (Vice-Chairman)

**Adur District Council:**

Joss Loader  
Ann Bridges  
Carol Albury  
Vee Barton  
Mandy Buxton  
Joe Pannell  
Sharon Sluman  
Debs Stainforth

**Worthing Borough Council:**

Jon Roser  
Sally Smith  
Vicki Wells  
Rosey Whorlow

**Absent**

Councillor Louise Murphy and Councillor Daniel Humphreys

**Substitutes**

**JOSC/1/61/21-22 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declaration of interests or substitute members

**JOSC/1/62/21-22 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members

**JOSC/1/63/21-22 Confirmation of Minutes**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting of the 27 January 2022 be approved as the correct record

**JOSC/1/64/21-22 Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public

**JOSC/1/65/21-22 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions**

There were no urgent items

**JOSC/1/66/21-22      Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee in relation to a call-in of a decision**

There were no call-ins

**JOSC/1/67/21-22      Review of the delivery of 'Platform for our Places': Going further 2020/22 and interview with Chief Executive**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director for Digital and resources, a copy of which had been circulated to all members, a copy of which is attached to a signed copy of these minutes as item 7. The report before members provided the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) with an overview of progress on the delivery of the commitments set out in Platforms for our Places: Going Further over the period July to December 2021.

The Chief Executive was at the meeting to present the report and answer questions from Members

A Member asked the following question: *Platforms for Our Places: Going Further 6 months progress report is described as an 'Autumn and Winter Recovery' strategy. The Omicron variant was identified in the UK in November and as we know, it spread rapidly. What lessons about strategic planning during a pandemic can be learnt from the impact of the Omicron variant?* Members were told that data was important and would help quick reaction in the right place. Health inequalities were being addressed. There was value placed on resilience of the organisation and time would be taken to achieve this.

A Member asked the following question: *I was disappointed, to say the least, to learn that funding for the One Stop Employment Youth Hub in Marine Place was due to cease at the end of this month. The Hub provides an invaluable service in preparing clients for employment and aiding their mental health. Has any new funding been secured for this project and if not, are you exploring ways and means of continuing this valuable work alongside the DWP?* Members were told that the Chief Executive shared the disappointment that the DWP funding was no longer there. However there was work ongoing to find further funding streams

A Member asked the following question: *Paragraph 6.21 on agenda page 20 - Platform 3 discusses WSCC EV Network. Enabling truly 'green' transport will be a key deliverable for the Net Zero Vision. I welcome opportunities being explored for Hydrogen fuel for Transport and freight vehicles. Focusing on the existing, conventional vehicles in our waste fleet - does the Waste Team's research also include the adaptation - through conversion using fuel cell technology - and/or the gradual replacement of conventional vehicles with new hydrogen powered alternatives? If the later, is there a waiting time for these new vehicles and what is it?* The Committee was told of the process for fleet strategy and how this might run along developments with other partners such as the green hydrogen hub being developed by Shoreham Port and Ricardos as well as innovative thinking about the fleet there was also a need to consider how the Councils designed rounds for the vehicles

A Member asked the following question: *Platform 1 Prosperous places - Page 16 Paragraph 6.4 - I was very pleased to read that a lease agreement has finally been*

*agreed with Audio Active. It seemed a long time in coming. But can you tell us more about the proposed timeline for this initiative to be finally up and running? To what extent, if any, will the council be contributing to the funding of this initiative? To what extent, if any, will the council be involved in the support of the initiative moving forward?* Members were told that the Council had helped unlock £100k of funding to assist bringing AudioActive to Worthing. The organisation was a social enterprise that was a massive asset to Worthing and the Council was assisting further by helping the organisation network.

A Member asked the following question: *My question relates to Paragraphs 5.5 and 6.12 (Pages 13 and 17) and the accompanying paper 'proactive interventions to support low income residents'. This report contains very little information as to how the system identifies who needs help - and - more worryingly - no-one on Universal Credit is currently included in the piece. So, we have potentially thousands of households on UC who are being plunged into hardship, and no current means of identifying and proactively targeting interventions toward those affected. Whilst 164 people have been helped, which is significant for each person and a great start, we know that this is a drop in the ocean of the numbers of people who are suffering hardship. Would the CEO consider that if the Proactive Project worked alongside our networks of communities, and 3rd sector organisations, it could use these networks to scale up from 164 people, and really start to connect with people on UC, and tackle the enormous scale of misery and hardship our residents face?* Members were told of the lack of frustration around the lack of Universal Credit advice. There was an indication that information on Universal Credit would be available from April 2022. Members were told about the proactive approach and how this worked with partners.

A Member asked the following question: *It is impressive and pleasing to note that the Gigabit Fibre Programme has made good progress and now reaches 32,000 homes. What provision is there for digital inclusion please? Specifically for families on low incomes who cannot afford the most basic internet packages, rendering children unable to access homework and adults unable to access basic services, since most of this is now online?* The Committee was told that digital inclusion was an important issue and that provision of public wifi access points was the best answer. Other issues included access to devices and digital literacy. The council was providing access to devices and skills via different locations in Worthing.

A Member asked the following question: *The identification of sites for electric vehicle charge points is also mentioned. Can you confirm if charging points will be installed in all 31 sites identified - if so, how many points are being installed - and what is the timescale for completion?* Members were told that the Councils had delivered a list of sites West Sussex County Council and their partners. An analysis would be undertaken. Members were also given some information about the types of charging that were being considered.

A Member asked the following question:

A Member asked the following question: *'Dare To Dream' is designed to raise aspirations of young people in secondary schools with a focus on those most at risk of disengaging, using a preventative approach". Which partners are working with the council on this? How are you raising the aspirations of the families and communities who raise our young people and therefore directly influence the developing aspirations of our young people?*

Members were told of projects focusing on the development of skills and ways to make connections between young people and local employers.

A Member asked the following question: *The Time For Worthing partnership offers a significant opportunity to boost the local tourists trade and local events and businesses, however a number of local traders are saying that they remain fairly underwhelmed so far by the impact that this has made on Worthing's brand values. It is mentioned on page 16 that the council has been working with partners to deliver the new website and visitors guides. To what extent are the Councils' partners directly involved in the reimagining of our Brand Worthing, also local independent business and traders? To what extent has the BID and the TCI been involved?* Members were told that Time for Worthing needed to work on a number of levels. Members were told that the background of the release coincided with the national lockdown. The Committee was told of the diverse range of bodies represented which included the Town Centre Initiative, the Business Improvement District and other groups including youth groups as part of a blended management group.

A Member asked the following question: *Paragraph 6.20 on page 20 The schemes funded under the public sector decarbonisation programme are welcomed. There was another fund for a part of £500 million that was being allocated to local authorities through the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme. This sets out to improve the energy efficiency of homes of low-income households, helping reduce fuel poverty, phasing out high carbon fossil fuel heating, and delivering progress towards the UK's commitment to net zero by 2050. There was £79m across the South East. Did the Council apply for this fund, and if not, why not?* Members were told that the Council was part of a consortium that had secured over £15m of funding to deliver home improvements to over 1500 on gas properties.

A Member asked the following question: *Platform 2 'Thriving People and Communities' talks about the co-location of an Independent Violence Domestic Advocate (IDVA) with the Housing Needs team. Can you confirm this appointment has taken place?* Members were told that the appointment had been made and a person was in place.

A Member asked the following question: *Paragraph 6.35 on agenda page 24 - Platform 5 discusses developing relationships with our communities and highlights the need to develop closer working relationships with our diverse and often excluded communities. Which minoritised ethnic community groups have engaged with this relationship building (and out of these, what age groups were represented). Are there groups that you have targeted that haven't engaged and if so, what measures are you taking to address this?* Members were told that a piece of work had been commissioned with the group 'bridging change' to undertake work with minoritised communities and Citizen's Advice to develop Community Champion's work. They had been asked to engage with a variety of groups.

A Member asked the following question: *Time For Worthing have worked with the Council to produce a new website and visitor guide. This sounds impressive and I'm sure has been welcomed by local businesses. How effective has this been in attracting visitors to the area? How is this effectiveness measured? Are these guides available digitally and in physical paper format? If these are available in physical paper copy, how has the environmental impact and cost been mitigated? Is a similar offer available in Adur?* Members were told that the guides were widely available across the south east. Hard copies were being reduced as digital access increased. Success rates were measured by digital access along with marketing campaigns being attributed with qr codes to monitor

the impact of regional marketing. With regards to Adur something different was needed. Stories needed to be developed around the different places in the District.

A Member asked the following question: *Platform 2 Thriving People and Communities. What will be the next step, moving forwards, to develop the Healthy AW Team service ensuring that it extends its reach, and raises an awareness of its services such as the 'Going Local Initiative', the Wellbeing Hubs and the Alcohol Wellbeing Advisor in order to reach more Adur and Worthing residents and is there also some sort of intervention that follows up on residents who have relapsed in their alcohol use?* Members were told that work was being undertaken with the Comms team to increase the reach of the service to support people experiencing health inequalities. The dedicated Alcohol Wellbeing Advisor post would continue to develop ways to reach and engage with the target audience, which was: people who were drinking at risky and higher risk levels. This was a difficult group to engage as there could be shame and or denial associated with drinking. Often it took an event, such as a relationship breakdown or health issues associated with drinking, to lead people to seek support.

A Member asked the following question: *Platform 3: Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment Plans to deliver the Worthing Heat Network are admirable. Can you tell us when procurement begins and, importantly, have the necessary underground investigations determined that the project is viable? How much will the Heat Network contribute towards our net carbon target?* Members were told that procurement was due to begin in April 2022. There was also an investment in viability work concerning sewers. The heat network was due to save 3000 tons of carbon annually across Worthing.

A Member asked the following question: *Purchase of Shepherds Mead, Pad Farm and New Salts Farm are welcome. What is the data on CO2 reduction resulting from the purchase of these areas?* Members were told that the purchase itself would not necessarily bring about carbon reduction. However work planned at Shepherds Mead, New Salts Farm and Pad Farm would include a calculation of carbon sequestration brought about by habitat restoration and creation as part of the strategic nature recovery work.

**Resolved:**

- i) That JOSC notes the overview of progress in delivering the commitments and activities in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further';
- ii) That when the next Corporate Strategy has been developed, JOSC received further progress reports and interview the Chief Executive on the Delivery of the new Strategy

**JOSC/1/68/21-22 Strategic Approach to Seasonal Concessions in Adur and Worthing**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for the Economy, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes, a copy of which had been circulated to all members. The report before members provided the Committee with a detailed understanding of the approach being undertaken to deliver Seasonal Concessions across Adur and Worthing and how they supported economic activity.

The Head of place and Economy was present at the meeting to answer questions

A member asked the following question: *Given that there is a finite amount of space along the promenade in Worthing and that the space is shared by cyclists and pedestrians, is there a maximum number of pop up businesses that will be licensed along Worthing seafront.* Based on the positive feedback received about the concession programme, the Councils had grown the available areas to a manageable but yet visible programme in recent years. The Authorities were mindful not to have too many concessions on Worthing seafront as the promenade had multiple uses, so the current number was foreseen as the maximum. However, things did change and the officer would liaise with Members and adapt the programme based on feedback if it was needed. It's worth noting that the authorities restricted concessions to a maximum of 3 tables and 12 chairs for this very purpose as well, with all running east west, rather than north south to not hinder the overall promenade.

A Member asked the following question: *Paragraph 5.2 on agenda page 60 - With the increase of concessions operating along Marine Parade - licensed concession traders who are not permitted to leave their vehicles at the licensed location overnight, are often seen parked nearby along Marine Parade in "car parking only" spaces after the close of business instead. What will you do to further support these small local businesses and increase provision of 'any vehicle parking' availability - so that they can park nearby to their allocated licensed locations?* Members were told that the current programme was designed for businesses to 'setup' and 'set down' on the same day, with businesses responsible for their units whilst not accessing their concession site. For all of the businesses, they take their unit back to their home premises. There were 3 businesses that currently parked on Marine Parade, all of which were local residents – all based in Central Ward - in the controlled parking zone. The Council was in dialogue with those concession operators to seek alternative parking provision and, where possible, encourage businesses to work together to find solutions. For example, some were exploring the option to share combined storage parking out of town. The businesses were keen to work with the Councils to explore this as these businesses had experienced break-ins to their trailers when parked on Marine Parade overnight.

A Member asked the following question: *What work has been done to assess the financial impact of concessions on existing 12 local businesses, who operate from fixed premises all year round?* The Committee was told that the Councils had not undertaken any particular research but was mindful of the need for the businesses as part of the concession programme to not hinder but provide 'added value' to the locality they served. Where possible the Councils tried to place concessions in areas where there wasn't direct competition with existing businesses in fixed premises. The Councils continually listened to feedback from all quarters regarding the programme and barring a few comments coming out of the first lockdown, there was not awareness of any formal complaints from the business community about the programme. There were a number of fixed premise businesses expanding to have a concession licence as well.

A Member asked the following question: *While 'meanwhile uses' are increasingly popular, some businesses in our town centre feel that they are disadvantageous to shops/Cafe owners etc who have greater overheads plus provision of facilities such as toilets and handwashing. How can a balance be achieved between competing needs?* Members were told that there was interest from the existing business base. It was understood that there was a need to balance the value of the programme as not to hinder the businesses who had fixed premises. The offer was very different - with different challenges and

opportunities for both. The Councils, where possible, sought to avoid putting 'similar' businesses in the same vicinity, which came back to how many and where the Councils had cluster opportunities.

A Member asked the following question: *When does the Council plan to mandate, rather than encourage sustainability features such as solar power? For example at events in Steyne Gardens last summer diesel generators were widely used.* The Committee were told that where possible power points would be installed to move away from generator power. The Council was now moving towards discouraging certain types of fuel and encouraging sustainable practices and materials.

A Member asked the following question: *I'm pleased to see a joined up and strategic approach to seasonal concessions. We have seen in PFOP the commitment to help small businesses to thrive. What measures can the Council introduce to support small businesses running seasonal concessions to thrive?* The Committee was told that those businesses taking seasonal concessions were automatically plugged into business support opportunities through the Economic Development team. When opportunities were presented, for example grant funding, marketing and promotion or skills support, they were included in those circulations. Equally, the Council and Time for Worthing, continued to 'spotlight' a number of operators to increase visibility of that business and the programme as a whole. Furthermore, Officers were always on hand to listen to thoughts and ideas from the businesses as to how the programme, and wider support, could be improved. The team asked for evaluation forms after each season, with questions including 'how did you find the support' from the Councils. This helped shape our future programmes across the Service, not only for concessions.

**Resolved:** That JOSC notes the overall approach to Seasonal Concessions to deliver place-based interventions and activities to support local businesses and provide additional destinations for our communities and visitors to enjoy.

#### **JOSC/1/69/21-22      JOSC Working Group - Review of the Adur and Worthing Evening and Night-time economy**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director of Digital, Sustainability and Resources, a copy of which had been circulated to all members, a copy of which is attached to a copy of these minutes as item 9. The report set out the recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) Working Group which was created as part of the JOSC Work Programme to review the Adur and Worthing evening and night time economy (ENTE).

The Chairman of the Working Group introduced the report to the Committee and took questions on the content of the report. Questions were asked about groups that had been involved in the review.

**Resolved:** JOSC consider the report and recommendations from the ENTE Working Group and refer the recommendations to the Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) for consideration in due course.

#### **JOSC/1/70/21-22      JOSC Work Programme setting 2022/23**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources, a copy of which had been circulated to all members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 10. The report before Members outlined progress in implementing the work contained in the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) Work Programme for 2021/22. The report also includes a draft JOSC Work Programme for 2022/23 for consideration.

Members discussed the situation regarding vulnerable people being moved to temporary accommodation outside of the District and Borough. It was agreed that an item be added to the Work Programme for further investigation into the processes and impact involved.

Members agreed that the work programme as amended be submitted to Council for approval.

**Resolved:**

- i) That JOSC note the progress in delivering the JOSC Work Programme for 2021/22;
- ii) That JOSC confirm draft Work Programme as amended for 2022/23;
- iii) That the amended draft JOSC Work Programme for 2022/23 be reported to the Council meetings in April 2022 for approval.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.15 pm, it having commenced at 6.30 pm

**Chairman**