



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

5 October 2021

Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date:	14 October 2021
Time:	6.30 pm
Venue:	Remote Meeting via Zoom

Committee Membership:

Adur District Council: Councillors; Joss Loader (Adur Chairman), Ann Bridges (Adur Vice-Chairman), Carol Albury, Vee Barton, Mandy Buxton, Joe Pannell, Sharon Sluman and Debs Stainforth

Worthing Borough Council: Councillors; Charles James (Worthing Chairman), Richard Nowak (Worthing Vice-Chairman), Russ Cochran, Louise Murphy, Jon Roser, Sally Smith, Carl Walker and Tim Wills

Agenda

Part A

1. Declaration of Interests

Members and officers must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in relation to any business on the agenda. Declarations should also be made at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting.

If in doubt contact the Legal or Democratic Services representative for this meeting.

2. Substitute Members

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To approve the minutes of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of held on 16 September 2021, copies of which have been previously circulated.

4. Public Question Time

So as to provide the best opportunity for the Committee to provide the public with the fullest answer, questions from the public should be submitted by 12.00pm Tuesday 12 October 2021

Where relevant notice of a question has not been given, the person presiding may either choose to give a response at the meeting or respond by undertaking to provide a written response within three working days.

Questions should be submitted to Democratic Services
democratic.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk

(Note: Public Question Time will operate for a maximum of 30 minutes.)

5. Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

To consider any items the Chairman of the meeting considers to be urgent

6. Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee in relation to a call-in of a decision

7. Interview with Executive Members for Resources (Pages 1 - 6)

To consider a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources, copy attached as item 7

8. Delivering 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' - Progress report January to June 2021 (Pages 7 - 54)

To consider a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources, copy attached as item 8

9. Covid-19 response - Economic recovery, support for the vulnerable and health and wellbeing review (Pages 55 - 76)

To consider a report by the Director for Economy, copy attached as item 9

10. Crime and Disorder Scrutiny - Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership (Pages 77 - 80)

To consider a report by the Director Digital, Sustainability and Resources, copy attached as item 10

11. Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2021/22 (Pages 81 - 98)

To consider a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources, copy attached as item 11

Recording of this meeting

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

For Democratic Services enquiries relating to this meeting please contact:	For Legal Services enquiries relating to this meeting please contact:
Chris Cadman-Dando Democratic Services Officer 01903 221364 chris.cadman-dando@adur-worthing.gov.uk	Joanne Lee Solicitor 01903 221134 Joanne.lee@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Duration of the Meeting: Four hours after the commencement of the meeting the Chairperson will adjourn the meeting to consider if it wishes to continue. A vote will be taken and a simple majority in favour will be necessary for the meeting to continue.

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ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

Interview with Executive Members for Resources

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out background information on the Portfolios of the Adur and Worthing Executive Members for Resources to enable the Committee to consider and question the Executive Members on issues within their portfolios and any other issues which the Executive Members are involved in connected with the work of the Councils and the Adur and Worthing communities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee consider any information or representations provided from the Executive Members on the work within their Portfolios, priorities and areas of focus; and
- 2.2 That the Committee ask questions of the Executive Members on the progress being made to achieve the priorities within their Portfolios and make appropriate comments or recommend suggested action to the Executive Members for their consideration.

3. Context

- 3.1 As part of its Work Programme for 2021/22, the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) has agreed to interview the Leaders and all Executive Members on their priorities for 2021/22.
- 3.2 As part of its fact finding/investigative role, JOSC is asked to consider the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Members for Resources. It is part of the scrutiny role to fact find/investigate in the form of questions and JOSC is asked to direct questions to the Executive Members on any issues within the responsibility of the Adur and Worthing Councils that relate to their Portfolios.
- 3.3 The Committee is entitled to ask for further investigation or make recommendations into items where it may not be satisfied with the progress as described.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The Executive Members are responsible for the following delegated issues:-
- Budgets (including the overall allocation of Revenue and Capital), external funding.
 - Capital programme.
 - Local taxation (benefit fraud, non-domestic rates).
 - Property and asset management, facilities management, estates (including Southwick Square shops), property terriers, corporate property (not in other portfolios) and non-housing property repairs. (Adur)
 - Property and Asset Management, including the Town Hall and Portland House sites; non-housing property repairs, corporate property, terriers, property not included in other portfolios, estates management. (Worthing)
 - ICT (client side), telephony and eGovernment - Data Protection, Freedom of Information, information security and web team. Includes the CenSus IT Partnership (Adur).
 - Procurement, including contracts.
 - Personnel and staffing (where Executive functions), including organisational development, occupational health and learning and development of staff.
 - Other central support services.
 - Internal Audit and audit fees.
 - Digital transformation programme.
 - Treasury Management including investments, loans, leasing and banking matters.

- 4.2 JOSC is requested to ask questions of the two Executive Members based on their responsibilities outlined in Paragraph 4.1 above. Further information on work strands connected with the Portfolios can be found in the commitments and activities of ['Platforms for our Places: Going Further 2020-2022'](#) which sets out the Councils role in developing places and communities and also the ['And Then' document - Bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing](#) which sets out the Place based activities and interventions that Adur and Worthing Councils will take to enable the communities to thrive, prosper, be healthy and resilient during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 The JOSC Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen and the Executive Members have been consulted on the proposals contained in this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications to consider within this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 JOSC is responsible for holding the Executive Members to account, reviewing their work and decisions and in accordance with the procedures outlined within the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in the Councils' constitutions, can request Executive Members to attend its meetings.
- 7.2 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 7.3 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Councils to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.

Background Papers

- Information on Executive Members and their Portfolios is included on the Adur & Worthing Councils website;
- 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further 2020-2022';
- 'And Then' document - 'Bouncing back in Post pandemic Adur & Worthing - Place based activities and interventions that Adur & Worthing Councils will take to enable our communities to thrive, prosper, be healthy and resilient following the pandemic of Spring 2020.

Officer Contact Details:-

Mark Lowe

Scrutiny & Risk Officer

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Matter considered and no direct issues identified but issues contained in the Executive Member Portfolios can impact on and influence the local economies.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered. No direct issues identified but issues contained in the Executive Member Portfolios can improve social value.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered. No direct issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered. No direct issues identified.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no direct issues identified.

3. Environmental

Matter considered and no direct issues identified in the report

4. Governance

Matter considered and no direct issues identified in the report. JOSC is responsible for holding the Executive Members to account on issues for which the Councils are responsible and matters that are contained within their Portfolio areas and the process for this is set out in the JOSC Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

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ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14 October 2021

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected:N/A

Delivering 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' - Progress report January to June 2021

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides 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 January to June 2021.
- 1.2 This report will also assist JOSC in questioning the Interim Chief Executive on the progress in delivering the commitments and activities in '*Platforms for our Places: Going Further.*'

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That JOSC note the overview of progress in delivering the commitments and activities in '*Platforms for our Places: Going Further*' and question the Interim Chief Executive on this; and
- 2.2 That a further progress report on the delivery of '*Platforms for our Places: Going Further*' be requested to be presented to JOSC in March 2021 as part of the JOSC Work Programme.

3. Context

- 3.1 As part of the Work Programme for 2021/22, JOSC has agreed to review the progress in delivering the commitments and activities in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' in October 2021 and March 2022 and also question the Interim Chief Executive on the progress.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 JOSC is asked to consider the progress update on the delivery of the activities in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further', details of which are set out in the copy of the report attached as the Appendix to this report which was presented to the Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) on 13 July 2021. The JSC has also requested that its report be referred to JOSC for consideration.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 the Joint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of JOSC and the Councils Leadership Team have been consulted on the proposals contained in this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are some financial implications arising from the overall 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' document which are covered under the overall budget process.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Councils have the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 7.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a Best Value Authority to make continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Background Papers

'Platforms for our Places: Going Further 2020-2022' - Adopted by Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils in December 2019

'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' six month progress report to Joint Strategic Committee - 13 July 2021

Officer Contact Details:-

Mark Lowe

Scrutiny & Risk Officer

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Creating and enabling Prosperous Places is one of five Platforms for development in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further'. The progress report attached as the Appendix to this report provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils have been working to develop this Platform.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Thriving People and Communities is one of five Platforms for development in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further'. The progress report attached as the appendix to this report provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this Platform.

- 2.1.2 A particular focus on several elements of 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' is how to build vital capacity within our communities and community partners to enable them to shape and lead our Places, while at the same time ensuring the Councils provide a robust 'safety net' for the most vulnerable.

2.2 Equality Issues

- 2.2.1 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' objectives include building the capacity of our communities, engaging with them to find solutions that ensure that our services (and interventions) are designed to meet specific needs and address areas and issues of historic disadvantage.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- 2.3.1 There are specific commitments in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' which relate to the promotion of communities as safe places. Delivery of these commitments are in progress.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- 2.4.1 Through the implementation of 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' the Councils are seeking solutions with other partners to enable our residents, communities and places to thrive.

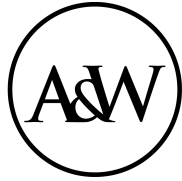
3. Environmental

- 3.1 Developing the Councils and communities role in Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment is one of five platforms for development in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further'. The progress report attached as the appendix provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this Platform.

4. Governance

- 4.1 This report provides the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the progress being made to implement 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further', the Councils three-year plan to enable our places to thrive. A progress report has also been submitted to the Joint Strategic Committee on 13 July 2021.

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ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
13 July 2021
Agenda Item 5

Key Decision No

Ward(s) Affected: All

“Platforms for our Places: Going Further” 6 Month Progress Report for January to June 2021.

Report by the Interim Chief Executive

1. Purpose

1.1 “Platforms for our Places: Going Further” is the Council's ambitious strategic programme designed to help create the healthy, prosperous and well connected communities our residents and businesses have told us they want to see.

1.2 This is the update report to the Joint Strategic Committee describing the strong progress made by the Councils in achieving these commitments and ambitions over the past 6 months.

1.3 This report reflects our shift from pandemic response and reflects the impact of the pandemic on the Platforms ambitions. Whilst progress against some of the commitments has slowed because of the pandemic, most are on track. The impact of the pandemic on other commitments has enabled them to develop further and faster (for example some economic interventions) than might otherwise have been the case. This report also picks up progress against the “And Then ...” objectives (Adur & Worthing Councils’ initial response to the easing of the first national lockdown)

1.4 Looking forward, we will be embedding the lessons we have learned from the pandemic and the opportunities it has given us to accelerate some of our strategic ambitions into the next phase of work on the Platforms strategy.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note and consider the 6 months progress report on the implementation of “Platforms for our Places: Going Further” over the period January to June 2021 and agree to refer this report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.

3. Context

3.1 In December 2019 Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils adopted “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” as the Councils’ direction of travel for the next three years.

3.2 “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” builds on progress under the previous Platforms agenda and sets out significant ambitions, it recognises we as Councils cannot and should not do everything for everyone. Our role as Councils (as well as providing great services and vital safety nets) is to create and maintain five essential platforms upon which our communities can build happy, healthy, prosperous and connected places.

3.3 “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” identifies five platforms underpinned by a series of commitments namely:

- 1) Prosperous Places
- 2) Thriving People and Communities
- 3) Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment
- 4) Good Services and New Solutions
- 5) Leadership of Place

Platform	Commitments	Activities & Projects
Prosperous Places	10	68
Thriving People and Communities	5	23
Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment	10	40
Good Services and New Solutions	7	43
Leadership of Place	6	18

Table A: Five Platforms and associated commitments, activities and projects

- 3.4 Progress reporting draws on the progress of the 192 projects and activities and the Councils' broader activities to provide a snapshot of progress in developing the 5 identified Platforms.

Status Indicators	Status Definitions
Blue	Completed
Green	In progress: on track and on time
Amber	In progress: but delays anticipated or minor issues to be resolved (no apparent 'show stoppers' identified)
Red	Significant difficulties in implementation
Grey	Yet to start

Table B: Status Indicators and definitions

- 3.5 Table B shows how the status of projects and activities are determined. In the light of the considerable amount of work required to respond to the pandemic, in this report "amber" should be taken to include things that either are delayed or have not yet started (the red and grey categories will be used in future 6 month reports).
- 3.6 All previous six-monthly update reports to the Committee have also been considered by the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JOSC).

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The progress report (Appendix A) provides an overview of highlights and challenges in the development of the 5 Platforms over the last 6 months, which has continued to be shaped by the challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic. Where relevant it also references "And Then ..." activities. The strong ongoing progress continues to demonstrate the ability of the Councils to respond to the complex challenges posed by the virus whilst maintaining a focus on the longer term commitments established in "Platforms for our Places : Going Further". For each of the 5 platforms we have identified a number of activities that seek to respond to the needs of our communities experiencing the pandemic, to build resilience and catalyse recovery action, and these are described in the progress reports.
- 4.2 Our experience over the past 12 months is that the platform's approach has provided a strong and creative framework for the Councils to provide quality and highly responsive public service in the most challenging of circumstances.

Our overall approach, characterised by adaptivity and resilience, has proven invaluable during the pandemic. Indeed, in the face of the many challenges, we have taken the opportunity to move further and faster on key commitments wherever possible. The speed and scale of the challenges we face continue but they are met by the appetite of communities, businesses and elected Councillors to respond with tenacity, speed and ambition.

- 4.3 The progress report provides an overview of the current status (in percentage terms) of Platform commitments. In evaluating the progress of these activities and projects, objective analysis has been employed and the overall assessment seeks to give a clear and accurate view of our progress.
- 4.4 These commitments are not “everything we do”. Whilst progressing our Platforms agenda we have continued to provide a full portfolio of universal services and essential safety nets to the communities we serve. Going forward, officers will be looking to address the impact of the pandemic on the resilience and design of these services to ensure that the learning and experience of the last year is captured and embedded in the organisation.
- 4.5 It is not intended, in this covering report, to comment on each and every issue flagged in the progress report. This is the first 18 months of a 3 year programme and these 18 months have been extraordinary in the life not just of these Councils, but across the UK.

5. Progress in the context of the Covid 19 Pandemic

- 5.1 COVID-19 has created an ongoing global public health emergency and its economic and social impacts continue to cause harm to individuals, communities and businesses across Adur and Worthing. We must expect that these impacts will last for some time creating increased and changing demands on public services. We are also constantly horizon scanning to better understand the challenges and opportunities for Adur and Worthing in the post pandemic social and economic context and these observations are also described in the report.
- 5.2 Beyond the personal and community damage caused by the virus, the potential fragilities of our economy and society have been exposed by the pandemic. Our work on better understanding and building resilience continues as a result. We see our work on building resilience as a process of increasing our ability to respond to the unexpected and, critically, give us the capacity to develop, change and improve as a result. The Councils see resilience as more than just gaining additional operating capacity, it is also about having an

adaptive workforce that can flex around shifting needs as well as a focus on removing unnecessary duplication or disconnection of skills within the organisation. Importantly, building resilience seeks to help our staff feel that they have what they need to do their job and that we remove constraints where need is growing or where operational issues hold back our ability to deliver our strategy and respond to community needs. This work is situated in our Good Services platform but will be reflected across all platforms.

- 5.3 The attached commitment trackers seek to summarise the progress made across the full breadth of the “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” programme. For each of the 5 platforms we have focused on key catalytic activities that have both responded to the needs of our community and started to build increased resilience across the district and borough. A number of these activities are highlighted below and are provided in more detail in Appendix A.

6. Lessons Across the Platforms during this 6 month period

- 6.1 Whilst the following sections of this report (and perhaps more significantly the Appendix of Commitment Trackers) gives a comprehensive view, it is worth pausing to look across the Platforms at the approach of the Councils during the past 6 month period.
- 6.2 The Councils have during this time sought to provide strong leadership of our places (often jointly with others) in the midst of a public health crisis that is unprecedented in recent times. Your officers have continued to move forward at pace with an ambitious agenda showing resilience and an ability to innovate. Adur and Worthing is rightly seen as a progressive organisation and we need to lean into this future perspective and deepen our work to modernise if we are going to face the challenges and opportunities of the post pandemic world robustly and effectively.
- 6.3 We have continued to perform well financially and delivered a balanced budget as a result of the government support received over the course of the pandemic. Our financial and operational performance has been helped by some impressive redeployment of staff to priority areas and high quality, cost effective in-house digital work. Operational leaders are now looking at the upstream impact of these redeployments to make sure that medium term plans and the need to address valuable maintenance and incremental improvements to services are back in focus for service managers.

- 6.4 Going forward, we will anticipate the need to plan to manage without the additional funding we have received during this extraordinary period while expecting considerable pressures on income from things like parking which represent a major challenge. The national skills investment programme provides significant opportunities to address historic and emergent skills gaps created by disadvantage and the pandemic, enabling residents to access new employment opportunities and local business to thrive. Beyond funding, our communities continue to grapple with the impact of the pandemic and there is a very real risk of sustained long term unemployment if we do not see a recovery in the retail and hospitality sectors. This makes our work to reactivate high streets as well as the medium to long term skills agenda critical to our recovery.
- 6.5 Our work with communities, supported by recent pieces of national research including the Marmot Review, have found that the pandemic has disproportionately affected those communities who were already experiencing significant health and wellbeing inequality. These groups include older people, those with pre-existing health conditions, those on low incomes and insecure employment and housing. The pandemic has also significantly affected black and minoritised communities, young people and those with disabilities. Very significant resources of £1.5 million have recently been secured from Central Government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) for 2021/22 to help reduce transmission and the effects of Covid 19 in these communities and progress on this investment will be described in the next 6 month review.
- 6.6 In many ways, a sense of greater connectedness is one of the positive outcomes from the pandemic; mutual aid groups and community response have been a huge success, supported by the Council's skills and infrastructure. There is much to build on here with more asset based practice, working alongside our communities, but in doing so we also have to acknowledge that our communities are also fragile and exhausted from the pandemic with a growing concern about mental health issues, especially in young people. Our staff similarly emerge from the pandemic rightfully proud of what we have achieved and we need to think about how we can help individuals build their resilience as we consider resilience at an organisational and systemic level.
- 6.7 As we start to look at the work needed to catch up on maintenance and other activities which were delayed through the pandemic we will continue to work closely with our communities as we prioritise and plan our work.

- 6.8 We have seen the benefit of the investment in our technology and a growing confidence around our planned investment around data. The new reality of our gigabit infrastructure raises the bar in terms of what can and should be achieved. Moving outside of the digital, our interest in modern methods of constructions and new environmental technologies means we need to look widely at the technical skills we need as an organisation. Our work on sustainability is amongst the best in the sector and beyond; and the report presented alongside SustainableAW on the agenda demonstrates the remarkable range of sustainability initiatives across our communities and businesses.

7. The 5 Individual Platforms

- 7.1 Members of the Committee are referred specifically to the Appendix to this report which sets out in greater detail some of the specific highlights and challenges of the last 6 months.

Platform 1 Prosperous Places

- 7.2 Of vital importance has been the distribution of over £57m in grant funding to almost 4,000 businesses across Adur and Worthing.
- 7.3 84 local businesses have benefited from the councils' Small Business Growth Grant and we have continued to work with the University of Chichester to promote the Coast to Capital wide HotHouse Programme which focuses support on financial, innovation and productivity skills for small and medium sized enterprises.
- 7.4 We know that we need to focus on skills to support economic recovery. Local data generated, for example through our Proactive project, but also directly from DWP and national studies has helped us to better understand the impact of the pandemic on key groups and has informed our focus on training and skills. We have continued to develop our “Good Work Programme” that assists people back into work, whilst also helping to address wider wellbeing issues such as mental health, domestic violence, vulnerable housing and addiction.
- 7.5 We have continued our successful Kickstart programme and more than 50 high quality work placements have been created for 16- 24 years olds across Adur and Worthing. The Councils are currently actively supporting 21 young people as part of this Kickstart programme and we will continue to take advantage of this government programme to help young people into work.

- 7.6 We have begun a workstream with local employers to look at the role of innovation in supporting economic recovery. As part of this, we have begun to explore the potential for an innovation centre and have played an active role in the development of Hydrogen Sussex with partners such as Shoreham Port; the Airport and other local employers and stakeholders.
- 7.7 Place based initiatives build confidence and support our town centres and high streets. We have purchased the former Lancing Police Station with a view to bringing this forward as a new community and co-working project aimed at helping people gain new skills and work. Portland Road, Worthing is on site and a further scheme to improve Railway Approach is being consulted upon by West Sussex County Council.
- 7.8 The creative and cultural economy is vital for our places. The business plan and planning permission have been agreed for Colonnade House to be rebuilt as a creative and digital hub. New exhibitions have been installed at the outdoor exhibition sites at West Buildings Shelter and the gabions opposite the Lido. The Council's are also supporting the return of running events such as the Three Forts Challenge and the South Downs Way 50.
- 7.9 We have secured capital funding; gained planning permission and reached a lease agreement with AudioActive to move former shop premises into Montague Street in Worthing. AudioActive will provide a range of activities from this site, including the opportunity for young people to gain essential knowledge and skills to enhance their prospects of securing employment.
- 7.10 The Councils have sought to secure public and private investment from a number of sources during this time and have, for example, worked with Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership in the development of regionally significant 'pipeline' projects. We have submitted projects for both Adur and Worthing to the national Levelling Up Fund in partnership with several of our major employers and with the support of our MPs.
- 7.11 Adur & Worthing Councils' pioneering investment in gigabit ultrafast infrastructure is progressing well and making the area one of the most digitally connected places in the south east. A total of 27,000 homes have now been passed, with Zen, Talk Talk and No-one broadband providers offering services to residential customers with a 1Gb service available for as little as £40 a month. Agreement on the Adur fibre exchange is almost complete and this will enable fibre build to commence east of the river. Whilst fibre build in Worthing town centre is now scheduled for a January 2022 start, Citizen WiFi

is still expected to begin rollout in 2021, building out from the fibre point at Colonnade House.

- 7.12 We have reached significant milestones on a series of important major projects. The Adur Civic centre redevelopment has reached the planning application stage and work continues on Free Wharf and as a series of major projects in Adur. New Monks Farm has reached the 100th new home built and infrastructure completed such as the new pumping station. We have also started work to consider the future of the Southwick estate, working closely with residents in order to identify the best path for regeneration.
- 7.13 We have completed a very significant £4.8m project to decontaminate Decoy Farm and make the site 'development ready'. The full business case for the ground breaking Worthing Integrated Care Centre, as part of a new Civic Quarter, has been agreed and a build contract is now being finalised prior to a start on site. Our partnership with London & Continental Railways (LCR) has moved forward to the point where we are now actively marketing Union Place to potential development partners. Another major step forward is that we have now extended our partnership with LCR to take forward a similar approach to securing the development of Teville Gate.

Platform 2: Thriving People and Communities

- 7.10 The impacts of the pandemic continue to be central to our work on the Thriving People and Communities platform with our focus as Councils, on keeping people safe, in supporting the recovery process and ensuring our communities are able thrive in the post pandemic context. The "Thrive" platform is central to this work and the last 6 months have supported activity around secure housing, strengthening our food networks, making sure support measures are in place for anyone who needs to self isolate as well as launching a work platform that is there to help people navigate the complex job seeking environment. Rather than seeing the pandemic as distracting from the Thrive agenda we have been focusing our work on this agenda to support communities and build resilience through this difficult period.
- 7.11 Continuing to underpin this approach has been our digital infrastructure (see Platform 4) where our in house Digital Team, working collaboratively with Communities and Customer Service, have built and developed our community response platform. The platform enables individuals to register for support, ranging from help with getting food to people requesting support with mental health and wellbeing and linking those people to volunteers or organisations

who also registered through the portal. Through this work we have supported 2355 people and continue to support 426 of these. In response to changing needs we have started looking to transition our community response work into a more self-managed peer support approach.

- 7.12 We have spent time over this period supporting and enabling the Adur and Worthing Emergency Food Network. Which includes three established food banks plus 12 new emergency food providers. A more preventative approach is being developed with groups aimed at helping people before they reach crisis point, and being there to help when they do. Work has also begun around food as a whole system, with the Councils providing a platform to connect across all aspects of food, from commissioning a community kitchen/ pop up community kitchen spaces, to developing work around food growing in our green spaces.
- 7.13 The Councils have adopted a Pathways to Affordable Homes strategy to deliver and/or enable the construction of 1,400 affordable homes by 2025. Work is underway on the major development at New Monks Farm and the final phase of the West Durrington scheme is progressing well. In Adur, redevelopment of Cecil Norris House is progressing at pace and Council contractors Westridge are now well underway at Albion Street transforming the disused brownfield site into much needed homes. Albion Street is just one of a number of schemes underway in the area which will help to provide a total of 100 new Council homes in Adur in the next couple of years. A key part of this work includes Adur's hidden homes programme seeking to deliver up to 57 new homes, In each of these projects the Councils have taken the initiative, established strong partnerships, developed a shared vision and done what is necessary to support businesses and build local homes.
- 7.14 Our focus on reducing homelessness continues and has made consistent progress in the last 6 months. We have worked hard to ensure the positive effects of the work undertaken through the 'Everyone In' approach during the first lockdown and we are working with a range of landlords to make similar offers of accommodation to everyone who is in need. A key part of this work has included development of our Housing First Offer (with funding support from MHCLG) and we are working to strengthen ways to introduce residents and landlords to the scheme before they are in crisis through "Opening Doors". The approach, which includes a range of incentives to sign up to the scheme, such as no commission or fees and a guaranteed rent for up to two years, is transforming our ability to help families most in need.

- 7.15 The wider community safety, health and wellbeing work being undertaken through this platform is extensive and seeks to be person centred and psychologically informed. Much of our work also draws on the principles of contextualised safeguarding as appropriate. In the period January to May 2021 there were some 339 referrals to the our social prescribing service 'Going Local' from over 16 GP surgeries across Adur and Worthing. This is an increase of 30% compared to the same period in the previous year. Key themes continue to include mental health, housing, finances, social isolation and lifestyle factors. Officers have just secured £66,000 for a OneStop Employment Youth Hub - to work in partnership with DWP to support 200 young people (16-24 year olds) who are claiming Universal Credit and who are struggling to find work, and who have additional issues that may prevent them to find employment. In January Adur Council secured a deal with South Downs Leisure to take over the running of Adur's leisure centres and ensure the provision of quality leisure facilities going forward. Adur also formed a partnership with Age Concern UK so that the charity can take over the running of Eastbrook Manor Community Centre and develop improved community services and activities in the area.
- 7.16 A very significant area of focus under the Thrive Platform but also the Platform 4 (Good Services and New Solutions) has been our multidisciplinary Proactive Project. Proactive uses data from our systems in new and smart ways to identify key groups at risk of financial exclusion. A cross service Proactive Team formed in February is bringing together colleagues from Customer Services, Wellbeing, Housing and Revenues & Benefits to undertake this work. The team uses data to identify specific groups that might benefit from targeted, proactive interventions that aim to increase household income and/or decrease household debt. The team uses an asset based approach and signposts residents to support available from inhouse teams and from outside the Councils. The work of the Money Mentors has been fundamental in developing this approach, ensuring access to good support and advice, and in sharing skills (such as motivational interviewing) and referral routes with the wider project team. Through Proactive and other referrals 'Money Mentors' has responded to 135 complex money referrals which has led to an increase of income of approximately £100k.

Platform 3: Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

- 7.16 Whilst Covid 19 had created a public health, economic and financial crisis the climate crisis has not gone away. To this end the Councils have continued apace with our *“Platforms for Our Places : Going Further”* and associated climate change, green space and biodiversity conservation actions. Through a number of energy, waste reduction and biodiversity initiatives the councils are successfully working towards its ambition of being a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030.
- 7.17 Supporting this agenda has been the establishment and delivery of the highly successful Climate Assembly, a representative group of 43 residents who presented their recommendations to the Joint Strategic Committee in January 2021. These recommendations are now informing the work of the Councils and members of the Assembly are participating in a range of civic initiatives linked to these sustainability priorities.
- 7.18 Investment in Adur and Worthing green spaces continues at a pace and includes developments at Brooklands Park, the new Forget Me Not memorial Garden at Worthing Crematorium and the £1 million upgrade to Highdown Gardens. The Brooklands Park Master Plan is progressing at pace and there is a separate report on the JSC agenda describing the work that will commence in the autumn including the construction of the new cafe, family leisure development, and landscaping and planting to encourage wellbeing through outdoor activity.

The purchase of Shepherds Mead, Pad Farm and New Salts Farm and our associated partnership working with the Environment Agency, the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, Surrey Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park and Sussex Wildlife Trust aims to secure much needed greenspace for local communities. The work also seeks to support our objectives around ecological protection by dedicating these sites for the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, enhancing biodiversity, and contributing to carbon neutrality.

Responding to the Climate Assembly recommendation, Adur & Worthing Councils have been working with partners in recent months to drive forward the restoration and management of the kelp forest and other “blue” habitats at the pace the climate emergency demands, and the purchase of Pad Farm and New Salts Farm in the Adur Estuary is a key investment in this programme. This work is being brought together under an emerging initiative called Sussex Bay, which aims to bring partners together, and build the funding and governance infrastructure needed to make a real impact. The Councils believe restoration of these habitats could create enormous opportunities for our

coastal communities in terms of new local jobs in fishing, aquaculture, recreation and tourism under the compelling identity of Sussex Bay, the blue counterpart to the South Downs. The project also offers significant opportunities for the Councils and their partners to offset their Carbon emissions as kelp and estuarine habitats are able to take up and store significant amounts of carbon. To progress this work the Councils are making excellent progress in forging a highly innovative partnership with The Crown Estate, who are owners of the seabed and in March 2021, an application for £79k was made to the DEFRA Investment Readiness Fund (IRF), requesting support for the financial and legal work required to create a trial product.

- 7.19 During the pandemic, work has been accelerating to develop a project pipeline to decarbonise the Councils' estate and offset residual emissions. In the past 6 months we have secured Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding to deliver £2m of capital projects identified as part of the Carbon Neutral Plan work with Technical Services and Adur Homes. Within a year, these should reduce emissions from the Councils' estate by approximately 12% and a pipeline of future projects. Projects include 2 large Heat pump projects, insulation and energy efficiency projects and solar PV installations. The Worthing Heat Network project is now approaching the commercialization stage for a £12m scheme and has had £250k support from BEIS to date. In March 2021 a BEIS HNIP funding application was submitted (for £6m) for Commercialisation & Construction funding. The scheme proposes to deliver a Worthing Town Centre heat network that will enable heat decarbonisation at scale based on a 3MW sewer source heat pump. The Worthing Heat Network project consists of 28 connections of which 18 are public sector buildings or with 7 owners, 16 are Worthing Borough Council owned buildings or sites. The Worthing Heat Network is expected to deliver 2454 tonnes CO2 savings per year when fully developed.
- 7.20 The Councils have been working with Ricardo, Shoreham Port and the Greater Brighton Economic Board to establish a Hydrogen Sussex Group that backs projects seeking to use the fuel, particularly in transport and heating systems and also helps position Greater Brighton as a centre of innovation and production. The Solar Together Sussex (STS) scheme, supported by councils across Sussex, including Adur and Worthing Council, is progressing extremely well. STS is a group buying scheme that enables residents to install high-quality, roof-mounted solar panels and battery systems at competitive prices. To date over 700 households in A&W registered interest to have PV and/or battery storage installed in their homes.

- 7.21 Our recycling rates continue to rise, with a 4.09% point increase on last year's rate in Adur, and 2.14% in Worthing. We collected 6,162.36 tonnes of recycling material in Adur, up 643.52 tonnes on last year, and we collected 10,772.87 tonnes of recycling material in Worthing, up 1,124.55 tonnes since last year. Overall we are still running at a 5.05% point increase on recycling rates compared to the pre alternate weekly collection rate.
- 7.22 The increasing interest in walking and cycling during the pandemic provides the Councils with the opportunity to support residents in making lower carbon journey choices, in improving exercise levels and achieving associated health and wellbeing outcomes. The JSC agenda has a further update on the proposed extension to the Brighton and Hove Bikeshare scheme to Adur and Worthing, including the development of a proposal to provide 322 bikes (including 161 e-bikes) to Adur & Worthing served from 43 hubs.

Platform 4: Good Services and New Solutions

- 7.23 The Councils have been and will continue to manage a period of significant financial uncertainty, with planning assumptions set at the beginning of the year needing near constant revision and updating. In financial terms there have been significant challenges in terms of income (e.g. car parking and other fees) and expenditure (for example, homelessness, leisure, emergency community support etc.). With prudent and robust financial management (and support from MHCLG) the Councils in 2020/21 have managed to both keep within budget and release resources where required for pandemic response.
- 7.25 The Proactive project and digital work referenced elsewhere are examples of how the councils are changing the way they work so they can be more responsive, more efficient and more effective. Collaborative, networked and data informed ways of working are increasingly being developed across the Councils' teams. To enable this work and release the potential of our staff, our learning offer has continued apace, upskilling and developing staff to gain the skills needed to develop as 21st century public servants leaders. We have adapted to the pressing needs of our people through our learning offer, providing resilience training, Mental Health First Aid training and management learning sets focusing on leading remote teams. Support for our leaders is key to the success of this approach and continues with the quarterly Leadership College bringing around 80 senior managers together to learn and develop together. The second cohort of the Leadership Lab is currently providing intensive development support to 14 of our most talented leaders.

- 7.26 An effective communication channel during the pandemic has continued to be our upgraded website (www.adur-worthing.gov.uk) where the Covid web pages have drawn many thousands of views, guiding people to advice, information and support including our community and business support schemes. This emphasises the importance of our website as a communication channel which has been designed to GOV.UK standards. We continually update and streamline our content in our efforts to make the site easier to navigate.
- 7.27 A significant outcome from the pandemic has been the ability of Councils to work differently and we are keen to avoid going back to an 'old normal' that no longer serves our staff or our communities. WorkspacesAW is a programme to deliver the transformation in our working model, post pandemic. Funded through income generated by the lease of part of Portland House, Worthing Town Hall will be refurbished, and different types of office space will be provided to support blended working (working from home, quiet office spaces, workshop spaces, meeting rooms with new audio-visual technology, improved WiFi) and improved customer services.
- 7.28 We have continued to develop our Good Services work with the appointment of a data lead who will be able to develop our data practice and capability.

Platform 5: Leadership of Place

- 7.29 In *"Platforms for our Places: Going Further"* and *"And Then ..."* we set out a range of place based leadership activities that, in the current context, we are seeking to actively develop further and faster. Our regional and national profile as a place of innovation and as being 'open for business' are continuing to bring forward exciting partnerships and opportunities.
- 7.30 As part of this work we fast tracked our place brand "A Time for Worthing" which is guided by a Management Board made up of local businesses, partners and third sector organisations. Since January, the focus has been on the visitor economy and, specifically, the staycation market in response to the Government's Roadmap. Successes include the refreshing of the Visitor Guide (released in June), a 'Summer in Worthing' campaign, whilst the most significant piece of work is an upgraded and broader website that will be launched in July. The next 6 months will see a combination of maximising the staycation messaging and a phase two programme of works around inward investment, which primarily will look to capitalise on the domestic market.

- 7.31 We continue to influence a range of partnerships and this has perhaps been most evident with the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB), Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership (LEP), West Sussex County Council, other District and Borough Councils, housing partners, various NHS and Economic bodies as well as the Police and Community Safety organisations. As part of the GBEB we are helping to shape the board's Covid recovery work and as a part of the LEP we are actively engaging with the "Building back Stronger, Smarter and Greener" plan. At a regional level, the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) has brought together a variety of local players to deal with the pandemic response at a Sussex wide level. As systems leader we are supporting, driving and leading a wide number of economic and sustainability projects including Sussex Bay, Hydrogen Sussex, and our affordable homes programme.
- 7.32 With regard to Community Safety we have been working with Sussex Police and our community safety partners on the development of our next Safer Communities Strategy which includes a focus on developing safer spaces and places for women within our communities. As part of this work we continue to focus on building the partnership response to serious and acquisitive crime and the harm caused to vulnerable people. We have been developing a multi-agency response to reducing school exclusions and tackling youth violence through mentoring and outreach. As described above our housing partnerships continue to work well together, skillfully and compassionately seeking to provide rapid and comprehensive support to those affected by homelessness.
- 7.33 We have developed better relationships with our communities through the pandemic and our experience of closer working and deeper trust, especially with our diverse and often excluded communities, means we are able to work more effectively. Maintaining and developing this improved way of working will be critical if we are to support those in need now and prevent further disadvantage and inequality from taking root in our communities in the future. Our work with the local Community and Voluntary Sector as part of this is developing well. We have built stronger relationships with the growing food network and mutual aid groups in Adur and Worthing and have shifted into a more enabling and supporting role as we move through the pandemic. Officers have recently secured significant Covid funding and are using some of this in creative ways to support and enable the sector and improve health outcomes for our communities. We have also begun to develop our Asset Based Community Development Communities of Practice to improve and strengthen our work with communities.

8. Engagement and Communication

- 8.1 As outlined in the progress report, engagement with our communities and partners has proved critical in realising our objectives and delivering the individual commitments outlined in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” over the last 18 months. This remains an important area of focus and one for continual development as we move forward.
- 8.2 Delivery of specific projects are communicated through the Councils’ communications channels, press releases, social media etc. as appropriate.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no unbudgeted financial implications in this report. Specific commitments that have capital or revenue consequences are individually assessed as part of the decision making process and built into the Councils’ capital and revenue budgets
- 9.2 The revenue and capital budget reports elsewhere on the agenda demonstrate the Councils’ commitment to funding the initiatives contained within “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”. The ongoing intention is that the activities set out in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” and budget strategy become ever more closely aligned.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications relevant to this report. The legal implications relevant to any individual commitment are reported in the usual decision making process.

Background Papers

[Platforms for our Places - Going Further \(2020-2022\) : Unlocking the Power of People, Communities and our Local Geographies Report](#)

Joint Strategic Committee (Item 6) - 3rd December 2020

[Platforms for our Places : Going Further](#)

[And Then: Bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing](#)

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

1.1 Creating and enabling Prosperous Places is one of five Platforms for development in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”. The progress report ([Appendix A](#)) provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this Platform.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

2.1.1 Thriving People and Communities is one of five Platforms for development in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”. The progress report ([Appendix A](#)) provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this Platform.

2.1.2 A particular focus on several elements of “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” is how to build vital capacity within our communities and community partners to enable them to shape and lead our places, while at the same time ensuring the Councils provide a robust “safety net” for the most vulnerable.

2.2 Equality Issues

2.2.1 The Council is subject to the general equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Councils’ legal duties (Equality Act 2010) have shaped the development of the plan, for example, “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” objectives include building the capacity of our communities, engaging with them to find solutions that ensure that our services (and interventions) are designed to meet specific needs and address areas and issues of historic disadvantage and inequality.

2.2.3 Our experience of working with communities during the pandemic has deepened our relationships with diverse and often marginalised groups and we are seeking to actively capitalise on these new ways of working and new relationships to better understand and respond to those most in need. Areas of investment identified in the plan, including funding from Central Government’s Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI), as well as other

decisions relating to implementation of the plan, will require additional equality impact assessment.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- 2.3.1 There are specific commitments in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” which relate to the promotion of communities as safe places. Delivery of these commitments are in progress.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- 2.4.1 Through the implementation of “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” the Councils are seeking solutions with other partners to enable our residents, communities and places to thrive.

3. Environmental

- 3.1 Developing the Councils’ and communities’ role in Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment is one of five platforms for development in “*Platform for our Places : Going Further*”. The progress report ([Appendix A](#)) provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this platform.

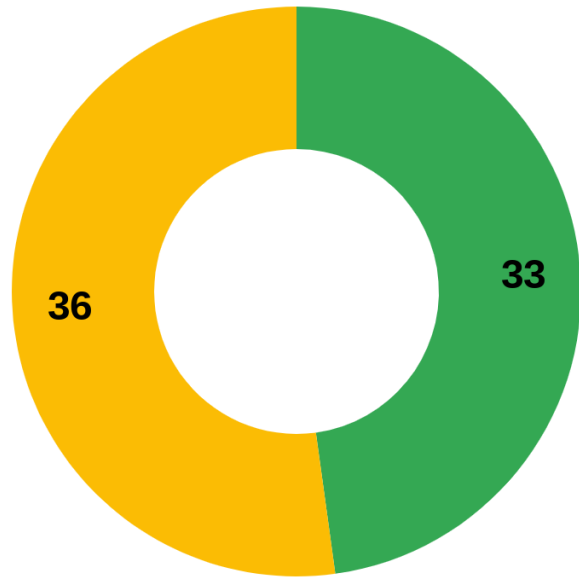
4. Governance

- 4.1 This report provides Joint Strategic Committee an overview of the progress being made to implement “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”, the Councils’ three-year plan to enable our places to thrive.

Appendix 1: The Commitment Trackers

- **Platform 1** Prosperous Places
- **Platform 2:** Thriving People and Communities
- **Platform 3:** Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment
- **Platform 4:** Good Services and New Solutions
- **Platform 5:** Leadership of Place

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : last six months

Over the past 6 months we have continued to support our local businesses through our Platform objectives. We have now distributed over £57m in grant funding to almost 4,000 businesses and continued to offer advice and support.

We have begun a workstream to better understand the role of innovation in supporting our local economy over the longer term and our role in helping to secure inward investment. We have actively supported a series of projects themed around the production and application of hydrogen-based solutions in our local economy working with partners at **Shoreham Port**; the **Airport**; and in the businesses aiming for high growth.

We have continued to focus on supporting our town centres and providing a safe and welcoming environment for people to return to. The **gigabit fibre programme** has continued with only some reduction in pace during the pandemic, now reaching 27,000 homes and with the fibre exchange east of the river Adur now on its way.

We have answered the call from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership for regionally significant **‘pipeline’ projects** aimed at supporting innovation; inward investment; town centre regeneration; creative industries; sustainable business and environmental stewardship of the land (and sea). We have submitted projects for both Adur and Worthing to the national **Levelling Up** Fund in partnership with several of our major employers and with the support of our MPs.

Overview : last six months

Platform Highlights : Last six months

In line with our “Platforms for our Places : Going Further” (and our recovery plans set out in “And Then ...”) ambitions, we have reached significant milestones on a series of important major projects:

We have completed a £4.8m project to decontaminate **Decoy Farm** and make the site ‘development ready’. In parallel, we have been actively engaging with our business community around the best way to bring the site forward and meet the considerable demand for high quality employment space to promote expansion and inward investment.

84 local businesses have benefited from the councils' **Small Business Growth Grant** and we have continued to work with the University of Chichester to promote the Coast to Capital wide HotHouse Programme which focuses support on financial, innovation and productivity skills for small and medium sized enterprises.

We have developed a **Good Work Programme** to assist people to develop the skills needed to get back into work; we have used the Apprenticeship Levy to support apprenticeships across the Councils and we are actively supporting 21 young people as part of the **Kickstart** programme.

The full business case for the ground breaking **Worthing Integrated Care Centre** as part of a new Civic Quarter has been agreed and a build contract is now being finalised prior to a start on site.

Southern Housing has made considerable progress on the flood defences and groundwork necessary to support 540 new homes at **Free Wharf** in Shoreham, supported by grants from Homes England. We have now received the proposal from Hyde to develop the **Adur Civic Centre** site and deliver **172** new homes.

Cala homes have completed 90 homes at **New Monks Farm; the new travellers site has been completed with 16 new homes now occupied; and the riverside Pumping Station is substantially complete**. Many of the 120 new homes at **Ropetackle North** are now occupied.

Projects to deliver the former EDF car park site at **Southdown View Road** in Worthing and the former **Police Station in Lancing** are underway where we are looking to re-purpose space to provide opportunities for start-ups, scale ups, re-skilling and learning.

Following planning approval for **Union Place**, our partnership with London & Continental Railways (LCR) has moved forward to the point where we are now actively marketing the opportunity to develop the site to a potential development partner. A major step forward is that we have now extended our partnership with LCR to take forward a similar approach to securing the development of **Teville Gate**.

The **Boklok** scheme deliver 150 high quality modular homes at Fulbeck Avenue has moved forward to site set up and work will now begin in earnest.

Our public realm project at **Portland Road** is on site. A further scheme to improve **Railway Approach** now that the **new HMRC building** is complete and occupied is being consulted upon by West Sussex County Council.

We have secured planning permission and agreed a business plan to secure the extension and redevelopment of **Colonnade House** and transform the space into a Cultural and Digital Hub for new and expanding businesses - building on the success of the existing facility.

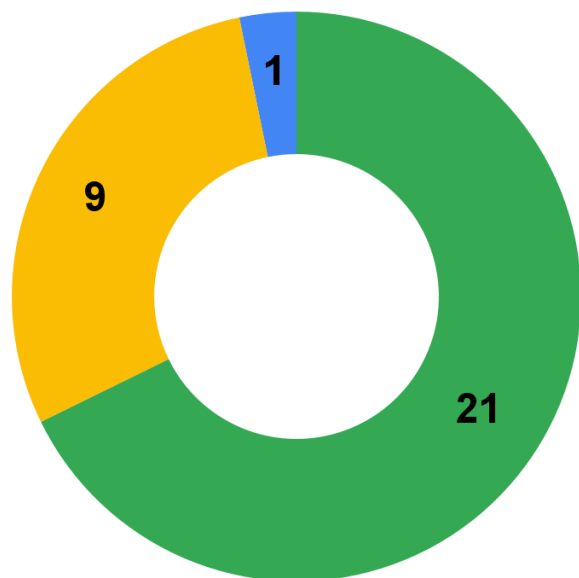
A total of 27,000 homes have now been passed, with Zen, Talk Talk and No-one broadband providers offering services to residential customers with a 1Gb service available for as little as £40 a month. Agreement on the Adur fibre exchange is well progressed, and this will enable fibre build to commence east of the river. Whilst fibre build in Worthing town centre is now scheduled for a January 2022 start, Citizen WiFi is still expected to begin rollout in late 2021, building out from the fibre point at Colonnade House.

During this past 6 months we have secured capital funding; gained planning permission and reached a lease agreement with **AudioActive** to move former shop premises into Montague Street. AudioActive will provide a range of activities from this site, including the opportunity for young people to gain essential knowledge and skills to enhance their prospects of securing employment. The project will provide a major boost to the local music economy.

Challenges -

Our Platform commitments to working in partnership to support local people and to plan for recovery and the 'new economy' are vital. We will continue to work alongside businesses to promote access to new markets, supporting people to reskill to find new jobs, supporting likely growth in micro-entrepreneurialism and working to support employers, businesses and education providers to make better use of apprenticeships to help particularly young people entering the job market.

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : last six months

The health, social and economic impact of the pandemic is central to our Thrive agenda with a focus on recovery, keeping our communities safe and enabling them to thrive. The “Thrive” platform is driving and connecting a number of key themes that will support and enable our communities, especially those that are most vulnerable through secure housing, developing and strengthening our food system, supporting people with their finances (including those that needed to self isolate), developing a good work agenda and promoting safety.

Platform Highlights : last three months

Safer Communities

We are working on the development of our next Safer Communities Strategy and have been focusing our work around some key themes, including: safer spaces and places for women; reducing school exclusions and tackling youth violence through mentoring and outreach; providing support to 77 victims of Anti Social Behaviour - holding perpetrators to account; supporting 3 Closure Orders on problematic properties; extending our delegated powers to Worthing Homes to issue Community Protection Notices; extending our efforts to develop a workforce that is trauma / psychologically informed (training a further 14 members of frontline staff); reducing school exclusions and influencing Worthing High Schools to undertake Therapeutic Thinking training, through the No More Exclusions Pilot co-led by the Early Help and Wellbeing Lead.

We have also been focusing our external funding on issues around young people, prevention and early intervention in our communities. The Mentivity mentoring project for children entering High School has supported the transition of young people at risk of not coping. We are using NHS funding to support young people back into school following remote learning, successfully enabling one child to return to school following a 14 months' absence. We have applied for funding to pilot approaches to reducing school exclusions by school workshops and one to one mentoring (to be confirmed early June). We have extended the original VRU programme to fund a community approach to youth violence which was impacted by Covid. In early June, 15 youth ambassadors will be trained to carry out awareness raising in the community.

Supporting and enabling our food system

We have spent time over this period supporting and enabling the A&W Emergency Food Network. A more preventative approach is being developed with groups aimed at helping people before they reach crisis point, and being there to help when they do. Funding secured through the COMF grant is being used to support and enable this work, including a community kitchen/pop up community kitchen spaces.

Homelessness

The trend in increased demand for homeless services continued and we provided housing for anyone who was homeless through the winter via MHCLG funding for our Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) and winter provision. Through 'Everyone In' and winter provision, 169 Worthing and 26 Adur residents were provided with housing and support. Since January, 64 of them have been supported to move on into settled or

supported accommodation with 24 who remain in accommodation and supported under discretionary duties whilst suitable housing is sourced.

Despite the constraints of the pandemic we are continuing to develop our work to prevent rough sleeping with our key aims of Prevention, Intervention and Relief. We were able to deliver a programme of psychologically informed training funded through our Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) for two cohorts of housing, outreach and Turning Tides staff who deliver services and support to single homeless and rough sleepers.

Under our NSAP work, additional HMO's were leased with the councils providing inreach support and security, this was a pilot to 'test' tenancy readiness in a group where landlord confidence is low. Three landlords are now working with the team to convert these onto the Opening Doors scheme with assured shorthold tenancies and will backfill with a further HMO lease to meet the demand of single people needing temporary accommodation.

To support our Domestic Abuse work in response to increasing incidents we now have an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) co-located and working in partnership with the housing teams and a further support worker is to be recruited as part of the work being delivered with the recently secured COMF funding.

The service has begun transitioning from meeting the immediate needs of the pandemic which presented itself in increased homelessness from people who had no security of tenure, to a preventative approach to work with those with security of tenure or mortgage holders who are at risk of homelessness. Notice periods are beginning to taper back to normal levels and the Eviction Ban ended on 1 June 2021. There are a variety of work streams being

Thriving People and Communities

commissioned both locally and countywide to provide targeted meaningful support to those in need to prevent homelessness.

Housing Strategy 2020/2023 - Our progress continues with Worthing development Downview phase 2 due online for occupation in July and Rowlands Road in August, which will provide 27 additional units of local temporary accommodation, with the Adur site at Albion Street expected by March 2022.

Work is well underway for 17 new Council homes at the former Cecil Norris House in Shoreham with completion expected in Summer 2021. A programme to build 56 new Council homes on redundant garage sites has been agreed and planning applications progressing at pace.

Opening Doors Scheme - Opening Doors despite the challenges presented by our local buoyant private sector market continues to attract landlords and the work for 'Scaling up Opening Doors' has begun.

Health and Wellbeing

We are re-invigorating the Adur & Worthing Local Community Network with our wider NHS and community partners.

Alcohol Programme - Alcohol remains a key driver for wellbeing and over the last period our new Wellbeing Advisor has been developing her work providing specialist support for people from January, who are drinking at increasing and higher risk rates - i.e. people who are not yet dependent. We have been working with a small number of cases and been focusing on campaign work to raise awareness in our communities.

Going Local - In the period January to May there were some 339 referrals to the service (an increase of 30% compared to the same period in the previous year) from over 16 GP surgeries across Adur and Worthing. Key themes continue to include mental health, housing, finances, social isolation and lifestyle factors.

Financial Capability

Our multidisciplinary Proactive Project has progressed well and is using data in smart ways to identify key groups at risk of financial exclusion and issues and through proactive work, provide good information, advice and support.

The multi-disciplinary team is testing how it can mitigate the impact of the covid pandemic on the councils' more financially vulnerable residents, using data to identify specific cohorts that might benefit from targeted, proactive interventions that aim to increase household income and/or decrease household debt. Using an asset based approach to signpost residents to support available from inhouse teams and from outside the councils.

The work of the One Stop programme 'Money Mentors' has been fundamental in supporting the Proactive Project and supporting the community more widely. During the period Jan 2021 to May 2021 there have been 135 complex money referrals into OneStop which has led to an approx increase of income £100k

Good Work - We are developing our Good Work approach to connect employment, skills and wellbeing. Our initial focus has been focused on supporting and information and advice.

Thriving People and Communities

One Stop has helped 125 employment referrals during the period, with 29 people being offered full time employment, including 6 young people's referrals to the youth hub (started on 06/05/21) We have loaned out over 19 digital devices to provide access to the internet for our most vulnerable residents and signposted 12 referrals to gain digital skills via course or support. Officers have just secured £66,000 for a **OneStop Employment Youth Hub** - to work in partnership with DWP to support 200 young people (16-24 year olds) who are claiming Universal Credit and who are struggling to find work, and who have additional issues that may prevent them to find employment. A physical venue is being sourced in Worthing Town Centre to co-locate DWP and Council officers to create opportunities for building stronger professional relationships between our two organisations. This will also provide a safe & friendly space where young people can meet their work coaches and our youth support coaches who will be focusing on supporting personal barriers such as mental health, housing and financial issues to help build resilience during these uncertain times. We are also hoping to provide advice and access to opportunities for young people who might not be claiming Universal Credit

Community Assets and Resources

During this period we have secured a tenant for Eastbrook Manor Community Centre - Age UK West Sussex. We have also provided £20,000 of grants to support those disproportionately affected by COVID to 4 organisations focusing on young people, adults with learning disabilities, a safe space for people to come together and connect and support for the community efforts and emergency provision due to the direct impacts of COVID.

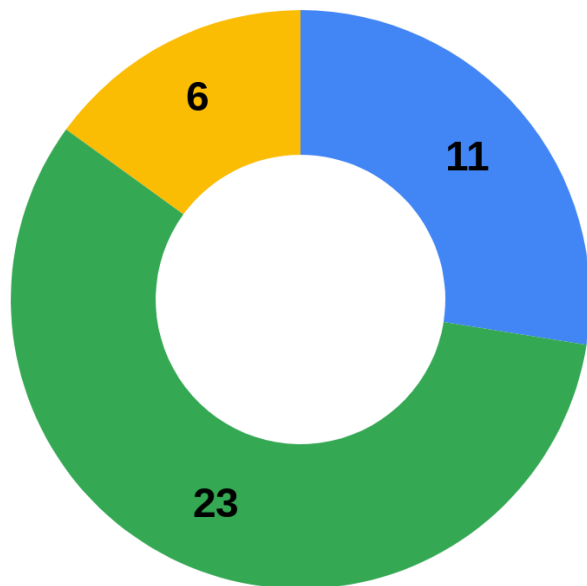
Covid Recovery

Our PH&R Team have continued to work hard to support the public and businesses during the Covid pandemic, using our new Covid Information Officers to provide support and guidance to local residents and businesses. We have used our wise regulatory approach to provide good advice and information to businesses and communities and have managed to deal with incidents of non compliance informally, with no enforcement notices being required. The team have also worked with the HSE since December 2020 to carry out spot checks and inspections on local businesses and ensure business safety. A total of 847 businesses in Adur and 1567 in Worthing have been or will be contacted. So far we have received 18 referrals.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, the Food Hygiene Inspection service has managed to carry out inspections of approved premises and A & B rated premises and supported a number of new businesses, particularly home caterers.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : Last six months

The last six months have continued to see very significant progress with the sustainability agenda. A very successful Climate Assembly with a representative group of 43 residents reported its recommendations to the Councils in January 2021.

Despite the challenges of COVID, the Parks & Foreshore team delivered the largest tree planting scheme the Councils have ever undertaken.

The Councils have attracted widespread praise for their acquisition of 213 acres of land for nature restoration over three sites, Shepherds Mead, Pad Farm and New Salts Farm, with exciting plans forming for each. The Councils are working in partnership with South Downs National Park, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency.

The Councils also made national news recently, in a groundbreaking move to lease the seabed from The Crown Estate, with the aim of attracting blue carbon investment in support of kelp forest restoration. A wider concept, Sussex Bay, has the potential to create a blue mirror to the South Downs, promoting a range of sustainable fishing, nature restoration, tourism and recreation opportunities.

The Worthing Civic Heat Network, which aims to use excess heat from the sewer system, is also receiving significant support from BEIS, and is a leading project nationally, predicted to be one of the lowest carbon heat networks in England.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

The Councils were successful in securing £2m from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund which is funding a significant programme of carbon reduction projects. A 13% reduction in carbon emissions was reported for the year 2019/20 against the 2030 Net Zero target.

A new **commercial food waste** service is set to roll out from the summer, powered by our digital platform and marketing support from the communications team.

Platform Highlights : last six months

- Our recycling rates continue to rise, with a 4.09% point increase on last year's rate in Adur, and 2.14% in Worthing. We collected 6,162.36 tonnes of recycling material in Adur, up 643.52 tonnes on last year, and we collected 10,772.87 tonnes of recycling material in Worthing, up 1,124.55 tonnes since last year. Overall we are still running at a 5.05% point increase on recycling rates compared to the pre alternate weekly collection rate.
- Our collected refuse figures this year totalled 11,023.87 tonnes in Adur which is a reduction of 626.75 tonnes from last year. In Worthing we collected 21,072.01 tonnes, an increase of 1,001.87 tonnes. This increase is caused by a number of factors, Covid, an increase in side waste and a number of new developments coming live.
- Delivery of the highly successful Climate Assembly, a representative group of 43 residents who presented their recommendations to the Joint Strategic Committee in January 2021.
- Development of a proposal to join the Greater Brighton City Bike Share scheme, providing 322 bikes (including 161 e-bikes) to Adur & Worthing served from 43 hubs.
- Secured Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding to deliver £2m of capital projects identified as part of the Carbon Neutral Plan work with Technical Services and Adur Homes. Within a year, these should reduce emissions from the councils' estate by approximately 12% and a pipeline of future projects. Projects include 2 large Heat pump projects, insulation and energy efficiency projects and solar PV installations.
- The Worthing Heat Network project is now approaching the commercialization stage for a £12m scheme and has had £250k support from BEIS to date. In March 2021 a BEIS HNIP funding application was submitted (for £5m) for Commercialisation & Construction funding. The scheme proposes to deliver a Worthing town centre heat network that will enable heat decarbonisation at scale based on a 3MW sewer source heat pump. The Worthing Heat Network project consists of 28 connections of which 18 are public sector buildings or with 7 owners, 16 are Worthing Borough Council owned buildings or sites. The Worthing Heat Network is expected to deliver 2454 tonnes CO2 savings per year when fully developed.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

- Delivery of Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Green Homes Grant Programme in consortia with other south east local authorities. LAD aims to decarbonise homes through installing measures such as insulation, new heating technologies and solar PV to homes EPC rated D,E,F & G:
 - LAD (1A), with SE Warmer Homes consortium, £3m to deliver measures in 300 homes across SE
 - LAD (1B) with SE Warmer Homes consortium, £60m to deliver measures in 900 homes across SE, March-Sept 21
 - LAD (2), South East Local Energy Hub led, £79m, Sept-Dec 21.
- Under the Solar Together Sussex scheme, over 700 households in A&W registered interest to have PV and/or battery storage installed in homes - a phenomenal rate of interest. Due to expected drop off rates these are predicted to reduce to around 100 installations which will deliver an estimated 100tonnes CO2/year. A 2nd auction is planned for late autumn 2021.
- The Councils are leading the development of an exciting vision for Sussex Bay with many local partners. Sussex Bay aims to drive nature restoration at scale and pace across our marine, coastal and intertidal habitats, along the whole of the Sussex coastline. The vision will be underpinned by development of a “blue natural capital” model, which aims to attract investment into blue habitats, including carbon capture, water quality, flood risk management and biodiversity. Adur & Worthing are the first councils in the UK to propose a “natural capital seabed lease” from the Crown Estate to enable the investment scheme, and many national bodies are taking a keen interest in developments. Work to build a strong local partnership continues, and Sussex Bay aims to support the work of the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project along with a

growing number of other projects, including restoration of intertidal and estuary habitats in Sussex rivers, with the Adur Estuary as a leading exemplar.

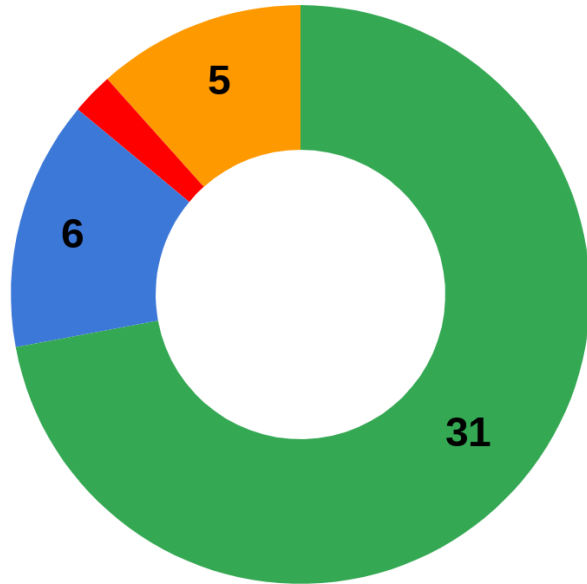
- The Councils’ land acquisitions for nature restoration are also among the most innovative interventions made in the UK by any local authority. Partnership working locally is very strong, and restoration plans are progressing well. The Councils have commissioned Surrey Wildlife Trust to create natural capital plans for each site which will establish a before and after view, enabling the creation of biodiversity net gain credits, which will be made available to developers under the new regime coming forward in the Environment Bill. Initial feasibility is underway at Pad Farm for saltmarsh/habitat restoration, with the Environment Agency keen to support progress through to potentially significant capital works. At New Salts Farm we are working with the Rivers Trust to develop a proposal for the National Heritage Lottery Fund, based on the successful model at the EPIC project, Sompting, and at Shepherds Mead, we are working with the South Downs National Park to restore chalk grassland and meadow, working in partnership with the community.

Platform Challenges: last six months

- We plan to increase our focus on Adur Homes social housing decarbonisation, by recruiting a RETROFIT coordinator to develop a programme of work.

Good Services and New Solutions

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : last six months

The digital team has continued to support our **COVID response** by providing new digital services that support both the provision of assistance and access to grants. These services are robust, easy to use digital products delivered rapidly through partnership working with service teams.

With reference to our working practices, WorkspacesAW has seen the Councils respond quickly to learning gained through the pandemic. By leasing a part of Portland House, revenue has been generated to support the Councils' finances while providing the financial capacity for significant modernisation of office spaces. WorkspacesAW will deliver different kinds of office space (meeting rooms, quiet spaces, collaboration spaces) while supporting home working and making a **blended model of working** the norm. Our staff travel policy being developed in parallel is helping staff shift modes of transport helping secure reduced commuting and business miles, helping reduce carbon emissions.

Our digital estate continues its migration to the cloud, with the **Revenues & Benefits** system on target for launch in August. The provision of much needed digital self service is expected to make a big impact on convenience for customers and should reduce call volumes in the autumn.

With new internal service design expertise in place, work to design **Citizen Hub** is underway. This will help us track resolution of customer issues into service areas, and provide better customer satisfaction and feedback data to support continuous improvement tracked through the Good Services Board.

Good Services and New Solutions

Platform Highlights : last six months

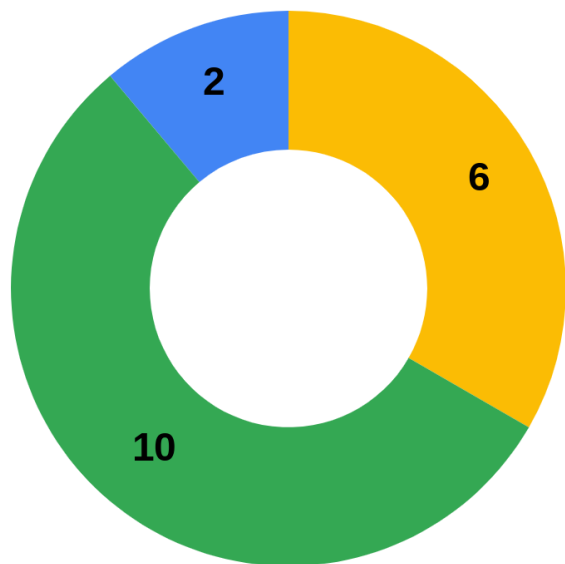
- Our customer service team has continued to deliver excellent levels of service throughout the pandemic period, embracing the opportunity to proactively support the most vulnerable, making calls out to help customers facing financial or housing difficulties, and referring them on to further support from housing, well-being or third party support services. This proactive work, described in more detail in Platform 2, is data led, person centred, and focuses on improving household income and/or reducing household debt. Customer service has established and led a cross service team that can take a more holistic view of residents to support those already in crisis, and can also take an early intervention approach to minimise the numbers of residents tipping into crisis. A simple pathway has been tested with 100 residents, just over a third of whom were happy to engage with the team and have been signposted to additional benefits they were eligible for and/or provided with money mentoring and/or befriending services. Over time, we will be able to track financial and wellbeing impacts resulting from the pathway.
- A digital “citizen hub” project has started, focusing on digitising the proactive service described above and in Platform 2. Designed to enable joint working across teams and track outcomes for those receiving support, citizen hub will be expanded over time to enable tracking of customer experience end to end, across multiple services using our low code platform and the exciting new features available in a newly upgraded platform.
- The Good Services Board has been created to work to help services meet the Good Services Standard. The Board will use data to help services understand their performance, and get closer to the experiences and needs of their customers.
- WorkspacesAW is a programme that aims to deliver post pandemic transformation in our working model. Funded through income generated by the lease of part of Portland House, Worthing Town Hall will be refurbished over the summer, and different types of office space will be provided to support blended working.
- A major programme to move our Revenues and Benefits system to the cloud is well progressed with additional digital self service capabilities scheduled for later in the year.
- Support for our leaders continues, with the quarterly Leadership College bringing around 80 senior managers together to learn and develop together. The second cohort of the Leadership Lab is currently providing development support to 14 of our most talented leaders.
- A pilot programme has begun to explore the opportunities presented by the procurement green paper. This has identified a number of procurements where greater emphasis will be placed on the opportunities to drive social and environmental value.

Good Services and New Solutions

Platform Challenges : last six months

- A new asbestos management system has been successfully procured and implemented, however the broader need for a shared digital asset management system has not progressed as hoped, largely due to pressures brought by the pandemic and the redeployment of staff and other resources to support our communities and businesses (flagged as a red in the pie chart above). This project will be given renewed focus over the next six months as part of the corporate landlord agenda.

Commitment Tracker



● Complete ● On Track ● Potential Risk

Overview : last six months

The councils have continued to focus on responding to the economic and social turbulence created by the pandemic. Work has also progressed on building resilience and shaping post pandemic opportunities for our residents and local businesses.

In light of the magnitude and complexity of the pandemic's impact, especially on business and vulnerable communities, the councils have actively taken the role of systems leader, helping to address the immediate and longer term issues faced in Adur and Worthing with our partners.

The challenge of the public health crisis and the economic and social consequences of lockdowns, as well as seeking to meet higher needs within constrained budgets has not been easy.

Our work on better understanding and building resilience continues to be a key theme in our partnership working. We see our work on building resilience as a process of increasing Adur and Worthing's ability to both respond to the unexpected but also to develop, change and improve as a result.

In “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” we highlighted the need for **strong relationships** with communities, businesses and public service providers locally, regionally and nationally. These relationships over the last 6 months have, in the context of the Covid 19, continued to be essential. In responding to the pandemic we have relied upon these strong relationships to further the health, wellbeing and long term prosperity of our communities. Through these mature and strong partnerships we have been able to be there for our residents and our businesses when they have most needed us. Examples of where those relationships have born valuable fruit can be found across all four the preceding Platform reports.

With the economic and social turbulence of the past year some of the activities have inevitably either been put on hold or have been rapidly repurposed to support pandemic activity. As we anticipated in “And Then” the pandemic and the implications of it have created new opportunities, for example by intervening in commercial sites, accelerating gigabit build out, supporting community action, developing skills opportunities, and progressing our ambitious sustainability agenda. Officers and Members have continued to work extremely well together to seize the opportunities as identified.

Platform Highlights : last six months

Critical Relationships - The councils have sought to maintain and develop a wide number of critical relationships including the Greater Brighton Economic Board, housing partners, various NHS and Economic bodies as well as the Police and Community Safety organisations. Our relationships with other Districts and Boroughs continue to be positive and productive. Our work with West Sussex County Council in many areas is also progressing well. At a

regional level the Local Resilience Forum has continued to bring together a variety of local players to deal with the pandemic response at a Sussex wide level.

Place Campaigns- “Time for Worthing” continues to be guided by a Management Board made up of local businesses, partners and third sector organisations. Since January the focus has been on the visitor economy and, specifically, the staycation market in response to the Government’s Roadmap. Successes include the refreshing of the Visitor Guide (released in June), a ‘Summer in Worthing’ campaign, supported by the TCI, whilst the most significant piece of work is an upgraded and broader website. Outside of this, the Council have been active with a number of other campaigns, notably focused on the reopening of the economy as part of the government’s roadmap. Success include “WelcomeBackAW” and “WinterWelcome” that covered both Adur and Worthing. These campaigns included direct business and Member engagement.

Community and Voluntary Sector - Our work with the local Community and Voluntary Sector is developing well. We have built stronger relationships with the growing food network and mutual aid groups in Adur and Worthing and have shifted into a more enabling and supporting role as we move through the pandemic. Officers have recently secured significant Covid funding and are using some of this in creative ways to support and enable the sector and improve health outcomes for our communities. We have also begun to develop our Asset Based Community Development Communities of Practice to improve and strengthen our work with communities.

Leadership of Place

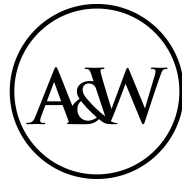
Community Safety - We have been working with the Sussex Police and our community safety partners on the development of our next Safer Communities Strategy which includes a focus on developing safer spaces and places for women within our communities. As part of this work we continue to focus on building the partnership response to serious and acquisitive crime and the harm caused to vulnerable people. We have been developing a multi agency response to reducing school exclusions and tackling youth violence through mentoring and outreach.

Housing and Homelessness - Housing partnerships continue to work well together, skillfully and compassionately seeking to provide rapid and comprehensive support to those affected by homelessness. We have continued to make progress in tackling homelessness and we are actively seeking to learn from the positive effects on the work undertaken through the 'Everyone In' approach. The impacts of domestic violence, unemployment and family breakdowns have taken their toll and we are seeing this reflected in those presenting as homeless. Partners are working well together in constantly reviewing cases to ensure we are able to prevent homelessness and assist residents with housing problems.

Emergency Planning and Civil Contingency Work - In "*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*" we made specific reference to the importance of Emergency Planning and Civil Contingency work. Over the past 15 months we have been focussed on supporting West Sussex County Council, the lead authority for public health, to ensure that vulnerable people in our communities are supported. This work has been wide ranging and includes secure housing, developing and strengthening our food system, supporting people with their finances (including those that need to self isolate), mental

health support, addiction services, developing a good work agenda and promoting safety.

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ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14 October 2021

Key Decision: No

Ward(s) Affected: All

Covid-19 response - Economic recovery, support for the vulnerable and health and wellbeing review

Report by the Director for the Economy

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

1.1 To update Members of the Committee of the support provided to our communities and businesses throughout the pandemic, notably from April 2020 to September 2021.

1.2 To provide an overview of how the local economy in Adur and Worthing is 'bouncing back' from the pandemic, and highlight the ongoing areas of work which are supporting our most vulnerable residents and businesses.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That JOSOC notes the overview of progress in delivering the interventions and activities to support our businesses and communities as a result of the pandemic.

3. Context

3.1 Adur & Worthing Councils were tasked by the central government to run a series of interventions in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This report provides an outline to those immediate actions taken by the Councils' when the pandemic was first declared in March 2020, through to the current day as the Councils' continue to support and enable our communities and businesses. The Joint Strategic Committee Papers of [Covid 19 Response \(July 2020\)](#) and ["And Then" bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing \(July 2020\)](#) provide a good overview of the progress made in the last 18 months.

3.2 The immediate response was delivered in the context of the unknown; unknown into the extent of the virus, unknown in how the virus would be contained and unknown in how people, businesses and communities would react to the daily calls from central government. The Councils' Officers and Members reacted and adapted very quickly and pivoted a number of activities and resources in order to support our places. This included the need to redeploy staff to the areas of the Councils' where need was most. A number of those areas are contained in this paper and the majority of those working groups have continued into the recovery phase.

Community Response

3.3 The Councils' Community Response was instigated at the outset of the Covid Pandemic in March 2020 to ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities were not left behind and struggling without access to food and housing.

3.4 The immediate emergency response began in March 2020 during the first lock down until June 2020, with the majority of the Council's staff and some of its partners forming the Community Response Team who worked alongside our Housing Team, our local partners and groups that were establishing themselves to support communities. A briefing was shared at that time which can be viewed [here](#).

3.5 The Councils' work broadly focused on providing help and support with some of the basics needed by people and families, including: food, medicines, someone to talk to, prescriptions, mental health, safety advice and help with digital access. Efforts were focused on establishing a digital platform to enable communities to ask for help and for efforts to support them to be managed and communicated between the teams and with volunteers. Officers

also worked with WSCC and local groups to ensure that communications with local residents were also provided in written form and especially targeted to those in need.

3.6 Alongside this an emergency food depot was established to provide space for bulk buying of food and providing food parcels directly to people's homes. Hundreds of local volunteers were onboarded to help with the delivery of food, medicines and providing food parcels to people in need of emergency food parcels. The team also worked closely with WSCC who held primary responsibility for the "clinically vulnerable," and with other key partner agencies and especially local food and mutual aid groups.

3.7 As the pandemic has evolved, its ongoing impacts on the most vulnerable members of the community have been and continue to be well documented in national data and research. These include the most immediate effects and the emerging ongoing social and economic impacts, which began with predominantly older people, or those with underlying health conditions, for people from minoritised ethnic communities, carers and disabled groups, and young people etc. We have seen the profound impact and indeed the ongoing effects on young people and their education and their mental health alongside the impact of mental health and wellbeing for many of our communities. Alongside this however we also witnessed the huge capacity for kindness and community, through the efforts of our local communities and our workforce that stepped up to help and enable others during this crisis.

Business Response

3.8 The immediate response to supporting businesses focused on an extensive distribution of Covid-19 Business Grants and Business Rates relief (see 3.11 and 3.12). The business grants focused on providing support to all eligible business rates payers during the initial lockdown. Following the announcement of these funds in March 2020 the Councils' were tasked to develop a grant distribution system in order to provide grants of £10,000 and £25,000 to all eligible businesses across Adur and Worthing ([reported to JSC in June 2020](#)). The Councils created, tested and delivered this system within 3 weeks of the government announcement with the first grants issued on 3rd April 2020. A cross-departmental team was brought together to deliver the new service, including officers from Place & Economy, Digital, Technical Services, Major Projects & Investment and Finance.

3.9 During the pandemic, from April 2020 to August 2021, the Councils' processed over 8,000 applications and distributed in excess of £60m to

businesses across Adur & Worthing. These funds were critical to keep businesses active and the local economy resilient. The grants distributed were varied over the course of the pandemic, based on the needs of each lockdown. The team had to adapt to and deliver over 10 grant streams over the period, examples include:

- Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant
- Local Restrictions Support Grant
- Christmas Support Grant
- Restart Grant
- Additional Restrictions Grant

3.10 Prior to the pandemic, eligible Business Rates bills were due to be reduced from 1 April 2020 by awards of Expanded Retail Relief at 50% including live music venues and cinemas, in all cases restricted to properties with a Rateable Value below £51,000. However, as part of the response to the pandemic the government increased the rate of relief to 100%, removed the Rateable Value threshold and extended the criteria to include properties being used for assembly, leisure, hotels/guest accommodation and those used for the provision of sport. Those industries and businesses most affected by the pandemic.

3.11 Expanded Retail Relief was extended from 1 April 2021 at 100%, but was subsequently reduced to 66% from 1 July 2021. Additionally, from 1 July 2021 two “cash caps” were introduced depending on whether the business was required to be closed from 5 January 2021.

3.12 The Councils successfully issued revised Business Rates bills applying these changes, and are now working flexibly with ratepayers with a view to creating sustainable payment arrangements balanced with the need to secure vital income to the Councils. Total awards of relief since 1 April 2020 exceed £12.5M in Adur and £24M in Worthing.

4. Supporting through the pandemic

Communities

4.1 The Councils have focused on five priorities in its response to the pandemic:

- Food security

- Financial support
- Housing and homelessness
- Employment
- Mental health and wellbeing

4.2 These priorities shaped how the Councils secured and managed the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) ([reported to JSC in June 2021](#)). Adur and Worthing received over £859,000 to deliver a programme of activities designed to help vulnerable people respond to the impacts of Covid-19 and support the public health approach to this pandemic. This is also forming the basis of the development of some key strategies such as the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4.3 **Food Security**

In response to the issues of food security during the first phase of the pandemic the Councils organised the bulk purchasing of food and provided and secured funding for several of the food groups.

4.4 From June 2020, the emergency food depot was closed, and Councils' efforts shifted towards working to support local food groups. Community Works, the Councils' commissioned infrastructure partner, was asked to play a key role in supporting local food groups and mutual aid partners with their food and support efforts. This work has been evolving over the last 18 months into what is now the Adur and Worthing Food Partnership, providing important infrastructure support and enablement for the food groups in Adur and Worthing.

4.5 The communities response to the issue of food insecurity in Adur and Worthing was enormous, with a network of mutual aid groups forming in local communities across the Councils. Thousands of meals were delivered or provided to local residents, vulnerable people were connected by food groups into the wider support around the drivers of food need (finance / debt, losing work / furlough, mental health, housing etc) and the network built solid relationships with large scale food suppliers to ensure adequate food donations.

4.6 **Financial Support**

The Councils have been working since March 2021 to explore how to identify, target and support low income households in Adur & Worthing. The Proactive multi- disciplinary team developed and tested a five-step pathway that aims to build greater resilience across our communities and to mitigate, through the

proactive use of data, the impact of the pandemic on our more financially vulnerable residents.

4.7 This work continues to develop a preventative and early intervention approach that supports residents to avoid spiralling into further debt and supports them with the wellbeing and mental health challenges associated with financial and social hardship, including the work of our Money Mentors, the work of Citizens Advice and other organisations and groups.. Full details of the work completed to date, and the plans to scale it up, can be read in the Director for Communities' [Report to the Joint Strategic Committee dated 13 July 2021](#).

4.8 The Councils' financial support service managed to meet the growing demand throughout the whole of the pandemic. With the increased demand generated by the Proactive calls to vulnerable residents, OneStop financial advisors hours were increased and a full time additional post was recruited, in addition to funding from COMF to support and enable some of our wider groups.

4.9 Additionally, the Revenues & Benefits Service has awarded discretionary Council Tax Support of up to £150 to working age customers which amounted to:

- Adur: 2020/21 = £177k and 2021/22 = £124k
- Worthing: 2020/21 = £655k and 2021/22 = £570k

In 2020/21 this was funded from the Hardship Grant that each Council received. In 2021/22 the additional awards are part funded by the Councils from the Council Tax Support Grant and from a contribution from the County Council.

4.10 The Councils' also administered [Test & Trace Support Payments](#) of £500 for self-isolating residents (and parents/guardians of children who are self-isolating from school or nursery) who suffer a reduction in their earnings. Since September 2020 more than 3,300 applications have been considered and payments of almost £400k issued.

4.11 ***Housing and Homelessness***

As part of our 'Everyone In' and winter provision, 27 Adur residents were housed and 144 Worthing residents, of those we have achieved. Positive move on for 21 of the Adur residents and for 103 Worthing of residents.

4.12 Between March and August we have continued to house rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping and 2 Adur residents remain in temporary housing and 27 Worthing residents. MHCLG provided an uplift in Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding and we bid successfully for Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) funding to support the provision which has included a pilot where we procure accommodation under SLA, once the landlord is reassured the tenancy can be managed, an assured shorthold tenancy is being awarded and the property transferred to Opening Doors.

4.13 MHCLG released two further funds to support move on housing and support for those at risk of rough sleeping - Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) and Accommodation For Ex Offenders (AFEO). As registered social landlord, Adur was able to bid and was awarded capital for two units of accommodation with revenue support for 5 service users. Through AFEO we have been awarded funding to help those released from prison secure private sector accommodation and funding for 3 staff to work with probation, the prisons and CAS3 - the probation accommodation scheme for those not eligible for housing on release under the Homeless Reduction Act.

4.14 The Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding provided outreach with funding for additional staffing to support those in all forms of accommodation and provide weekly inreach support, drop ins as well as outreach work.

4.15 The COMF award has enabled us to provide a variety of work and includes Dual Diagnosis support (for those with mental health and substance misuse), an Emergency Assistance Grant fund has been set up, delivered by Turning Tides to help those in financial hardship and can be accessed by Adur and Worthing residents. This fund will assist with essential items and help those for example experiencing fuel poverty. There is also a fund to assist homeless prevention work so that we can assist those impacted by the pandemic e.g meet their housing costs to prevent eviction.

4.16 Pathway established for RSLs to refer households at risk of eviction so that we can work together to prevent eviction, our buyant local housing market is impacting this work as rents are increasing.

4.17 WORTH domestic abuse work co-located with the housing team to support those experiencing domestic abuse

4.18 Delivery of new local temporary accommodation has continued and 27 additional units of WBC owned accommodation in Worthing will be in use by the end of October.

4.19 Employment

In response to the ongoing concerns rising from the pandemic, a deliberate decision was made to form a multi-disciplinary team, primarily between Wellbeing and Economy, to work together on delivering a series of interventions to support the employment and skills agenda. This programme, named Good Work, bridges the gap between the two services. At its heart is a focus on jobs that promote wellbeing, that grow and develop skills and capabilities and provide financial security. Work needs to be good, enjoyable and fulfilling, with employers recognising the importance of retaining staff and creating flexibility for their workforce. Sections 4.16 - 4.18 are some examples of the interventions being delivered under this programme.

4.20 One of the gaps identified was the need for the Councils' to provide some clear guidance for those individuals who were experiencing employment concerns, including redundancy, during the pandemic. Whilst the core delivery of this sits with partner organisations, it was important to establish '[Help to Work](#)' information that provided self-guided help for those in need. This support sits alongside the work of our Employment Support Workers and also the relatively new Youth Work Hub, which was established earlier this year to directly support young people.

4.21 The Councils' were one of the early adopters of the Kickstart Programme. A government-led initiative to support young people directly affected by the pandemic back into work. The Council agreed to be a Kickstart employer, whilst also helping to facilitate placements for other businesses, in Autumn 2020. Since then the Councils have worked in partnership with DWP and other organisations, such as Worthing Homes, to deliver a series of placements. The Councils' have provided over 30 placements for local young people, with wrap-around support provided to give them the best possible chance of securing employment post the initial six month Kickstart period. A further 6 placements have been secured in our partner organisations of West Sussex MIND, ESTEEM and Worthing Homes.

4.22 Further to supporting individuals, the Councils also began to work with key sectors, those severely impacted by the pandemic, to see if assistance could also be provided to those industries. A combination of interventions were delivered with key sectors such as leisure and hospitality, through providing virtual job fairs and, where needed, redundancy support. The

Councils have continued this key sector work and are currently working with a number of healthcare organisations to, where possible, support local recruitment into these key roles.

4.23 *Mental Health and Wellbeing*

The Wellbeing and Going Local Teams focused on the provision of support for communities, especially those that are struggling with their health and wellbeing, connecting them up to receive calls from volunteers or community groups (especially during periods of lockdown where people could not get this connection in any other way), and helping them get online to access as a means of connection with others.

4.24 The COMF funding enabled us to extend our interventions to support young people. This includes twice weekly detached outreach in Worthing but also one to one mentoring for children who are struggling to return to school post lock down. The funding also allowed us to support people who are homeless and vulnerably housed, to enhance their social connection through facilitating access to pro social activities, training and volunteering.

4.25 COMF funding also contributed towards a multi agency project to help prevent suicide. The Councils joined forces with several local organisations including West Sussex MIND, Worthing Samaritans and Olly's Future to deliver a new initiative called Preventing Suicide in Adur and Worthing. Launched on Friday 10 September - World Suicide Prevention Day - the initiative aims to raise awareness of the signs to look for that someone is in crisis, and teach people how to start a conversation that could help save a person's life. This will be delivered through a series of free 'Talking About Suicide' training courses, taking place between September and December, for people who volunteer or work with the public. This includes Councils' Parks and Foreshore teams, taxi drivers, bartenders and food bank volunteers.

4.26 Finally, to support the health and wellbeing of Adur and Worthing residents, a programme of events, 'The Great Outdoors' was run over summer 2021. This aimed to encourage residents to use outdoor spaces, to bring communities together in activities designed for adults and children. This was a great success with over 2,685 people participating in events over 25 days from 21st June to 5th September with an additional 80 people invited to attend some wellbeing (sauna & sea) sessions in Autumn.

4.27 *Volunteering and Mutual Aid*

In response to the Pandemic, Adur and Worthing tasked over 200 volunteers across the nine Council area neighbourhoods. Feedback showed that many

volunteers found the process of engaging with the Councils easy, enjoyed helping and the sense of purpose. Feedback showed that many volunteers found the process of engaging with the Councils easy, enjoyed helping and the sense of purpose and community.

4.28 The pandemic led to a significant increase in the numbers of new mutual aid groups starting up across Adur and Worthing. This community mobilisation was extraordinary and crucial to ensuring that communities coped during the pandemic. During the lockdowns, the groups focused primarily on the provision of food and supporting vulnerable or lonely people and this informal network of voluntary services was invaluable in helping many of Councils' residents worst affected by Covid-19.

Businesses

4.29 To support our businesses and economic base the Councils have been focusing on five core areas of work in response to the pandemic:

- Financial support
- Safe spaces and visitor confidence
- Placemaking
- Business networking
- Delivery of major development and investment projects

4.30 *Financial support*

As outlined in 3.8, the Councils delivered a series of covid business grants to support businesses during each of the lockdowns. The initial mandatory funds supported all sectors, and predominantly those businesses that had a rateable value, to assist with such items as overhead costs. As the pandemic continued and further lockdowns ensued, the Councils were also provided with discretionary which allowed more flexibility to target those sectors that weren't receiving the support or those businesses, for example self-employed businesses, that 'slipped through the net'. The covid business grants, through different grant strands, were provided to businesses from April 2020 to August 2021 and were predominantly targeted at those sectors most affected by the pandemic (e.g. retail, hospitality and leisure sectors).

4.31 Further to the covid monies, the Councils also secured further funding from West Sussex County Council to provide small business grants to enable those businesses who were pivoting or diversifying during the pandemic to gain some targeted support to facilitate this change. Whilst some sectors suffered, other businesses have pivoted well which has sustained and, in

some cases, grown their business. The Small Business Growth Grant was delivered in the first six months of 2021 to provide a launch pad for those businesses coming out of the pandemic. A number of grants also went to micro entrepreneurs, therefore these grants also supported start up opportunities. In total the Councils supported 100 businesses across Adur and Worthing.

4.32 *Safe spaces and visitor confidence*

Due to the sectoral makeup, Adur and Worthing's town centres were severely disadvantaged during the pandemic. Not only in the initial lockdown where all high street businesses, excluding those selling essential items, were asked to shut but over the course of the last 18 months. Businesses are still feeling the effects of Covid-19 as consumer confidence still isn't at the same pre-pandemic levels. A series of interventions were delivered to support these businesses as they moved in and out of lockdowns.

4.33 In response to the initial re-opening of the economy in Summer 2020, a number of service areas, including Place & Economy, Licensing, Safer Communities, Wellbeing and Environmental Health came together to share business intelligence in order to provide up to date business support. The Safe Towns Group, which still meets, was the driving force behind advising businesses on the latest government initiatives, supporting consumer confidence and interpreting new legislation that would affect the high street. The Coronavirus (COVID-19): Business Advice page is still live on the Councils' website.

4.34 The Councils also received Reopening High Streets Safely funding around the same time to support the Summer reopening. Due to the need to practice safe distancing in town centres, and in order to allow businesses to create two metre queuing systems and to trade outside (see 4.31), the Councils' installed temporary road closures in Adur and Worthing, new covid markings and signs, whilst also providing marketing campaigns to encourage residents and visitors back into the town centres . These were joint initiatives with our business community. The Councils are currently delivering a series of interventions as part of the Welcome Back funding received from central government to also encourage more people back to our high streets, to include upgrades of street furniture and localised events. Further marketing has followed, including the [Roadmap to Return](#) campaign.

4.35 *Placemaking*

The pandemic encouraged Councils and businesses to work in partnership to deliver a series of place-based changes in order to, amongst other things,

capitalise on the 'Buy Local' theme which has been a positive change as a result of Covid-19 (due to workforce patterns). A number of legislative changes came into effect from the central government during the different lockdown periods, whilst a number of direct interventions, such as the 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme directly supported the hospitality sector to recover after the initial lockdown period. The Councils also experienced an increase in outdoor concession (pop up business) applications as businesses wished to capitalise on the natural environment.

4.36 Changes to trading hours, the ability to trade outside through pavement licences, an allowance for food and beverage businesses to deliver off sales from their premises, new outdoor structures all came into effect during the pandemic and were managed by the Councils. Most of these government interventions supported the notion of outdoor activity rather than indoor activity, allowing businesses to trade where they might not have been able due to national covid restrictions. As with the business grants (in section 3.8) the Councils had to adapt and deliver activity very quickly to ensure businesses had the opportunity to capitalise on the aforementioned initiatives.

4.37 In addition to the interventions in 4.33 and 4.34 the Councils felt it important to continue programmed works to upgrade our places and spaces, especially as more people were enjoying the outdoors. During the pandemic period public realm improvements such as Queensway in Lancing, new decking at Waterwise Play Area on Worthing Promenade and the start of construction of new public realm at Portland Road were examples of the Councils committing to improving spaces and places.

4.38 ***Business Networking***

Further to direct interventions, the Councils also kept in close contact with our business networks to ensure 'on the ground' realities were fed through to allow the Councils to be flexible to react to the needs of the businesses. Active dialogue with Sussex Chamber of Commerce, Coastal West Sussex Partnership, Adur & Worthing Business Partnership and Worthing & Adur Chamber of Commerce provided an imperative connection during the last 18 months. These partnerships have strengthened as a result of the work undertaken to support the pandemic.

4.39 As a result of the networking and data collection through the covid business grants, the Councils now have a more comprehensive database of up to date business information. The majority businesses have 'opted in' to receive further information from the Councils, which provides greater

opportunity for engagement. This will be important as we move into the next economic recovery phase over the autumn and winter months (2021/22).

4.40 *Delivery of major development and investment projects*

Whilst the majority of the economic recovery work focused on individuals or businesses during the pandemic, the Councils felt it important to continue the Major Projects & Investment Programme to bring forward sites for economic growth. Work continued throughout the pandemic on the major sites, including the former Adur Civic Centre site, Union Place and Teville Gate in Worthing. A number of these sites will be mixed-use, therefore will provide much needed employment space and opportunities across our places.

5. Looking forward

Short term delivery

5.1 There will be some significant impacts on vulnerable members of the Adur and Worthing community this autumn and winter. The reduction in Universal Credit, alongside the end of the furlough scheme, and rising food and fuel prices, mean that many of the Councils' most disadvantaged residents will be facing difficult financial choices. For businesses, recruitment remains a concern, especially in our key sectors, whilst new challenges exist regarding access to materials or products and the resilience of the supply chain.

5.2 In response to 5.1 there are some immediate strategies being put in place by the Councils', including:

- **Food** - provision of storage capacity to enable local food groups to store and share food, receive donations and bulk purchase food ahead of winter. In addition, funding will be provided directly to local food groups to support and enable their work ahead of Winter.
- **Financial support** - additional funding for Proactive (£12,000 for temporary agency staff) and money mentor financial support staff provided through the COMF funding to meet increased demand for help from low income residents. Work is also focusing on the development of clear information that will help direct communities to the help and support they need around finance, debt and utilities. In addition we are also continuing the work around Self Isolation payments and providing additional Council Tax Support of up to £150

per working age claimant (further details are provided in paragraph 4.9).

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing** - funding for an additional full time and part time Social Prescriber has been agreed to add increased capacity to the Going Local team. This will enable the Social Prescribers to spend more time connecting residents of Adur & Worthing into local community groups and services - improving their health and wellbeing. Through the Wellbeing Workplace Health initiative, Wellbeing Advisors are engaging with staff from local businesses to review and support their wellbeing needs, allowing employees to look at all aspects of their lifestyles. Employers are being given information on how to support their employees and are being encouraged to identify and provide training for a Mental Health First Aider within their workforce. For children and young people, Adur and Worthing is also piloting an approach to reduce school exclusions, and using grant funding to increase access to mentoring and bespoke support for children. We are also continuing to support the suicide prevention awareness work with Olly's Future (as detailed above)
- **Housing** - continues to work with those threatened with homelessness utilising homeless prevention and COMF funding to both prevent and relieve homelessness. Additionally we will be recruiting Lettings Support Officers, Move On Officers as well as staff to work on the AFEO scheme through the various funding awards we have received. We are also preparing to develop the next iterations of our homelessness strategy. Opening Doors continues to expand its portfolio of properties - a critical element supporting our work in delivering affordable homes.
- **Employment and Skills** - we have opened and are developing our new Youth Employment Hub in Worthing to provide invaluable holistic support and enablement for young people aged 18-24yrs around employment. Delivered alongside and using funding from the DWP, this hub is delivered in Marine Place and provides a space for young people to engage and be supported and directed to guidance, training, support and employment. Furthermore, as well as a number of other initiatives highlighted in this paper, the Councils' have also instigated an Employer Charter to work with a number of developers to embed an Employment and Skills Plan. The work around key sectors will also continue in relation to supporting local recruitment, for example with the healthcare sector.

- **Businesses** - the Councils will continue to harness the business networks that have been strengthened during the pandemic and ensure insight is gathered and businesses are signposted to appropriate support. This will include closer connections with Coast to Capital's Growth Hub. In addition, there is a growing need for us to focus attention on our key sectors (i.e. retail and hospitality, healthcare and construction) and examine the support needed that will be impactful for those sectors. Through funding secured from West Sussex County Council the Councils are already looking to provide independent retail opportunities, capitalising on a high percentage of people starting their own businesses as a result of the pandemic, whilst the delivery of Fabric in Lancing is a good example of an 'on the ground' intervention that will support existing and new businesses. The Councils will also continue to support the skills and innovation agenda by promoting apprenticeships, work experience and connecting businesses to Higher Education and Further Education facilities.

Medium to long term delivery

5.3 The Councils' continue to examine how to respond to the more medium and longer term needs of Adur and Worthing communities and businesses. Planning is already underway to identify the impacts of the increasing costs and reduction in Universal Credit, as well as building the infrastructure to help future proof for further impacts. The effects on businesses are harder to determine as existing challenges are market driven, such as the resourcing of materials and supply chains, but the Councils' are aware of the need to monitor the situation and respond where appropriate.

5.4 Key strategies for the medium term include:

- Developing a sustainable approach to **healthy, local and sustainable food** that supports the development of two local food / community hubs, working with local groups to support and develop local food approaches. Our ambition is to co-produce this work with communities, aimed at enabling communities to access healthy local and sustainable food and that embrace cooking, sharing, learning, as well as tackling food waste and building local food supply chains.
- Implementing HealthAW 2021-2024, Adur and Worthing's **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**, which was reported to the Joint Strategic Committee in September ([report](#)), which sets out our ambitions around enabling our communities to thrive and focuses upon prevention and

early intervention and addressing the health and social inequalities exposed and deepened by the pandemic.

- Our **Delivering Pathways to Affordable Homes** sets out our ambitions to not only deliver homes but pathways, acknowledging that move through is as important as supply, as well as ensuring connection to our communities and green spaces that supports our **Housing Strategy 2020-2023** to enable our communities to ‘thrive in their own homes’.
- Developing and using a robust **evidence base** to guide policy and strategy making, including identifying key sources of data and data gaps and ensuring that services are resourced and targeted based on available data.
- Implementing our **Good Work Programme** which will deliver, with partners, a series of employment and skills interventions to assist individuals, businesses and sectors to create resilience and growth in the job market. This will be guided by exploring the role of the Councils’ in different scenarios and examine how a relational approach may support this agenda.
- The health of our high streets, and therefore businesses, will continue to be monitored and the **Safe Towns Group** will be crucial in overseeing the consumer transition post pandemic. This agenda isn’t solely related to Covid-19, however this is an important aspect of the economy that we need to address by continuing to invest in our town centres.
- Implementation of our **major development and investment projects** will continue. As outlined in 4.40, a number of sites across Adur and Worthing are coming forward that will provide an increase in our employment footprint, whilst also bringing forward housing for current and future residents. Most notably, Decoy Farm in Worthing presents a good opportunity to significantly increase the employment base, whilst supporting growth with existing businesses and attracting new businesses in the process (inward investment).

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The Councils received considerable financial support throughout the pandemic from the government. In summary to date we have received grants totalling:

- Adur - £3.7m
- Worthing - £7.7m

6.2 These grants were used to support the programmes of work identified above as well as helping the Council address the financial impact of the pandemic on its own budgets.

6.3 In addition to the direct government grants, the Councils also received £68.3m funding from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to administer as business grants. These grant programmes closed at the end of August and any undistributed amounts are now being returned to the Government.

6.4 The Councils were also responsible for awarding significant additional business rate reliefs both in 2020/21 and in the current year.

	2020/21	2021/22	Total
	£'000	Estimated £'000	£'000
Covid reliefs awarded			
Adur	9,250	3,020	12,270
Worthing	16,910	5,980	22,890
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	26,160	9,000	35,160

40% of the cost of these reliefs is initially funded by the Councils. However, the Councils will be fully reimbursed for the financial impact associated with these grants via additional S31 government grant.

Finance Officer: Sarah Gobey

Date: 1st October 2021

7. Legal Implications

8.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

8.2 The Council has a wide general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.

8.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

8.4 Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the Council to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the Council.

8.5 The Contain Outbreak Management Fund is a Department of Health and Social Care fund set up to support Local Authorities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The various initiatives described in the report are subject to legal advice and support in formulating and implementing the Council's response to Covid-19 to ensure they are in accordance with the Council's power, duties and responsibilities.

8.6 When entering into a public contract whether or not with expenditure from grant funding received, the authority is required to comply with the grantor's funding terms and conditions and the Councils' Contract Standing Orders found at Part 4 of the Councils' constitution.

Legal Officer: Maria Memoli

Date: 27th September 2021

Background Papers

- [JSC Paper - Chief Executive's use of Urgency Powers during the Covid-19 Global Pandemic \(June 2020\)](#)
- [A&W Coronarius Community Response Update \(June 2020\)](#)
- [JSC Paper - Covid 19 Response \(July 2020\)](#)
- ["And Then" bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing \(July 2020\)](#)
- [JSC Paper - Covid Funding and use of the Chief Executive's Urgency Powers \(June 2021\)](#)
- [JSC Paper - Proactive interventions to support low income residents \(July 2021\)](#)
- [JSC Paper - HealthyAW: Developing the new Health & Wellbeing Strategy, 2021-2024 \(September 2021\)](#)

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

- The pandemic has had a major impact on the wider economy. Our approach to response has aimed to support our local residents and businesses and help to ensure they are resilient moving into the recovery phase. The impact on our local communities will be critical, whilst key sectors and access to employment opportunities, skills and training will also be key considerations going forward.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

- The pandemic has had a major impact on the lives of individuals, families and our communities. The community response has been a very important part of the councils' work during the response period and it will be vital to work with our partners and meet people's changing needs as we move through the recovery phase.

2.2 Equality Issues

- The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on some communities and this will need to continue to be reflected in our recovery planning and delivery.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- The pandemic has raised a number of community safety issues both direct and indirect. Issues that have arisen have been addressed in partnership with other agencies, notably the Police, to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to ensure a safe environment.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

No specific matters

3. Environmental

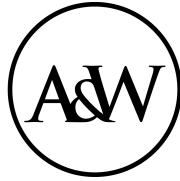
- The importance of locally sourced goods and services has been highlighted during the response phase and is likely to be reflected in changing patterns of consumer behaviour which could provide opportunities for local business and employment.

4. Governance

- The councils have adapted their formal governance arrangements during the response phase to ensure that they remain 'open for business' and able to deliver key services for our residents. At times, this has demanded that we exercise sensible regulatory principles to support community and commercial activity during this unprecedented period. Not to do so would have significant reputational impacts.

- Conducting the business of the council including aspects such as site visits; appointments at our offices and visiting people's homes; has meant that health and safety assessments and practise have had to be prepared and implemented rigorously.

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ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14 October 2021

]

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected:N/A

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny - Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) with information on the work of the Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Partnership (A&WSCP) in order for JOSC to scrutinise the work of the A&WSCP and interview the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing who represent the Councils on the Partnership.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That JOSC is asked to review the work of the A&WSCP and question the Executive Members for Health & Wellbeing on the work being undertaken by the Partnership.

3. Context

- 3.1 As part of its Work Programme for 2021/22, JOSC have agreed to scrutinise the work of the A&WSCP.
- 3.2 Councillors Kevin Boram and Sean McDonald will be present to speak on the work of the A&WSCP and JOSC will have the opportunity to question them.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 JOSC has the responsibility under the Police and Justice Act 2006 to scrutinise crime and disorder and the work of the A&WSCP. As part of its crime and disorder scrutiny role, JOSC are asked to consider the role of the A&WSCP. The Committee are entitled to ask for further investigation into items where they may not be satisfied with the progress.
- 4.2 The Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Partnership vision is to reduce crime and disorder through effective multi-agency working to make Adur and Worthing a safer place to live, work and visit. Safer Communities is also about how safe people feel in their own communities and how it is possible to make a real difference by working together to help cut crime and its causes and the fear of crime.
- 4.3 The A&WSCP has a statutory duty to reduce crime and disorder. The Partnership includes representatives from a range of agencies:-
 - Adur & Worthing Councils
 - Sussex Police
 - Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner PCC (Previously the Sussex Police Authority)
 - West Sussex County Council
 - West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
 - NHS West Sussex
 - Sussex Probation

Other partners contribute to the work including organisations from the the voluntary sector, local businesses and members of the community.

- 4.4 The Safer Communities Partnership is currently reviewing its priorities for 2021- 2024.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 The JOSOC Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, relevant Officers and Executive Members have been consulted on the contents of this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications to consider within this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Councils have the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 7.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 7.4 Under the relevant Sections of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Councils have authority to undertake crime and disorder scrutiny and scrutinise the work of the Safer Communities Partnership.

Background Papers

Report to Joint Strategic Committee 7 October 2021 - 'Towards a Safer Adur and Worthing - Proposed Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership Strategy 2021 - 2024

Officer Contact Details:-

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Scrutiny & Risk Officer

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Matter considered and no direct issues identified.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered. Improved community safety and a reduction in crime and disorder issues can lead to improved social value for local residents and communities.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no direct issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

The Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership has a statutory duty to reduce crime and disorder and make Adur & Worthing a safer place. Constructive Scrutiny of the work of the Partnership will help in achieving that vision.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

Matter considered and no issues identified.

4. Governance

Matter considered. Under the relevant Sections of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Councils have authority to undertake crime and disorder scrutiny and scrutinise the work of the Safer Communities Partnership.



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14 October 2021

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected:N/A

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2021/22

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

1.1 This report outlines the progress in implementing the work contained in the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) Work Programme for 2021/22 which was confirmed by the Councils in April 2021.

1.2 This report also includes two Scrutiny requests which JOSC is requested to consider relating to Southern Water services and the Worthing Business Improvement District (BID) process.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That JOSC note the progress in delivering the JOSC Work Programme for 2021/22 as set out in the Appendix to the report; and

2.2 That JOSC consider the two scrutiny requests attached at Appendix B to this report.

3. Context

3.1 The JOSC Work Programme for 2021/22 was agreed by the Councils in April

2021 and was reviewed by JOSC at its meeting on 16 September 2021. A copy of the latest version of the Work Programme is attached as the Appendix to this report.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The Committee will receive regular update reports on the implementation of the Work Programme at each meeting throughout the Municipal Year.
- 4.2 The Committee is requested to review the revised Work Programme and consider if any further items are required to be added to the Work Programme or items to be reviewed.
- 4.3 Additional items may be added to the Work Programme, where appropriate. Requests for additional matters to be included in the Work Programme will initially be considered by the Joint Chairpersons in accordance with the criteria and they will make their recommendations to the next JOSC for consideration and determination. When considering further items for the Work Programme, consideration should also be given to the capacity of the Committee and resources available.
- 4.4 This report includes two scrutiny requests concerning issues relating to Southern Water services and the Worthing Business Improvement Districts (BID) process. JOSC is requested to consider and decide whether or not the requests should be added to the Work Programme. Details of the requests are set out at Appendix B to the report including the recommendations from the Joint Chairpersons.
- 4.5 Items in the Work Programme for 2021/22 have been produced for the Committee guided by issues that closely align with the Councils' Strategic Objectives included in 'Platforms for our Places: Going Further' and 'And Then' document - 'Bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing', how the Committee can influence the outcomes and also general value and outcomes in accordance with the PAPER criteria -(P) - Public interest , (A) - Ability to change, (P) - Performance, (E) - Extent and - (R) - Replication.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 The JOSC Chairmen/Vice- Chairmen and the Councils Leadership Team have been consulted on the contents of the JOSC Work Programme.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications to consider within this report, however, some items contained in the Work Programme may have financial implications.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Councils have the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 7.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 7.4 Paragraph 9.2 of the current Joint Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, which form part of the Councils' Constitutions and are binding on all Members states that the Work Programme will be approved by both Councils. A report must be taken to both Councils on an annual basis seeking the Councils' approval of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the forthcoming year and any changes to the Work Programme should be submitted to the Councils approximately mid year for noting and this will be undertaken in December 2021.

Background Papers

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules
Reports on the Work Programme to the JOSC meeting on 16 September 2021

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Some of the issues scrutinised as part of the Work Programme could impact on the development of our places or the economic participation of our communities if implemented.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Some of the issues to be scrutinised as part of the Work Programme will have an impact on the communities and provide social value.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no direct issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered. Some of the issues being scrutinised will have community safety implications.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no direct issues identified.

3. Environmental

Matter considered. Some issues being scrutinised may relate to environmental and natural resources issues.

4. Governance

Matter considered and no direct issues identified. It is good practice for an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set a Work Programme. The current Joint Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules state that the Work Programme will be approved by both Councils and that any changes to the Work Programme should be submitted to the Councils approximately mid year for noting.



Adur & Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme - 2021/2022

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 14 October 2021

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
Interviews with Executive Members for Resources	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Executive Members for Resources	Yes. Interview added in place of interview with Executive Members for Customer Services which will now be in November.
Review of the delivery of 'Platforms for our Places: Going further 2020/22 and interview with Chief Executive	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Chief Executive	Yes. Item moved from September meeting in consultation with JOSCC Chairmen to accommodate diary commitments.

Covid-19 response - Economic recovery, support for the vulnerable and health and wellbeing review	Director for the Economy	Director for the Economy and relevant Officers	Yes. Item added following consideration of a scrutiny request. Item moved from the September meeting in consultation with the JOSC Chairmen to allow more time for the production of the report.
Crime and Disorder update - Interview with the Chairman of the Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Partnership	Covering report - Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Chairman of the Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Partnership.	No
Review of JOSC Work Programme	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	No

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 25 November 2021

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
Adur & Worthing and Joint Outline 5 year forecast and savings proposals	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources/Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer	No
Interview with Executive Members for Customer Services	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Executive Members for Customer Services	Yes. Item added in place of the interview with Executive Members for Resources which will now be in October.

Review of progress on the delivery of the Housing Strategy	Director for Communities/Head of Housing Services	Director for Communities/Head of Housing	No
Review of JOSC Work Programme including note of changes made since Work Programme agreed by Councils in April 2021	Director for Digital & Resources	No	No

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 27 January 2022

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
Interviews with the Executive Members for Environment and Digital & Environmental Services	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Executive Members for Environment (Adur) and Digital & Environmental Services (Worthing)	No
Presentation from Southern Water on bathing water quality issues - Results of 2021 Bathing water testing.	N/A	No	No
Adur & Worthing Health & Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan - 2021 - 2024	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources (Covering report)	Director for Communities/ Executive Members for Health & Wellbeing	Yes. Item added at the request of JOSC on 16 September 2021.

Worthing Theatres - Review of the operation of the contract	Director for Economy	Director for Economy	No
Review of JOSC Work Programme	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	No

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 17 March 2022

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
Review of the delivery of 'Platforms for our Places: Going further 2020/22 and interview with Chief Executive	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Chief Executive	No
Interviews with the Executive Members for Regeneration	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Executive Members for Regeneration	No
Annual feedback report from meetings of the West Sussex Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC) - Issues affecting Adur & Worthing	Verbal report from the Council Members on HASC	No	No
JOSC Work Programme setting 2022/23	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	No

Working Group reports - Dates to be confirmed

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBER/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
Reports from the Working Group reviewing the Adur Homes repairs and maintenance service	Chairman of the Working Group	No	Working Group currently in progress - Reports expected later in 2021 and 2022.
Report from the Working Group reviewing the Adur & Worthing evening and night time economy	Chairman of the Working Group	No	Working Group will be meeting again in September 2021 to review the evening and night time economy recovery Post 'lockdown'.
Final report from the Working Group reviewing Cultural Services	Chairman of the Working Group	No	Working Group currently reviewing information - Report expected later in 2021.

Items to be considered in 2021/22

Annual summary of complaints	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	
Worthing Theatres contract monitoring	Director for Economy	No	
Annual update on progress with delivering the Climate Change agenda	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources/Sustainability Manager	

PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND ITEMS CONSIDERED IN 2021/22

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 10 June 2021

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
Annual JOSC report for 2020/21	Joint Chairmen of JOSC	No	No
Review of JOSC Work Programme and confirmation of JOSC Working Group memberships for 2021/22	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	No

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 15 July 2021

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK</u>
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		<u>MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO ATTEND</u>	<u>PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
Joint Revenue outturn report 2020/21	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources/Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer	No
Outline Budget Strategy 2022/23	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources/Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer	No
Interview with Leaders	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Leaders	No
Worthing Theatres contract monitoring	Director for Economy	Director for Economy	Yes. Item moved from June JOSC meeting because the report is also being considered at the JSC meeting in July.
Annual update on progress with delivering the Climate Change agenda	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources/Sustainability Manager	No
Review of JOSC Work Programme	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	No

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 16 September 2021

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT AUTHOR</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/OFFICERS TO</u>	<u>CHANGE TO ORIGINAL WORK PROGRAMME?YES/NO/REASON</u>
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		<u>ATTEND</u>	
Interview with Executive Members for Health & Wellbeing	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	Executive Members for Health & Wellbeing	No
Review of JOSC Work Programme	Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources	No	No

Note:- This draft Work Programme is a 'live' document and all dates and items contained in it are provisional and subject to change in agreement with the JOSC Joint Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen, JOSC and relevant Officers.

APPENDIX B(1)

Scrutiny request Issue - Scrutiny of Southern Water services
Request from - Councillor Russ Cochran - Worthing Borough Council
Public interest - Ability of Southern Water to deliver services in Worthing in areas of expansion in particular. Issue affects a large group of people in Worthing and potentially Adur.
Score = High
Ability to change - A JOSC discussion could help in the public understanding of how Southern Water delivers its services.
Score = Medium
Performance - This review could review the performance of Southern Water in terms of delivering its services.
Score = Medium
Extent - Issues affecting water supply in Adur and Worthing. Particularly on new estates.
Score = High
Replication - Issue has not been considered by JOSC before.
Score = High
Expected Outcomes - Clarification of the way that Southern Water will meet the needs of residents and increased demand in the future.
Does the proposed review link with the Council strategic objectives or does the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the ability to influence and/or add value on the subject? Platforms for our Places: Going further - Platform 3 - Tackling climate change and supporting our natural environment - Commitment 3.4 - Improving water quality and reducing water consumption. Score = Medium
How could this review be undertaken? Southern Water to attend a future JOSC meeting.

**Recommendations from Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen:-**

That the scrutiny request be supported and Southern Water be invited to attend the JOSC meeting in January 2022 to address JOSC on its general performance and the delivery of water services.
(Note: Southern Water are already due to attend JOSC in January 2022 to report on the bathing water quality results).

Scrutiny request

Issue - Scrutiny of the Worthing Business Improvement District (BID) process

Request from - Councillor Kevin Jenkins - Worthing Borough Council

Public interest -

I am aware that within your work portfolio you were/are seeking to look at how our respective towns economy is recovering and being supported in its recovery post pandemic. The work of the local and county authorities in this is crucial, as well as the adaptations of business to the changes and challenges they face. This is very much a partnership approach. Amongst that is the work of the Worthing Business Improvement District (BID), which is overseen by the Worthing Town Centre Initiative (TCI).

By way of background information, (extracted from TCI/BID webpages)

The Worthing Town Centre Initiative proposed that the Town Centre became a Business Improvement District in 2007. The business plan was written, following an extensive consultation with the business community, and the postal ballot took place during June 2007.

A successful BID ballot must achieve 2 criteria

- 1) at least 50% of the number of businesses voting agreeing to the BID – Worthing achieved 57%
- 2) at least 50% of the rateable value of those voting agreeing to the BID – Worthing Achieved 53%

The ballot was successful and the BID launched on 1st April 2008.

The Business Improvement District funding comes from businesses trading in the Town Centre who pay an additional levy on their business rates, currently 1.25%. Businesses are given the opportunity every 5 years to vote on an updated or new business plan to decide if the BID should continue.

The BID has been successfully renewed in 2012 and 2017 .

2012 Result:

69% of the number of businesses voting agreed to the BID
79% of the rateable number of those voting agreed to the BID.

2017 Result:

82% of the number of businesses voting agreed to the BID.
85% of the rateable number of those voting agreed to the BID.

The current BID term is from 1st April 2018 until 31st March 2023 with levy paying businesses liable for a levy of 1.25% of their rateable value. Businesses within the BID area with a Rateable Value of £12,000 or above, are liable to pay the BID levy charge.

Business Improvement Districts are business led partnerships which are created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to local businesses. They can be a powerful tool for directly involving local businesses in local activities and allow the business community and local authorities to work together to improve the local trading environment. There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a Business Improvement District. The only requirement is that it should be something that is in addition to services provided by local authorities. Improvements may

include, but are not limited to, extra safety/security, cleansing and environmental measures.

The Business Improvement District proposer is required to develop a proposal and submit this to the local authority, along with a business plan. The proposal should set out the services to be provided and the size and scope of the Business Improvement District. It will also set out who is liable for the levy, the amount of levy to be collected and how it is calculated.

The local authority will manage the ballot process. However, if the local authority is of the opinion that the Business Improvement District arrangements are likely to conflict to a significant extent with an existing policy, place a financial burden on rate payers or the burden from the levy is unjust, it can decide to veto the proposals.

The proposal to renew the BID for a 4th term, covering 2023-2028, is currently being considered utilising a Business Survey, to identify the priorities for the next 5 years, and is about to take place. The formal ballot will be held by post and will take place during October 2022.. To my knowledge the renewals in 2012 and 2017 were not subject to any formal review, other than by the TCI/BID and the businesses themselves.

Worthing Borough Council is one of, if not the largest, contributor to the BID in respect of being a business with a number of premises in the town, all of which attract levy fees, funded by local tax payers money. As we come out of the pandemic local residents need assurance that the past work of the BID has made a difference to the town and that the future plans for the BID area reflect the real and current challenges faced by our town centre post pandemic with the changing use and face of our high streets / town centre and align with the aspirations for the town.

I would therefore invite you to consider calling a meeting of the 'Worthing Overview & Scrutiny Committee' to consider this request for scrutiny and if accepted appoint a working group to oversee a review of the current BID and its proposals for 2023-2028 to help allow the local authority to make an informed decision as to whether the Business Improvement District arrangements are likely to conflict to a significant extent with an existing policy, place a financial burden on rate payers or the burden from the proposed levy is unjust or whether they should be considered for support.'

Score = High

Ability to change - The proposal will allow the local authority to make an informed decision as to whether the Business Improvement District arrangements are likely to conflict to a significant extent with an existing policy, place a financial burden on rate payers or the burden from the proposed levy is unjust or whether they should be considered for support.

Score = High

Performance - This review request is not related to the performance of a Council service but does relate to the performance of the BID arrangements to ensure that they are robust and fit for purpose.

Score = Medium

Extent - This proposal covers issues relating to businesses in Worthing but also the outcomes from a BID will have an impact on local residents and visitors to the town if improved services are provided.

Score = High

Replication - This issue has not been scrutinised previously by JOSC

Score = High

Expected Outcomes - Oversight of a review of the current BID and its proposals for 2023-2028 to help allow the local authority to make an informed decision as to whether the Business Improvement District arrangements are likely to conflict to a significant extent with an existing policy, place a financial burden on rate payers or the burden from the proposed levy is unjust or whether they should be considered for support.

Does the proposed review link with the Council strategic objectives or does the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the ability to influence and/or add value on the subject?

Score = Platform 1 - Prosperous Places - Helping businesses improve.

How could this review be undertaken? A Working Group of JOSC to be set up to oversee a review of the current BID and its proposals for 2023-2028 to help allow the local authority to make an informed decision as to whether the Business Improvement District arrangements are likely to conflict to a significant extent with an existing policy, place a financial burden on rate payers or the burden from the proposed levy is unjust or whether they should be considered for support.'

Recommendations from Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen:-

That the scrutiny request be supported and a Worthing only JOSC Working Group be set up to review the matters contained in the request.

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