

Public Document Pack



ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

3 January 2022

Joint Strategic Committee

Date:	11 January 2022
Time:	6.30 pm
Venue:	QEII Room, Shoreham Centre

Committee Membership:

Adur District Council: Councillors; Neil Parkin (Adur Chairman), Angus Dunn (Adur Vice-Chairman), Carson Albury, Brian Boggis, Kevin Boram, Emma Evans and Nicola Waight

Worthing Borough Council: Councillors; Kevin Jenkins (Worthing Chairman), Edward Crouch (Worthing Vice-Chairman), Sean McDonald, Heather Mercer and Elizabeth Sparkes and Nicky Waight

Agenda

Part A

1. Declarations 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. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 7 December 2021, copies of which have been previously circulated.

3. Public Question Time

To receive any questions from members of the public.

Questions should be submitted by **noon** on **Friday 7 January 2022** to Democratic Services, democratic.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk

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

4. Items Raised under Urgency Provisions

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

5. Platforms for our Places: Going Further 6 Month Progress Report for July to December 2021 (Pages 1 - 48)

To consider a report from the Chief Executive, a copy is attached as item 5.

6. Proactive interventions to support low income residents (Pages 49 - 80)

To consider a report from the Interim Director for Communities, a copy is attached as item 6.

7. Council Tax Support Schemes for Worthing Borough Council in respect of 2022/23 & 2023/24 (Pages 81 - 90)

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

8. Worthing Pier - Emergency Works (Pages 91 - 96)

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

9. Referral of motion on notice from Worthing Borough Council (Pages 97 - 100)

To consider a report from the Interim Director for Communities, a copy is attached as item 9.

Part B - Not for Publication – Exempt Information Reports

None.

Recording of this meeting

The Council will be live streaming the meeting, including public question time. A 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:
Neil Terry Democratic Services Lead 01903 221073 neil.terry@adur-worthing.gov.uk	Andrew Mathias Senior Solicitor 01903 221032 andrew.mathias@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

Joint Strategic Committee
11 January 2022

Key Decision No

Ward(s) Affected: All

“Platforms for our Places: Going Further” 6 Month Progress Report for July to December 2021

Report by the Chief Executive

1. Purpose

1.1 “Platforms for our Places: Going Further” is the Councils' 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 ongoing strong progress made by the Councils in achieving these commitments over the past 6 months.

1.3 The report reflects our shift from pandemic ‘response’ to ‘Autumn and Winter recovery’ and describes the continuing impact of the pandemic on our communities. Whilst progress against some of the commitments has slowed because of the pandemic, most are on track and some have accelerated.

1.4 We continue to embed the lessons we have learned from the pandemic, using these to better support our communities and advance our strategic ambitions.

1.5 Moving forward the Councils will be gathering learning from the Platforms activity in order to feed into the next strategy cycle.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note and consider the “Platforms for our Places: Going Further” 6 months progress report (July to December 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. It has been delivered largely during a period of global pandemic alongside the delivery of core services and a huge Covid support effort that has impacted on every area of the organisation. It is a testament to the commitment of all staff that such progress has been made in such conditions.
- 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

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 ongoing 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. Given where we are in the strategy cycle we will be doing an internal review of these Amber / Red projects and then discussing with members whether they are appropriate to continue or if we should reconsider them.
- 3.6 All previous six-monthly update reports to the Committee have been considered by the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JOSC).

4.1 The Progress Report

- 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. The ongoing progress described in this report demonstrates the ability of the Councils to respond to the complexity of differing impacts created by the pandemic, whilst maintaining a focus on the longer term commitments established in *“Platforms for our Places : Going Further”*.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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 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.

- 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, including a range of ‘safety net’ activities for our communities in greatest need. Officers are actively reviewing the design of these services in light of the pandemic experience, ensuring the learning from the pandemic is captured and fully utilised across the Councils.

5. Issues for Consideration Including Delivery During a Pandemic

- 5.1 COVID-19 is an ongoing global public health emergency and its economic and social impacts continue to affect residents, communities and businesses across Adur and Worthing. No one has been left unaffected. The impact of both the initial crisis and the complexity of the recovery period is set to continue for some time, creating increased and changing demands on public services.
- 5.2 Our experience over the past 20 months continues to demonstrate how Platforms provides a strong and creative framework for the Councils to provide quality and highly responsive public services in the most challenging of circumstances. Our overall approach, characterised by agility and resilience, has proven invaluable during this period, enabling us to move further and faster, wherever this has been possible, on key commitments. The challenges faced by our communities and businesses this winter are significant and the prospect of the new Covid 19 variant adds another degree of uncertainty and difficulty for many. The scale and complexity of the challenges we face continue but they are met by the appetite of the Councils, with their communities and businesses, to respond with fortitude, speed and ambition.
- 5.3 During this period the Councils have been managing 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, emergency community support etc). With skillful financial management and support from

the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) the Councils have managed to both keep within budget and release resources to meet need when this has been required.

5.4 Our work with communities, supported by national research, including the Marmot Review, have found that the pandemic has disproportionately affected those communities who were already experiencing significant health and wellbeing inequalities. The Councils' investment in our own data capability has enabled us to take a granular view of this national research and identify cohorts and areas which have been hardest hit by the pandemic. These groups include older people, those with pre-existing health conditions, those on low incomes and insecure employment and housing. The evidence also shows that the pandemic has also significantly affected black and minoritised communities, young people and those with disabilities. Very significant resources of £1.5 million have 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 is described in the report and appendices.

5.5 In this next phase of the pandemic it is becoming increasingly clear that our residents and communities are experiencing additional and ongoing challenges. The ending of the Universal Credit uplift as well as the end of furlough, combined with increases in National Insurance and the cost of food and fuel, mean that some families risk shifting from coping to not coping. Increases in the National Living Wage, rising salaries and alterations in the way Universal Credit is calculated when working mean that whilst some families will be protected from these changes others will not.

Autumn and Winter recovery work is therefore a key priority for the Councils at this time, working with partners, to ensure our communities and businesses are more resilient and have what they need to thrive through the next phase of the pandemic period. Our Autumn and Winter recovery work is described in this report and presented more fully in the accompanying committee paper entitled 'Proactive interventions to support low income residents'.

5.6 Our experience is showing us that building resilience is about increasing the ability of our communities and services to respond to the unexpected, whilst also developing capacity to develop, change and improve as a result. In seeking to cultivate resilience within the workforce we are working differently, across teams to find new and more effective ways of working and helping

those most in need. This approach removes unnecessary duplication or disconnection of skills within the organisation and enables our staff to work creatively and ultimately more effectively in increasingly complex situations. Our expanding use of data and improved information gained through stronger collaboration with our communities and partners, provides both the foundation and the directional steer in this approach. This work is situated in our Good Services platform but is reflected across all platforms.

- 5.7 Amongst the pain and hardship of the pandemic there are some positive outcomes including stronger community networking and an increasingly confident community and voluntary sector. Our investment in community infrastructure and participation is starting to develop, including our work in supporting and developing food banks throughout Adur and Worthing and also in our acquisition of the Lancing Police station and its meanwhile use as a combined community / co-working hub further develops our work in this area.
- 5.8 Our focus on jobs and skills, promoting confidence in our places, and attracting investment has helped to protect, support and enable our local businesses and keep people in employment. As described below, we are for example, actively supporting a further 20 young people as part of the Kickstart programme, with 42 placements so far in total. We have, as part of this, sought to maintain our retail and visitor economies, ensuring for example planting is well maintained and the streets are kept to the highest possible standards. We have reached several major milestones on a series of significant major projects including the start of building work for Worthing Integrated Care Centre and groundwork for Southern Housing to develop 540 new homes.
- 5.9 We have also continued to benefit from investment in our technology and data science, as demonstrated in the development of our Citizen Hub and the implementation of our Proactive Programme that is helping those most at risk of not coping in our community. The new reality of our gigabit infrastructure raises the bar in terms of what can and should be achieved.
- 5.10 Our work on sustainability is amongst the best in the sector and we are well positioned to deliver a number of significant projects. Described in more detail below, the Councils were recently awarded a £5m grant from central government (BEIS) for the delivery of a UK leading district heat network scheme to connect 23 buildings using a sewer source heat pump. The Adur River project is part of a significant investment that has been made by the Councils for the protection of public open space and biodiversity. This

investment will form part of a wider Sussex Bay initiative, set to protect and transform our coastal natural environments.

6. The 5 Individual Platforms

- 6.1 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

- 6.2 **Economic recovery** remains a core focus for the Councils including helping people gain the skills needed to secure employment and help local businesses recover and grow. Over the past six months we have ensured that the remaining '**Pandemic grant funding streams**' find their way swiftly to our local businesses; over £60m has been distributed to businesses across Adur and Worthing during the pandemic. In addition, our work on place continues to progress well, **renewing infrastructure, stimulating economic development and building new homes**. Our collaboration with local, regional and nation partners is driving areas of significant innovation including the potential development of local hydrogen-based solutions.
- 6.3 We know that we need to focus on **skills** to support economic recovery. Local data generated by our **data capability**, 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.

We have used the **Apprenticeship Levy** to support apprenticeships across the Councils and we are actively supporting a further 20 young people as part of the Kickstart programme, with 42 placements so far in total. The **Youth Hub** has opened, focussing on helping young people to secure employment opportunities. Our **Employer Charter** seeks to maximise opportunities for development and training and we are working with our partners on 'Dare to Dream', designed to raise aspirations of young people in secondary schools, with a focus on those most at risk of disengaging, using a preventative approach.

- 6.4 We have continued to focus on supporting our **town centres** and providing a safe and welcoming environment for people to return to. Adur & Worthing

Councils' pioneering investment in **gigabit ultrafast infrastructure** is progressing well, now reaching 32,000 homes, and is making the area one of the most digitally connected places in the south east.

87 local businesses, including 10 in the last period, 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. A lease agreement with **AudioActive** to move former shop premises into Montague Street is now complete. 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.

- 6.5 A new **Farmers' Market** has been introduced in Worthing and we continue to support small businesses and have extended many of our concessions into the autumn and winter seasons. The Markets in Adur, including **Shoreham Farmers Market**, continue to deliver a vibrancy to our high streets each month, whilst also providing local / independent businesses the opportunity to trade.
- 6.6 We have worked with our **Time for Worthing** partners to deliver a new website and visitor guide; and as regulations have eased, we have supported large events such as Legends in Shoreham and this year's Pride event at Worthing. We continue to support innovation in our local economies in partnership with our local employers and as part of this have co-sponsored a study with higher education and business partners to examine the prospect of a virtual production centre.
- 6.7 Place based initiatives build confidence, support our high streets, provide much needed local employment and provide new homes. We have reached significant milestones on a series of important major projects over the past 6 months. Work has begun on site to deliver the **Worthing Integrated Care Centre** and the new public realm for **Portland Road** is progressing well. A stylish temporary scheme for **Montague Place** has been developed and will inform a longer-term intervention. Design work has begun on a proposed public realm improvement for **Southwick Square** for consultation with local stakeholders.
- 6.8 Following purchase of the **police station** site in Lancing a 'meanwhile use' has been developed for the site called **Fabric**. Fabric, aims to offer community, charity and small business space in the North Road premises both

to create sustainable jobs in Lancing but also to encourage the new tenants to work together on ideas that can bring new opportunity to the village.

- 6.9 Worthing Borough Council has completed the purchase of **Teville Gate**. This is of fundamental importance to securing the regeneration of this strategically important site. While the development strategy is put together we will deliver a safer and much more welcoming environment for our communities by introducing 'meantime activities' and re-establishing pedestrian routes to the Station.
- 6.10 Following the successful completion of the £4.8m project to decontaminate **Decoy Farm** and make the site 'development ready' Worthing Borough Council has made the decision to develop the site directly and bring forward high quality employment space to help our expanding businesses and support inward investment. In Adur, Southern Housing has now completed the flood defences and groundwork necessary to support 540 new homes at **Free Wharf** in Shoreham, supported by grants from Homes England. Hyde Housing will also be starting on site shortly delivering 255 affordable homes on **Kingston Wharf** alongside Easystore's innovative **Enterprise Centre** providing storage and managed office floorspace. Following the grant of permission for 467 dwellings at **West Sompting** the developer, Persimmon Homes, will be starting on site next year building the first phase of 96 dwellings and delivering new sports pitches and open space. The **Union Place** marketing exercise has completed and the Borough Council and London & Continental Railways (LCR) are now actively engaged with potential development partners with a view to selecting a team and a procurement route to deliver this major scheme.

Platform 2: Thriving People and Communities

6. 11 The pandemic continues to be central to the work of this platform with our focus continuing to be on keeping people safe, in supporting the **recovery** process and ensuring our communities are able **thrive** in the post pandemic context. Rather than seeing the pandemic as distracting from the Thrive agenda we have actively sought to use lessons learnt to better support communities and build resilience.
- 6.12 As described above, in the coming months, with changes in benefits and rising costs of living, many families are at risk of moving from coping to not coping. **Autumn and Winter recovery** is therefore our priority, helping to ensure our communities have what they need to get through the next phase of the pandemic. Our focus is on providing good planning and delivery around:

- Identifying those at risk of not coping
- Developing stronger pathways of support for people identified as been in need through internal and partner support
- Developing a 'safety net' of provision with our partners including Money Mentors, Good Work and the Wellbeing Hub.

6.13 Our multidisciplinary **Proactive Programme** is the cornerstone of this approach and is progressing well having, by the end of October, engaged 164 residents. The approach uses the **LIFT platform** to identify households with low financial resilience and our Customer Service team members then telephone these households to explore ways of increasing household income, reducing household debt and also addressing issues such as depression, anxiety and loneliness that often accompany financial exclusion. For some residents, support is offered at the first point of contact (our customer services team) but for others, they are "introduced" (referred) to other council teams for further assistance. The work of the **OneStop "Money Coaches"** programme has been fundamental in supporting the Proactive Project and supporting the community more widely. During the period July - Oct 2021 there have been 311 complex referrals (Adur Cases 125 - Worthing Cases 186) that have led to an approximate increase of income for the referrals of £205,459.

6.14 We have spent time over this period working with **local food groups** to support and enable their work. Working with Community Works, the A&W Food Group has been meeting regularly, providing a space to better understand food system issues. We have used our **COMF grant** to provide direct funding to these groups, enabling them to better engage with their users, to develop shared food storage facilities and when necessary, to purchase food for families in crisis. Learning and data from this work will be used to help co design processes that deliver a more sustainable and effective food and antipoverty system.

6.15 Our focus on reducing **rough sleeping and homelessness** continues and has made consistent progress in the last 6 months despite the challenges of meeting increased demand and need. 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 offers of accommodation to everyone who is in need. A key part of this work has included the development of our **Housing First approach** and associated support offer (with funding support from DLUHC). This approach includes our **"Opening Doors"** scheme which has delivered 75 lets, with 14 further properties in the pipeline as well as accommodation via the Rough

Sleeper Accommodation Programme. Opening Doors, which includes a range of incentives (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.

6.16 The wider community safety, health and wellbeing work being undertaken through this platform is extensive. During this period we have completed and signed off our new **Health and Wellbeing Strategy** 'HealthyAW' and its associated Delivery Plan. The strategy sets out our approach to working with and enabling our communities to thrive, focusing on health inequities across the following three priorities:

- **Priority 1** - To improve health and wellbeing for all, focusing on our communities with the poorest health and wellbeing.
- **Priority 2** - To create places, spaces, and environments that are sustainable and promote and enable good health and wellbeing
- **Priority 3** - To promote stronger community resilience in our communities and our workforce

6.17 During the Autumn / Winter recovery period the HealthyAW delivery plan has focused on providing health and wellbeing support for our communities through a number of activities and services:

- **Going Local** - Between July to September the service received 325 new referrals for support and this is a 13% increase in demand compared to preceding quarter. During this period the service has seen a rise in the complexity of cases (linked to mental health and social isolation) and increases in safeguarding concerns.
- **Wellbeing Hubs** - During this period the Councils have seen a 49% increase in referrals compared to the previous period, with Wellbeing Advisors currently working with 229 people across Adur and Worthing. The initial reasons for referral remain weight management and eating healthier. Underlying issues of a more complex nature however often present, including mental health needs, feelings of isolation, money worries and bereavement.
- **Alcohol Wellbeing Advisor** - During this period the service has received 25 referrals which is an increase of 75% compared to the previous period. We are beginning to notice a number of people who have relapsed, some after having managed their alcohol use for many years. Again this can likely be attributed to the impact of the Covid pandemic on people's lives.

Platform 3: Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

- 6.18 The realities of the **climate emergency** have not gone away during the Covid 19 pandemic and the Councils have therefore continued apace with their Platform 3 priorities. Through a number of energy, waste reduction and biodiversity initiatives the Councils are successfully working towards their ambition of being Carbon Neutral by 2030. **The Environment Act** received Royal Assent in November and provides the Councils with a number of significant opportunities to progress these ambitions, with particular reference to biodiversity, waste reduction and recycling.
- 6.19 Our community engagement work around sustainability has continued during the last six months, building on the success of the **Climate Assembly**. The community section of the **SustainableAW climate and nature plan** was, for example, completed following engagement with over 200 organisations. The Climate Action AW campaign, which ran alongside **COP26**, helped showcase many local business and community projects as well as council activity.
- 6.20 During the pandemic, work has been accelerating to develop a project pipeline to help **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. Projects include triple glazing and insulation at Worthing Civic Quarter, solar PV arrays at multiple sites, ground and air source heat pumps at Shadwells Court, Tollbridge House and the Shoreham Centre. A feasibility study for a 3MW **solar farm** at Dale Road is planned to commence in the next few months. The Councils were recently awarded a £5m grant from central government (BEIS) for the delivery of the **Worthing Heat Network**, a UK leading district heat network scheme to connect 23 buildings including the NHS, Councils and the police in Worthing centre using a sewer source heat pump.
- 6.21 Under the WSCC **EV network** 31 sites are being put forward for installation of new EV charge points. An Installer was awarded in early Nov (Connected Kerb) and the first charge points are likely to be installed in Adur and Worthing in Spring 2022. Workplace charge points have been installed at Commerce Way for new EV vans. There are plans to provide EV charge points at Worthing Civic Quarter in the newbuild MSCP where council rental fleet will be parked and can then be switched from hybrid to full EV. The Waste Team is exploring opportunities for Hydrogen fuel for transport and freight vehicles across the Greater Brighton area.
- 6.22 The Councils' land acquisitions for nature restoration and community green

spaces are among the most innovative interventions made in the UK by any local authority. These acquisitions include the purchase of **Shepherds Mead, Pad Farm and New Salts Farm**. Our associated work with the Environment Agency, the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, Surrey Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park and Sussex Wildlife Trust is progressing well, ensuring these sites are preserved for the purposes of enhancing and protecting biodiversity, improving community access and contributing to carbon neutrality. **The Adur River Project** (Pad Farm and New Salts Farm) has passed the Expression of Interest stage for funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and community engagement is progressing well for Shepherds Mead nature restoration projects.

- 6.23 Responding to the Climate Assembly recommendation, Adur & Worthing Councils have continued to work with partners to drive forward the restoration and management of the kelp forest and other “blue” habitats. This work is being progressed through our **Sussex Bay Initiative**, which aims to bring partners together, and build the funding and governance infrastructure needed to make a real impact. Restoration of these habitats will create significant 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. The project is working with DEFRA and many local partners, and has for example recently engaged the **Worthing small boat fishing community** in developing plans for the future of sustainable fishing locally. Work is also progressing with the **Arun to Adur Farmers Group** regarding use of seaweed as fertilizer for soil improvement to tackle the wash up of kelp from winter storms.
- 6.24 The Councils have continued to work with Ricardo, Shoreham Port and the Greater Brighton Economic Board and the newly established **Hydrogen Sussex Group**. The group is backing 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 Councils, continues to progress well and is in its second phase. STS is a group buying scheme that enables residents to install high-quality, roof-mounted solar panels and battery systems at competitive prices. During the first round almost 50 households installed either solar PV and/or battery storage. During the second round over 400 households in A&W registered interest to have PV and/or battery storage installed in their homes.

- 6.25 **The Environment Act** sets out a number of significant changes to refuse and recycling and officers will actively engage with forthcoming guidance on the new requirements. In the meantime we are progressing in a number of areas that should enable us to respond well to the new requirements of the Act. Our **recycling rate** has continued to rise year on year, with figures from April - October 2021 showing a further 3.16% point increase in Adur and a 5.24% point increase in Worthing, compared to the same period in 2020-2021. The **commercial food waste service** was launched in October initially serving a small number of customers on a trial basis. The trial has gone very well helping commercial customers manage their waste more sustainably and reduce costs. A more high profile campaign is now being launched to offer this service more widely.

Platform 4: Good Services and New Solutions

- 6.26 The Councils have continued to manage a period of **significant financial uncertainty**, with planning assumptions requiring ongoing revision and updating. As described above, both income (e.g. car parking and other fees) and expenditure (for example, homelessness, emergency community support etc) remain areas of ongoing challenge. With **skilled financial management** and support from DLUHC, the Councils in 2020/21 have managed to keep within budget and release resources where required. Work is ongoing to ensure the Councils can sustain this position without additional funding from DLUHC going forward.
- 6.27 With new internal service design expertise in place, work to design our new customer relationship management system '**Citizen Hub**' is underway. 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.

Our **Customer Service** team has continued to deliver excellent levels of service throughout this 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, wellbeing or third party support services. The Customer Service team has, as part of this approach, led the **Proactive work** described in Platform 2. The team has now been able to identify financial and wellbeing impacts as a result of this work through the LIFT platform. Of those residents

that have engaged with us, we can see that more are moving into “coping” and out of “not coping”.

- 6.28 Through our **Good Services programme**, the Councils are taking the lessons from the Proactive project and other new ways of working, to improve service delivery right across the council. This work includes a focus on **encouraging collaboration with communities** and partners, the collection and better use of data, more effective use of digital solutions and multidisciplinary working when addressing complex, cross cutting issues. To support this work and release the potential of our staff, our **learning offer** has continued to develop at speed, adapting to the challenges faced and ambitions sought by the two Councils. Areas of training include the provision of resilience training, Mental Health First Aid training, equality and diversity training and management learning sets focusing on leading remote teams.

Support for our leaders is key to the success of this approach and includes focused leadership support for the **Organisational Leadership Team** and additional quarterly training for around 80 senior managers. The second cohort of the **Leadership Lab**, providing intensive development support to 14 of our most talented leaders, was completed in November.

- 6.29 **WorkspacesAW** is another of our modernisation programmes, helping the Councils to apply learning from the pandemic and deliver necessary and helpful changes to the way in which we operate. WorkspacesAW will for example 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 encouraging staff to shift modes of transport, securing reduced commuting and business miles and potentially helping reduce carbon emissions.
- 6.30 Our work to deliver best practice in procurement continues with a pilot programme exploring 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.

Platform 5: Leadership of Place

- 6.31 In “*Platforms for our Places: Going Further*” and “*And Then ...*” we set out a range of leadership activities that, in the current context, we are seeking to

actively develop further and faster. Our reputation as a place of innovation and as being 'open for business' continues to bring forward exciting opportunities for collaboration and development.

- 6.32 In this next phase of the pandemic we know our residents and communities are experiencing another set of challenges. Autumn and Winter recovery work is therefore a key priority for the Councils, working with partners, to ensure our communities and businesses have what they need to thrive through the next phase of the pandemic.
- 6.33 The Councils continue to maintain and develop a diverse and ever increasing set of **partnerships** including housing partners, the community and voluntary sector, the NHS, Police and Community Safety organisations. Our relationships with other Districts and Boroughs continue to be positive and we are keen to further cultivate these for example through strategic work including Sussex Bay. Our work with **West Sussex County Council** in many areas is also progressing well and will need to develop further if we are to successfully implement the many opportunities and challenges we share, including the **Environment Act, Health and Social Care reform** and the relocation of **Afghan Refugees**.
- 6.34 We have been working with the **Sussex Police** and our community safety partners on the development and agreement of the new **Safer Communities Strategy** which was signed off by the Joint Strategic Committee in October 2021. Work is now being undertaken to develop the Delivery Plan which will be focused on a number of priorities, including reducing the harm caused by serious, organised and acquisitive crime; better support for minoritised communities; and actions that tackle violence against women and girls.
- 6.35 We continue to **develop relationships** with our communities seeking to develop closer working and deeper trust, especially with our diverse and often excluded communities. Maintaining and developing these relationships is 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 relationship with the local **Community and Voluntary Sector** continues to develop and mature. With funding from the **Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)** we have been able to further support the local food partnership and other mutual aid groups in Adur and Worthing. We have also begun to further develop our **Asset Based Community Development** practice to improve and strengthen our work with communities, including improved engagement with **minoritised ethnic community** partners and organisations.

- 6.36 We are developing our **Good Work** approach as part of our autumn winter recovery programme, seeking to develop opportunities for those most impacted by COVID-19 - this includes work opportunities for young people, those who are disabled, over 50s and our minoritised ethnic communities. The programme uniquely undertakes this work through an integrated approach to wellbeing, skill development and employment 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 accessing 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.

7. Engagement and Communication

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 Delivery of specific projects are communicated through the Councils' communications channels, press releases, social media etc. as appropriate.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 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
- 8.2 The relevant revenue and capital budget reports 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.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides all local authorities with the power to take any steps which are likely to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their area and residents. It also places a duty on authorities to develop a community strategy, together with other local bodies, for this purpose, and is a strategy that also contributes to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK
- 9.2 There are no further 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.

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.

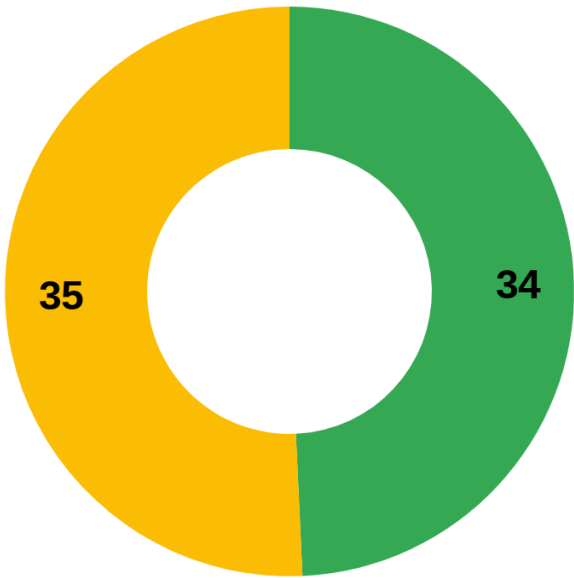
4. Governance

- 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

Overview : last six months

Economic recovery remains the core focus and in particular, helping people gain the skills needed to secure employment and help our local businesses recover and grow. Over the past six months we have ensured that the remaining ‘Pandemic grant funding streams’ (over £60 million) find their way swiftly to our local businesses. In addition our work on place continues to progress well, renewing infrastructure, stimulating economic development and building new homes.

Platform Highlights :

Employment, Skills and Wellbeing

Our **Good Work Programme** is designed to assist people to develop the skills they need to get back into work as part of the wider recovery. We have used the Apprenticeship Levy to support apprenticeships across the Councils and we are actively supporting a further 20 young people as part of the Kickstart programme, with 42 placements so far in total.

The **Youth Hub** has opened, focussing on helping young people to secure employment opportunities. Our **Employer Charter** seeks to maximise opportunities for development and training and we are working with our partners on ‘**Dare to Dream**’, designed to raise aspirations of young people in secondary schools, with a focus on those most at risk of disengaging using a preventative approach.

A lease agreement with **AudioActive** to move former shop premises into Montague Street is now complete. 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.

Supporting Local Business and Innovation

Through our work with the Adur & Worthing Business Partnership we have co-sponsored the successful **Better Business Show** and the Annual **Business Awards**.

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** continues to make good progress now reaching 32,000 homes.

87 local businesses, including 10 in the last period, 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 **Hot House Programme** which focuses support on financial, innovation and productivity skills for small and medium sized enterprises.

A new **Farmers' Market** has been introduced in Worthing and we continue to support. The Markets in Adur, including Shoreham Farmers Market, continue to deliver a vibrancy to our high streets each month, whilst also providing local / independent businesses the opportunity to trade. To support small businesses, we have extended many of our concessions into the autumn and winter seasons. We have worked with our **Time for Worthing**

partners to deliver a new website and visitor guide; and as regulations have eased, we have supported large events such as Legends in Shoreham and this year's Pride event at Worthing.

We continue to support innovation in our local economies in partnership with our local employers. We have co-sponsored a study with higher education and business partners to examine the prospect of a **virtual production centre** and we have strengthened our partnerships with business and public agencies around potential **hydrogen-based solutions**.

Development of Place

Work has begun on site to deliver the **Worthing Integrated Care Centre**.

The Examination in Public into the **Worthing Local Plan** has been completed – a major milestone in guiding the future development of the town; and work has already begun on a Review of the **Adur Local Plan** which is of equal significance to the District.

Following purchase of the police station site in Lancing a 'meanwhile use' has been developed for the site whilst a planning application is developed. Refurbishment work is coming to completion with the launch of **Fabric Lancing** now imminent. The Fabric concept is based on a collaboration with the private sector to provide co-working space along with active community space, supporting the sustainable economic, social and cultural growth of Lancing.

Worthing Borough Council has **completed the purchase of Teville Gate**. This is of fundamental importance to securing the regeneration of this strategically important site. While the development strategy is put together

we will deliver a safer and much more welcoming environment for our communities by introducing 'meantime activities' and re-establishing pedestrian routes to the Station.

Investment in our **town centres and seafront** is vital for recovery. The new public realm for **Portland Road** is progressing in line with the programme and has seen dark fibre infrastructure installed. A stylish temporary scheme for **Montague Place** has been developed and will inform a longer-term intervention. Design work has begun on a proposed public realm improvement for **Southwick Square** for consultation with local stakeholders. In the meantime, we have continued to focus Welcome Back funding toward updating street furniture and improving local parades.

Developer led-schemes are underway at the former **Beales** building and permissions have been granted for other residential conversion and or redevelopment schemes above existing shop units including at Poundland, HMV and Mothercare bringing residents into the heart of the town.

Following the successful completion of the £4.8m project to decontaminate **Decoy Farm** and make the site 'development ready' the Borough Council has made the decision to develop out the site directly and bring forward high quality employment space to help our expanding businesses and support inward investment. As part of this approach we are actively exploring the concept of a 'net zero business park'.

Southern Housing has now completed the flood defences and groundwork necessary to support 540 new homes at **Free Wharf** in Shoreham, supported by grants from Homes England. Enabling works have now progressed on Stage 1 which will deliver 137 affordable housing units on the

A259 frontage at Free Wharf and work is imminent on the site at **The Mannings** with the redevelopment of the existing flats with 73 new affordable units.

Hyde Housing will also be starting on site shortly delivering 255 affordable homes on **Kingston Wharf** alongside Easystore's innovative Enterprise Centre providing storage and managed office floorspace.

Following the grant of permission for 467 dwellings at **West Sompting** the developer, Persimmon Homes will be starting on site next year building the first phase of 96 dwellings and delivering new sports pitches and open space.

The Port Authority continues to expand its offer to provide a range of new business floorspace opportunities following the success of the light industrial units built at **Lady Bee Marina** and permission has been granted for 22 commercial units to be known as Riverside Studios built adjacent to the Schooner public house.

Cala homes have completed 120 homes at **New Monks Farm**; and the riverside **Pumping Station** is complete and operational; and planning permission has been secured for a fourth arm for the new roundabout on the A27. Work has begun on the new roundabout, using £5.7m of Local Growth funding secured via Coast to Capital. The application for the detailed design and layout of the 25,000 square metres of commercial floorspace at **Shoreham Airport** has been submitted and will be considered early in the new year by the Planning Committee.

Ropetackle North in Shoreham is complete and most of the new homes are now occupied.

The **Union Place** marketing exercise has completed and the Borough Council and London & Continental Railways (LCR) are now actively engaged with potential development partners with a view to selecting a team and a procurement route to deliver this major scheme.

Work is on site at **Fulbeck Avenue** where Boklok will deliver 150 high quality modular homes; both affordable and market homes matched to reflect local incomes.

An application by St William for 203 dwellings at the **Gas Works site** is due to be considered by Worthing Planning Committee in December. Bellway Homes have also purchased the HMRC site and are expecting to submit a detailed application for 287 dwellings and a care home on the **Barrington Road former HMRC site**.

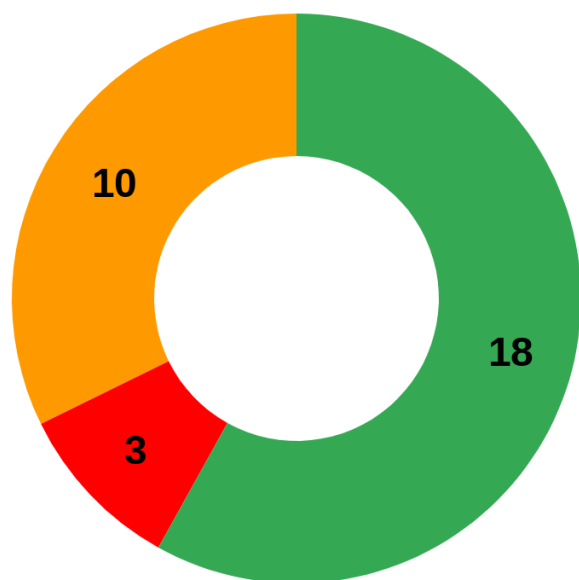
Challenges

Sustainable recovery for our local economies will depend on a wide range of factors and influences. We need to respond positively to the needs of our communities and in the context presented by the climate change agenda.

We will continue to work alongside businesses to promote access to new markets, supporting people to reskill to find new jobs and to support employers, businesses and education providers to make better use of opportunities to help young people entering the job market.

We will need to maintain our energy and reputation for securing investment opportunities that support our Platforms objectives.

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

Autumn / Winter Recovery

In this next phase of the pandemic it is becoming increasingly clear that our residents are experiencing additional and ongoing challenges. The ending of the Universal Credit uplift as well as the end of furlough, combined with increases in National Insurance and the cost of food and fuel, mean that some families risk shifting from coping to not coping. Increases in the National Living Wage, rising salaries and alterations in the way Universal Credit is calculated when working mean that whilst some families will be protected from these changes others will not. Autumn/Winter recovery is therefore the focus of Thrive at this time and includes:

- Identifying those at risk of not coping using available data sets including the LIFT Platform
- Developing stronger pathways of support for people identified through internal and partner support

Thriving People and Communities

- Developing the safety net of provision around support including our Money Mentors and also working with our partners to understand capacity and demand. This work is supported through the following approaches:
- **Getting upstream:** Working with data to identify and support residents who are at the coping / not coping boundary
- **Design around the person:** Create person and where possible community centred pathways to support these residents and households to help them thrive
- **Really getting upstream and out of the water:** Use our place based data to look at how we strengthen support within communities - not just building safety nets but looking at what we need for communities to thrive.

Proactive

Our multidisciplinary Proactive Project is progressing well and by the end of October had engaged over 164 residents. The team uses the **LIFT platform** to identify households with low financial resilience and telephones them to explore ways to increase household income, reduce household debt and also to address the depression, anxiety and loneliness that often accompany financial exclusion. For some residents, support is offered at the first point of contact (our customer services team) but for others, they are “introduced” (referred) to other council teams for further assistance.

The team has now been able to identify financial and wellbeing impacts as a result of this work. LIFT assigns each resident with a financial risk score and we can track these over time.

Of those residents that have engaged with us, we can see that more are moving into a “coping” risk score and out of “not coping” scores. We are also seeing positive impacts in terms of the self-assigned wellbeing scores that residents who engage with the Proactive team report to us.

The work of the **OneStop “Money Coaches”** programme has been fundamental in supporting the Proactive Project and supporting the community more widely. During the period July - Oct 2021 there have been 311 complex referrals (Adur Cases 125 - Worthing Cases 186) receiving at least 10 interventions per referral (3,110). Which has led to an approx increase of income for the referrals of £205,459.00

Food strategy / system

We have spent time over this period working with local food groups to support and enable their work. Working with Community Works, the A&W Food Group has been meeting regularly and has been providing a space to understand needs and issues. We have used our COMF grant to provide direct funding to groups enabling them to purchase food through the Autumn/Winter period and also to engage with people who are food insecure to better understand their needs; this will help us to co design a more sustainable system around the needs of the people.

We are also working with food groups to deliver better infrastructure and this work includes supporting shared food storage spaces. These food storage sites are located in Worthing (Queen Street), Lancing (the Old Police Station), Shoreham (the Shoreham Centre) and Fishersgate (the Gateway building)

Housing First / Homelessness

Demand on the service continues to increase, driven by more evictions following the end of the eviction ban and the end of the furlough scheme, pushing more people into financial difficulties. The Housing Needs Team are working closely with partner organisations to ensure as many households and individuals as possible are helped to avoid homelessness, or be speedily rehoused once homeless. The latest data shows that, in 2020/21, of households presenting to the councils as at risk, homelessness was prevented in 52% of cases in Adur and 41% of cases in Worthing.

A number of new initiatives and close partnership working made this possible. For example, a WSCC pilot project “Discharge to Assess Beds”, provides an improved pathway for those being discharged from Mental Health settings and this work includes:

- Pathways Home floating support (a floating support and mentoring service), together with referral routes for Registered Social Landlords into the Homelessness Team and Pathways Home.
- The implementation of a joint working protocol for young people and care leavers, which includes joint assessments for 16 and 17 year olds.
- The co-location of an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) with the Housing Needs Team
- Working more closely with OneStop to support those in temporary accommodation
- Beginning the process to submit a bid for Rough Sleeper Initiative funding 2022-2025

- Secured Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme funding to contribute capital and support for single people who have experienced rough sleeping.

The last official annual count found that, in 2021/22 there were 8 people sleeping rough in the streets of Worthing and 1 person sleeping rough in Adur.

While the Hospital Admission Reduction Pathway(HARP) PHE funding stream has now ended, WSCC have funded an extension to the programme until March 2022. This provision provides a housing navigator in the hospital and a community nurse. Options to mainstream this service after March 2022 are being explored as well as looking to expand the remit to include those who misuse alcohol who are currently excluded under the extension due to constraints of the funding stream.

The multi-agency Rough Sleeper Team (RST) continues to ensure homeless and rough sleepers are registered with general practitioners and have access to health services. Successes include being one of the first areas in the country to secure a programme of covid vaccinations for rough sleepers and homeless people led by Worthing Medical Group.

Plans to improve homelessness prevention in prison have started by working with the Probation Service’s CAS3 project, which is intended to provide accommodation to those at risk of being homeless on being released from prison and are not owed a statutory duty

Housing Strategy 2020/2023

In Adur, 15 new homes have been completed at Cecil Norris House and construction has started on a further 6 flats in the district. In Worthing, 19 homes have been completed at Rowlands Road and 8 more homes have been completed as part of the Downview phase 2 development.

Opening Doors Scheme

We have completed a total of 75 lets so far through the Opening Doors Scheme, with a further 14 in the pipeline that we expect to sign up by the end of the year. We have also 'floated off' 16 tenancies, which means that, because they have been successful for two years, the council is no longer liable for the rent guarantees on those properties.

We have also just completed a contract with a property developer, "Crowding Bricks" to secure 21 newly refurbished one-bed properties in Worthing that will be let through the Opening Doors service. Individual landlords are also still showing interest in the scheme, despite the fact that rents are continuing to rise and LHA rates remain frozen.

We are also now working with our HMO emergency accommodation landlords to turn emergency accommodation placements into permanent offers of accommodation, where appropriate, through the Opening Doors scheme. We have completed successfully on two of these with a further two in the pipeline. With rising numbers of single person placements and a lack of available 'move on' accommodation, this is proving to be a very useful method in securing long term accommodation for this group.

HealthyAW

During this period we have completed and signed off our new Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 'HealthyAW' and the associated Delivery Plan. This strategy sets out our approach over the next two and a half years and our ambition to develop how we work with and enable our communities to thrive, focusing on health inequalities across the following three priorities:

Priority 1 - To improve health and wellbeing for all, focusing most on our communities with the poorest health and wellbeing.

Priority 2 - To create places, spaces, and environments that are sustainable and promote and enable good health and wellbeing

Priority 3 - To promote stronger community resilience in our communities and our workforce

The HealthyAW Delivery Plan outlines what we will do over the next two and a half years and shows the inter connections across many areas of work in the Councils and with external organisations. This is a move towards a systems approach, where we recognise that we live and work within an interconnected, complex context where no one action is divorced from another. The delivery plan therefore aims to help people, including: staff, residents, members and local partners, to make links between their actions and others.

The new HealthAW Delivery Plan will help to drive forward this work. The Autumn Winter Recovery for HealthyAW has been focusing on providing health and wellbeing support for our communities including:

Going Local - Over Q2 2021 (July to September) the service received 325 new referrals for support, an increase of 13% from Q1. We have seen a rise in the complexity of cases, with some key challenges around safeguarding. The main trends over the period were people struggling with their mental health and with feelings of social isolation. The impact of the pandemic has meant that some of the services Going Local would connect people to no longer exist, or now have long waiting lists. To give the team more options for connecting people into local groups there has been an increased focus on the Social Prescribers researching new services in their areas. Over the July to September period the Social Prescribers connected people in Adur & Worthing to 1148 groups and services.

Although referrals into the service remain lower than pre pandemic levels, during this reporting period the **Wellbeing Hubs** have seen a 49% increase in referrals compared to the previous quarter, with Wellbeing Advisors working with 229 people across Adur and Worthing at the time of this update. The lower level of referrals is consistent with other Wellbeing Hubs across the county and could be for a number of reasons, for example: people are reluctant to give up 'props' such as comfort eating, smoking or alcohol whilst still living with uncertainty and the ongoing stressful situation of the pandemic. People may also be more concerned with meeting their basic needs at this time; food, housing, money, rather than their wellbeing. We are noticing an increase in self referrals and informal referrals (where a service has passed on our details to a client but not made the referral themselves). This is perhaps an indication that the usual referral organisations, such as GPs and other health professionals, have other priorities at this time. The initial reasons for referral are mainly related to weight management and eating

healthier. However, it is apparent that for many, there are underlying issues of a more complex nature, which has resulted in their weight gain.

The Wellbeing offer has been increased to six appointments and this increased number of appointments is proving particularly successful at the early engagement stage where people often need to share their personal experience of the pandemic. This allows the Wellbeing Advisor time to build trust to support the client to identify their main priority and also to work through and signpost for other issues such as: feelings of isolation, money worries, bereavement and mental health needs, which need to be dealt with before tackling priorities such as healthy weight management.

We are seeing an increase in emotional eating/binge eating and addictive behaviours in general: smoking, alcohol use, gambling and comfort eating - all of which appear to be linked back to how the pandemic has impacted on people's lives.

The **Alcohol Wellbeing** Advisor has received 25 referrals over this period which is an increase of 75% compared to the previous quarter. We are beginning to notice a number of people who have relapsed, some after having managed their alcohol use for many years. Again this can likely be attributed to the impact of the Covid pandemic on people's lives.

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. Part of our focus is looking at how, as a large employer for our area, the Councils can provide more employment opportunities to those most impacted by COVID-19 - this includes improving

our work experience, volunteering and work opportunities for young people, those who are disabled, over 50s and our minoritised ethnic communities.

OneStop has helped 176 employment referrals during the period, with 50 people being offered full time employment, including 90 young people's referrals to the youth hub (started on 06/05/21). We have loaned out over 30 digital devices to provide access to the internet for our most vulnerable residents and signposted 77 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 from finding 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

Creating a Space to Collaborate

Part of our 'Covid Response' included a new cloud based case management system that enabled our services to work together and respond at speed to residents in need. Over the last 8 weeks a multi-disciplined team, made up of our Wellbeing Hubs, One Stop (Money, Digital & Employment Support) and

Going Local, have been working together alongside Digital colleagues to further develop this system. Key developments are to include:

- Creating One Front Door for those self referring and referring.
- Improving the quality of referrals, ensuring the service user is getting the right service at the right time.
- To more effectively co-work cases across a number of services.
- To improve the allocation of cases and the management of these.
- Increased data capabilities, providing key information to commissioners, greater insight and gap analysis.

This system will create the space for these teams to continue to improve their practice and more effectively meet/manage the needs of those residents accessing services.

Additional Funding

We have secured additional resources to support this work, including the allocation of £859,000 from Central Government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and £150,000 for round 2 of COMF, which is currently being allocated.

The Councils are also working with WSCC to help ensure the Winter Support Fund and Household Support Grant are used effectively to support our communities during these times.

Safer Communities

We have also been working on the next Safer Communities Strategy which was signed off by the Joint Strategic Committee in October 2021. Work is now being done to develop the Delivery Plan for this work which will be focusing on the following priorities:

- To reduce the harm caused by serious, organised and acquisitive crime
- To Increase safety for vulnerable adults and children
- To improve pathways out of offending and reoffending
- Increase community cohesion and reduce ASB & hate crime
- Reduce public place violent crime with a particular focus on youth safety
- Tackle social inequality and the drivers of crime
- Embed trauma informed practice across partners
- Better understand the experiences of minoritised communities
- Tackle violence against women and girls at every opportunity

Some of our key metrics and achievements during this last period for safer communities include: Co-delivering a Sussex wide conference to embed Contextual Safeguarding, instigating a pilot to reduce school exclusions, contributing to the Social Care transformation process to safeguard children from exploitation, extending mentoring to children struggling to thrive at school, recruiting an additional officer to support those impacted by anti social behaviour, refreshing the Joint Action Group to be more data and intelligence led and training 4 Community Ambassadors to support communities impacted by youth violence and exploitation.

We continue to respond to an extremely high level of anti social behaviour reports- already reaching almost 200 this year. We have conducted two case reviews under the Community Trigger.

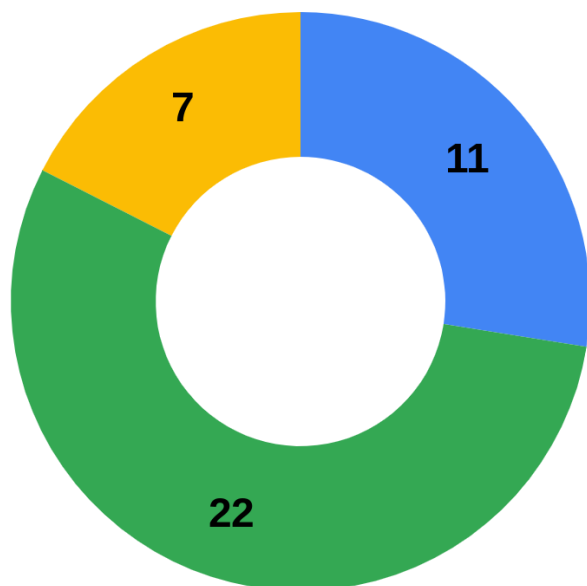
Challenges

Significant challenges during this time have been managing both increasing demand and the complexity of need. Linked to this has been the increasing demands placed on our safeguarding arrangements, created by both greater need and changes to thresholds for support from West Sussex County Council. Work to improve our engagement with our diverse communities, gathering more timely and accurate information remains a focus.

The short term injection of Covid Outbreak Management Fund cash (COMF) has been welcome but the short timescales for spending this have been challenging.

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

Significant community engagement work has been undertaken during the last six months, building on the success of the Climate Assembly. The community section of the SustainableAW shared climate and nature plan was completed following engagement with over 200 organisations. The Climate Action AW campaign which ran alongside COP26 helped showcase many local business and community projects as well as council activity.

Platform Highlights

Sustainable Energy

The Councils were recently awarded a £5m grant from central government (BEIS) for the delivery of the **Worthing Heat Network**, a UK leading district heat network scheme to connect 23 buildings including the NHS, councils and the police in Worthing centre using a sewer source heat pump. Aiming to attract an additional £7m of commercial funding, the planned concession model is of interest to project developers across the UK.

Good progress has been made with delivering schemes with the **£2m public sector decarbonisation funding** secured earlier in the year. This includes triple glazing and insulation at Worthing Civic Quarter, solar PV arrays at multiple sites, ground and air source heat pumps at Shadwells Court, Tollbridge House and the Shoreham Centre. A feasibility study for a 3MW solar farm at Dale Road is planned to commence in the next few months.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

To date 31 sites are being put forward for installations of **EV charge points** under the WSCC EV network. An Installer was awarded in early November (Connected Kerb) and the first charge points are likely to be installed in A&W in Spring 2022. Workplace charge points have been installed at Commerce Way for new EV vans. There are plans to provide EV charge points at Worthing Civic Quarter in the newbuild MSCP where council rental fleet will be parked and can then be switched from hybrid to full EV. The Waste Team is exploring opportunities for Hydrogen fuel for transport and freight vehicles across the Greater Brighton area.

The **Solar Together Sussex** (STS) scheme, supported by Councils across Sussex, including Adur and Worthing Councils, continues to progress well and is in its second phase. STS is a group buying scheme that enables residents to install high-quality, roof-mounted solar panels and battery systems at competitive prices. During the first round almost 50 households installed either solar PV and/or battery storage. During the second round over 400 households in A&W registered interest to have PV and/or battery storage installed in their homes.

We continue to support the **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. To date, with the SE Warmer Homes Consortium, 63 million pounds worth of investment has been secured and 900 homes across the SE have benefited.

Waste and Recycling

Our **recycling rate** has continued to rise year on year, figures from April - October 2021 show a further 3.16% point increase in Adur and a 5.24% point increase in Worthing, compared to the same period in 2020-2021. We collected 3,349 tonnes of recycling material in Adur, (down 218 tonnes) from 3,567 tonnes and in Worthing we collected 6,411 tonnes, (up 182 tonnes) from 6,237.89 tonnes compared to the same period last year. The recycling percentage point increase was helped by the increase in garden waste collected. Adur & Worthing saw an increase of 5.79% point and 5.58% point increase respectively in the same period compared to last year. Overall we are running at an increase of 4.20% point, when compared to the same period last year and a significant 7.32% point increase when compared to pre alternate weekly collections. (reported as a joint service)

Collected refuse figures for the same period (April - October) this year totalled 6,489 tonnes in Adur, which is a reduction of 334 tonnes. In Worthing we've collected 11,820 tonnes, a reduction of 27 tonnes. Adur has seen a bigger decrease compared to Worthing in part due to the higher number of new properties coming live (in future we will start reporting on volumes of waste and recycling per household to provide more meaningful context). However both have shown a decrease which is positive given the current climate we face.

The **commercial food waste service** was launched in October initially serving a small number of customers on a trial basis. The trial has gone very well helping commercial customers manage their waste more sustainably and reduce costs. A more high profile campaign is now being launched to offer this service more widely.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

Nature Restoration and Protection

The Councils are members of the **Sussex Kelp Restoration Project**, a collaboration of national and local organisations taking an evidence-based approach to tackle the challenges to the restoration of Sussex kelp. We have also initiated a West Sussex Coastal Local Authority Forum to help coordinate action along the coast as the kelp forest returns, working collaboratively on beach management issues.

Linked to this, excellent progress is being made with **Sussex Bay**, the ambitious initiative to drive integrated “blue habitat” restoration along the coast through kelp forest and river estuary restoration. The project is working with DEFRA and many local partners, and has recently successfully engaged the Worthing small boat fishing community in developing plans for the future of sustainable fishing locally. Work is also progressing with the Arun to Adur Farmers Group regarding use of seaweed as fertilizer for soil improvement to tackle the wash up of kelp from winter storms.

The Councils’ land acquisitions for nature restoration are among the most innovative interventions made in the UK by any local authority. Partnership and community working locally is very strong, and restoration plans are progressing well. **The Adur River project** (Pad Farm and New Salts Farm) has passed the Expression of Interest stage with DEFRA test & trials, and funding from this scheme would assist the development of blended finance models for the sites, and support engagement with landowners in the wider river valley.

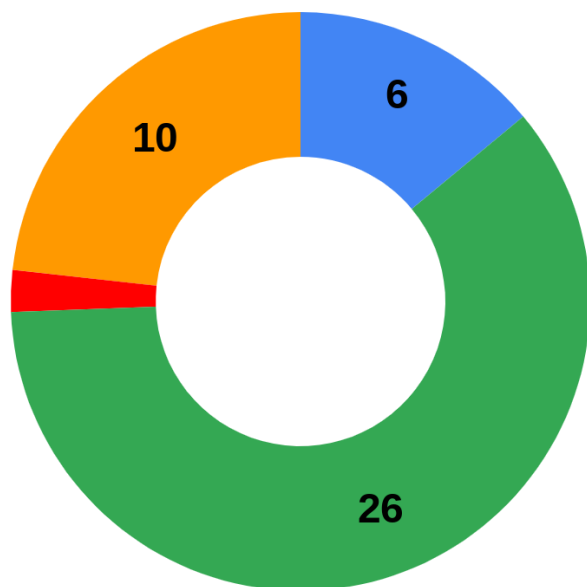
- The Councils are also part of a wider project across West and East Sussex. The locations selected to be a part of this project includes Steyne Gardens, Kingston Beach and Buckingham Park with links to the

Local Nature Partnership and Health objectives across the region. All aspects of these projects are connected with the local communities and key stakeholders and will define a baseline assessment of the natural conditions of these locations and then work alongside the local community to create a set of recommendations that will include how to fund them, what work is needed to aid nature recovery, what work is needed to bring in ecosystem services into that model and how the community feel / respond to this. These projects will then be replicable over our landscapes.

Platform Challenges: last six months

- We recognise that further strategic work is needed to develop approaches to tackling the 2045 area wide target, which is extremely challenging. We are connecting with partners such as the Green Growth Board and Low Carbon Leaders (an SME group) to explore how to galvanise action across the business community. Domestic heating and transport are the other two major sectors to tackle, and further strategy work will be undertaken Jan-Jun 2022.
- We also plan to develop approaches to Scope 3 emissions, for example the councils’ supply chain, business mileage etc. to extend the work of our councils in tackling carbon emissions.
- Finally, we recognise the need to start to develop a low carbon strategy for Adur Homes social housing, and plan to commence that strategic work following delivery of more critical priorities.
- We recognise that further works on our landscapes are required, including the gathering of baseline data, to better monitor progress.

Commitment Tracker



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

Overview : last six months

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. Our work to both effectively manage the budget and invest in new ways of working is enabling the councils to respond at speed to community needs, improve service provision, support our staff and better utilise resources.

Platform Highlights:

- 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.

Good Services and New Solutions

- Our customer service team has continued to deliver excellent levels of service throughout the post 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 followed for over 160 residents, with tangible financial and wellbeing outcomes identifiable for many of those. Of those who have engaged with the proactive team, more are now “coping” financially than previously and fewer are “struggling” or “at risk” .
- With new internal service design expertise in place, work to design **Citizen Hub** is underway. 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.
- The **Good Services Board** has been created 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, the refurbishment of Worthing Town Hall will be completed in the spring, providing different types of office space to support blended working.
- Our digital estate continues its migration to the cloud, with the **Revenues & Benefits** system on target for launch in November 2022. The provision of much needed digital self service will be launched in Q1 of 2022/23 and is expected to make a big impact on convenience for customers and should reduce call volumes freeing staff up to support customers proactively.
- Revised **Business Rates bills** have been issued following the government announcement about the reduction in Expanded Retail Relief for the retail, hospitality, leisure & tourism sectors from 1 July.
- Applications for **£500 Test & Trace Support Payment** s for residents who are self-isolating, unable to work from home and suffering a loss of earnings continue to be administered. The scheme has now been extended until 31 March 2022 with more than 3,600 applications received to date.

Good Services and New Solutions

- Our commitment to **developing our staff continues**. This work includes support for our leaders 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.
- Our work to deliver best practice in **procurement** continues with a pilot programme exploring 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, and local spend.

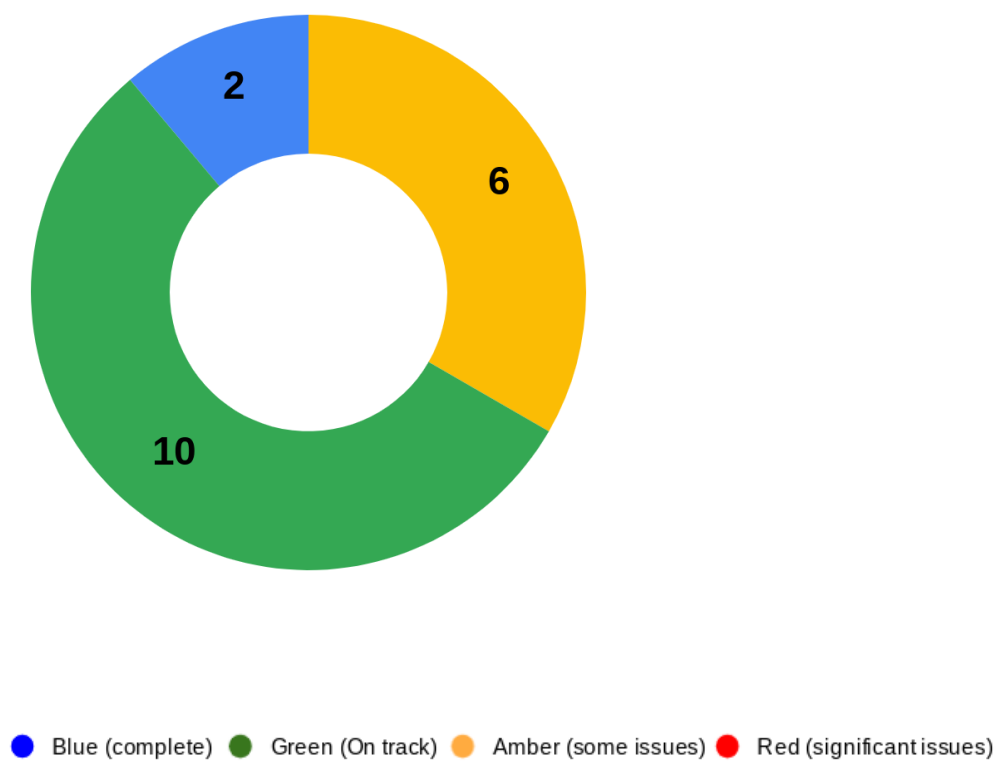
Platform Challenges:

- The implementation of the Revenues & Benefits system into “the cloud” was delayed by several months through a combination of resource pressures and technical challenges. However, the system successfully went live in November 2021 in good time for the annual billing process with no major “go live” issues.
- The Councils have been managing 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, homelesses, leisure, emergency community support etc.). With prudent and robust financial management (and support from MHCLG) the Councils have managed to both keep within budget and release resources where required for pandemic response.

- The corporate digital asset management system has not progressed as planned (the red item in the donut above), although good progress has been made using the T100 risk management system in relation to tracking asset checks and inspections. The need for a comprehensive asset management system remains, and is being considered in digital prioritisation and planning for 2022/23.

Commitment Tracker



Overview : last six months

Over the past 6 months the councils have continued their work in supporting residents affected by Covid 19. 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. Our focus is now very much also on recovery and the development of greater resilience in our communities and local economies, especially over this autumn and winter period. We see our work on **building resilience** as a journey, increasing Adur and Worthing Councils’ ability to both respond to the unexpected and be able to develop, change and improve as a result.

We also have an increased focus on the wellbeing of our staff who continue to deliver both the Platforms’ ambitions as well as our core services in incredibly challenging conditions. A major learning point from the pandemic is to make sure we focus on resilience and not just efficiency.

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 have enabled us to be there for our residents and our businesses when they most need us, as described across all four of the preceding Platform reports. An ongoing focus of the Councils is on the development of even stronger relationships, to further strengthen this work, improving the health, wellbeing and long term prosperity of our communities.

In this next phase of the pandemic we know our residents and communities are experiencing another set of challenges. **Autumn and Winter recovery** work is therefore a key priority for the councils, working with partners, to ensure our communities and businesses have what they need to thrive through the next phase of the pandemic. In doing this we are working to address the short term impacts of the pandemic as well as the deeper implications for structural inequalities which have been highlighted by the last 20 months.

As we anticipated in “And Then” and previous Platform updates the pandemic and the implications of it have also 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 and with our partners and communities to seize these opportunities.

We are now starting to gather the learning and experience from the Platforms strategy in order to inform what comes next, in doing so we are looking both at how we work together internally and externally as well as what has worked and the outcomes which we have achieved - and want to achieve in the future.

Platform Highlights : last six months

Critical Relationships - The councils continue to maintain and develop a diverse and ever increasing set of partnerships including housing partners, the community and voluntary sector, the NHS, Police and Community Safety

organisations. Our relationships with other Districts and Boroughs continue to be positive and we are keen to further cultivate these for example through strategic work such as Sussex Bay. Our work with West Sussex County Council in many areas is also progressing well and this will need to develop further if we are to successfully implement policy changes such as the Environment Act and the Health and Social care reform agenda plus other areas of shared priority including the relocation of Afghan Refugees. At a regional level the Local Resilience Forum has continued to be invaluable, bringing together a variety of local players to deal with the pandemic response at a Sussex wide level. Our work with the Local Economic Partnership and the Greater Brighton Economic Board continues, supporting our ambitions around place, prosperity and sustainability.

Place Campaigns- “Time for Worthing” is guided by a management board made up of local businesses, partners and third sector organisations. The focus of Time for Worthing continues to include the visitor economy, seeking to rebuild its previous successes of three million visitors a year, delivering an estimated value of £200m to the local economy. As part of this work a total of 30,000 copies of the Time for Worthing summer guide were distributed across the region to entice people to our blue and green spaces including the newly reopened Highdown Gardens, as well as inspiration for enjoying local restaurants and bars and independent shops. The **Christmas Campaign** was launched in late November supporting the reopening of the economy and local high street shopping. As part of this work, Time for Worthing is supporting the Town Centre Initiative’s **local gift card** that aims to keep Christmas spending local. The card is valid in independent and national

businesses across the Town Centre including participating shops, bars, eateries, leisure, and cultural venues.

Community and Voluntary Sector - Our relationship with the local Community and Voluntary Sector continues to develop and mature. With funding from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) we have been able to further support the local food partnership and other mutual aid groups in Adur and Worthing. For example, we are working with food groups to increase community partnership working and resilience by developing shared food storage facilities in Worthing (Queen Street), Lancing (the Old Police Station), Shoreham (the Shoreham Centre) and Fishersgate (the Gateway building).

Community Participation - We have also begun to further develop our Asset Based Community Development practice to improve and strengthen our work with communities. A project under development is our Minoritised Ethnic Community engagement project that aims to develop collaborative working relationships with minoritised ethnic community partners and organisations, helping to inform the development of the Councils' policies and services going forward.

Community Safety - We have been working with the Sussex Police and our community safety partners on the development and agreement of the new Safer Communities Strategy which was signed off by the Joint Strategic Committee in October 2021. Work is now being done to develop the Delivery Plan for this work which will be focusing on the following priorities:

- To reduce the harm caused by serious, organised and acquisitive crime
- To Increase safety for vulnerable adults and children
- To improve pathways out of offending and reoffending
- Increase community cohesion and reduce ASB & hate crime
- Reduce public place violent crime with a particular focus on youth safety
- Tackle social inequality and the drivers of crime
- Embed trauma informed practice across partners
- Better understand the experiences of minoritised communities
- Tackle violence against women and girls at every opportunity

Health And Wellbeing - The HealthyAW Delivery Plan was agreed in the Autumn and outlines what we will do over the next two and a half years to improve health wellbeing in Adur and Worthing. The plan is part of our system leadership, mapping and working with the inter connections within, between and across areas of work in the Councils and beyond, to external organisations. The strategy focuses on health inequities across the following three priorities:

- **Priority 1** - To improve health and wellbeing for all, focusing most on our communities with the poorest health and wellbeing.
- **Priority 2** - To create places, spaces, and environments that are sustainable and promote and enable good health and wellbeing
- **Priority 3** - To promote stronger community resilience in our communities and our workforce

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. 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. Our developing 'Opening Door's' partnership with local landlords continues to grow and assist with housing needs. Work with local charities and the County Council continues helping to home and support Afghan refugee families.

Nature Restoration and Protection - The Councils are members of the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project, a collaboration of national and local organisations taking an evidence-based approach to tackle the challenges to the restoration of Sussex kelp. Linked to this work, excellent progress is being made with **Sussex Bay**, the ambitious initiative to drive integrated "blue habitat" restoration along the coast through kelp forest and river estuary restoration. The project is working with DEFRA and many local partners, and has recently successfully engaged the Worthing small boat fishing community in developing plans for the future of sustainable fishing locally. Work is also progressing with the Arun to Adur Farmers' Group regarding use of seaweed as fertilizer for soil improvement to tackle the wash up of kelp from winter storms.

Good Work - We are developing our Good Work approach as part of our autumn winter recovery programme, seeking to develop opportunities for those most impacted by COVID-19 - this includes work opportunities for young people, those who are disabled, over 50s and our minoritised ethnic communities. The programme uniquely undertakes this work through an integrated approach to wellbeing, skill development and employment 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.

Emergency Planning and Civil Contingency Work - In "*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*" the importance of Emergency Planning and Civil Contingency work was emphasised. Over the past 24 months we have been working with 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 as described above, includes secure housing, developing and strengthening our food system, supporting people



Leadership of Place

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 Strategic Committee
11 January 2022

Key Decision: No

Wards Affected: All

Proactive interventions to support low income residents

Report by the Interim Director for Communities

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. In February 2021, the Director for Communities presented a Report titled “Covid Benefit Measures impact on Vulnerable Residents” to the Joint Strategic Committee. That report described the financial impact of the Covid pandemic on the councils’ more financially vulnerable residents, and set out how, through the proactive use of data, combined with a person-centred, asset based approach, the councils planned to mitigate that impact.
- 1.2. In July 2021, the Director for Communities presented an update Report titled “Proactive Interventions to support low income residents“. This set out the councils’ work to trial a 5-step pathway in order to provide support to low income households and to strengthen their routes out of low resilience. The pathway was described as laying the groundwork for key frontline services to shift to a more preventative and early intervention approach and for the councils to strengthen their capabilities for multi-disciplinary, data-led working.
- 1.3. The July report described that a cross-service Proactive team had identified a trial group of 103 low income residents and attempted to contact all of them on at least two occasions. The team made contact with 46 residents in total, 35 of whom wanted to engage in ongoing dialogue and support. End to end outcomes and impacts were included so far as they were

available at that point. The July report also set out an outline plan for how the councils could undertake more of this type of work on a larger scale.

- 1.4. By mid November 2021, the team had identified 502 residents for support and attempted telephone contact with all of them. Contact was made with 239, 164 of whom agreed to work with the team to explore how they could increase their household income and/or lower their household debt.
- 1.5. This report is an update report to describe changes in the national and local context since the Summer, the Proactive team's progress since then, the ways in which this work has been connected to other pandemic related support, and to describe next steps. It also now includes the financial impacts that residents have experienced over the months that this work has been underway (see para 4.22). It is a "for information" report and no specific decisions are requested.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Joint Strategic Committee is recommended to:
 - Note the report
 - Request that the Director for Communities reports back in 12 months on progress on the roadmap/next steps outlined in this paper

3 Context

- 3.1 The impact of the pandemic is ongoing and the councils continue to work in a number of ways to support and assist residents experiencing difficulties. Our aim remains that we provide support where it is most needed. Recent pieces of national research, including The Marmot Review ¹ and The Human Rights Commission ² have found that the pandemic has disproportionately affected those who were already experiencing health and wellbeing inequality and exacerbated those inequalities. 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 minoritised ethnic communities, young people and those with disabilities.
- 3.2 In June 2021, the councils purchased for a period of two years from Policy in Practice the Low Income Family Tracker "LIFT" data tool referenced in previous reports to this committee. Immediately post-purchase, we undertook a two-month data gathering and collation exercise, which meant that with effect from August 2021, the councils

¹ [Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review](#)

² The Human Rights Commission: [How the Coronavirus has affected equality and human rights](#).

have had access to a data set and dashboard that are refreshed monthly. This has been invaluable in helping us adopt a data-led and targeted approach to our work.

- 3.3 The dashboard shows us, at a non person identifiable level, the total numbers of residents in receipt of council administered benefits (housing benefit and council tax support) and the numbers of Adur Homes tenants who are in arrears. These numbers vary month to month; in October 2021 it contained 11,128 residents (4,135 Adur residents, 6,829 Worthing residents and 164 who were living out of area). The dashboard gives us the ability to see at a glance key highlights available within the dataset behind it, and to see different categories of hardship as clusters on maps of our local area. The dashboard also allows us to export reports that can be cross referenced with the councils' benefits system in order to produce person identifiable lists of residents for the team to contact.
- 3.4 Policy in Practice has assigned each resident in the data set one of four possible financial risk scores, which they calculate by comparing known income and anticipated spend based on household size and ONS data:
- **Coping:** household income exceeds expected costs by £100+ pcm.
 - **Struggling:** household income exceeds costs by £0-100 pcm
 - **At risk:** household income is less than expected costs.
 - **In crisis:** household income insufficient for housing.
- 3.5 The data set can be filtered e.g. by financial risk score, by ward, by demographic segments, or by arrears level. Recent additional filters provided by Policy in Practice also allow filtering to identify those in food, water and fuel poverty. PIP's definitions/criteria and methodologies are set out in Appendix One of this document.
- 3.6 It is important to highlight what the data set does *not* contain. LIFT includes Adur & Worthing residents who receive council administered benefits only. It does *not* include those who are in receipt of Universal Credit, unless they also receive council tax support - that is likely to be the case for only 20-25% of Universal credit claimants. In September 2021, there were 4,807 residents in Adur and 8,650 in Worthing claiming Universal Credit.³
- 3.7 Policy in Practice is exploring with the Department for Work & Pensions whether LIFT can, over time, include Universal Credit data. The ambition is that it will expand to cover all of our low income households. In the meantime, LIFT already provides far better visibility than we previously had regarding financial challenges faced by our community and is highlighting previously hidden hardship.
- 3.8 LIFT shows us the changing picture for our communities since the pandemic started:

³ LG Inform: <https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports>

Financial resilience scores allocated by Policy in Practice to A&W residents in LIFT								
	Number of households “coping”				Number of households “not coping” i.e. struggling/at risk/in crisis			
	Mar 2020	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Nov 2021	Mar 2020	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Nov 2021
Adur	3724	3801	3968	3902	580	517	203	279
Worthing	6057	6382	6433	6358	1087	866	398	573
A&W	9781	10183	10401	10260	1667	1383	601	852

- 3.9 The numbers of our residents who are “not coping” financially had fallen significantly between September 2020 and September 2021 but have started to increase again since then. Overall numbers in the “coping” risk category have fluctuated to a less significant degree and the gap between the total numbers in the two categories is explained by the numbers of residents who leave the dataset altogether each month:

Total numbers (coping and not coping) in the data set for Adur & Worthing			
March 2020	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Nov 2021
11448	11566	11022	11112

- 3.10 Typical reasons for leaving the data set would include that residents have come off benefits altogether (due to having secured employment, or better paid employment), because a change in circumstance has triggered their moving to Universal Credit, or because they have moved out of our area. At para 4.27 below, we provide an analysis of the reasons for those residents who engaged with the Proactive team’s work and who subsequently came off the data set.
- 3.11 The Proactive team includes colleagues from Customer Services, Revenue & Benefits, Housing and Wellbeing - with regular support from Digital and Organisational Design. In September 2021 we brought together a Proactive cross-service team and five other project or service teams that provide front line support under the councils’ pandemic recovery plan to form a “Thrive team” that can provide holistic support, integrated when appropriate, to low resilience households in our community:
- Homelessness prevention
 - Food System
 - Good Work
 - R&B service delivery
 - Wellbeing service delivery (this includes financial capability and support)
- 3.12 Whilst each of those five streams provides support to residents on a stand alone basis, the Lead officers for each stream have, since September 2021, been meeting

with the Proactive team to develop and share data, learning and approaches and to provide a consistent, integrated level of support to low income households.

- 3.13 This wider group is also testing how the councils can boost its capability to work effectively in a cross-service, multi disciplinary way. This is as much about soft skills as it is about technical knowledge and know-how. In terms of front line work, those skills include motivational interviewing, active listening, and the ability to show empathy for both the circumstances that have caused financial hardship *and* the fears that residents can associate with contact from the councils and/or with change. In terms of strategic and leadership skills, the key shifts required are to think beyond service or silo processes and policies, to manage complexity and to work iteratively.
- 3.14 The work of the Proactive team and the Thrive team is just part of the overall support for low income households that the councils is providing, and just part of the wider support provided within the Adur & Worthing “system”. Internally, this work is a core part of our HealthyAW work through our Health & Wellbeing delivery plan. Externally, it contributes to the community “safety net” provided by the councils alongside partner and community organisations.
- 3.15 National pandemic support mechanisms have changed since the last report to the Joint Strategic Committee. Furlough support measures ceased on 30 September 2021, pre-pandemic private sector eviction notice periods returned on the same date, and the £20 Universal credit uplift was withdrawn on 5 October, with a reduced taper rate then being applied from 27 October 2021. Each of those changes potentially impacts on the level of reactive demand facing all front line teams whose work supports our low income communities, which in turn determines how much capacity exists for those teams to work proactively. That said, the councils believe that any investment of time and resources in providing early and proactive help will not only mitigate future hardship for some of those residents, but will also reduce or avoid future demand on front line services and front line teams.

4 Process for Proactive work

- 4.1 The pathway that the Proactive team uses contains five steps:

Step One Identify ->	Step Two engage ->	Step Three support - >	Step Four direct ->	Step Five review ->
Extract the group from the data set	Proactively contact residents	Discuss options and support	If needed, refer for inhouse or external support	Measure the impact of these interventions

- 4.2 The councils’ original aim was that all frontline services would, over time, adapt their service delivery models to follow this pathway. We have since decided that customer service advisers should make all initial calls, as they are best placed to triage

residents and to provide support at the first point of contact whenever possible, but also to refer on to other teams where appropriate. This new approach better facilitates a consistent and efficient resident experience and we are designing referral pathways with this in mind. All customer service advisers who make proactive calls have completed relevant training in motivational interviewing and in recognising and responding to vulnerability and all have strong knowledge and experience of all frontline council services and systems, which makes them best placed to assess needs. This model also gives “referral receiving” teams the ability to focus their limited resources on providing support that adds the most value, rather than on triage work that can be done by Customer Services.

- 4.3 The commitment made in the July 2021 report was that the Proactive team would telephone between ten and twelve further groups of residents by December 2021. The team had contacted nine further groups by 31 October 2021, and expects to have contacted a total of thirteen to fifteen cohorts by year end. Outcomes for cohorts 1-10 are set out in this report. Neither financial nor wellbeing outcomes are apparent immediately after first contact is established with a resident, so there is a time lag between contacting a cohort and being able to report on the outcomes of those contacts. Outcomes for cohorts 11-12 are not yet available for that reason.

Pathway Progress March - October 2021

Step One: Identify

- 4.4 The team’s choice of which residents to contact is influenced by a number of criteria:
- maintaining an appropriate balance between Adur and Worthing residents
 - maintaining a balance across the financial risk groups
 - covering as many demographic groups as possible
 - responding to needs identified via the dashboard
 - balancing potential referrals across the five work strands referenced above.

Description of cohorts 1-12 selected for proactive contact March-October 2021

		size
1	Adur Homes tenants with council tax/rent arrears - majority “coping”	55
2	Worthing private sector tenants with arrears and “not coping”	48
3	Adur & Worthing residents “in crisis”	50
4	Adur & Worthing private renters at risk of homelessness <i>Not progressed as required initial contact by housing - insufficient capacity</i>	-
5	Adur & Worthing owner occupiers aged 50-60 and “at risk”	47
6	Adur & Worthing residents claiming a carers benefit, “struggling” or “at risk”	38
7	Adur & Worthing private renters, rent exceeding the LHA rate and “at risk”	50

8	Adur & Worthing owner occupiers aged 16-30 “coping”, “struggling” or “at risk”	25
9	Adur & Worthing lone parent renters under 30, “coping”, “struggling” or “at risk”	69
10	Adur & Worthing private renters with a child under 5 and council tax arrears	49
11	Adur & Worthing private renters aged under 40 and “struggling” or “at risk”	38
12	Adur & Worthing residents aged 60-64, out of work but no barriers to work “struggling”, “at risk” or “in crisis”	33
	TOTAL NUMBER chosen for proactive contact March-October 2021	502

4.5 The demographic breakdown of these twelve cohorts is set out in [Appendix Two](#).

4.6 It can be seen from paragraph 3.8 above that 502 residents represents 4.5% of the total numbers of residents currently appearing in the dataset. However, of the 11,112 residents in total, we know that (using November data) 10,240 were already “coping” and 852 were “not coping”. Because the Proactive team focuses on preventative action, the team’s plan for 2022 is to prioritise those at the boundary of coping/not coping i.e. excluding those in crisis and focusing to a lesser degree on those already coping. This will enable us to assign and prioritise the resources that we have to those for whom we think the most positive impacts can be achieved. Further details of our next steps are found in section 6 below.

Step Two: Engage (Proactively contact residents)

4.7 Our experience since July 2021 matches our experience with the first two resident groups we contacted. Establishing contact is challenging, but for those whom we *are* able to contact, engagement levels fall within a range of 24-44%. Policy in Practice have advised us that across the councils they work with, and including all channels for proactive contact i.e. written correspondence as well as phone calls, engagement rates tend to be between 10% and 40%, so our progress here looks relatively strong.

4.8 The cohort level breakdown of engagement rates can be found in [Appendix Three](#). Our best engagement to date has been with cohorts 1, 2, 6 and 10 and it can be seen from the table at paragraph 4.4. above that there is no obvious theme common to those four cohorts. Customer Service Advisers who make the proactive phone calls have provided feedback that the demographic group that is the most likely to engage with them is younger, single mothers (this matches the high engagement rates seen for cohort 10) and that the group the hardest to engage is men aged 35-65. Policy in Practice have commented that across the councils that they work with, engagement levels are generally higher with women than men. Some national research indicates that women are more likely than men to be in financial hardship, partly as a consequence of the gender pay gap, and also because women are more likely than men to be in part time work and/or to take on caring responsibilities.

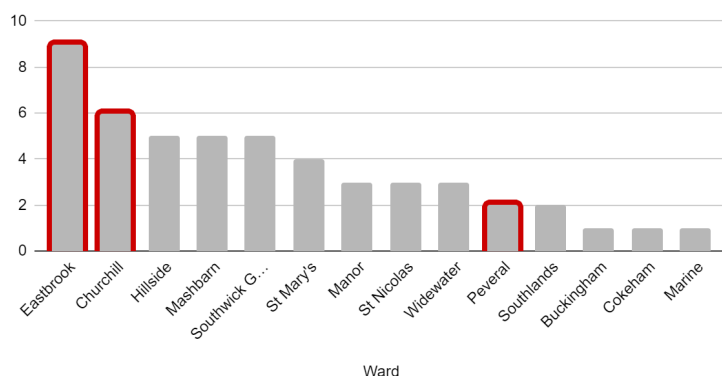
- 4.9 If we look at the demographic breakdown of those who chose to engage with the team's phone calls, we can see that three quarters of those who want to explore support from the team are women. It is important to highlight that whilst the Proactive team deliberately targets certain demographic segments for contact (those we know to have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic), the dashboard does not allow us to filter the dataset by gender, and ethnicity data is not available to us at all. It is not until we cross reference the non-person identifiable lists with council systems that we can see the gender split of each cohort, meaning that it is not possible to select a particular gender balance for any cohort.

Demographics for cohorts 1-12, excluding 4, who engaged with Proactive team
(164 residents **Adur**/Worthing residents)

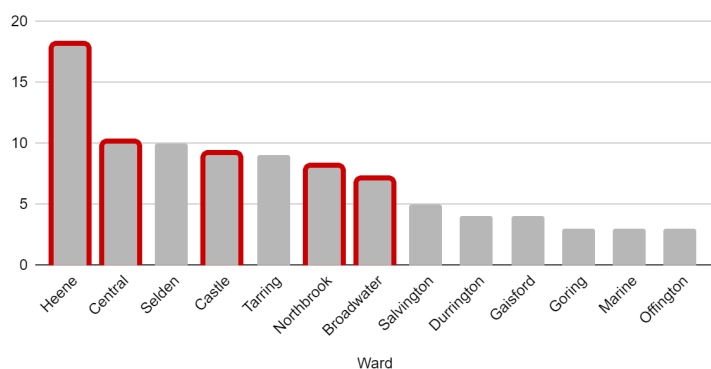
Gender	41 (73%) Female and 15 (27%) Male; <i>84(78%) Female, 23 (21%) Male, 1 (1%) MX</i>
Household type	2 couples without children, 22 single, 7 couples with children, 25 lone parents <i>10 couples without children, 41 single, 8 couples with children, 49 lone parents</i>
Economic status	14 in work; 42 not in work (3 carer, 22 disabled, 6 lone parent, 11 other) <i>20 in work, 88 not in work (10 carer, 25 disabled, 24 lone parent, 29 other)</i>
Ward	1 Buckingham, 6 Churchill, 1 Cokeham, 9 Eastbrook, 5 Hillside, 3 Manor, 2 Marine, 5 Mash Barn, 2 Peverel, 3 Southlands, 6 Southwick Green, 5 St Mary's, 4 St Nicolas, 4 Widewater <i>7 Broadwater, 12 Castle, 11 Central, 5 Durrington, 6 Gaisford, 3 Goring, 21 Heene, 4 Marine, 9 Northbrook, 3 Offington, 5 Salvington, 12 Seldon, 10 Tarring</i>
Disability	25 (45%) claiming disability benefits, 31 (55%) not disabled <i>26 (24%) claiming disability benefits, 82(76%) not disabled</i>
Financial risk status	29 coping 19 at risk 8 struggling 0 in crisis <i>39 coping 45 at risk 17 struggling 7 in crisis</i>
Age	0 16-21; 7 22-29; 16 30-39; 8 40-49; 19 50-59; 6 60-69 <i>4 16-21; 39 22-29; 23 30-39; 14 40-49; 16 50-59; 12 60-69</i>

- 4.10 In terms of geographical data, we can see a correlation between households in need and wards identified as having the highest levels of deprivation. This correlation is especially strong in Worthing. The 2019 **Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)** examines 7 domains of possible deprivation and identifies Adur and Worthing as generally having lower levels of deprivation than the rest of the UK. There are exceptions of course at a household and local level, and eight wards (Churchill, Peverel and Eastbrook in Adur and Central, Heene, Northbrook and Broadwater in Worthing) have been identified as having particular challenges. See [Appendix Four](#) for details on the domains of deprivation for these eight wards. This data is being used to support the wider work of the Thrive platform and in particular our HealthyAW initiatives.

Adur households engaging with the team - wards with a red border are domains of deprivation



Worthing households engaging with the team - wards with a red border are domains of deprivation



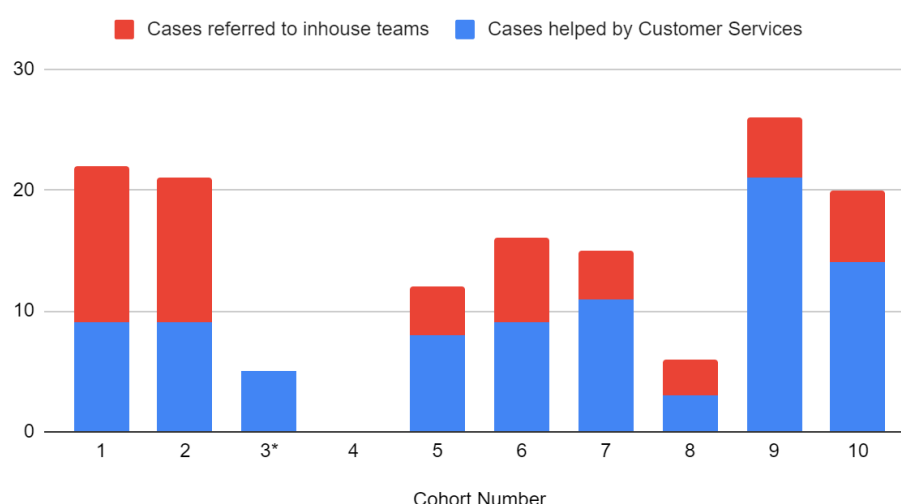
- 4.11 The LIFT tool identifies those areas of our communities that have the highest proportion of residents in the “not coping” categories each month. Ward level data will be helpful, in time, in enabling the councils to work with partners and community organisations to work in much better and targeted ways in local places. This will enable the teams to focus efforts in more focused ways that relate to different needs in each of our wards and will connect to how we help support and enable the community safety nets in and across our places.

“Top 5” wards with highest percentage of households who are “not coping” (Low Income Family Tracker dashboard October 21)			
Adur		Worthing	
St Nicholas	11.5%	Heene	9.5%
Southlands	6.1%	Selden	6.9%
St Mary's	5.8%	Broadwater	6.8%
Marine	5.3%	Northbrook	6.4%
Buckingham	4.9%	Salvington	6.0%

Step Three: Support (Discuss options and provide support)

- 4.12 Between March and October 2021, Customer Service Advisers triaged and advised, in many cases over a period of weeks or months, 143 residents, some of whom were also referred to other inhouse teams. The numbers who engage changes every week and by early December, 143 residents had increased to 162 working with the team. Over time, the proportion of cohorts that those advisers fully support at the first point of contact has increased, reflecting the team's growing confidence and competence in working proactively:

Support provided at first point of contact and on referral



- :
- 4.13 Typical support that Customer Service advisers provide directly includes signposting residents to council and/or DWP administered benefits, assisting residents to complete application forms and advising them of other financial and wellbeing help they could access e.g. Southern Water support schemes, mental health support etc.
- 4.14 Customer Service advisers' feedback on the most common reasons that residents find themselves in financial hardship are:
- Complex health (including mental health) problems affect their ability to keep on top of bills, meaning that debts and additional charges/costs accrue quickly
 - Zero hours contracts and the impact of fluctuating income on benefits, producing overpayments and constantly changing entitlements
 - A lack of awareness of financial support available
 - Rising private sector rent costs and the gap between the Local Housing Allowance and housing benefit
- 4.15 Customer Service advisers have also flagged how much proactive telephone calls differ from calls that they answer on a reactive basis. It takes several attempts to make contact with residents, and they need time and sensitive conversations to foster the kind of relationship where they will answer future follow up calls. Residents who are signposted to complete benefits application forms can also need time and support

to complete them. Some of our best conversations have been after 5pm, when residents do not feel rushed by day time commitments.

Step Four: Direct (Refer for further support, inside and outside the councils)

4.16 The top four reasons for Customer Services to refer a resident to other teams are:

- Referrals to OneStop Junction for detailed and/or ongoing financial advice
- Referrals to Wellbeing for isolation/loneliness
- Referrals to Council Tax Recovery for complex arrears arrangements
- Referrals to Adur Homes to discuss rent arrears

4.17 For the period March to 31 October 2021, Customer Service Advisers referred 24 Adur residents and 30 Worthing residents to other council teams and/or external organisations for additional help and support. Some residents were referred to more than one receiving team or organisation. Typical reasons for referrals include detailed financial support, mental health support, employment support, and housing support. When needed, our wellbeing team refers residents to external organisations e.g. to befriending services.

Step Five: Review (Measure the impact of the interventions)

4.18 The Proactive team looks at two key measures to determine the impact/outcomes of its work for those residents who engaged with us:

- **Financial position** - at an individual resident level, has the financial position of those residents changed since we first proactively contacted them to offer support?
- **Wellbeing position** - at an individual resident level, has the wellbeing score (in all cases residents self-assign a score at first contact and three months after that first contact) changed since we first proactively contacted them to offer support?

Non-telephone generated financial improvements for residents on LIFT

4.19 The LIFT dashboard does not just prompt us to make proactive phone calls, it can also prompt us to investigate cases that it flags as potential anomalies. In October 2021, for example, it highlighted seventeen residents who could be entitled to claim a Severe Disability Premium ("SDP"). The councils' Revenues & Benefits team identified and assessed all seventeen cases. Twelve did not, in fact, qualify for SDP but five did, and a total of £25,000 of additional housing benefit and/or council tax support was retrospectively awarded to those five residents.

Financial risk scores for all residents who engaged with us by telephone

4.20 The LIFT dashboard allows us to compare the financial resilience scores for specific residents (via their Housing benefit reference number) across time periods. If a

resident starts in the “struggling” category, but moves to the “coping” category after engaging with us, that indicates that their financial position has improved, whether through additional household income, reduced household debts, or both.

- 4.21 There is no financial risk category within LIFT that is “better” than “coping”, so for any resident already assigned a “coping” score when we first made contact, it’s necessary to look beyond that risk score to consider if household income or debt has changed.
- 4.22 At a cumulative level, of the 143 residents in cohorts 1-10 who engaged with the Proactive team, they had improved their financial situation as follows:
- The numbers coping increased from 66 to 98
 - The numbers at risk reduced from 57 to 8
 - The numbers struggling reduced from 13 to 6
 - The numbers in crisis reduced from 7 to 6
 - The number leaving the data set altogether totals 25 (see para 4.27 below).
- 4.23 It is not valid to claim that the Proactive team’s input has been the sole or definitive cause of all the improvements listed above. A major employer opening or closing in the local area would impact positively or negatively, regardless of council interventions, for example. The new taper rate applied to working universal credit claimants who also receive council tax support would improve that group’s household income regardless of whether they interacted with the councils or not. Conversely, rising costs of living could lead to decreasing financial security for households, even where they are taking up support we have signposted them to.
- 4.24 Details of changes in the financial risk category for each cohort can be found in [Appendix Five](#).
- 4.25 The “headline” financial risk category is a useful indicator of whether the work is having a positive impact or not. The team’s aims are simple: to increase household income and/or to reduce household debt for those that we work with. The LIFT tool allows us to track both over time, and it is at this level that we can see the tangible difference made to residents:

Household income/arrears for cohorts 1-7 (excluding 4)
Using a start date of September 20 and end date of October 21

Cohort	Average change in monthly take home income	Average change in monthly income after ONS defined bills paid	Average change in total arrears (council tax and Adur Homes rent if applicable)
1	+£147	+£93	-£324
2	+£332	+£183	-£169
3	+£245	+£61	+£115*

4	-	-	-
5	+£57	+£25	£0
6	+£332	+ £196	-£17
7	+£253	+£90	-£178
8	Too early to measure beyond this point		

* Cohort 3 residents were all “in crisis” to start with, so the increasing arrears for just that group could be due to their dealing with multiple debts and not considering council tax arrears a priority debt

4.26 This table indicates that some residents will be benefiting from an additional annual income of £3984, and that the councils are benefiting from reduced arrears too.

4.27 At paragraph 4.22 above, we set out that 25 of the 143 residents we have worked with had left the data set altogether by October 2021. We have looked at the detailed reasons for all these residents and have identified that two thirds of them left the data set because of an increase in their household income or because they have started work and no longer qualify for council tax support. The other third are split almost equally into a group that have left the area or withdrawn their claim and a group that did not respond to further information requested in support of their claim or who had not returned all of the necessary forms.

Wellbeing scores (self assessed) for all residents who have engaged with us

4.28 The three questions that we ask all residents we contact are to think about the last two weeks and consider three statements:

1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future.
2. I've been dealing with problems well.
3. I've been dealing with my financial situation well.

4.29 Residents are asked to self-assess by assigning a score of between 1 and 10 for each statement, which we add together to assign a total “wellness score”. The same questions are posed again after at least three months from the first point of contact. We compare total scores from both self assessments to see if the overall wellness score has improved, deteriorated or stayed the same.

4.30 The wellbeing impacts as reported by residents are shown below for cohorts 1-7. It is early for the later cohorts to have collected the second wellbeing score, as it is not yet three months since initial engagement. The team has made follow up phone calls to every resident who engaged with the offer of advice and support, but not all residents have been willing to revisit their wellbeing scores with us. Some residents have commented that a wellbeing score conversation is of less obvious benefit to them than the offer of tangible advice and support provided in other calls. The data provided from those residents who were willing to revisit their scores is listed below:

Category	Cohorts 1-7 (excluding 4)					
	1	2	3	5	6	7
Number of residents whose self assessment score is worse than initially	3	0		0	2	0
Number of residents whose self assessment is the same as initially	4	1		0	0	2
Number of residents whose self assessment improves by 1-4 points	2	1		1	2	2
Number of residents whose self assessment improves by 5+ points	1	1		0		0
Number who could not be contacted or did not want to provide new wellbeing scores	12	18	5	11	12	11
Total engaged	22	21	5	12	16	15

4.31 Case study to illustrate the impact of the team's work:

Mr G, a Worthing resident, was highlighted to the Proactive team because he had council tax arrears. He was referred by customer service advisers to the wellbeing team because it was clear he would need support in completing benefit application forms. The OneStop Programme team arranged to visit Mr G face to face at home. The team member who visited Mr G could smell damp from his open door. Mr G advised that he had had no income for over three months and it became clear that he had not realised he needed to apply for state pension on reaching pensionable age. The team:

- Contacted Mr G's GP, who sent out paramedics to carry out various checks and ensured he was noted on health records as in need of regular visits.
- Made sure he had electricity and gas vouchers
- Arranged for a food parcel delivery that day
- Called the DWP so that his state pension was put in place urgently
- Applied for him to receive pension credit - this was awarded
- Contacted the Revenues & Benefits team, who put a council tax support adjustment in place, resulting in all charges being wiped
- Asked his landlord to address the damp problem - a new extractor fan was fitted, mouldy blinds were replaced and the property was deep cleaned.
- Arranged for hot meals to be delivered to him
- Contacted his social worker to ensure she was aware of the situation

Mr G's financial situation at the start of the team's contacting him was "struggling" and he had an income after costs of £29 per month. At this point it is "coping" with an income after costs of £499 per month - an annual difference of £5,988 to this resident.

5 Progress on scaling up this work

- 5.1 In the July 2021 report to the Joint Strategic Committee, we identified three main ways (staff resources, partners and digital tools) via which we hoped to expand the scope/scale of the proactive approach. Progress under each is listed below. The Proactive phone call model used to date, whilst effective, will not enable us to work with thousands of residents in a timely way, so the current model will not allow us to help all those residents who appear in the LIFT dataset.
- 5.2 The team will focus its resources in the next year on those residents who are near the “coping/not coping” boundary i.e. by targeting those in the “struggling” and “at risk” categories with the goal of moving them into “coping”. It is clear from the data tables at the start of this report that the majority of residents in the dataset are already in the “coping” category, so our approach will be to prioritise our resources on those “just out of coping” and to include coping groups only as resources allow.
- 5.3 As paragraph 4.6 sets out, the numbers of residents at the boundary are currently under 1000. We anticipate that general cost of living increases, and the national insurance changes due to take effect from April 2022 will lead to further Adur & Worthing households falling into this “not coping” category. Given that we have to date identified and attempted contact with 582 residents, and that our resourcing will increase for quarter four of the current financial year (as outlined below), our ambition for 2022 is to attempt contact with all those who are “not coping”, excluding those already in crisis.
- 5.4 To date, one third of those we identify engage in working with the Proactive team, so we cannot commit to achieving positive impacts for all those in the “struggling” and “at risk” categories, but we will continue to experiment with a range of approaches to maximise our reach on that front. The Proactive team believes that a blended model that offers both digital and human interactions is essential - for many people, “self service” information is sufficient, and for others, digital engagement may be the “safe” first step prior to discussing debt issues with the team. We also need to signpost residents to the varied and excellent advice and support options available from partner organisations in our community. And finally, we have deliberately placed more of our existing male customer service advisers onto the proactive adviser team, to see if some male residents that we call engage better with male advisers.

Assigning further staff resources to proactive work:

- 5.5 As indicated above, the Proactive team now works closely with other teams/projects that provide post pandemic support to those residents most in need of support. At the “front door” to proactive/preventative approaches, we have moved away from expecting all teams to make proactive phone calls, but the Customer Services team has, in line with the commitments made in the July 2021 report to this committee, increased the number of hours that it assigns to proactive work from 8 hours per

week initially, to 37 per week with effect from August 2021. Those hours have been assigned from the existing team and we anticipate being able to maintain that commitment other than at times of peak reactive demand such as Annual Billing.

- 5.6 In terms of being able to add to the resources of the teams to do this work the teams have been able to access Covid funding (COMF) in the short term. However it should be noted that this funding is only available until the end of March 22. The Customer Services team was, in October 2021, provided with £12,000 of additional COMF funding which it has spent on an additional temporary member of staff who has a welfare uptake background. The temporary member of the team will be in place from mid November 2021 until mid March 2022 and will contact residents who may be eligible for DWP administered benefits.
- 5.7 The Councils' housing team provided the Proactive team with an *additional* £12,000 of COMF funding on 15 December 2021. This money, also to be spent by the end of the financial year, will be used to backfill customer service advisers who will call residents who are on the housing application waiting list. The team will assist residents to complete Income & Expenditure forms and to carry out as much pre-work as possible before referring those residents to housing officers. This will speed up how quickly those residents receive advice and help and will free up the housing to shift from reactive to preventative, upstream work.
- 5.8 On 30 November, the Proactive team was provided with £40,000 further COMF funding, also to be spent by the end of the financial year. This money will be spent on additional temporary staff who can backfill advisers spending more time on proactive calls and/or on digital developer/service designer time to support cross-service case management. Given the time needed to recruit, it is realistic to say that these advisers will be in post for three months each. This will provide a welcome boost to the capacity of the "front door" team, and will enable us to contact greater numbers of cohorts for a short period. This will be particularly useful in allowing us to look for patterns in terms of the best levels of engagement and the best positive impacts achieved, and will inform the choice of future cohorts into 2022/23 and beyond.
- 5.9 As we move forward with Proactive, the team has been identifying some key areas for focus over the next 12 months and the investment needed to develop, deliver and scale up this work, which will have the greatest impact. There is also consideration about some key areas of work which are at risk through short-term external funding (notably COMF) This includes capacity to focus on:
- benefit uptake with people identified through Proactive. There is currently short-term funding in place through COMF but this is critical to continuing and scaling up this work;
 - Data and service development design capacity to grow and develop this work internally and externally with our partners, ensuring we are continuing to use LIFT and develop its capabilities;
 - One Stop service capacity for people referred needing 121 support and help;

- How those struggling with rent arrears might be better supported and enabled to prevent further escalation into debt and homelessness.

Working collaboratively with partner organisations

- 5.10 Between June and August 2021, Proactive team members attended Money Advice Trust training on how to recognise and respond to financial and health related vulnerabilities when interacting with residents. They were joined in that training by representatives from several partner organisations, including Worthing Food Foundation, Worthing Soup Kitchen, UKHarvest and Turning Tides.
- 5.11 The Wellbeing team has continued to maintain and expand its links with partner organisations who support those in financial difficulty and those who are struggling with their mental health and with other partners including those working to alleviate food poverty. Those links have enabled the Proactive Team both to signpost residents to other sources of help, and to benefit from additional insight that will help to shape future interventions. In October 2021, the councils updated their webpages⁴ to highlight the range of support available inside and outside the councils to those experiencing financial and social difficulty.
- 5.12 In September 2021, the councils funded and contributed to an event that focused on shifting to a more preventative approach generally, and on the work of the Proactive team specifically. This was attended by a range of partner organisations who, over time, are keen to share data, referral pathways and communications with residents to continually build and strengthen an Adur & Worthing “system” approach to tackling food insecurity and financial hardship.

Using digital tools and approaches to further extend our reach

- 5.13 The councils digital and service design teams have made good progress in developing part of “Citizen Hub” (the council’s CRM) for the Proactive team. Prior to this work, staff were using google documents, shared folders and shared calendars to run the service, which meant it was time consuming to find the status of a specific case, or to extract data. The team has reported that this system has sped up their processing times, made it easier to extract data on wellbeing outcomes, and reduced the risk of follow up steps for individual residents being missed.
- 5.14 The Revenues & Benefits teams continue to progress the implementation of eforms which will, in time, replace the need to complete paper forms for a number of customer transactions (including applying for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support, applying for a Council Tax discount/exemption, and notification about changes in circumstances). It is anticipated that eforms will make it both quicker and easier for residents to apply for financial support with the forms being introduced between April and June 2022.

⁴ <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/debt-advice-and-support/>

- 5.15 In the July 2021 report to this committee, the Director for Communities advised that our Housing team wanted, via Contain Outbreak Management Funding, to purchase Telljo, a digital tool that provides residents with automated signposting, via text or email, to improve their wellbeing, improve their financial situation and sustain their tenancies. Telljo takes users through a simple assessment that can be completed on a smartphone and provides automated signposting to local and national support services. A procurement/purchase process will be started by the housing team in January and it is anticipated that Telljo or a suitable alternative will be operational by Summer 2022.

6 Next Steps for the Proactive Team

Roadmap for January - June 2022:

- 6.1 The team's focus for the next six months will be on three main areas:

Data capability & capacity building

- 6.2 A small data team will focus on creating a data dashboard to assist us in tracking trends and themes over time. This will show at a glance the numbers of households that are moving from "not coping" to "coping" and changes to cumulative household incomes and debts. The dashboard will also highlight what impacts are/are not achieved for particular groups of residents that have been contacted, and what demographic themes may emerge in terms of engagement and/or improved financial and/or wellbeing outcomes. Finally, the dashboard will consider the geographical data available to us and where there exist particular concentrations of "not coping".
- 6.3 The data team will also establish a data community of practice and look to build competence and confidence in working with LIFT and the analysis and reporting of data. The councils have ambitions at a wider level to grow our abilities in this area, and will use case studies and evidence from the Proactive team's work to demonstrate to wider council teams the importance of Insight work and its potential for changing service approaches.

Service delivery capability & capacity building

- 6.4 The Proactive team will continue to contact residents via telephone for the first half of 2022. As the Citizenhub CRM project progresses, we will, in time, have the opportunity to automate texts and emails to residents, either a precursor to phone contact, or as an alternative to it.
- 6.5 The COMF funding referenced above means that between January and March 2022, we will have the resources to continue to make proactive telephone calls from within customer services. Through this funding, the Wellbeing team will also have the

capacity to receive additional referrals of residents with complex financial and/or health needs.

Multi disciplinary team working capability & capacity building

- 6.6 As well as providing support to residents, the proactive approach is helping the councils learn to work cross-functionally. To date, the teams have been focusing on improving their knowledge and understanding of each other's work, and maximising the degree to which they can cross refer low income residents. The councils' WorkspacesAW programme means that from Winter/Spring 2022 onwards, key front facing teams (customer services, housing, wellbeing and Revenues & Benefits) will all be housed on the same floor of Portland House. This co-location will allow us to build on our successes to date and to continue to deliver holistic support to residents rather than from the perspective of individual services.
- 6.7 The next steps will be for us to focus on case management approaches and on identifying change at a policy level, as well as a process level, that would allow us to better support low income residents.

7 Managing risks and uncertainties arising from this work

- 7.1 As reported to the July 2021 Joint Strategic Committee, Citizen Hub (our CRM) remains crucial in order to allow us to scale up this work and to support council teams working as multi disciplinary teams. The full CRM project remains a long term one which will be delivered in stages between now and 2023.
- 7.2 Also as reported in July 2021, capacity was, is, and will remain, the most significant barrier to this work being maintained or scaled up. To mitigate this risk, the Councils' Leadership Team have highlighted that they consider this a top priority and that they are asking all teams to de-prioritise other work in order to support proactive working.
- 7.3 A new risk that has emerged since the last report relates to our data capacity. Interest in LIFT from teams and from partners, and a shift to the councils working increasingly as a data-led organisation has meant that our data related workload is growing steadily.

8 Engagement and Communication

- 8.1 The Proactive team has engaged internally and with partners. The teams have updated/increased information about available support for low income residents on the councils' webpages and this will assist those who approach us for help as well as those whom we proactively contact.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 In recognition of the financial impact of the increasing level of Council Tax Support payments the government has provided the Councils with additional grant towards this pressure (Adur £111,060 and Worthing £132,980). This is being used to provide an additional Council Tax Support award of £150.00 per household in 2021/22 with the County Council contributing towards the costs of these additional reliefs as follows:

	Adur £'000	Worthing £'000
Estimated cost in 2020/21	180	650
Allowance for further growth	10	30
Amount required for 2021/22	190	680
Local Council Tax Support Grant	111	133
Contribution from the County Council	79	547

- 9.2 The Councils have received significant COMF funding in 2021/22 which is being used to fund such items as an Emergency Assistance Grant (EAG), interventions to support organisations who address food poverty, support for victims of domestic abuse as well as to support to help people back into work.
- 9.3 Both Councils have set aside contingency sums to address issues arising from the Covid 19 pandemic (Adur £447,000 and Worthing £647,000), this is being used to fund the cost of the Lift Platform provided by Policy in Practice at £35,080 per year for two years.
- 9.4 The work does create some resourcing issues for all teams involved in the cross service Proactive team and this is under ongoing review by Heads of Service.

10 Legal Implications

- 10.1 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 Full Discharge of any of their functions.
- 10.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation
- 10.3 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.

- 10.4 Under the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 the Councils have the power to make arrangements or agreements with a Council tax payer for payment of outstanding Council tax as are necessary and within the scope of the Regulations.

Background Papers

- Proactive interventions to support low income residents (JSC July 2021)
- Covid Benefit Measures on Vulnerable Residents (JSC February 2021)
- Building our data capability (JSC February 2021)

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

The aim of the Proactive Team's work is to increase household income and/or reduce household debt via targeted support to low income residents. Achieving those aims will enable the economic participation of a wider proportion of our communities and will help sustain the local area's recovery post the pandemic.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

The work potentially reduces financial exclusion and improves financial inclusion. National analysis of the impacts of the pandemic shows that certain groups have been disproportionately impacted e.g. over 50s, younger people, and women and this work will allow us to offer support to a range of groups.

2.2 Equality Issues

The Proactive team completed its first full equality impact assessment in July 2021, and proposes to review that annually. Due to the potential scale, breadth and scope of interventions, the project team is likely to encounter a range of impacts on access and participation and will need to respond in the light of resident feedback encountered. For example, the team is keen to use digital tools to scale up, but is aware that it will need to use non-digital contact methods for those residents who are unable or willing to use digital tools.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

This work will have a positive impact on community safety issues by tackling some of the root causes that can lead to distress and anti-social behaviour in some instances.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and will support human rights through access to financial resources

3. Environmental

Matter considered and no issues identified

4. Governance

The work is overseen as part of the Councils' Thrive Board and aligns to our Good Services Framework to ensure we deliver a good customer experience and one which makes it as easy as possible for our residents to get what they need.

The work offers the opportunity to work closely with third sector stakeholders, enhancing our reputation as a good partner

Appendix One:

LIFT datasets and methodology

About LIFT dashboard

The LIFT dashboard brings together multiple person level datasets into a single analytical platform which allows the council to better understand the complex needs and circumstances of low-income households. LIFT provides both a comprehensive picture showing the distribution of low-income households across the council and also a detailed individual picture for each household. This gives the council unparalleled visibility of poverty and vulnerability enabling highly targeted support initiatives and activities for those most in need.

Using analytical insight in this way allows the council to take a more proactive approach to support and early intervention work can be carried out mitigating future risks and costs. The datasets used to build the LIFT dashboard contains rich, household-level information including earnings, benefit incomes and family composition whilst the policy engine underlying LIFT models the welfare system and includes analysis of future policy impacts, indicators of financial vulnerability and opportunities to increase incomes of residents. This allows the council to see the impact of all policy changes on individual households, identify residents struggling financially either today or in the future, design appropriate interventions and track the effectiveness of those interventions.

About the datasets

The low-income households represented within LIFT are based on two core datasets, the Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE) and Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). We often build on these by pooling additional data on arrears (council tax arrears, rent arrears and housing benefit overpayments) and support payments (discretionary housing payments, other discretionary support), and can link these to other datasets upon request.

SHBE is a standard dataset with information on all Housing Benefit recipients that local authorities have to provide to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) each month. The CTRS dataset contains information of all Council Tax Support recipients in the local authority. We capture a proportion of households on Universal Credit within the CTRS dataset, which is about 28% of the UC caseload in Adur & Worthing. These are households that are claiming both council tax support and UC.

When the CTRS dataset is solely used to capture information of households on Universal Credit, the information available about these households is limited. In particular, it does not contain information about the household's tenancy. In LIFT, we reverse engineer missing household information and we are able to then estimate the household's rent and tenancy information.

The approach we are moving to for LIFT projects is to use Universal Credit data share for UC households in receipt of council tax support. This approach overcomes the above limitations and improves our accuracy on Universal Credit households, and also allows for additional analysis:

- Get correct and up to date earnings. These come directly from HMRC's RTI system
- Identify UC households impacted by the benefit cap, so you can intervene earlier to mitigate impacts
- Taking deductions from UC (i.e. sanctions, repayments) will improve LIFT accuracy, better understanding of financial circumstances eg financial resilience, rel/food/water/fuel poverty etc
- Insight into Private Sector and Social Sector landlords to enable you to better manage your housing availability

Guide to poverty measurement

Policy in Practice references a number of different poverty metrics and brief definitions are displayed in the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) dashboards. This guide is intended to provide an explanation of those metrics including statistical sources and contextual information but will not include specific formulas or detailed calculations. The guide also includes a definition of 'financial resilience' categories in LIFT.

Food poverty

The Minimum Income Standard (MIS) is a research method developed in the UK, and now applied in other countries, to capture the level of income required to reach a socially acceptable living standard, across different types of households. The term has also been used to describe political criteria used openly or implicitly by some governments to assess the adequacy of income levels. MIS is the basis for the calculation of the UK living wage.

The first MIS report was published in 2008 by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) under the title "A Minimum Income Standard for Britain: what people think", and was carried out by the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) at Loughborough University and the Family Budget Unit at the University of York. The research is now fully carried out by CRSP with the continued support of JRF, which publishes [annual MIS reports](#). CRSP offers a range of resources relating to the MIS, including a [downloadable calculator](#) with which to calculate the MIS for different households and see a breakdown of the MIS for each budget component, for example, for childcare costs or food.

There are two key steps to calculating the MIS for each household type. The first step consists of deciding a list of goods and services, agreed by a process of negotiated consensus among focus groups for that household type. For example, couples with children are asked to agree on a list of necessary goods and services for couples with children. In the second step, each item is priced at stores and providers by the CRSP research team, to build a total household budget, thereby establishing the minimum level of income that is required to meet total household costs.

MIS represents a budget standard in its specification of the level of income households need in order to achieve an adequate standard of living. MIS may also be referred to as a reference budget, as it provides a costed list of items that households need to buy in order to achieve a socially accepted minimum standard of living. The MIS is calculated according to whether the household is working-age or pension-age and, among working-age households, depending on the age and number of children (up to a maximum of four children), resulting in over 100 possible household combinations.

Policy in Practice compares each household's total minimum acceptable food expenditure (Food-MIS) to household income after 'priority costs'. Priority costs are a grouping of expenditure categories that include rent, CTS liability, cost of disability, TV license, electricity, gas, water and mobile phone costs.

Households are categorised as being in food poverty if their income after priority costs is less than the Minimum Income Standard (MIS) for food expenditure, based on the number of occupants in the household.

Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty in England has an official [Government definition](#). Previously measured using the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator, from 2021 it incorporates wider concerns over sustainability and is measured using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE). Both definitions are made up of two criteria, listed below:

LIHC definition	LILEE definition
<p>a household is considered to be fuel poor if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>high cost</i>: they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level); and b) <i>low income</i>: were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. 	<p>a household is considered to be fuel poor if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>low energy efficiency</i>: they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below; and b) <i>low income</i>: when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line
Pre-2021	2021 onwards

There are 3 important elements in determining whether a household is fuel poor:

- household income
- household energy requirements
- fuel prices

Household-level information about property energy requirements and incurred fuel prices are not included in the main datasets used to populate the LIFT. This means it is not possible to capture precisely which households meet the *low energy efficiency* criterion. In order to minimise the risk of excluding at-risk households, LIFT defines fuel poverty according to the *low-income* criterion only.

Households are categorised as being in fuel poverty if their income is already below the relative poverty line, or if fuel expenditure at the median UK level would bring their income below the relative poverty line.

Water poverty

A person's ability to access safe, clean and affordable water is recognised by the United Nations as a human right (2014). The concept of 'water poverty' was therefore developed to consider both a lack of access to clean water and sanitation and the cost of consuming it. In the UK, access to safe and clean water is rarely compromised. The affordability of water however varies between different customer groups and circumstances, leading to some customers choosing to restrict their consumption in an attempt to manage cost. Alternatively, some customers accumulate debt with their water company which can lead to collections procedures. Therefore, water poverty in the UK refers to the inability of a customer to pay their water and sewerage bill(s) (rather than their ability to access safe and clean water).

There's currently no Government-defined definition of water poverty. However, recent efforts recommend a common threshold-based definition whereby households that spend more than a certain percentage of their disposable income on water bills are considered to be in water poverty. In their 2019 publication

[‘Water Poverty: A Common Measurement’](#) National Energy Action recommended adopting a standard ‘3%’ measure of water poverty across UK industry providers. According to this measure, a household is considered to be in water poverty if it spends more than 3% of its disposable income on water and sewerage bills. The report also discusses an alternative benchmark of 5%, but noted (in light of Minimum Income Standard findings with respect to water) that a higher threshold risks excluding households likely struggling to maintain a decent standard of living.

To prevent the exclusion of households that are struggling to meet water costs, the LIFT uses the 3% threshold to capture the incidence of water poverty. Since household-level information to capture actual fuel costs is not included in the datasets used for LIFT, Policy in Practice uses information from Money Advice Service to produce a formula to calculate overall water and sewerage costs based on estimated usage and per-person rates.

Households are categorised as being in water poverty if their estimated water costs account for 3% or more of their disposable income.

Relative poverty (below the poverty line)

Although there is no single definition of poverty, *relative poverty* is one of the commonly accepted definitions and is employed by various departments across the UK Government. According to this definition, a household is considered to be in relative poverty if their income is below 60% of UK median income (this is often called the ‘poverty line’). The poverty line is calculated each year by the UK Government, using the Households Below Average income (HBAI) dataset to capture median income (the income earned by households in the 50th percentile of the income distribution). A family earning less than 60% of the median household income is therefore said to be in relative poverty.

Households are considered to be at risk of being in relative poverty if their total equivalised household income is below the UK poverty line (defined as 60% of median household income).

Financial resilience and cash shortfall definitions in LIFT

The financial resilience data concept describes the relationship between household income, savings and expected household expenditure using the following mutually exclusive categories:

In crisis - household take-home-income (per month) is not enough to meet only their rent and their Council Tax liability and they do not have enough savings to meet 3 months’ worth of expected expenditure.

At risk - household take-home-income (per month) is less than their expected expenditure, and they do not have enough savings to meet 3 months’ worth of their expected expenditure.

Struggling - household take-home-income (per month) is between zero and £100 greater than their expected expenditure and they do not have enough savings to meet 3 months’ worth of expected expenditure.

Coping - household take-home-income (per month) is greater than expected expenditure by over £100. Or household take-home-income is less than £100 above expected expenditure and they do have 3 months’ worth of savings.

In addition, LIFT employs a 'cash shortfall' measure to capture whether households' expected take-home-income is less than expected expenditure. This is a binary (Yes/No) indicator that corresponds to the 'In crisis' and 'At risk' groups above; that is, households in cash shortfall will also be either in the 'In crisis' or 'At risk' group.

Households are considered to be at risk of facing a cash shortfall if their total take-home-income falls below their expected total expenditure. Total expenditure includes rent, council tax liability, disability, TV license, electricity, gas, water, public transport, mobile, groceries, personal costs.

Methodological note:

- 'Expenditure' is made up of known costs of rent and council tax liability plus estimated household expenditure on key items/spending categories (TV license, electricity, gas, water, public transport, mobile, groceries, personal costs).
- No housing costs are assumed for owner-occupiers.
- Where provided in the source datasets, the cost of disability is included and captured by the value of disability benefits.
- Household costs are subject to equivalisation according to the [modified OECD scale](#) to capture economies of scale for larger households.

Appendix Two:

Demographic breakdown: Cohorts 1-12 identified for Proactive Contact (excluding cohort 4)

Adur/Worthing

Gender	113 Female; 54 Male <i>232 Female; 102 Male; 1 MX</i>
Household type	8 couple without children, 85 single, 24 couples with children, 50 lone parents <i>20 couples without children, 173 single, 24 couples with children, 118 lone parents</i>
Economic status	35 in work; 132 not (14 carers, 57 disabled, 17 lone parents, 44 other reason) <i>63 in work; 272 not (23 carers, 67 disabled, 57 lone parents, 125 another reason)</i>
Ward	3 Buckingham, 15 Churchill, 9 Cokeham, 22 Eastbrook, 11 Hillside, 8 Manor, 5 Marine, 15 Mash Barn, 10 Peverel, 18 Southlands, 16 Southwick Green, 14 St Mary's, 7 St Nicolas, 14 Widewater <i>13 Broadwater, 29 Castle, 57 Central, 14 Durrington, 24 Gaisford, 11 Goring, 54 Heene, 13 Marine, 24 Northbrook, 6 Offington, 21 Salvington, 43 Seldon, 26 Tarring</i>
Disability status	59 claiming disability benefits; 108 not disabled * <i>72 claiming disability benefits; 263 not disabled</i>
Financial risk status	65 coping; 22 struggling; 64 at risk; 16 in crisis** <i>106 coping; 62 struggling 123 at risk; 44 in crisis</i>
Age	3 16-21; 26 22-29; 39 30-39; 23 40-49; 48 50-59; 28 60-69 <i>16 16-21; 117 22-29; 51 30-39; 38 40-49; 61 50-59; 51 60-69; 1 70+</i>

Appendix Three:

Contact/Engagement outcomes for cohorts 1-12

	1	2	3*	4**	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
No contact	26	23	38	-	30	15	28	12	30	26	16	19
Refused support	7	4	7	-	5	7	7	7	13	3	8	7
Accepted support	22	21	5	-	12	16	15	6	26	20	14	7
Cohort size	55	48	50	-	47	38	50	25	69	49	38	33
Actively engaging	40%	44%	10%	-	26%	42%	30%	24%	38%	41%	37%	21%

Appendix Four

Adur

Ward	Domains of Deprivation that are in the 10% most deprived in the nation	Domains of Deprivation that are in the 20% most deprived in the nation
Churchill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, skills and training. • Income levels affecting children's wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income levels generally • Employment levels • General health
Peverel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, skills and training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment levels
Eastbrook		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment levels • Income levels generally • Income levels affecting children's wellbeing ⁵

Worthing

Ward	Domains of Deprivation that are in the 10% most deprived in the nation	Domains of Deprivation that are in the 20% most deprived in the nation
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment levels • Crime levels • Living environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income levels generally. • Income levels affecting children's wellbeing • General health
Heene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General health • Living environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment levels • Income levels affecting children's wellbeing
Northbrook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills, education and training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment levels • Income levels generally • Income levels affecting children's wellbeing
Broadwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment levels • Skills, education and training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income levels generally • Income levels affecting children's wellbeing • General health
Castle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income levels generally • Employment levels • Skills, education and training. • Income deprivation affecting older people ⁶

⁵ [West Sussex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Briefing, 2019](#)

⁶ [West Sussex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Briefing, 2019](#)

Appendix Five

Cohort breakdown of changes to Financial risk scores over time

	"Coping" Sept 20 Oct 21	"Struggling" Sept 20 Oct 21	"At risk" Sept 20 Oct 21	"In crisis" Sept 20 Oct 21	Total in dataset Sept 20 Oct 21
1	18 18	1 1	3 0	0 0	22 19
2	0 13	7 3	12 1	2 1	21 18
3	0 1	0 0	0 0	5 2	5 3
4	-	-	-	-	-
5	0 5	0 0	12 2	0 3	12 10
6	0 15	3 0	13 0	0 0	16 15
7	0 7	0 2	15 5	0 0	15 14
8	5 3	1 0	0 0	0 0	6 3
9	23 18	1 0	2 0	0 0	26 18
10	20 18	0 0	0 0	0 0	20 18



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
11 January 2022

Key Decision: No

Ward(s) Affected: All

Council Tax Support Schemes for Worthing Borough Council in respect of 2022/23 & 2023/24

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report relates to the Council Tax Support schemes for Worthing Borough Council in respect of 2022/23 and 2023/24. It has been produced following the decision made by the Joint Strategic Committee on 7 December 2021 that officers should provide further details about options for:-
- Enhancing the budget for discretionary awards during 2022/23; and
 - Removing the £5.00 weekly restriction from 1 April 2023 and the associated timescales

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Joint Strategic Committee is asked to:
- a. Note the content of this report;
 - b. Approve the start of the consultation with the precepting bodies for the development of the 2023/24 Council Tax Support scheme;
 - c. Note that a further report will be presented to Committee in June outlining the options for a new scheme and the public consultation approach; and

- | |
|---|
| d. Approve the release of £100,000 from the Capacity Issues Reserve to increase the hardship fund for 2022/23 |
|---|

3. Context

- 3.1 On 7 December 2021 the Joint Strategic Committee considered a report to determine the criteria for the respective Council Tax Support schemes for working age customers in respect of 2022/23.
- 3.2 Adur Members decided to recommend to the Full Council that the scheme for Adur District Council should be based upon the scheme for 2021/22 with no restrictions and that no other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit.
- 3.3 Worthing Members decided
- i. That the £5.00 weekly restriction should be removed as soon as possible
 - ii. That it was appropriate to accept the advice from officers that the risks of changing the scheme for 2022/23 and that it was therefore not possible to change the scheme due to the development and consultation timescales involved
 - iii. To recommend to Full Council that in respect of 2022/23
 - 1. That the discretionary budget to support those in severe financial difficulty should be retained
 - 2. The scheme should be based on the scheme for 2021/22 with the £5.00 weekly restriction retained
 - 3. No other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit
 - iv. To request that the scheme for 2023/24 is developed to remove the £5.00 weekly restriction and that officers should start the consultation process with the precepting bodies as soon as possible
 - v. To request that a further report is presented to the Committee on 11 January 2022 that outlines the options and associated timescales for the scheme for 2023/24
 - vi. To request that officers investigate the feasibility of a discretionary hardship scheme for 2022/23 similar to the current scheme of £150 per household with a report to be presented to the committee by March 2022
 - vii. To request that officers investigate other measure to alleviate hardship and consider how to fund this as part of the budget-setting process
- 3.4 This report addresses points v to vii above.

4. Engagement and Communication

- 4.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 Schedule 1A, paragraph 5.2 provides that the latest date to set the Council Tax Support Scheme is the 11 March preceding any financial year. Appendix A contains details about the requirement to consult about proposed changes to a scheme.

4.2 The following logistical considerations have been considered by officers in respect of the scheme for 2023/24:

- Initial consultation with Members about changes to the scheme to meet policy objectives following local elections in May 2022
- Consultation with precepting bodies
- Report to JSC to approve the principles of the draft scheme and public consultation questions (to include details about the responses from the precepting bodies)
- Public consultation
- Report to JSC to include the outcomes of the public consultation, seeking approval of the scheme with a recommendation to Full Council
- Software testing of the proposed new scheme
- Full Council decision to confirm the new scheme and annual Council Tax setting 2023/24
- Implementation of the new scheme

Indicative timescales are shown in Appendix B.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 When the £5.00 weekly restriction was introduced in Worthing with effect from 1 April 2015 provision of a discretionary budget to help those in severe financial difficulty was also made. The budget is currently £99,000 per annum of which £60,000 is funded by the County Council. Applications are considered and the administration of awards is undertaken on a case-by-case basis to fully or partially offset the £5.00 restriction.
- 5.2 The removal of the restriction is likely to have a significant cost impact on the collection fund which will then be shared between the precepting bodies. Based on the impact of introducing the restriction for 2015/16, it is estimated that the collection fund will lose approximately £1.4m of income per year. This will be split across the precepting authorities as follows:
- Worthing Borough Council - £175,600
 - West Sussex County Council - £1,071,900
 - Sussex Police Authority - £152,500
- 5.3 With the introduction of a more generous scheme, the current hardship scheme could be ended which will produce a net saving of £39,000 to offset the loss of income for the Council. Consequently, the net cost is likely to be in the region of £137,000. However the final cost will depend on the number of claimants and their income levels.
- 5.4 The Council can opt to provide additional discretionary support in 2022/23 ahead of the introduction of a new scheme for 2023/24. This can take one of two forms:
- i) A blanket reduction in the level of Council Tax payable by all working age claimants;
 - ii) An enhanced hardship scheme, targeted at our most deprived residents.

The cost of any discretionary scheme will fall wholly on the Council.

- 5.5 Separately, for each of the last two financial years (2020/21 and 2021/22 since the start of the COVID pandemic) the government has provided funding so that

discretionary awards of up to £150.00 per annum can be awarded to all working-age customers. Applications are not required and awards are made automatically provided the customer is entitled to Council Tax Support at some point during the financial year.

- 5.6 However, this support has not been replicated for 2022/23 as part of settlement. The cost of the £150.00 additional payments in 2021/22 is currently estimated at £630,000 which will be funded as follows:

- Worthing Borough Council £133,000
- West Sussex County Council £497,000

This was funded through the one-off Council Tax Support Grants that each of the Councils received in 2021/22.

- 5.7 Since the government had not provided a 2022/23 Council Tax Support grant, the Council is not currently in a position to repeat the £150.00 additional awards for next year. However, the position could be reviewed if further government funding is made available in the light of the new pandemic pressures.

- 5.8 However, the Council could increase the hardship funding available to through the targeted discretionary award scheme. The Councils use a data analysis tool called LIFT which interrogates revenues and benefits data to assess the financial position of customers. In Sept 2021 analysis showed the following customers in categories of financial difficulty in Worthing

- Coping - 6,433 (94.2%)
- Struggling - 240 (3.5%)
- At Risk - 119 (1.7%)
- In Crisis - 39 (0.6%)

Our current hardship fund has sufficient resources to

- a) Remove the minimum annual payment of a little over £260 (£5.00 per week) from 380 households (which would address the majority of customers in the 'Struggling' to 'In Crisis' categories as at Sept 2021); or
- b) Award £150.00 to 660 households

Awards are made through an application process and are based on an assessment of income and expenditure case by case.

- 5.9 The number of customers shown in the four LIFT categories in paragraph 5.8 is likely to alter either as the result of individual circumstances changing or due to broader economic and employment conditions, and could well increase over the next period. An additional investment in the hardship fund would enable the Council to support all the customers in the 'Struggling', 'At Risk' and 'In Crisis' categories whilst also providing a safety net for those currently coping but whose circumstances may change. An additional investment of £100,000 into the hardship fund would mean that support could be provided to between 760 (at £260) and 1,300 (at £150) households.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in relation to Council Tax Reduction Schemes (England).
- 6.2 Paragraph 3 in schedule 1A of the amended 1992 Act states that before making a scheme the authority must consult the major precepting authority, publish a draft scheme and consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.
- 6.3 Paragraph 5 in the same schedule states that each financial year each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme and that a duty to consult applies when revising a scheme in the same way as when the authority was making the scheme.

Background Papers

Localising Support for Council Tax in England report to the Joint Strategic Committee held on 22nd July 2014

Welfare Reform Act 2012

Local Government Finance Bill 2012

Minutes of the meetings of the Joint Strategic Committee of Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils held on 26 July 2012, 28 November 2012, 3 December 2013, 2 December 2014, 2 February 2016, 10 January 2017, 5 December 2017, 31 January 2019, 14 January 2020 and 1 December 2020

Minutes of the Adur Full Council meeting held on 17 December 2020

Minutes of the Worthing Full Council meeting held on 15 December 2020

Minutes of the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 7 December 2021

Minutes of the Worthing Full Council meeting held on 14 December 2021

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Whilst Council Tax represents an important source of income to the Councils, financial support must be provided to residents on a low income via appropriate Council Tax Support schemes.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

Matter considered and no issues identified.

4. Governance

Matter considered and no issues identified.

Appendix A - details about the requirement to consult about proposed changes to a scheme

Decision making for Council Tax schemes is governed by Schedule 4 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).

At Paragraph 3 to Schedule 1A of the LGFA 1992 the Schedule specifies the necessary consultation requirements for the development of any new scheme, which includes the 'revision and replacement' of a Scheme - Paragraph 5.5 of Schedule 1A.

Paragraph 5 - Revisions to and replacement of a scheme

- (1) For each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme.
- (2) The authority must make any revision to its scheme, or any replacement scheme, no later than [11 March] in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to have effect.
- (3) The Secretary of State may by order amend sub-paragraph (2) by substituting a different date.
- (4) If any revision to a scheme, or any replacement scheme, has the effect of reducing or removing a reduction to which any class of persons is entitled, the revision or replacement must include such transitional provision relating to that reduction or removal as the authority thinks fit.
- (5) Paragraph 3 applies to an authority when revising a scheme as it applies to an authority when making a scheme.
- (6) References in this Part to a scheme include a replacement scheme.

Schedule 3 - Preparation of a Scheme - consultation requirements

- (1) Before making a scheme, the authority must (in the following order)—
 - (a) consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it,
 - (b) publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and
 - (c) consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.
- (2) The fact that this paragraph was not in force when any step described in sub-paragraph (1) was taken is to be disregarded in determining whether there has been compliance with that sub-paragraph.
- (3) Having made a scheme, the authority must publish it in such a manner as the authority thinks fit.
- (4) The Secretary of State may make regulations about the procedure for preparing a scheme.
- (5) Regulations under subparagraph (4) may in particular—
 - (a) require the authority to produce documents of a particular description in connection with the preparation of a scheme;
 - (b) include requirements as to the form and content of documents produced in connection with the preparation of a scheme;
 - (c) include requirements (in addition to sub-paragraphs (1)(b) and (3)) about the manner in which such documents must be published;

- (d) require the authority to make copies of such documents available for inspection by members of the public, or to supply copies of such documents to them;
- (e) include provision about the making of reasonable charges for the supply of copies of such documents to members of the public.

The Act was then supplemented by guidance from the then Department for Communities & Local Government (see [Localising Support for Council Tax - A Statement of Intent at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6091/2146581.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6091/2146581.pdf)) which further specified the following:

In respect of the timing of consultations:

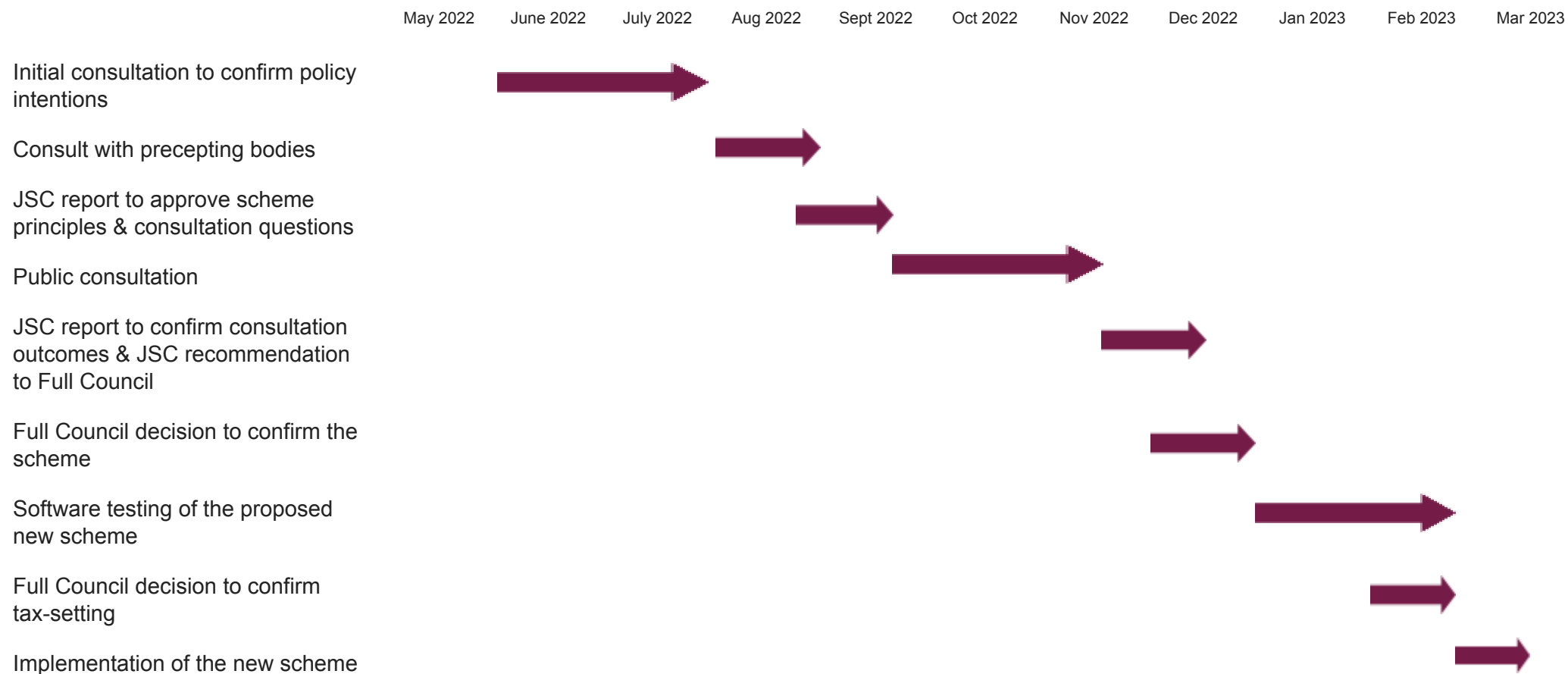
- 2.14 A billing authority will need to take account, in developing a local scheme, that a realistic time frame must be put in place to ensure feedback can be sought from all appropriate individuals and groups in the community. The length of any consultation should also reflect the changes proposed.
- 2.15 Although Government's code of practice on consultation states that normally 12 weeks is appropriate, billing authorities may wish to consider the appropriate length of their consultation depending on the impact of their proposals and the ability to complete the consultation exercise within budgetary timetables.
- 2.16 The code of practice indicates that where timing is restricted, for example, due to having to meet a fixed timetable such as a budget cycle, there may be good reason for a shorter consultation, and any documentation should be clear for the reasons for the shorter timetable.

In respect of the extent of Consultations:

- 2.19 The content of any consultation will depend on the complexity of the reduction scheme that is proposed to be introduced. Billing authorities will need to consider administrative processes that they may require – such as whether an application is needed, or how existing working age claimants can transition to the new local schemes.
- 2.20 A billing authority will be under a duty to adopt a local council tax reduction scheme. Where the reduction scheme they adopt fundamentally changes all aspects of any existing scheme they may need to provide greater detail of its impacts than a reduction scheme that simply amends the level of awards but not the qualifying criteria.
- 2.21 Nonetheless, to be an effective consultation, a billing authority will need to ensure that all interested parties are able to give their view and influence the design of the scheme.

The Cabinet Office also published "Consultations Principles Guidance" in 2018 at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691383/Consultation_Principles_1_.pdf.

Appendix B - indicative timescales for the 2023/24 scheme



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ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
11 January 2022

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: Marine

Worthing Pier - Emergency Works

Report by the Director for the Economy

Officer Contact Details

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Martyn Payne, Senior Engineer,

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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report provides an update to the Committee on the direct award of a contract for emergency works to the Pier and landing stage sub-structure under Standing Orders 8.3 Special Circumstances and Emergencies - 8.3.3 for Emergency Works.
- 1.2. And update the Committee on the ongoing situation.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To note the award of the contract for emergency works to the Pier and landing stage sub-structure under Standing Orders 8.3 Special Circumstances and Emergencies - 8.3.3 for Emergency Works.
- 2.2. To note the ongoing emergency works in available tidal windows to the Pier and landing stage sub-structures.

3. Context

- 3.1 The Pier, landing stage and Lido sub-structures are maintained under a term maintenance contract. The current contract awarded in 2019 is for a two year period extendable by up to three years (annually), based on performance.
- 3.2 Following a difficult period of operation caused by the Covid pandemic in 2020, which is still being felt by some contractors, the current maintenance contractor suffered both material supply and personnel resourcing problems which culminated in the contractor terminating its contract with the Council on the 16th August 2021.
- 3.3 The Councils Technical Services Engineering Team had been proactively working with the contractor up until the end of the contract to try to maintain service delivery. This included sourcing possible links with other companies and experienced resources, but to no eventual success.
- 3.4 Since receipt of the notice from the contractor, inspections of the sub-structure have continued with efforts to establish short term maintenance works whilst preparing a new maintenance contract for tendering.
- 3.5 During an inspection on the 3rd November 2021 to a report of deteriorated railings to the top deck of the landing stage, it was noted that the landing stage sub-structure had seriously deteriorated, due to recent storm events over the previous three to four weeks, since the last inspection and required immediate works to maintain the structural stability.
- 3.6 Carrying out works to the Pier are of a specialist nature and difficult due to the environment. To be able to carry out works on the pier landing stage sub-structure from beach level requires low tides of 0.7m or less at a suitable hour (e.g. 6am to 6pm). These opportunities happen only once or possibly twice a month and the next available opportunity at that time was the 3rd December 2021.
- 3.7 With our normal term maintenance contractor no longer available it was crucial that an experienced contractor be sought to undertake emergency works to the sub-structure on the low tide window commencing the 3rd December 2021.
- 3.8 Due to the restrictive period of time available traditional procurement routes were not an option and preliminary discussions were held with JT Mackley & Co Ltd, a local engineering contractor with experience in working in the

coastal environment and who recently completed a project to replace the Brooklands outfall after successfully completing a tendering process, to establish if they had available resources.

- 3.8 The urgency of the works was considered by Officers and the use of emergency procurement procedures. Matter considered included the sudden deterioration of the pier landing stage sub-structure due to bad weather and sea swells could have resulted in part of the pier landing stage collapsing, creating a true emergency, posing an immediate risk to services (ie the provision of 'fishing services' would have been affected; with further effect, if the Pier substructure was also damaged, that the Southern and Central Pavilions would likely close). There was also a real and substantial risk someone would get injured on the beach, if there was a collapse of the pier landing stage at any time even if the pier was closed.
- 3.9 For the reasons outlined in 3.8 above, the Director for Economy in consultation with the Worthing Executive Member for Regeneration approved the award of the works contract under Standing Orders 8.3 Special Circumstances and Emergencies - 8.3.3 for Emergency Works, to JT Mackley & Co Ltd on the 19th November 2021.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 JT Mackleys Co Ltd commenced work on the 3rd December 2021 and worked the available period of low tides. Whilst works proceeded well, it was noted that further deterioration has occurred in the interim period between detection and the start of the emergency work, but not to the extent of failure, and further tidals windows would be required to complete the works.
- 4.2 During this same tidal window period further inspections were carried out to the Pier and landing stage substructures confirming the extent of works required to bring the substructure to an suitable standard. Inspections will continue during this period at a greater frequency until the emergency works are completed.
- 4.3 The initial emergency works undertaken on the 3rd December 2021 tidal window has abated the deterioration to the landing stage substructure and significantly reduced the risk level to the Pier substructure. The planned additional tidal working windows available in the first three months of 2022 will ensure the landing stage is restored to a good working condition, subject to any severe weather events encountered in this period.

- 4.4 The contractor has programmed resources in for the next available tidal window from the 31st December 2021 to the 8th January 2022 to continue the emergency work. Subsequent tidal window working will be considered based on the outstanding emergency works required.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The 2021/22 reactive maintenance budget for the pier landing is £179,460.
- 5.2 The emergency works of £125,000 will be charged against this existing maintenance budget and it is not expected that additional funding will be required.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, provides the power to the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 6.2 S1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 6.3 Section 1 of The Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 provides that every statutory provision conferring or imposing a function on a local authority confers the powers on the local authority to enter into a contract with another person for the provision or making available of assets or services, or both (whether or not together with goods) for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority.
- 6.4 Paragraph 8.3 of the Council's Contract Standing Orders found at Part 4 of the Constitution, defines a Special Circumstances and Emergency as 'a situation which poses an immediate risk to Council services or the wellbeing of residents, for which urgent action is needed and which cannot be dealt with using the Councils usual processes and procedures'. The Director for Service is required to consult with relevant Executive Members and Officers and thereafter report the use of the emergency provision to the next Joint Strategic Committee.

Background Papers

None.

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Not undertaking the emergency works would have a detrimental impact on the business on the Pier and affect the use of the Pier by the community if closed for an extended period due to damage to the sub-structure.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered and no issues identified

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered and no issues identified

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified

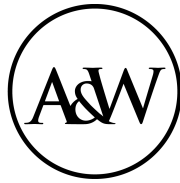
3. Environmental

Matter considered and no issues identified

4. Governance

The proposal supports a number of Council priorities across the Platforms by ensuring effective management of existing assets

The Council may receive criticism and reputational damage if the emergency works were not undertaken and the Pier closed.



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
11 January 2022

Key Decision: [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All Worthing

Referral of Motion on Notice from Worthing Borough Council

Report by the Interim Director for Communities

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Worthing Borough Council on the 14th December 2021.
- 1.2. Members of the Joint Strategic committee are asked to consider and determine the Motion.
- 1.3. Members can either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members can reject the motion.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Joint Strategic Committee support the motion and determine how further work is carried out; or,
- 2.2. That the Joint Strategic Committee reject the motion.

3. Context

- 3.1. At its meeting on the 14th December 2021, Worthing Borough Council received a motion from Councillor Emma Taylor, seconded by Councillor Margaret Howard, details of which can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The motion submitted to Council contained subject matter that is within the remit of the Joint Strategic Committee, as defined in para 14.4.1 of the Council's Procedure Rules. Therefore, it was moved and seconded, immediately noted by the Council and referred without debate to the Joint Strategic Committee for consideration and determination.
- 3.3 Where a motion has been referred by Full Council to the Joint Strategic Committee, the mover, or the seconder in the absence of the mover, shall be entitled to attend the relevant meeting of the Executive and explain the motion. Councillor Emma Taylor has been made aware that the motion has been referred to this Committee.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The Joint Strategic Committee can either support or reject the motion.
- 4.2 Should the Joint Strategic Committee support the motion, then the Committee should ask Officers to prepare a further report on the substantive issues to be presented at a future meeting of the JSC.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There may be direct financial implications in future depending on the course of action the Joint Strategic Committee wishes to take.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Rules concerning motions are set out in the Council's Constitution under paragraph 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

Background Papers

Motion to Worthing Borough Council on the 19th October 2021

Officer Contact Details:-

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Democratic Services Lead

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The Threat of Mass Homelessness

Worthing Borough Council notes that thousands of families are facing evictions and repossessions as measures to protect families put in place during Covid have come to an end. Universal Credit has reduced by £20 per week; the furlough scheme has finished; and electricity and gas prices have risen at an alarming rate. Now is not the time to unravel the great interventions that the Government brought in to protect people during this unprecedented period. Unless urgent action is taken, the UK will face a homelessness crisis this autumn, on a scale never seen before.

This Council resolves to:

1. Support the Big Issue's plan to Stop Mass Homelessness by writing to the relevant Secretaries of State asking them to keep people in their homes and in sustainable jobs. They could do this by committing to pay off £360m in rent arrears; suspending no fault evictions until a Renters' Reform Act is passed; permanently reinstating the £20 p/w Universal Credit uplift; improving access to Discretionary Housing Payments; unfreezing Local Housing Allowance; improving support for financial literacy education; providing grants to improve the insulation of people's homes and investing in the creation of new green jobs.
2. Express its support for a Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requiring public bodies to consider how decisions made now affect future needs, and tackle persistent problems such as poverty, homelessness, health inequalities and climate change.
3. Commission a report outlining options that will ensure the impact of Council decisions on future generations are properly considered.
4. Commission a report outlining how the Council can expand social housing; encourage innovative ways to increase housing stock; and increase support for ethical property and letting firms.

Proposed: Emma Taylor

Seconded: Margaret Howard