

**Minutes of a Meeting of the  
Adur District Council**

**15 December 2022**

**QE2 Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea**

Councillor Andy McGregor, Chairman  
Councillor Joss Loader, Vice-Chairman

Councillor Ann Bridges	Councillor Dan Flower
Councillor Carson Albury	Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor Carol Albury	Councillor Jeremy Gardner
Councillor Robina Baine	Councillor Jude Harvey
Councillor Vee Barton	Councillor Paul Mansfield
Councillor Tony Bellasis	Councillor Steve Neocleous
Councillor Kevin Boram	Councillor Carol O'Neal
Councillor Mandy Buxton	Councillor Joe Pannell
Councillor Lee Cowen	Councillor Neil Parkin
Councillor Gabe Crisp	Councillor Julian Shinn
Councillor Angus Dunn	Councillor Debs Stainforth
Councillor Emma Evans	Councillor Julia Watts

**Absent**

Councillor Catherine Arnold and Councillor Sharon Sluman

**c/114/22-23            Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Catherine Arnold and Sharon Sluman

**c/115/22-23            Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**c/116/22-23            Election of a Vice chairperson**

**Resolved:** that Cllr Joss Loader be elected as Vice-Chair of the Council until the meeting of Annual Council in May 2023

**c/117/22-23            Questions from the public**

Questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting, however the Public were not present to ask those questions

**c/118/22-23            Confirmation of Minutes**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman made the following announcements

As we approach Christmas, I am going to speak about one of our local heroes being honoured by an invitation to a festive event which is happening today, as I speak. It's called "Together at Christmas". A carol service at Westminster Abbey. It is being hosted by Princess Kate, Princess of Wales, supported by her husband, Prince William, King Charles the third and the Queen Consort. It is likely that there will also be other members of the Royal Family at the event.

The carol service is dedicated to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the second and the values the late monarch demonstrated throughout her life, including duty, empathy, faith, service, kindness, compassion, and support for others.

"These principles are shared and personified by the inspirational guests who have been invited to the Abbey in recognition of their tireless work to help and care for those around them", Kensington Palace said in a release confirming details of the event.

The service will be broadcast on ITV on Christmas Eve.

In October I received an email from the High Sheriff of West Sussex, Paul Legrave. He was asking me to put forward one person from Adur for a special event. Although no details of the event were given, I was told that the aim of the event was to recognise, celebrate and bring together those who have done incredible work in their communities in the last year. And that the service would be themed around the concepts of love and compassion, community, and togetherness. This was to include people who have:

- Contributed to making their community a kinder and more nurturing place
- Gone above and beyond in helping those around them and providing support to those in need
- Made a positive difference to the lives of others
- Collaborated with others to start or help further meaningful projects
- People who might find this Christmas period difficult

With just a day to come up with a candidate, I discussed possible candidates with our Leader Neil Parkin and MP Tim Loughton. We all agreed that Mr Tom Smith would fit this brief well.

Tom has worked for many decades as a local Sea Scout leader. He has spent around two years getting a 46 foot donated yacht, Supeta, on the water, leading a team of volunteers from across Adur and Worthing to pass the high standard required for Maritime and Coastguard Agency safety coding – a requirement if they are to take children and adults to sea in safety. This yacht is now in the water and has a berth in Shoreham Port. The team has already introduced hundreds of local youths, including disabled, to the joys of sailing.

Tom is also a motorcyclist who delivers blood across Sussex. While carrying blood he was recently in a severe road accident with a car carrying four nuns! Tom was in hospital for a long time and sustained life changing injuries - although he soldiered on without complaint. He was found to be completely blameless for the accident.

Tom has been a local police Constable and a retained Fireman. He really is a pillar of the local community.

Tom is going to find Christmas particularly difficult this year. His wife Heather, in her mid sixties, died suddenly and unexpectedly from a congenital heart defect earlier in the year - this will be Tom's first Christmas without her. .

I am so pleased for Tom to have received this invitation to recognise his work in the community.

The High Sheriff has told me that there is a strong possibility that there will be more events in the future to recognise local heroes. As Councillors I am asking you to be on the lookout for local heroes like Tom Smith. Hopefully we will get more notice than the day I was given on this occasion. But it would really help if you could start thinking of people as you go about your duties as ward Councillors.

The Leader wished everyone a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure updated members on the success of light up Shoreham Event

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing gave an update on progress with the cost of living roadmap

There were no further announcements

#### **c/120/22-23                    Items raised under urgency provisions**

The Chairman announced that there were no urgent items.

#### **c/121/22-23                    Recommendations from the Council and Executive and Committees to Council**

#### **8(a)                    Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 24 November 2022**

##### **Joint Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Chairman of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee introduced the recommendation to the Committee which was, seconded and on a vote it was

**Resolved:** that the Council note the status of the work programme

#### **8(b)                    Joint Audit & Governance Committee - 29 November 2022**

##### **Members' Allowances**

The Chairman of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee introduced the recommendation to the Council which was seconded, debated and on a vote it was

**Resolved:** that Members Allowances for 2022/23 be increased by 5.82% in line with the weighted average of the NJC pay bargaining agreement for 2022/23.

**8(c) Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee - 6 December 2022**

**2023/24 Budget Item**

The Leader introduced the recommendation to the Council which was seconded, debated and on a vote it was

**Resolved:** that the Council approve the use of capital receipts to support the delivery of the budget as set out in Appendix 4.

**8(d) Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee - 6 December 2022**

**The working-age Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24**

The Leader introduced the recommendation to the Council which was seconded, debated and on a vote it was

**Resolved:** that the Council Tax Support scheme for Adur District Council in respect of working age customers for 2023/24 should

i. Include a new provision that a valid claim for Council Tax Support would be deemed to have been made by customers who had been awarded Universal Credit and indicated that they wished to claim Council Tax Support (unless further information was required to enable entitlement to be determined)

ii. Be based upon the scheme for 2022/23 with no restrictions; and

iii. Not be further altered with any other changes beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit

**c/122/22-23 Report of the Leader on decisions taken by the Executive**

A Member asked a question relating to governance concerning the Brief for Review of Western Harbour Arm, Shoreham Harbour. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning gave an update of progression on the matter within the context of the progression of the review of the local plan. Suggestions relating to involvement of Local Ward Councillors would be taken onboard.

A Member asked a question in relation to a motion referred to the Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Adur). The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning updated member on consultation with local businesses

**c/123/22-23 Members question time under Council Procedure Rule 12**

Rotation One

A Member asked the following question:

Building condition surveys on the Southwick Estate were completed a year ago and money has since been allocated for the work identified to be carried out without delay.

At the last full council meeting in October, I asked for this work to be prioritised in order to improve insulation in the flats and thus reduce the heating costs for residents. You agreed to take this request to the director of Adur Homes immediately.

Has any work been done in the past two months in response to this request?

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services made the following response:

The Interim Works package proposed to be undertaken across the Southwick Estate this summer is to rectify fabric building issues to extend the useful life of the buildings until such time as the site is refurbished or re-developed; depending on the outcome of current resident consultation. Works would focus on essential fabric repair works identified by condition surveys and structural appraisals. The proposals include works to windows and balconies, external walls and roofing, which will prevent penetrating damp and reduce draughts that contribute towards high internal moisture levels currently. A full tender package was currently being prepared

A Member asked the following question

Worthing council is currently projected to spend £2.3million over budget this year, even after using reserves.

What measures are Adur council taking not to end up in the same predicament.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources made the following response

The most recent budget monitoring forecast estimates that by the end of the year the Council's General Fund budget will be overspent by just £64,000.

The Council has already taken action to defer expenditure where there are no long term implications behind this approach. The Council is also implementing approved savings early to further improve the position.

Experience would indicate that this position should improve as we move towards the year end although this is being closely monitored.

The Council does hold reserves to help mitigate risks particularly in what is emerging as a very difficult year. Currently our overall usable reserves are £3.3m (excluding grants and those relating to the HRA) which can be used to help manage the risk of overspend.

Rotation Two

A Member asked the following question

Planning permissions were granted in 2021 for the building of 19 homes on 'hidden homes' garage sites in Adur. They will provide much-needed social rented homes. Building contracts were awarded in August 2022 to a company which, sadly, went into administration that same month.

New contracts have now been awarded to the “second most successful” tenderers. These contractors will be carrying out the work for less money than the initially successful bid. Given this, is it fair to assume the initially successful builder was awarded the contract on the basis of the quality of their work?

Can the cabinet member tell us what measures will be taken to ensure the quality of work of the newly-appointed builders will equal that of the initially successful tenderer? Will the cabinet member also say what the timescale is for work in terms of demolition, site clearance and of building the new homes?

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services made the following response:

The Council always looks to ensure that only suitably qualified and experienced contractors take part in the tender contest. This approach ensures that every company who tenders the work will be able to deliver a good quality scheme for the Council.

Tenders are awarded based on evaluation of criteria set out in an Invitation to Tender. The criteria enable the Council to establish the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (overall) which relates to several factors relating to cost and quality, with ‘quality’ a broad term which includes assessment of a contractor’s previous experience, staff availability, approach to innovation, sustainability, social value and programme, and there are often very fine margins on this array of criteria.

Officers have assured me that the contract was awarded in line with the Council's procurement procedures and the existing legal regulations. A contract will only ever be awarded if the Council is certain that the contractor can deliver the contract to a high standard.

With regards to the detailed timetable, I will ask officers to share this with ward members at the same time as contacting affected neighbours and other stakeholders. Developments are likely to commence in the spring once the necessary legal notices have been sent out and vacant possession secured. The build will last approximately twelve months to complete in Summer 2024.

A Member asked the following question

The Greater Brighton Economic Board was set up in 2014, as a body behind the Growth of the Greater City Region in economic and Investment levels...

Could you please update the Councillors on the benefits this is Bringing to Adur and how this is developing for us, for the future....

The Leader responded as follows:

The Council is an active member of Greater Brighton, which is an important vehicle to discuss, action and lobby against a range of economic factors in the region.

Greater Brighton was a significant contributor in bringing Local Growth Funding to the area, along with the Coast to Capital LEP, and I’m pleased to say Adur benefitted from these funds towards projects such as Focus House and new Flood Defences in Shoreham, and also a contribution to infrastructure associated with the New Monks Farm development.

Latterly, and looking to the future, there is a great deal of value in working across boundaries on things like our sustainability and decarbonisation plans, whether that's looking at our collective housing stock or how people travel in and around the region.

Finally, the Greater Brighton Economic Board also opens up the Council to education partners, including the Universities of Brighton and Sussex, both of whom are bringing business innovation support into our area.

Rotation three

A Member asked the following question.

It has been indicated that repairs in Southwick are not being given the attention and that residents request and are being ignored. Can you comment on this please and give some indication the number of repairs that are being done there.

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services responded as follows

The Data below shows the total number of jobs raised from the 1st of January 2022 (2555), and the current status of the jobs..

Total	2555
Completed	1826
Cancelled	295
In progress	434

There are 3 weekly H&S inspections carried out at the Southwick estate, with all identified concerns on the estate including Roofs, Brickwork/pointing, windows, balconies drainage etc recorded on our IT System.

The main issue at this estate is that the works required fall outside of the scope of reactive repairs and are therefore difficult to address under the reactive framework. A number of the repeated issues identified through the repairs raised by tenants and reported by the Housing Management team form part of the interim works package which is currently being progressed by the team dealing with Capital Improvement works.

Where we are able to deliver small improvements we have. For example we have delivered a major overhaul of repairs to all of the communal entrance doors to every block which included new doors where required, closers, hinges, locks, broken glass, handles etc, every communal entrance door is now working. We are now working on a programme of renewing all of the intercom systems.

Alongside the standard repairs process, we have a dedicated Southwick Estate email box which is monitored daily.

The Southwick works and requirements are being managed alongside other priorities within the stock

\*Additional Questions\*

A Member asked the following question

At the last full Council meeting, questions were asked about CO 2 detectors in Adur Home Properties..

Please could you update us on the current situation and what is being done...

The Adur Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services responded as follows

We are currently installing battery powered Carbon monoxide detectors. About 671 properties already have CO detectors. We are installing about 150 per month. We expect all homes to have a battery powered Carbon monoxide detector within the 10 months. The contractor installing these have reported a slow to roll out due to supply issues possibly due to a lot of landlords procuring CO detector devices. 57 were fitted in the last 2 weeks.

A Member asked the following question

Could you please update the council on the progress of the Lancing Regeneration levelling up bid, what levels of participation there have been and what the next steps and timescales are?

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning responded as follows

I'm pleased to say we are still running an extensive engagement programme to gather the views of local residents and businesses. We have directly engaged and listened to over 200 people in small focus groups, including Parents & Carers, Young People and Businesses, whilst we have also received a further 120 online responses. All of this has been running over October and November.

What's important to note is whilst this may seem a small percentage, the 200 people who have taken part in our community conversations are also well networked and therefore we hope we're receiving a fair and representative view from the population - for example we had representatives attend from the Lancing Business Park BID who have a good working knowledge of the Park and it's 200+ businesses.

In partnership with the Parish Council, and with a range of stakeholders, we have reviewed the extensive feedback and we've started to distil these down into a series of community ambitions and project asks. These will ultimately form the basis of a 'plan for Lancing' which gives all stakeholders, not just the District Council, a firm set of parameters to work in partnership on future funding bids, whether Levelling Up or other government pots. This 'plan' is aiming to be finalised by March next year.

### **c/124/22-23                      Main Opposition Priority Motion**

The Council had before it a report by the Director for Communities, a copy of which had been sent to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 11.

The council had before it a priority motion proposed by the Leader of the main opposition.

*This main opposition group notes:*



- *Government policy is to extend the right-to-buy scheme to make it applicable to tenants of housing associations.*
- *Right-to-buy has depleted Council housing stock, as the homes being sold were not replaced, resulting in a lower levels of social housing.*
- *There is already a shortage of social housing in Adur.*
- *40% of council homes have been transferred to the private rented sector through right-to-buy.*
- *The UK Housing Review 2022 branding right-to-buy as a ‘strategic failure.’*
- *The Local Government Association has slammed plans to expand it. Those using the existing right-to-buy get an average discount of 42% on the property. This has resulted in the taxpayer spending £6bn on “unsustainable” right-to-buy discounts in the last 10 years.*
- *Unlike the existing right-to-buy scheme, the Government has promised to replace every social home sold off. However, no plan yet exists for how it will do this.*
- *The Government has not yet announced how it will fund the discounts for extending right-to-buy to housing associations.*

*This main opposition group believes:*

- *The planned extension of the right-to-buy scheme will further deplete Adur’s social housing stock and exacerbate the housing crisis.*
- *That we should support housing associations in opposing the extension of right-to-buy.*
- *Measures to support homeownership should not come at the cost of depleting social housing stock.*
- *There should be no further extension to the right-to-buy scheme. If they insist on pushing ahead with the scheme, all funding for it should be covered centrally and increased funding should be given to Councils and registered providers to build more social housing.*
- *Amendment of the existing right-to-buy is where the focus should be, as opposed to looking at any extension of it.*

*This main opposition group resolves to:*

- *Write to the secretary of state for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, outlining the views in this motion and to ask them to stop any immediate extension of the right-to-buy scheme.*
- *Also to recommend new powers to set right-to-buy discounts locally and to be able to keep all the sales receipts with the subsequent ability to combine them with other grant funding to fund replacements.*

The Main Opposition Priority Motion was proposed and seconded. In response to the motion the Leader of the council stated that he did not agree with the contents of the motion and that the opposition were entitled to write to the Secretary of state in their capacity as opposition should they so wish.

### **c/125/22-23                      Motion on Notice**

The Council had before it a report by the Director for Communities, a copy of which had been sent to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 12.

Members were asked to determine a motion on fair tax where responsibilities lay with the Council, other matters within the motion would need to be determined by the relevant Executive body.

The motion was proposed and seconded. During the debate a motion was put to refer the motion to the Joint Strategic Sub Committee (Adur) which was seconded and on a vote it was

**Resolved:** that the motion be referred to the Joint Strategic Sub-Committee for consideration

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.35 pm, having commenced at 7.05 pm

Chairman