



ADUR DISTRICT COUNCIL

2 November 2022

Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Adur)

Date:	10 November 2022
Time:	6.30 pm
Venue:	QEII Room, Shoreham Centre

Committee Membership: Councillors Carson Albury, Kevin Boram, Angus Dunn (Deputy-Leader), Emma Evans, Steve Neocleous and Neil Parkin (Leader)

Agenda

Part A

1. Declarations of Interest

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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee meeting held on 29th September 2022, 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 Tuesday 8th November 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. Corporate Debt Policy and Supporting the Most Vulnerable (Pages 5 - 22)

To consider a report from the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources, a copy is attached as item 5.

6. Carbon Emissions for 2021/22 (Pages 23 - 38)

To consider a report from the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources, a copy is attached as item 6.

7. Delivering an alternative bike share network (Pages 39 - 50)

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

8. Southwick Square Funding Release (Pages 51 - 62)

To consider a report from the Director for the Economy, a copy is attached as item 8.

9. Referral of Motion on Notice from Adur District Council (Pages 63 - 68)

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

10. Referral of Motion on Notice from Adur District Council (Pages 69 - 74)

To consider a report from the Director for Communities, a copy is attached as item 10.

Part B - Not for Publication – Exempt Information Reports

None.

Recording of this meeting

Please note that this meeting is being live streamed and a recording of the meeting will be available to view on the Council's website. This meeting will be available to view on our website for one year and will be deleted after that period. 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 Matthias Senior Solicitor – Legal Services 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 DISTRICT COUNCIL

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee
10 November 2022

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All
Cabinet Portfolio: Resources

Corporate Debt Policy and Supporting the Most Vulnerable

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

Officer Contact Details

Paul Brewer, Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources
paul.brewer@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To present the results of the first stage of work by the ethical debt working group, a group established as part of the Councils' response to the Cost of Living crisis, outlined in the report to the sub-committee in September 2022.
- 1.2. To propose a Corporate Debt Policy for the Council, providing the framework to build further on our ethical approach to debt recovery - identifying the vulnerable early on, and helping those in financial hardship, particularly in these times.
- 1.3. To drive alignment of debt recovery methods to *Proactive* ways of working, a model which has been piloted and is expected to be increasingly mainstreamed, through embedding multidisciplinary teamwork and joined up, more personalised support.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the sub-committee approves the Corporate Debt Policy and supports the proposed ethical approach to debt recovery.
- 2.2. That the sub-committee requests an update report in six months, outlining the changes that have been made to practices, processes and systems in support of a more proactive and holistic way of working.

3. Context

- 3.1. Work to make our services more proactive, and identify vulnerable residents earlier started in February 2021, working with project partners Policy in Practice to help us more effectively use data to identify financial vulnerability.
- 3.2. Subsequent committee reports in July 2021 and January 2022, member briefings in March 2022, and a further report in July 2022 have outlined the benefits of early identification and support through the *proactive pilot*.
- 3.3. As set out in the Cost of Living report presented to the sub-committee in September 2022, the proactive pilot has identified and sought contact with 900 residents using outbound calls, reaching 350 and successfully supporting the 250 who wanted our help.
- 3.4. The Cost of Living report presented a project road map, outlining a range of measures the Council is seeking to implement, with one strand being the development of an ethical debt approach and targeted financial support.
- 3.5. This report presents the product of the first stage of work by the ethical debt working group under the Cost of Living strategy, a Corporate Debt Policy which provides the framework for the identification of financial vulnerability, sensitive and fair debt recovery arrangements, and effective signposting to further support.
- 3.6. The next stage of the Proactive Project will be supported through the Shared Prosperity Fund, and drive the implementation of the road map, including implementation of ethical debt practices across the

organisation.

- 3.7. However, progress beyond policy development has already been made including the imminent re-launch of text message reminders for those late with their council tax payment, automation of applications for Council Tax Support for Universal Credit applicants, and trials of the TellJo digital assessment and signposting tool close to launch.
- 3.8. Using an online questionnaire, the TellJo tool prompts residents to request to make a payment arrangement with the Council, offers a route to register for social tariffs and the Priority Services Register with the energy supplier, and to request a call from a debt advisor. The tool also provides signposting to third sector organisations providing support for mental health, drugs and alcohol and domestic abuse.
- 3.9. The next stage of the Proactive Project will drive multi-disciplinary team working and alignment of culture and practice more deeply and extensively, as there remains a need to adapt language, process and practice in several key areas. Significant changes have already been made to standard letters and the stages of recovery in housing and revenues and benefits, but further work to standardise practices across all teams is required.
- 3.10. The Corporate Debt Policy presented in this report provides a clear and strong policy context for that work to be undertaken.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1. A recent internal audit of corporate debt management identified the need for an overarching debt management strategy, and the pre-existing work on ethical debt management has been expanded to meet the need for such a top level corporate policy.
- 4.2. The policy has been drafted with input from Policy in Practice who work with many local authorities on ethical debt.
- 4.3. Our Head of Legal services has also benchmarked across many local authorities and the proposed policy benefits from best practice across the country.
- 4.4. The policy outlines the requirement for a corporate debt management group to drive the development of coordinated multi-debt management

systems and practices. This will be established following the implementation of the Chief Executive's organisational design programme and from within the Cost of Living programme to ensure alignment.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1. As discussed above, extensive benchmarking has been undertaken with other local authorities.
- 5.2. Cabinet members have been engaged in the development of the policy.
- 5.3. The ethical debt working group has operated under the auspices of the Cost of Living programme and its engagement and communications approach.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the approval of the policy.
- 6.2. If the policy is successful in ensuring that debts due are paid then there may be an impact on the income collected from the additional charges made due to the late or non-payment of debts.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. 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 its functions.
- 7.2. Section 1 of The Localism Act empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 7.3. Section 3(1) of The Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

- 7.4. Under the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 the Council has 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.
- 7.5. The Council has statutory responsibilities for housing including a duty to provide advice and support to prevent homelessness, and a requirement to help residents find suitable and sustainable accommodation if they are already homeless.
- 7.6. Section 13A of The Local Government Finance Act 2012 requires the Council to make a scheme specifying reductions in council tax payable by people in financial need.
- 7.7. The Department for Work and Pensions provides funding to West Sussex County Council under section 31 of The Local Government Act 2003 to administer the Household Support Fund Scheme and provide assistance to households most in need. West Sussex County Council must in turn work with Adur Council to ensure the funding meets its objectives by identifying and supporting those most in need potentially as delivery partners.

Background Papers

Corporate Debt Recovery Policy ([link](#))

[Response to the Cost of Living Emergency in Adur](#)

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

The implementation of the Corporate Debt Recovery Policy supports the early identification and appropriate support of our most vulnerable residents, aiming to contribute to their stability and security, in relation to a range of negative social outcomes, including mental health and homelessness, and supporting the chances of a return into the labour market or the maintenance of employment.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Significant social value in relation to supporting our most vulnerable residents, and helping them access support from a range of community organisations as well as our own support services such as Going Local social prescribing.

2.2 Equality Issues

The corporate debt recovery policy explicitly identifies equalities issues as a vulnerability factor, and therefore drives practice and culture towards appropriate identification and action in relation to equalities issues.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered and no issues identified

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Early identification and support around financial hardship supports the delivery of fundamental rights relating to housing, food, and financial security.

3. Environmental

Matter considered and no issues identified

4. Governance

It is imperative that the Council has an effective corporate debt recovery policy in place.



ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

CORPORATE DEBT RECOVERY POLICY

This policy sets out our approach to collecting and recovering debt owed to us by businesses and residents.

1.0 Introduction

Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council ('the Councils') are required to collect monies from both residents and businesses for a variety of reasons.

Money we collect enables us to provide important public services. Income that is not collected or takes additional effort to collect means fewer resources are available to provide our services. We will try to recover all debts owed to us. This is a fair approach to people who use services and to the majority who pay Council tax and business rates on time. We will work proactively to identify those people suffering financial hardship, arrange fair repayment plans and signpost people to appropriate advice and support teams in the voluntary and community sector. We will follow the appropriate protocols and procedures to recover monies owed to us, including enforcement where this is appropriate and necessary.

In undertaking income and debt recovery it is inevitable that we will be required to pursue the recovery of arrears from residents and businesses that may experience difficulty in paying. It is therefore important that we set out how the Councils manage and collect debts to ensure consistency and best practice in such situations.

This policy identifies where responsibility for collection of different debts lie and sets out the principles and standards in relation to customer contact, recovery processes, repayments and benefit, money and debt advice. It also explains how the Councils and their partners can offer help, advice and support in the management of debt for our customers.

This policy sets the framework for a consistent and sensitive approach to maximising debt collection.

Our approach in Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council will be fair, consistent and sensitive to individual situations. We will:

1. Develop triggers and measures to provide an opportunity for **proactive**, early intervention and reduce the likelihood of the arrears increasing
2. Implement best practice for collecting and recovering debt to the Councils

3. Ensure that the debt has been raised correctly and in a timely manner
4. Make sure that residents and businesses are given invoices or bills setting out the charge, the basis of the charge, methods of payment and Council contact details
5. Where appropriate, agree payment arrangements with customers

2.0 Our approach for avoiding debt

The Councils' aims are to prevent excessive debt by promoting financial inclusion and budgeting to reduce the impact of poverty. The common approach by the Councils and its partners is supporting people to budget and pay their priority debts. The proactive, ethical management of outstanding debt for those experiencing exceptional hardship is of particular importance for the Councils, and an appendix to this policy "Supporting the vulnerable" provides further detail on the considerations and options that we require teams to adopt.

A number of payment methods, including online payments, are available to make it easy for customers to pay for services.

Services will be invoiced or billed in line with statutory requirements. Where a debt remains unpaid:

1. We will signpost customers to appropriate debt advice and support agencies.
2. We recognise that certain individuals will require more sympathetic and sensitive treatment. For example, in the case of recent bereavement, major illness or where the customer requires special assistance in handling their financial affairs.

3.0 Policy objectives

This policy has been developed to provide support to customers before legal or enforcement action is taken. But it will also use the full range of collection and recovery methods as appropriate if debts are not paid. The policy operates within the framework of relevant legislation, such as data protection, human rights and statutory regulations and other Council policies and internal procedures.

4.0 Policy aims

The aims of this policy are to:

1. Maximise income for Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council
2. Ensure that all Council tax and business rates payers' interests are protected by effective debt collection
3. Ensure our services work to identify those who "can't pay" due to experiencing financial hardship or other difficulties such as mental health issues or other life crises, *in distinction* to those who "won't" pay".
4. For those experiencing financial hardship, be 'preventative', for example offering payment options and to signpost customers with debt issues to debt advice providers
5. Protect and support vulnerable customers, ensuring we refer people to appropriate

services internally and externally, such as housing support.

6. Maximise the use of discretionary funds where appropriate to assist with pressures of welfare reform, homelessness or poverty.
7. Be fair but firm, and ensure consistency in dealing with customers, making sure those who “won’t pay” are strongly pursued, including through enforcement approaches.

5.0 Our commitment

When dealing with customers who owe money to us we will:

1. Treat all customers fairly and objectively
2. Ensure that there is no discrimination against customers because of their race, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, religious belief, gender, marital status, sexual orientations, age or disability
3. Encourage customers to make early contact with us about any debt-related matters
4. Use Plain English in all correspondence
5. Assist with communication needs where appropriate, including translation and interpreting services
6. Coordinate all our correspondence to avoid duplication and reduce costs; ensuring that correspondence with customers refers to and deals with all or similar accounts outstanding, so as to consolidate the debts and clarify the total amount owed, and offering options for payments (not including Sundry Debts)
7. Promote advice and support services available
8. Set out our charges clearly

6.0 Advice and support

The Councils will advise individuals and/or businesses as to the range of discounts, reliefs and reductions available at both the time an account is issued and in subsequent communications. This information is also available on both Councils websites.

Staff in direct contact with customers will signpost them as to where they can obtain advice on benefits and debt matters appropriate to their needs.

We will ensure that all written communications are clear and use Plain English as the standard wherever possible. We will explain complex terminology when it is required to be used by law.

All documents will be issued in a timely manner, in accordance with any statutory timescales. The legal options open to the Councils in collecting debts and the customer in paying debts will be explained, taking into account the stage of recovery achieved.

We will assist people with language and communication needs by offering translation, interpreting and other services when required.

7.0 Assessing ability to pay

In pursuing debt recovery, the Councils will act in accordance with statutory regulations and guidance. It is imperative that the Councils' approach to debt recovery is responsible and responds to the financial and social vulnerability of residents and business owners.

The Councils will take into account individual circumstances and the financial and economic climate that we are operating in.

We take a common approach in assessing a customer's whole financial position (by taking into account all of their expenditure and income) to assess their ability to pay. Where instalment arrangements can be entered into, the repayment rate will be based on a proportion of the customer's disposable income and realistic arrangements will be entered into for the repayment of debts in preference to legal action.

Customers who have single or multiple debts owed to the Councils will be offered the opportunity of independent debt advice.

8.0 Our recovery

We will look to charge for services by invoice or bills in line with statutory requirements which may be through instalment plans or arrangements. This will include making longer term repayment arrangements where recovery "in-year" is not realistic and could be counter-productive.

At each stage of the recovery process, customers are signposted to debt advice providers in the voluntary sector.

Where the debt remains unpaid or if instalment plans or arrangements are broken we will follow the appropriate statutory recovery process dependent upon the type of debt.

If the debt has not been recovered through internal recovery methods then, depending on the type of debt, we may instruct bailiffs or debt recovery companies to recover the debt on our behalf. County Court bailiffs may also be instructed, when appropriate, by HM Courts and Tribunal Service.

Consideration will be given to the vulnerability of a customer before we instruct a bailiff or debt recovery company and if we become aware of a vulnerable person once the debt has been passed to a bailiff or debt recovery company we will withdraw the instruction and bring the debt back to the Councils.

Once a debt has been passed to a bailiff or a debt recovery company, the customer may incur further costs.

9.0 Complaints

We have a Complaints Procedure and any customer that feels dissatisfied with how they have been treated may register their complaint in accordance with that procedure. Copies of this document (and other documents referred to in this Policy) are available at <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/complaints/>.

All our publications are available in alternative formats, such as hard copy, large print or a

language other than English.

The corporate complaints procedure provides the Councils with the opportunity to investigate and, where appropriate, provide a remedy in circumstances where the Councils are alleged to have been guilty of maladministration which has caused injustice (and where there is no other reasonable avenue available to the complainant to appeal or seek redress).

It is important to note, however, that the corporate complaints system cannot entertain objections against the merits of a decision which has been properly taken and with which the complainant does not agree.

In the event that the complainant remains dissatisfied after the Councils have investigated the complaint, the complainant may refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, who is independent of the Councils, but will not consider a complaint where more than 12 months has elapsed since the alleged act/omission.

NB: Some complaints in respect of certain debt matters are also supported by specialist or independent bodies e.g. The Appeals Service, The Housing Ombudsman and Local Government Ombudsman. Details of these bodies together with any external referrals will be provided to customers by the team dealing with the complaint.

10.0 Rights of Appeal

There are a number of ways in which people can appeal about decisions the Councils may have taken:

Valuation Tribunal: For people who believe the Councils have acted incorrectly on a Council Tax billing matter.

Magistrates Court: For people who are aggrieved by the recovery process for Council Tax, Fixed Penalties and Non-Domestic Rates and for Business Improvement District Levy payers or payers who believe the Councils acted incorrectly on a billing matter.

Appeal Tribunal: For decisions made on Housing Benefit claims.

Three Stage Appeals Process for Penalty Charge Notices (Parking tickets): For people who wish to challenge a penalty charge notice that they have received, they can appeal to the council within 28 days of the penalty being issued if you think it has been issued unfairly. They should submit their challenge as soon as possible. If they appeal within 14 days their penalty charge could be reduced by 50%.

If their appeal is unsuccessful they will be able to re-appeal to the Council for a reconsideration, once a Notice to Owner form has been issued. If their formal representations are rejected, they will be able to appeal to the independent tribunal known as the Traffic Penalty tribunal who are independent from the council. The adjudicators are independent lawyers who will make a decision on the case.

There are further appeals processes to the Traffic Enforcement Centre if it is disputed that a statutory notice has not been received.

11.0 How we will meet the Policy

The Councils will take steps to:

1. Give early advice to customers on repayment options and where to get assistance with debt problems.
2. Make all advice on how and where to pay clear and simple.
3. Raise awareness of a debt as quickly as possible.
4. Raise the implications for non-payment - review all reminders and letters periodically, change typeface, font, printing and paper colours, if required to heighten the impact.
5. Review each case individually, taking into account the known circumstances of that customer, if possible and endeavouring to find a remedy before taking any proceedings.
6. If an account remains unpaid, then advise the customer what will happen and let the customer know which organisation or agencies can advise them and how they can get in touch with them.

12.0 Protecting the Councils from Late Payment

The Councils are supported by current UK legislation to recover any amounts expended in recovering overdue amounts from debtors who unnecessarily avoid or delay payment.

Examples of these fees are:

1. Late payment charges
2. Court action fees
3. Enforcement Agent fees
4. Interest

and these may be charged to the debtor's account.

The aim of the legislation is to reimburse the Councils' costs in taking debt recovery action. It prevents citizens having to bear the costs of recovering debt from this minority of customers and also acts as a deterrent against deliberate or malicious non-payment.

The relevant legislation relating to recovering these charges shown below along with links to obtain further information;

- [Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in Commercial transactions](#)
- [Late Payment of Commercial Debts \(Interest\) Act 1998](#)
- [Local Government Act 1972](#)
- [Local Government Finance Act 1992](#)
- [Local Government Act 2003](#)

- [Localism Act 2011](#)
- [Traffic Management Act 2004](#)
- [Taking control of Goods Regulations 2013](#)

If further or outside advice is needed please see our [Support Directory](#) for details of organisations who can help.

13.0 How we will take Recovery Action

The following table sets out the various collection pathways for the major debt topics within the Councils' debt portfolios. It should be noted that the Councils operate many of their recovery pathways in cooperation with private and public partners to rationalise services and achieve efficiency.

As such the Councils retain their options to utilise collection and enforcement agents from both the private sector and the courts to carry out associated or appropriate enforcement actions on behalf of the Councils to prevent or mitigate the need to escalate debts along the collection path.

	Council Tax	Sundry Debt	National Non-Domes tic Rates	Housing Benefit overpayment	Parking (PCNs)
Charging method*	Annual bill	Invoice	Annual bill	Invoice	Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)
Default collection pathway	Magistrates Court	Magistrates/ County Court	Magistrates court	County Court	County Court Traffic Enforcement Centre
Appeals	Valuation Tribunal	High Court	Valuation Tribunal	To the Tribunal and Appeals Service	2 Appeals to the Council and one to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal
Option of Final Resort for persistent/ deliberate default	Fine and/or custodial sentence	Bailiff/custodial sentence	Fine and/or custodial sentence	Deductions from wages or benefits	Warrant being passed to a Certificated Enforcement Agent (bailiff). Other means of enforcement if Enforcement Agents are unsuccessful: Attachment of Earnings Charging Order

*Action following the exhaustion of all prescribed/standard recovery efforts, e.g. after written, electronic, oral contacts and reminders have failed to elicit a sustainable payment response from the debtor.

Supporting the Vulnerable

1.0 Introduction

The Councils aim to ensure that vulnerable residents are identified early through our developing proactive service model, and are treated fairly and compassionately, while recognising that effective debt recovery is an important principle to maintain on behalf of all residents.

The Councils' debt recovery staff will provide residents with details of how they can access independent advice and support in relation to their finances. The Councils' website and correspondences with debtors (letters, email) will also direct residents to independent sources to access support relating to their finances.

We recognise that some individuals may require additional support in order to be able to adequately manage their finances and repay monies owed. The measures that the Councils may seek to take are outlined in paragraph 3.2.

2.0 Vulnerability

2.1 There is no set definition of vulnerability in relation to poverty, and the degree to which someone is considered vulnerable can vary widely. The causes of financial vulnerability are broad and include any condition or situation which may affect a person's ability to manage their finances for a period of time. Some likely causes or examples of vulnerability could be:

- People undergoing significant changes in their life circumstances – i.e., have recently lost or who are at risk of losing their job or their home, or who are facing other major changes and or transitions such as those have been recently bereaved
- People with disabilities, including those with learning difficulties - where their disability specifically affects their ability to manage their financial affairs
- People suffering from serious illness, including mental health conditions - where their illness specifically affects their ability to deal with their financial affairs
- People who have difficulty communicating in English may be considered vulnerable in some cases. While translation services are available for interaction with the Council, those who may not have the support of family members who can speak or read English may be more broadly financially excluded
- People who have difficulty reading and writing. This may prevent them from being able to read notices or warnings in relation to their debt, and may have caused broader financial exclusion
- People affected by the economic or health impacts of pandemic or natural disaster
- Those experiencing/ fleeing Domestic Abuse

2.2 The above does not constitute a list of reasons for automatic assessment as vulnerable, nor is it intended to be exhaustive. Assessment of vulnerability, and the steps taken to support a vulnerable customer, will be assessed by the Councils on a case by case basis, based on the specific details provided by the customer.

2.3 The identification of vulnerability does not excuse someone from paying a debt which they are legally obliged to pay. It does, however, mean that the Councils will provide additional support in understanding the debt, and aim to minimise undue distress. This may mean referring to specific internal support or community partners.

2.4 Where vulnerability is identified, the Councils should, as a minimum, ~~will~~ put in place additional management control. For example, accounts will be flagged on the relevant systems to alert any staff dealing with the case and automated escalation will be halted to ensure that the case is reviewed by a member of staff before any further action is taken. This will be aided through the implementation of a CRM system ("Citizen Hub") through which officers can easily identify a vulnerability.

2.5 Depending on the nature of the identified vulnerability, there are a number of additional measures that the Councils may decide it is appropriate to make:

- Allowing longer to pay
- Referral to independent advice and guidance
- Temporarily halting enforcement action
- Providing additional support to overcome the vulnerability (e.g. home visits or assistance completing forms)
- Reviewing eligibility for benefits to ensure that these have been correctly assessed
- Considering referral to alternative support: discretionary funds, section 13A payments, DHP or referral to third party may be appropriate
- Where advocates or representatives have been appointed, ensuring that the appropriate evidence has been provided and accounts are updated.
- The action plan will depend on the nature of the debt

3.0 Support for those with Problem Debts

3.1 Whether or not an individual is vulnerable and needs additional support to manage their finances is often independent of whether the customer actually has the means to pay. In accordance with the principles set out, and in the first instance, the Councils will aim to assess a resident's ability to pay their debt, and to tailor its approach where it is identified that someone is struggling to pay their debts, working with them, their representative or appointee to find a solution to resolve the issue. A list of priority and non-priority debts have been provided in Appendix B.

3.2 In addition to provision of, and referral to, appropriate sources of advice and guidance through the Councils' existing advice contracts and network, the Councils will seek to support residents to overcome problematic debt and promote access to affordable credit by operating a policy of not pursuing and writing off all or a portion of the outstanding balance where it is identified that a customer does not have the means to pay the full amount.

3.3 It is not practical to implement a prescriptive set of criteria for such cases. Decisions are delegated to officers, but as a minimum, it will only be considered where an individual has engaged with financial assessments, and has kept to the affordable payment plan that has been agreed for a period of time. In order to achieve consistency among decision makers and officers dealing with accounts, we will ask residents to complete the benefit and budgeting calculator tool.

4.0 Multiple Debts

4.1 We know that individuals struggling with problematic debt are likely to owe multiple debts to the Councils and to other external companies.

4.2 Historically, it has been difficult to take a holistic view of an individual's balances due to each account requiring different recovery and enforcement methods and so being held and managed on different computer systems. This has meant it has not been possible for a single officer to easily make a customer aware of the various account balances they may have. The Councils are committed to providing a "dashboard view" using the LIFT platform to officers around council tax arrears, rent arrears and housing benefit overpayments for those residents on

benefits and a view to widen this approach across the whole Council. Officers can then make residents aware and sign post them to sources of debt advice, grants and employment skills training.

4.3 A corporate debt management group will develop the systems and processes required to expand that joined-up view across other debt streams, improving the way individual and commercial debt is managed and the customer communicated with.

5.0 Staying in contact and targeting

5.1 The Councils will ensure officers of the Councils will remain in contact and ensure residents are provided contact details of the relevant departments of the Councils if they need further support. Officers will ensure that their contact details are provided on all communications sent and ensure phones are logged in during working hours to be available to support. Officers will also ensure a prompt reply to any communications, as per set out by the standards of Adur & Worthing Council.

5.2 Adur & Worthing will continue to move towards adopting an early intervention approach and a commitment from all departments internally to move towards a prevention approach.

5.3 The Councils will use external resources and agencies to assist in locating residents who may have absconded and to help identify residents' propensity to pay. This will enable the Councils to better target recovery action.

6.0 Breathing Space

6.1 The Breathing Space scheme, originally outlined by the Government in February 2020 following campaigning from the debt advice and wider sector, went live on 4 May 2021. The 60-day breathing space period will see enforcement action from creditors halted and interest frozen for people with problem debt. The Councils have amended its processes to reflect this requirement and will actively refer cases to this where it is deemed the most appropriate plan of action.

7.0 Hardship Fund and write-offs for Council Tax

7.1 Worthing operates a hardship fund to support households on Council Tax Support intended to offset the £5 weekly restriction which is currently in place within Worthing, but due to end in March 2023.. The hardship fund will be considered before any consideration is given to writing off any current debt.

7.2 As part of sound financial management, the Councils will periodically write-off debts that it considers are not possible, or cost effective to recover. The Councils do not normally write-off debts at the request of the resident, however in appropriate circumstances it may consider setting aside a portion or all of the debt in line with the principles laid out above. The Councils have a procedure in place for write-offs.

8.0 Approach to Enforcement

8.1 As part of the Councils' approach to enforcing debts, the Councils, once they have gained required authority from the appropriate court in appropriate cases, will use the enforcement route deemed most likely to prove successful. Depending on the debt this may include, attachment of benefit, attachment of earnings, charging orders, bankruptcy, committal hearings, obtaining possession and referral to enforcement agencies including the High Court.

8.2 Where enforcement agents are used the Councils will use a number of enforcement agents depending on the debt. The enforcement agents may be both commercial companies and local authority service providers. All enforcement agents used will be committed to working with

empathy, ethically, identifying vulnerability and in accordance with the regulations. This code of practice will at least be equivalent to that of the CIVEA (www.civea.co.uk/our-code-of-practice).

8.3 Regular meetings will be held between the Councils and its enforcement agents to ensure that high standards are being met, and that welfare arrangements and appropriate behaviours are being adhered to.

Appendix B - Citizen's Advice Priority debts listing

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/dealing-with-the Councils's-debts/work-out-which-debts-to-deal-with-first/>

Priority debts include:

- mortgage or rent arrears. If you don't pay these, you could lose your home
- council tax arrears. If you don't pay these, the Councils can use bailiffs to take your goods. If, after this, you still have arrears unpaid, you can be committed to prison
- gas and electricity arrears. If you don't pay these, you can have your supply disconnected
- Phone or internet bills. If you don't pay, suppliers can cut off your phone or internet
- court fines such as magistrates' fines for traffic offences. If you don't pay these, the Councils can use bailiffs or High Court enforcement agents to take possession of your goods.
- arrears of maintenance payable to an ex-partner or children. This includes Child Support you owe to the Child Support Agency. If you don't pay these, the Councils can use bailiffs to take your goods. If, after this, you still have arrears unpaid, you can be sent to prison
- income tax or VAT arrears. You can be sent to prison for non-payment of income tax or VAT
- TV licence or TV licence arrears. It's a criminal offence to use a television without a licence. You could be fined.

You may have other debts which you think it is particularly important to pay. For example, if you're disabled and rely on your car to get around, you may need to make paying for your car a priority debt.

You need to think very carefully about which debts you treat as the most important ones. You must have very good reasons, as you might have to convince a court or other creditors why it is reasonable for you to treat these debts as more important than others.

Your non-priority debts might include:

- credit card or store card debts
- catalogue debts
- unsecured loans including payday loans
- unpaid water bills - your supplier can't cut off your water supply
- overpayments of benefits - apart from tax credits
- unpaid parking tickets - these are called Penalty Charge Notices or Parking Charge Notices
- money you owe to family and friends

You can't be sent to prison for not paying non-priority debts. But if you don't make any offers to pay, without explaining why, your creditors may take you to court. If you still fail to pay when the court has ordered it, your creditors can take further action. For example, they can get another court order which allows them to send bailiffs round to take your property away. This will be sold to cover your debts. If you don't keep up payments under a hire purchase agreement, the lender may be able to take back the goods. Depending on how much you have paid, the lender may not need to get a court order first.

Corporate Debt Policy November 2022

Next review November 2024



ADUR DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee
10 November 2022

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All
Cabinet Portfolio: Environment & Leisure

Carbon Emissions for 2021/22

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

Officer Contact Details

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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. On 9 July 2019 Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) declared 'Climate Emergency'. As part of the declaration, Members committed to *work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030*.
- 1.2. This report presents the third annual update on progress towards this target.
- 1.3. Since the previous report, the council has continued to improve the accuracy of its monitoring (particularly of gas consumption) and the easing of Covid-19 restrictions also saw office use increase as more staff returned to offices.
- 1.4. As a result, reported emissions for 21-22 increased by 2% when compared to the previous year.
- 1.5. An update on current carbon reduction projects is presented at Section 4.

- 1.6. A trajectory of future carbon emissions to 2030 is presented in Section 8. This uses indicative pipeline projects to map a potential route to meeting the 2030 target, subject to viable business cases being developed.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Committee notes:
- the councils' current carbon emissions and carbon reduction work programme
 - the trajectory of future emissions reductions which aims to ensure the councils meet their carbon neutral 2030 target
 - That further funding bids may be made, in consultation with the relevant executive member, and that if required further reports will brief members on the outcome of the bidding process
- 2.2. That the Committee approves:
- The publication of the carbon emissions report on the council website and the submission of these figures to external bodies where required by membership (e.g. UK100)

3. Context

- 3.1. Adur & Worthing Councils declared a climate change emergency on 9 July 2019, simultaneously setting a target to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.2. The councils' adopted: Adur & Worthing Councils' Carbon Neutral Plan: Working towards the 2030 target on 3 December 2019 and a Carbon Reduction Team was appointed in September 2020 to facilitate work to achieve the target and attract funding to contribute to the councils decarbonisation.
- 3.3. Tackling Climate Change is also a key strand of the new Corporate Strategy.
- 3.4. The councils have committed to report on their emissions annually as part of their signatory to the UK100 Cities Pledge. This report sets out the emissions for the year 2021/22 for the councils.

- 3.5. The 2030 carbon neutral target required the councils to deliver approximately 10% reductions in emissions annually through the decade. Some years may see lesser and some greater emissions reductions, depending on interventions delivered, climatic conditions and other unforeseen events.
- 3.6. Following the installation of more accurate metering equipment at Worthing Town Hall in 2020/21, full Automated Meter Reading (AMR) has now been installed across all gas meters. This means the council is no longer billed based on estimated billing and has allowed us to increase the accuracy of emissions reporting. More information is presented at 3.2.1
- 3.7. Additionally, the councils are now able to monitor additional emissions arising from other sources (see Section 2). It is hoped that this ability will expand in the coming years
- 3.8. A model of the future trajectory the councils intend to take in order to meet their 2030 carbon neutral target has also been developed, as outlined in Section 8.

4. Background and Scope

- 4.1. The councils report their emissions according to the following Scopes, as defined in the BEIS Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020 guidance,

Category	Description	Data analysed
Scope 1	Direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by the reporting organisation.	Metered gas data in properties owned and operated by, and where the councils pay for gas. Diesel and petrol consumption for council-owned vehicle fleet and mileage figures for pool cars
Scope 2	Indirect emissions from the generation of energy purchased by the reporting organisation.	Metered electricity data in properties owned and operated by, and where the councils pay for, electricity
Scope 3	Indirect emissions that result from other activities that occur in the value chain of the reporting organisation,	Scope 3 emissions are those from indirect council operations, for example leisure or cultural sites not operated by the council, or from activities not directly controlled by

	either upstream or downstream.	the councils, such as water consumption. Scope 3 emissions do not currently form part of the Emissions Reduction Pledge.
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Table 1: Emission scopes

- 4.2. This report contains information on carbon emissions associated with water consumption. Whilst these emissions fall outside of the current carbon neutral commitment, they have been highlighted in this report for additional visibility.
- 4.3. As noted at JSC in October 2021, the councils' 2020/21 emissions were 2,875 tonnes of CO2 equivalent (tonnes CO2e), broken down as follows:

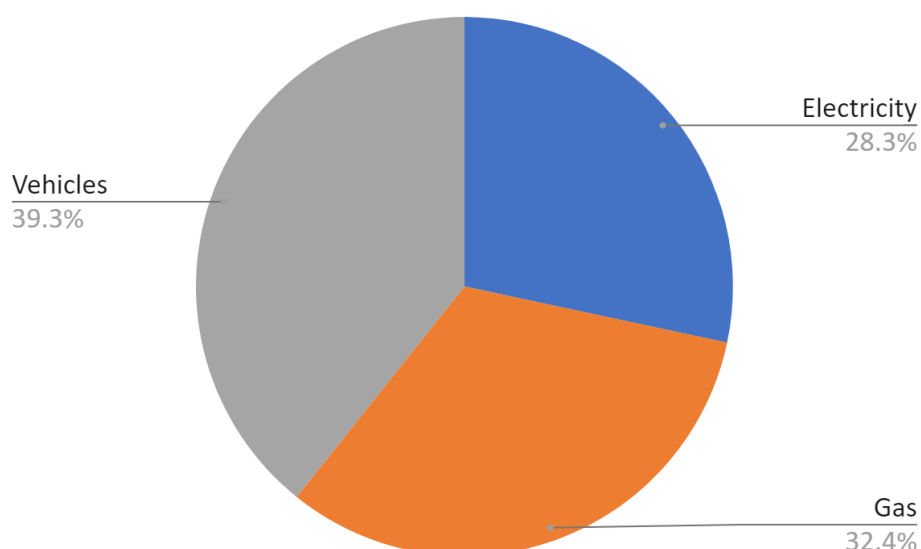


Chart 1: 2020/21 Emissions

5. 2021/22 Emissions

- 5.1. Given the shared nature of Adur & Worthing Councils offices, staff and operations, emissions are presented jointly for both councils. Where it is possible, emissions are presented separately.

Building Emissions

- 5.2. Analysis of the councils emissions associated with gas and electricity use in corporate buildings revealed that reported emissions increased by 4.57%, broken down as follows:

	Emissions (tonnesCO2e)		% change
	2020/21	2021/22	
Electricity	498	537	+7.95%
Gas	765	784	+2.37%
Total	1264	1322	+4.57%
<i>Water</i>	10	8	-14.26%

Table 2: 2021/22 Building emissions to nearest tonne

5.3. Adur Homes figures have been calculated separately:

	Emissions (tonnesCO2e)		% change
	2020/21	2021/22	
Electricity	78	71	-9.29%
Gas	311	378	+21.5%
Total	390	450	+15.3%

Table : 2021/22 Adur Homes Building emissions to nearest tonne

5.4. It should be noted that:

- 5.4.1. Following the installation of AMR technology across the councils' remaining gas meters, the reported emissions of two Sheltered Housing sites (Marsh House and Manor Court) have increased significantly from the 2020/21 totals. Without these, gas emissions from Adur Homes would've reduced overall.
- 5.4.2. Corporate gas emissions have increased slightly due to increased consumption when compared to under-occupied office accommodation the previous year.
- 5.4.3. Electricity emissions have rebounded since the start of the pandemic, with both the Town Hall and the return of the temporary ice rink at Steyne Gardens contributing to the increase seen in 21/22. Overall, electricity emissions remain lower compared to the pre-pandemic peak.
- 5.4.4. Since 2019, the council has procured 100% renewable electricity for all council buildings and sites through its corporate energy contract. This is an important signal to the market that the council wishes to utilise only renewable energy supplies, however according to the BEIS emissions reporting methodology, electricity generated by third-parties cannot be

counted towards the councils' emissions reduction unless very specific criteria are met.

- 5.4.5. Water emissions have been reported for the first time. Whilst current guidance recommends excluding these from our scope 1 and 2 target, they are reported here in order to increase the transparency of the councils' total footprint.

Vehicle Emissions

- 5.4.6. Based on the amount of fuel consumed by the councils' fleet and the number of miles driven by pool cars, emissions from vehicles reduced by 4.95%:

	Emissions (tonnesCO ₂ e)		% change
	2020/21	2021/22	
Fleet	1152	1090	-5.35%
Pool Cars	0.5	5	+908.8%
Transport	1152	1095	-4.95%

Table 3: 2020/21 Vehicle Emissions

- 5.4.7. Fleet emissions are based on the amount of fuel received by the depot, rather than actual consumption totals. This amount reduced proportionally, in line with the carbon emissions reduction.
- 5.4.8. Pool car use has increased significantly as a result of staff returning to offices and undertaking additional site visits but still represents a negligible amount of emissions from vehicles.
- 5.4.9. It is hoped that future reports will also account for 'grey fleet' mileage - that is, business mileage completed by staff-owned cars. As with water consumption, these emissions are excluded from typical 'scope 1 and 2' calculations but are hoped to be quantified for a fuller picture.

Total Emissions

- 5.4.10. The councils' corporate emissions for 2021/22 are 2,417 tonnes, broken down as follows:

Corporate Emissions 2021/22

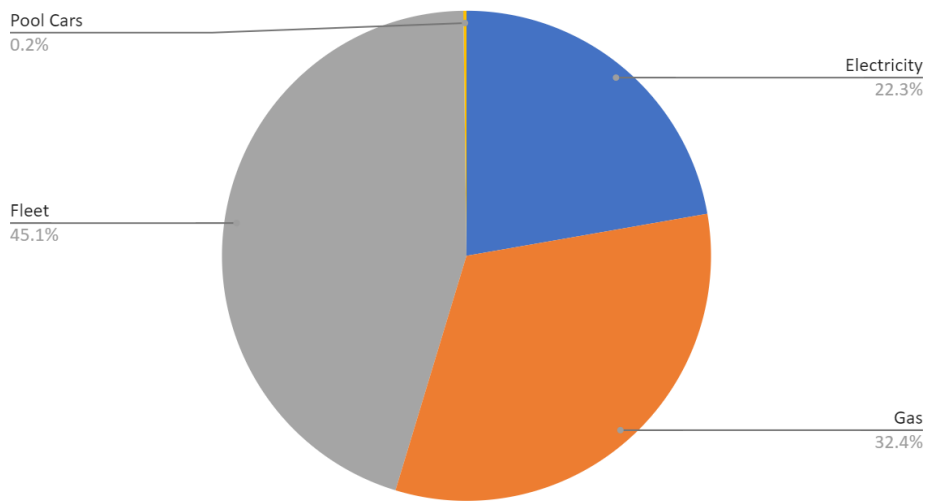


Chart 2: Corporate 2021/22 Emissions

5.4.11. Adur Homes emissions for 2021/22 are 450 tonnes, broken down as follows:

Adur Homes Emissions 2021/22

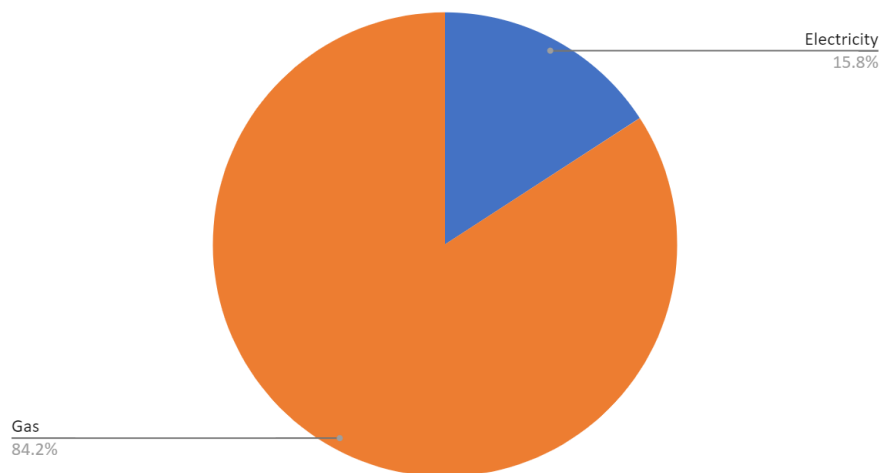


Chart 3: Adur Homes 2021/22 Emissions

5.4.12. Cumulatively, this means the Councils emissions for 2021/22 are **2,867 tonnes**.

6. Project Progress Pipeline

6.1. The councils continue to progress on the delivery of the 2019 Carbon Reduction Plan.

6.2. Projects completed this year include:

- Installation of multiple ground source heat pumps at two Sheltered Housing sites
- Installation of air source heat pumps and efficiency works at the Shoreham Centre
- Installation of 6 solar PV arrays on council-owned buildings which have already generated over 100,000kWh of renewable electricity
- Installation of multiple energy efficiency measures on Civic Quarter Buildings

- 6.3. Whilst some of the above projects completed before March 2022, the majority of the emissions reductions reported will be seen in 22/23.
- 6.4. It is estimated that the above projects will save in excess of 200 tonnes of carbon annually.
- 6.5. The councils continue to seek external funding support for decarbonisation work where appropriate. To date this has totalled in excess of £7m from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) through the Heat Network Delivery Unit/Heat Network Investment Project (HNDU/HNIP), the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) and Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF). A summary of this funding is presented at Appendix 1.
- 6.6. Additional LCSF funding was secured in August 2022 to produce additional heat decarbonisation plans for the following buildings:

Adur (total £55,000)	
Southwick Community Centre	Lancing Manor Leisure Centre
Southwick Leisure Centre	Wadurs
Sompting Community Centre/Parish Council	
Summer Close Communal Room	Kingsfield Close Communal Room
St Nicolas Court Communal Room	
Worthing (total £85,000)	
East Worthing Community Centre	Heene Community Centre
Durrington Community Centre	Field Place

Worthing Leisure Centre	Connaught Theatre*
Pavilion Theatre*	Worthing Museum*

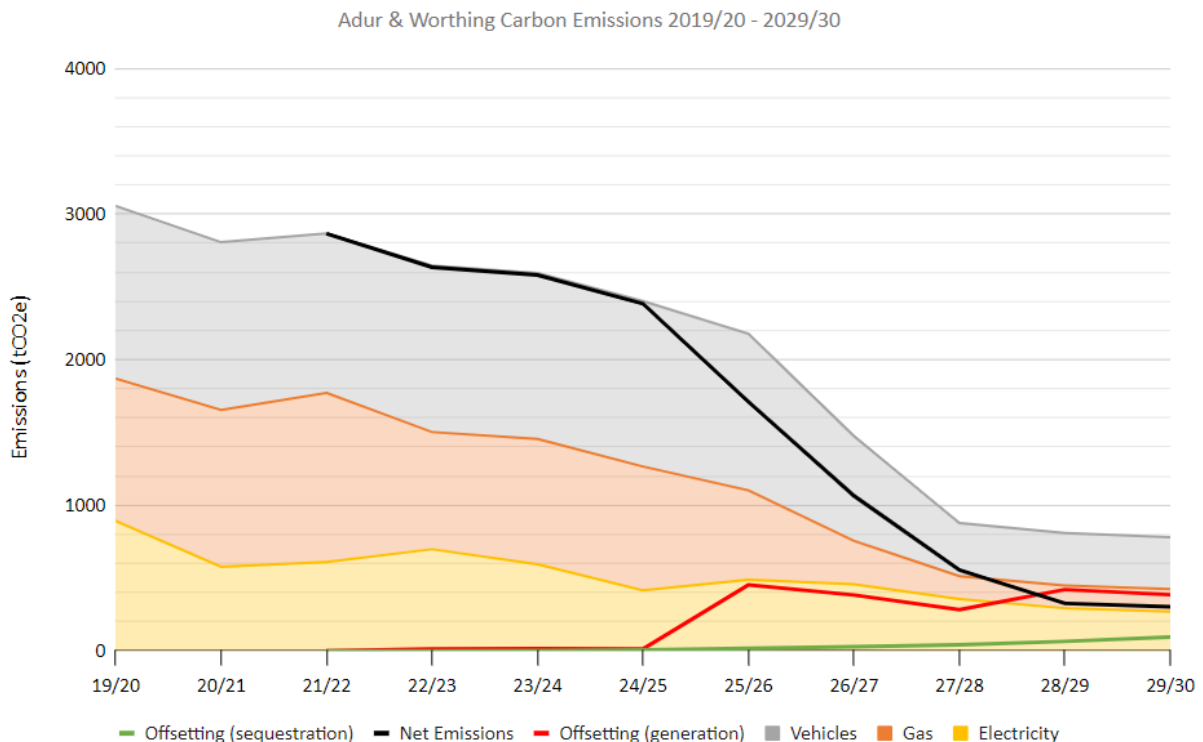
**funding secured to undertake detailed Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing surveys to determine adaptations required to adequately heat the building with lower temperature heating systems*

- 6.7. Surveys will be produced this autumn and will be used to inform future capital bids to secure funding (internal and external) to decarbonise these buildings. Once complete, these surveys will mean that the councils have feasibility studies complete to decarbonise over 80% of the gas boilers currently operated by the councils.
- 6.8. A Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) bid focusing on Worthing Civic Quarter buildings was submitted on 12 October totalling £2.99m. The outcome of this bid will not be known until mid-winter and the funding is very competitive, however if successful it will contribute significant funding to the decarbonisation of buildings throughout the Civic Quarter and is expected to lower the councils' carbon footprint by 300 tonnes per annum.
- 6.9. An additional PSDS bid to replace the end-of-life heating system at East Worthing Community Centre with a low carbon alternative was also submitted, totalling £57k and estimated to save 8 tonnes of carbon annually.
- 6.10. A further report will be brought to JSS-C Worthing seeking budgetary approval if either bid is successful.
- 6.11. Aside from the PSDS, LCSF and HNIP funded projects, additional work is ongoing on the following:
 - Offsetting via renewable energy generation feasibility work
 - Scoping for additional rooftop solar PV installations on corporate and commercial buildings
 - The replacement of 5 fleet vans with fully electric models by 2024 and the development of a wider fleet strategy.

7. Forecasting

- 7.1. In order to become carbon neutral by 2030, the councils need to achieve approximately 10% reductions annually from 2019/20 to 2029/30. continue to progress the 'next steps' proposed in the 2019 Carbon Reduction Plan.

- 7.2. These carbon savings will accrue from:
- Projects to reduce the amount of gas, electricity or vehicle fuel consumed in order to meet service needs
 - UK-wide reductions in emissions associated with gas, electricity or vehicle fuel (for example, increased renewable electricity supplying the national grid)
 - Offsetting of any residual emissions
- 7.3. Offsetting requires actions the councils take to be additional (i.e. not 'business-as-usual') and would typically involve either:
- the generation of renewable electricity to meet or exceed the councils' demand
 - sequestering carbon, for example through tree planting
- 7.4. The councils are exploring options for both of the above alongside other projects.
- 7.5. Based on many of the pipeline projects identified in Section 4, plus consultation with officers from across the council, a future emissions profile has been plotted, accounting for each of the three methods of carbon reductions listed at 5.2 (Chart 3).



- 7.6. The solid black line represents the councils' residual emissions from its ongoing operations, less its additional (offsetting) actions. In other words, this is the net emissions line that the councils are committed to being net zero (or better) by 2030. As the chart shows, additional projects are presently required to be identified and delivered by 2030 to achieve net zero.
- 7.7. The chart makes assumptions about large projects in particular, for example:
- Connections to the Worthing Heat Network begin to be made in 25/26
 - The refuse collection fleet begins to be replaced with low carbon alternatives at the end of their operational life in 25/26
 - Investment in generation assets (e.g. a solar farm) occurs in 25/26
- 7.8. Each of the large interventions necessary to ensure this trajectory is followed is subject to resource restraints, development of an appropriate business case and funding proposal being approved by the relevant committee. The chart should therefore be read as 'a possible', rather than 'a definitive', however it gives a clear indication of the councils' potential trajectory.
- 7.9. It should be noted that the sequestration portion of the graph remains relatively small to 2030. This is because mature trees absorb more carbon than new plantations. Sequestration will play an increasingly important part in ensuring the council continues to be carbon neutral beyond 2030 as the impact of using renewable electricity generation (the red generation line in Chart 3) to offset emissions is reduced due to the continued decline in electricity emissions across the UK.

8. Engagement and Communication

- 8.1. The following internal groups and teams have had input into work that has been used to generate these figures:
- Carbon Reduction Delivery Group;
 - Technical Services & Facilities;
 - Building Services;
 - Environmental Services;
 - Housing;
 - Waste, Recycling & Cleansing;
 - Major Projects;
 - Finance;

- Procurement;
- Legal;
- Democratic Services;
- Planning;
- Bereavement Services.

8.2 The following external groups have been consulted as part of various carbon reduction projects:

- BEIS (Heat Network Delivery Unit, and Heat Networks Investment Programme)
- Salix (Low Carbon Skills Fund and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme)
- West Sussex County Council
- Ministry of Justice (Worthing Law Courts)
- Worthing Theatres and Museums
- South Downs Leisure
- Sussex Police
- Goring Cricket Club
- Age UK
- Community Centre Trusts

8.3 Consultation has also been undertaken with the following external groups relating to carbon emissions reporting:

- TEAM (energy management software supplier)
- BEIS (emissions reporting)
- UK100

9. Financial Implications

9.1. The Council has committed a range of projects to support decarbonisation within the Capital and Revenue budgets to meet the 2030 target.

9.2. Where possible, the Council will bid for external funding to support the delivery of the decarbonisation ambitions of the Council given the associated costs.

10. Legal Implications

10.1. The Climate Change Act 2008 as amended by the (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 is the basis of the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. The Act requires emissions of

carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to be reduced from 80% to 100% by 2050 and the Council is committed to working towards this goal.

- 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 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.
- 10.4. In procuring for works goods or services to comply with its climate change proposals the Council must have regard to The Public Contract Regulations 2015 and / or The Public Concession Contract Regulations 2016 and take detailed legal advice as appropriate for each project.
- 10.5. When entering any arrangement with a provider the Council is to ensure that it does not infringe the rules relating to subsidies detailed in the Trade and Co-operation Agreement 2020 which are set out in Article 3 of the Agreement.
- 10.6. The Council is to remain fully compliant with any relevant grant funding terms and conditions and where there is an on-grant to an appointed provider, the Council is to ensure that there are appropriate indemnities in place in favour of the Council for any potential breaches of the funding terms, by that provider.

Background Papers

- [Carbon Neutral 2030: Working towards the councils' carbon neutral target: progress update](#) (JSC 7/10/22)
- Adur & Worthing Councils [Carbon Neutral Plan](#)
- Adur & Worthing Councils [SustainableAW](#)
- [UK100](#)
- [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#)

- [Low Carbon Skills Fund](#)
- [Climate Change Act 2008 \(2050 Target Amendment\) Order 2019](#)

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Transition to a low carbon economy is vital to provide future energy systems resilience, and to address and reduce potential impacts of climate change. Improved energy efficiency across the councils' assets reduce ongoing revenue requirements for energy purchasing.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

By securing affordable, low carbon energy into the future, the councils protect budgets from future energy price rises, drawing less budget into council operational costs away from services delivery that benefit local communities.

2.2 Equality Issues

The impacts of climate change are predicted to impact on all communities, but the greatest impact is predicted to impact the most vulnerable communities. It is imperative that all is done to mitigate climate change.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

No impacts identified

2.4 Human Rights Issues

The impacts of climate change are predicted to impact on all communities, but the greatest impact is predicted to impact the most vulnerable communities. It is imperative that all is done to mitigate climate change.

3. Environmental

The key driver for ongoing carbon reduction is to mitigate the predicted catastrophic impacts of climate change on the environment, economy and communities.

4. Governance

The reporting and management of carbon reduction emissions show leadership in response to our declaration of a climate emergency. This aligns with national legislation (the Climate Change Act 2008); national and regional policy, and the councils' own policy.

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ADUR DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee
10 November 2022

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected: All
Cabinet Portfolio: Environment & Leisure

Delivering an alternative bike share network

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

Officer Contact Details

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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Due to the financial pressures being faced at the Councils, Officers were tasked with developing an alternative to joining the BTN Bikeshare framework.
- 1.2. In partnership with Worthing Borough Council, an extended active travel network of 75 bikes and 19 hubs has been developed which will run East to West through town centres and along the seafront in Adur and Worthing, improving sustainable and active travel, reducing car use, and improving the health and wellbeing of scheme users.
- 1.3. Both the capital and operating costs for the Donkeybikes extension are significantly lower than those for BTN Bikeshare.
- 1.4. This report brings detail of the extended scheme, and funding strategy that have been produced and requests approval to progress to the procurement stage to seek an Operator for an Adur and Worthing extended Donkeybikes scheme.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That Members:

- Work in partnership with Worthing Borough Council and proceed with the Donkey Bikes extension over the BTN Bikeshare Scheme.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Digital, Sustainability and Resources to run an appropriate procurement exercise to secure an operator.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Digital, Sustainability and Resources to enter into all relevant contracts and purchase associated with the alternative scheme.
- Members to note that the monitoring of this scheme will be carried out under the active and sustainable travel mission in *Our Plan*.

3. Context

- 3.1. In 2019 Adur and Worthing Councils declared a climate emergency and subsequently set a target to become net zero carbon for the area by 2045. On road transport makes up around 24% of area-wide emissions at 165kTCO₂e. In order to meet our net zero commitments we need to ensure a modal shift for short journeys (under 2km) away from cars to more active, sustainable travel modes.
- 3.2. The Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was developed in 2018. The document identifies key new and improved cycling and walking routes for prioritisation within Adur and Worthing. This document has been used as a basis for developing the hub location network and the recommended infrastructure.
- 3.3. In July 2021 at the Joint Strategic Committee, Members made the decision to proceed with the procurement in collaboration with Brighton and Hove City Council to procure a bikeshare operator using call off contracts from the BHSS framework.
- 3.4. Significant budget pressures at the Councils prompted a review of the scheme in early 2022 which was set to cost over £830k in capital

expenditure across the two Councils, primarily associated with cost of the bikes (300+ with a 50/50 cycle and ebike split) and the construction of 38 hubs for docking cycles. An alternative, significantly lower cost option has been formulated which proposes to extend the existing Donkeybike provision across Worthing and into multiple locations in Adur. Focusing on hub locations in close proximity to stations and seafront locations with the aim of building a strong network and encouraging a modal shift of short journeys (under 2km) to active travel.

- 3.5. Delivering an expansion to the current Donkey bike provision (operating in Worthing for the last 5 years) helps the Councils towards its vision from the Local Cycling & Walking Action Plan: to create a place where walking and cycling becomes the preferred way of moving around Adur and Worthing. This project will be key for delivering our new mission as part of Our Plan: We are a place where active travel is easy, with opportunities for cycling, walking and public transport.
- 3.6. The extension of the Donkey bikes scheme into Adur will assist with delivering Adur District Council's priority to decarbonise the local area, contributing towards meeting the area-wide target of net zero carbon by 2045 as well as improving health and wellbeing of residents who use the facility to cycle.

4. The alternative scheme

- 4.1. The proposed extended scheme would consist of the provision of 75 pedal bikes across Adur and Worthing, including the provision of 29 new bikes in Adur, and the refurbishment of the existing fleet of bikes which will be redistributed to Worthing initially. The Councils will jointly own all infrastructure including bikes and hubs.
- 4.2. BTN Bikeshare was originally costed at approximately £830,350 for the capital purchase of bikes and installation of hubs, resulting in a net annual subsidy (including debt charges) of £149,000. As part of the contract it was anticipated that a major sponsorship contribution would offset costs.
- 4.3. The alternative scheme, based on the expansion of Donkeybikes, includes the following financial projections over the initial 5-year term:

Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Income (fees / sponsorship)	£27,493	£27,943	£28,402	£28,870	£29,347
Income (grant funding)	£55,000	£8,500	£8,000	£8,000	£8,500
Total	£82,493	£36,442	£36,402	£36,870	£37,847
Expenditure (capital)	£46,200	£0	£0	£0	£0
Expenditure (revenue)	£36,200	£36,200	£36,200	£36,200	£39,050
Total	£82,400	£36,200	£36,200	£36,200	£39,050
Income less Expenditure	£93	£242	£202	£670	-£1,203
Cumulative Total	£93	£335	£537	£1,207	£4

**figures supplied cover the full scheme across both Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council utilising all of the grant funding over the 5-year term*

- 4.4. The hubs will consist of Sheffield stand bike racks which will be reasonably easy to construct and locate and will not require the lengthy TRO process required by the BTN Bikeshare scheme. The ease of construction also allows for the hub locations to be moved relatively easily when the scheme is reviewed after its initial five year term of operation.
- 4.5. The bikes themselves have an estimated shelf-life of 5 years prior to the bikes being fully refurbished or additional bikes purchased. Therefore, the initial capital outlay in Year 1 will provide a fleet of 75 bikes over the 5-year term. All bikes will be regularly maintained as part of the agreement.
- 4.6. Income from the extended scheme is conservatively estimated as £22,493 (with a 2% uplift per annum); this was calculated using the previous three years of usage data from the existing scheme to calculate an average income per bike. This is a conservative estimate as the scheme was closed for several months at the start of 2020 due

to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please see 3.1 for additional income through sponsorship.

- 4.7. To assist with the initial setup costs, the Councils were successful in securing Pooled Business Rates funding from West Sussex County Council in 2019 under a joint cycling and walking bid. This funding was allocated towards the BTN Bikeshare Scheme, therefore this will transfer to the alternative scheme. The current balance is £44,000 per Council. Based on the figures in 2.3, £88,000 will be utilised in the first 5 years of the scheme (£44,000 per Council).
- 4.8. The financial model is based on 18 hub locations, 7 of which are in Adur. The list below shows the indicative hub locations, based on those from the consultant's report developed for BTN Bikeshare which can be amended. The hubs have been primarily located on an East to West route focussing on the seafront, stations and town centres to maximise the transport links.

Proposed location	Number of bikes	Existing or new
Shoreham Town Centre	5	New
Southwick Town Centre	4	
Lancing Perch	4	
Lancing Station	4	
Shoreham Station	4	
Southlands Hospital	4	
Middle Road (Shoreham)	4	
Goring Road	4	
George V Avenue	4	
Brooklands	4	
Windsor Lawns	4	Existing
Pavillion Theatre	4	
Lido	4	

Promenade (Burlington)	4	
Steyne Gardens	4	
Worthing Town Hall	4	
Worthing Station	6	
West Worthing Station	4	

*locations are subject to change

- 4.9. The main expenditure for the scheme relates to the management / operating contract, which is anticipated to run for the 5 year term. There is an existing operator managing the Worthing only scheme but this is due to end in December 2022, however a relevant procurement exercise will be undertaken to ensure best consideration for the Councils moving forward.
- 4.10. As outlined in 2.6, the projected income (the rental hire charges) have been conservatively estimated, however it is recommended that any surplus income is attributed back into the scheme to allow for future sustainability and growth. This will be subject to the financial position of the Councils at the time. The figures also assume no further grant funding, CIL or Section 106 monies, however this is a possibility over the 5-year period.
- 4.11. Based on the recommendations contained in this report, Officers will be working to a timeline of having the extended scheme up and running for Spring / Summer 2023.

5. Scheme branding and sponsorship

- 5.1. There is the opportunity to bring a local business onboard to contribute towards and sponsor the extended scheme; calculations have been based on scheme sponsorship of approximately £5,000 per year which would enable the Council to further offset management costs (this aligns with 2.6 and the rental income target). The sponsorship would enable the business to have an amount of space on each bike for branding, including associated editorial space.
- 5.2. The current Donkeybikes fleet is branded with the Time for Worthing logo as current operation is in Worthing only. The branding would need

to be amended to reflect the logos of both authorities as bikes will move between both the District and Borough.

6. Future development

- 6.1. Modelling has been undertaken to phase the scheme; at the end of the initial 5-year term there is the opportunity to amend the scheme accordingly, for example moving or increasing the amount or location of hubs / bikes.
- 6.2. Consideration will be given to the introduction of e-bikes into the network as soon as possible. E-bikes were considered for rollout during phase 1 but due to cost implications relating to charging and redistributing batteries, alongside the higher cost of the e-bikes, it was deemed financially prohibitive at this stage.
- 6.3. Additional extensions to be considered could include, e-cargo bike hire for local businesses, adding inclusive cycles through Cycall, bike trailers and dedicated youth bikes. Whilst the Councils currently haven't the financial provision for these 'extensions' now, Officers do commit to reviewing the scheme on an annual basis to determine whether any could be included as part of the initial 5-year term. This will be based on the financial performance of the scheme and costs associated with the 'extensions'.
- 6.4. Equally, there is a real opportunity to build social value. This could include the possibility of local employment / apprenticeships of mechanics to service the cycles (in partnership with the operator) and to include measures to ensure the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups/areas within the scheme. This will be a contractual element that will be discussed with the successful operator.

7. Engagement and Communication

- 7.1. AWC officers involved in the development of the Donkeybikes scheme include Finance, Place and Economy & Sustainability.
- 7.2. Once the scheme has been approved, work will commence with Communications and Place and Economy to work up a branding and communications plan for the new scheme.

- 7.3. There will also be an engagement process with the community through the AWC Cycling and Walking Action Group as part of a wider engagement on active travel. It is worth noting that this group were involved in identifying the hub locations as part of the Steer Report (see appendices) which has informed the proposed locations in this paper.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. The alternative proposal to the BTN Bikeshare Network of the extension of the Donkey Bike scheme across Adur and Worthing provides a significant saving to both Councils. The comparison of both schemes is shown in 6.2.

- 8.2. As follows:

Scheme	Capital Cost	Average Annual Revenue Cost
BTN Bikeshare	£830,350	£149,000
Donkey Bike extension	£46,200	£8,350
Saving from alternative extension of the Donkey Bike Scheme	£784,150	£140,650

- 8.3. There will be no financial impact on the capital or revenue budgets of Adur District or Worthing Borough Council over the first 5 years as the cost of the proposed extension of the Donkey Bike scheme will be fully funded by the Walking and Cycling grant. This is set out in the table at section 2.3 of the report.
- 8.4. Continuation of the proposed scheme beyond the 5 years would need to consider a number of factors including the level of rental and sponsorship income, revised cost estimates and the potential for further grant funding to support alternative travel opportunities.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilities, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 9.2. The Council has a wide general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 9.3. Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 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 regards to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 9.4. Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the local authority to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority.
- 9.5. Officers must ensure that the proposed Donkey Bikes extension is compliant with the Councils' Contract Standing Orders found at Part 4 of the Councils' constitution. Where the Contract is an above threshold contract for goods and/or services as defined by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 any procurement exercise to contract for those goods and services must be conducted in accordance with those Regulations.

Background Papers

- Previous JSC report (13-07-2021) - [Bikeshare progressing an Adur and Worthing scheme](#)
- [Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan](#)
- [Steer report](#) - development of bike share business case plan

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

- The alternative bike share scheme could support the modal shift intended to improve transport connectivity while reducing associated congestion which is predicted to increase by 51% by 2050. To maintain a vibrant economy it is crucial to maintain good transport flows; transport infrastructure will need to provide alternatives to car travel for business travel; commuting; visitor movement; leisure and utility trips.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

- Improved cycling and walking infrastructure can increase safety and accessibility; helping more communities to make cycling and walking their first choice for shorter journeys and as part of longer ones. Cycling and walking provides the cheapest form of transport compared with car travel and public transport. It also brings health benefits through active travel.

2.2 Equality Issues

- As outlined in 4.3, the Council did review the provision of e-bikes and inclusive bikes as part of the initial phase. Due to the associated cost implications, it's proposed that Officers review the phasing in of this provision over the initial 5-year term if budgets allow.
- The locations of the hubs (and nikes) have been carefully considered to ensure ease of access, whilst also connecting to other forms of sustainable transport. As part of the operator agreement, the Councils will ensure the hub locations are regularly reviewed to ensure they continue to be accessible.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- A risk register will be developed for the alternative bike share scheme and safety audits undertaken for the Hub locations. This will likely be in partnership with the successful operator.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- Matter considered and no issues identified

3. Environmental

- Transport emissions account for over a third of carbon emissions in Adur & Worthing. Unlike other sectors, transport emissions locally have been rising since 2013. Cycling and Walking are both zero carbon forms of transport. Greater use of these forms help reduce poor air quality.

4. Governance

- Development of a bike share scheme for Adur and Worthing is well supported by Council policy and 'active travel' will also be an important mission under 'Our Plan'.
- The day to day operation will be undertaken by the successful operator. The contract, and the performance, will be reviewed on a regular basis by an Officer team as part of the overall monitoring of Our Plan.

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ADUR DISTRICT
C O U N C I L

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee
10 November 2021

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s) Affected: Southwick Green

Investing in public realm improvements at Southwick Square

Report by the Director for the Economy

Officer Contact Details

Andy Willems
Head of Place & Economy
01273 263179
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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline to Members the opportunity to formally work in partnership with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) through a recognised Growth Deal with Adur District Council (ADC), focusing on mutually agreed regeneration and infrastructure projects.
- 1.2 To ensure Members are aware of the previous arrangements and how this Growth Deal differs to ensure Adur has dedicated pooled resources, including supportive WSCC capital funding, to prioritise and invest into places across the District. It should also be noted that the Growth Deal can be adapted to ensure the 'deal' is reacting and responding to the ongoing requirements across the District.
- 1.3 To outline how the Growth Deal can have an immediate impact with the prioritisation of the refurbishment of Southwick Square. This project

has previously been identified as an area for improvement through local traders and stakeholders.

- 1.4 To present the rationale for ADC delivering the project and the parallel approach being undertaken by WSCC in order for allocated WSCC capital monies to be used by ADC for the purposes of Southwick Square.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree to ADC taking on the project management and delivery responsibility of Southwick Square Public Realm work, supported by WSCC (both financially and by its officer time) and to enter into a Delivery Agreement with WSCC.
- 2.2 To note that ADC have already contributed £87k towards the scheme, which includes the appointment of a design team through an Officer Decision Notice ([DforE/010/22-23](#)) to enable the scheme to be appropriately designed in readiness to tender for the construction works.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Director for the Economy, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration and WSCC, the authority to approve and award a contract for the construction work required to deliver the public realm project subject to the development of a procurement strategy, the outcome of a compliant procurement process and the award being within the available budget.
- 2.4 To approve the creation of an additional budget of £600k within the capital programme, primarily funded by WSCC as part of the Growth Deal. This is subject to WSCC releasing funds from their capital programme as part of their governance process.

3. Context

- 3.1 The Adur and Worthing Growth (A&WG) Deal signed in March 2017 identified a series of public realm schemes in Worthing, including initial funding from WSCC Capital Programme (£5m) with the remainder being sourced through developer contributions, to include Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); planning obligations (Section 106) and grants to support delivery of later phases of the programme. This paper represents an opportunity for Adur District Council, as part of a new dedicated Growth Deal, to access similar capital funding from WSCC in order to improve public spaces across the District.
- 3.2 As part of the wider opportunity across Adur District, Southwick Square has been identified as an area that has received limited investment, against neighbouring places such as Shoreham. The revised Growth Deal is anticipated to be formally agreed in early 2023, however after negotiations with WSCC, this scheme presents an immediate opportunity to signify the 'Deal' and act as the forerunner.
- 3.3 Southwick's main shopping street was purpose built in 1962 as part of a major regeneration scheme replacing the old shopping area which ran along Albion Street, the A259. The consequence was to move the centre of Southwick away from the seafront where it had shifted from the mid 19th century back to the medieval centre which lay surrounding The Green, the old village common. The 'square' itself is at the eastern end but hasn't experienced any significant investment for decades.
- 3.4 The intervention at Southwick Square, provides an exciting opportunity to revitalise the public space through a people-centred design approach. A number of social and economic benefits include:
- Establishing a new destination and meeting point
 - Designing an inclusive and welcoming space
 - Improving and enhancing sustainable travel options
 - Improving place activation by providing improved outdoor spaces, supporting local businesses and stakeholders
 - Delivering sustainable planting and 'greening', contributing to biodiversity and climate emergency targets
- 3.5 The need for excellent outdoor spaces have been brought into sharp focus as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with more people taking advantage of the outdoors and, due to changes in work life patterns, enjoying staying local. This project will support the longer term requirement to create safe

pedestrianised areas where residents and visitors feel confident they can enjoy the space within a sound environment. Projects such as this will continue to support the economic wellbeing and performance of the town centre. Southwick Square presents a real opportunity to establish a new 'centre' and legacy for the area.

- 3.6 This scheme supports the emerging direction under *Our Plan*, which identifies a need for the Council to work and deliver in a 'place-based' way. This also aligns with WSCC's Economic Plan (2020-24) and 'Our Council Plan' (2021-25) and the requirements to support growth in our town centres and high streets.
- 3.7 Southwick Square will form part of the Adur Growth Deal and therefore is subject to Growth Board governance. This comprises of a quarterly Adur & Worthing Officer Growth Board followed by a Adur Growth Board which is comprised of Members and Senior Officers. Southwick Square is subject to its own project governance led by ADC of which WSCC Officers will be invited to attend project meetings.

4. The proposed scheme

- 4.1 The Southwick Square public realm improvements presents a significant opportunity to create a human-centred urban space. This design approach creates multiple social benefits and creation of destinations and arrival points – the district centre of the future will rely on high quality, distinctive, attractive places for people to enjoy.
- 4.2 This scheme seeks to create this place to ensure the major sites within Southwick, and the wider district centre, are complemented by great spaces. This is a key economic driver, whilst other attributes include:
- **Improving access and key facilities** – bringing the public realm up to a modern standard
 - **Inclusive spaces** – Improving safety and inclusive space in the public realm
 - **Sustainable travel elements** – Create healthy and attractive spaces
 - **Listening to, and supporting, key stakeholders** – strong local support from residents and businesses

- 4.3 As part of the initial investment made by ADC, and in line with the Officer Decision Notice ([DforE/010/22-23](#)), Officers have been working with Project Centre (procured consultants) to 'work up' a concept design for the space. This design was informed by a number of stakeholder conversations ahead of the wider public release which happened on 29th September 2022. The significant upgrade in design is planned to feature local materials, new planting and the removal of the steps and walls to the north, offering a clearer view to the shops and bars behind. In addition the new scheme will feature sustainable pedestrian lighting and a large open space suitable for events, performances, seasonal concessions and markets. Improved accessibility, community safety and sustainability also lie at the heart of new design.
- 4.4 Southwick Square sits in the heart of the Southwick community. Bookended by Southwick Recreation Ground at one end of the high street and Southwick Green at the other the scheme naturally sits in the 'centre' and will serve, and support, those residents, businesses and visitors that utilise these neighbouring assets.
- 4.5 Subject to approvals, the current headline timetable associated with the delivery of this scheme is:
- Concept design - September 2022
 - Public consultation - October 2022
 - Detailed design - November 2022
 - Issue Tender - December 2022
 - Tender Award - February 2023
 - Start on Site - March 2023
 - Expected completion - Summer 2023

5. The WSCC proposal

- 5.1 As identified under 4.5, work has already been undertaken on Southwick Square, including concept design and technical studies. This design has been informed by Members and town centre stakeholders. The design is being delivered and informed by Project Centre, notably their urban designers and technical engineers.
- 5.2 The initial design work and technical studies for the Southwick Square scheme have been funded by ADC, out of the capital programme (£87k). A

further £600k for Southwick Square has been allocated by WSCC from its capital programme, however this is subject to formal governance. A letter of comfort is appended to this report to highlight WSCC's commitment to completing a 'mirrored' governance process, and subject to approval will formally release the funds to ADC in January 2023.

ADC Officers have agreed with WSCC that the scheme won't proceed, and won't enter into any contracts, until the business case has been agreed through the WSCC governance process and the funds have been secured, as above.

- 5.3 It's proposed ADC will act as the delivery body and project manage the Southwick Square, with WSCC agreement on collaboration. This proposal is supported by a similar report through the WSCC governance process as outlined in 5.2. In both this report and the WSCC notice, it's recommended that ADC agree to be the delivery body for this scheme.
- 5.4 WSCC have agreed to reimburse ADC on a quarterly basis for costs incurred on the project, within an overall capped contribution to budget (£600k). WSCC will approve the funding and this will be drawn down over a number of key stages, with reviews to be carried out by both parties, in line with the partnership governance controls.
- 5.5 A final specification for Southwick Square will be drawn together by professional technical advisors, ADC and WSCC officers, endorsed by WSCC Highways, the Public Realm and Growth Boards, including the WSCC Executive Director of Place, prior to ADC procuring for a construction partner.
- 5.6 As indicated in 4.3, Project Centre Consultants have already been procured and appointed as technical advisors to project manage and supervise these works on behalf of ADC. The appointment was made under the ESPO framework and outlined in the Officer Decision Notice ([DforE/010/22-23](#)). As part of the next phase ADC, supported by Project Centre, will develop the procurement strategy associated with the main works.
- 5.7 Project Centre Consultants have extensive experience in delivering public realm works and have recently assisted other local authorities in West Sussex with similar schemes.

6. Engagement and Communication

- 6.1 A Southwick Square Working Group has been engaged in the concept design for Southwick Square from the outset. At each stage of design the working group has supported its development, however members of the group agreed that local consultation was critical. Southwick Square is at an advanced stage of project design, and therefore Members and officers agree this should be prioritised over other projects and run as a precursor to the new Growth Deal.
- 6.2 Akin to 3.4 and people-centred design, the Southwick Square scheme is being developed in collaboration with local stakeholders. Positive feedback was received in response to the initial consultation and more detailed and targeted activities thereafter. For example, Officers and Members completed an 'in person' consultation at Southwick Square on Saturday 1st October to ensure first hand information was gathered. In addition, the Council provided an opportunity for stakeholders and members of the public to contribute additional comments through a dedicated webpage; press and social media releases were also delivered to maximise reach and engagement.
- 6.3 ADC and WSCC officers have, and continue to, listen to feedback from local businesses (especially those impacted), key stakeholders and community groups to tailor the final design ahead of the scheme being tendered for construction. As outlined under 4.5 this will continue over the next 4 - 6 weeks (until the end of November). It is worth noting that ADC have also reached out to a number of community and accessibility groups via our partners in Adur & Worthing Community Works to ensure the scheme is inclusive.
- 6.4 The initial design has also considered the integration of sustainability measures, in both the use of materials and infrastructure to support biodiversity. This consideration falls in line with the Council's commitment to the climate emergency and the need to enhance 'greening', notably in our urban fabric. These elements will be further designed as the work progresses ahead of the tendering phase.
- 6.5 Based on the consultation activities above, and the early feedback that has already been reviewed (at the time of writing), the current design supports the requirements of an accessible 'square', additional green infrastructure and upgraded cycle storage, all of which were suggestions as part of the design process to date. As the design progresses, these will be further

considered, in line with the impacts on the immediate businesses and wider regeneration opportunities of the Southwick Square public realm scheme.

- 6.6 The Growth Board and Southwick Square Working Group have been consulted and agree that it's crucial to focus initial resources on the delivery of Southwick Square. Not only will this scheme add longer term benefits to the town centre, it will also be an important project to integrate with the continued economic recovery planning resulting from the pandemic, and the need to improve public spaces through this capital investment.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The Council has a capital budget of £161,250 to support improvements across Adur Town Centres which is being used to fund the initial studies. A small contribution, from this fund, will also go towards the scheme as matched funding from Adur District Council.
- 7.2 The funding of £600,000 from WSCC needs to be added to the Councils budgets to comply with the Councils financial regulations.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 8.2. 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
- 8.3. Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 8.4. s1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the Council to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the Council.

- 8.5. A procurement process compliant with the Council's Contract Standing Orders found at Part 4 of the Council's constitution is to be carried out.
- 8.6. The project will need to be managed by ADC on the terms set out in the delivery agreement to be entered into between ADC and WSCC.

Background Papers

- Officer Decision Notice (5th September 2022)
- Southwick Square Consultation - Press Release (29th September 2022)
- Letter of Comfort (WSCC)

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

- Public realm improvements are important to create the right setting for our town centres and economy, including our business base, to operate. Not only does this project represent an opportunity for our businesses (in Southwick Square and the immediate vicinity), it will also provide alternate possibilities for 'open space' activities, including events and pop up markets.
- The aforementioned activities are vital to support and revitalise our changing high streets; even more so in response to the outturn experienced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The 'in store' and 'out of store' experiences need to be balanced and the public realm improvements at Southwick Square, and future schemes in Adur, will support and give confidence to residents and visitors regarding the outdoor environment.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

- The scheme will support a number of stakeholders, including those immediate businesses in Southwick Square. The proposal will upgrade and improve the open space experience, which will serve both visitors and residents. Additional benefits include supporting cycling and walking interventions, sustainability and biodiversity interventions in this location, subsequently supporting the wellbeing agenda. All elements combine to improve the attractiveness of Southwick town centre.

2.2 Equality Issues

- The design for Southwick Square includes consultation with accessible groups. This consultation, and wider equality points, will be considered and implemented further as the project progresses through detailed design, procurement and delivery.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- The improved public realm works will fully consider crime and disorder act implications through the detailed design phase of the project. Consideration will also be given to the ongoing environment that the new public realm will create in relation to providing a safe and enjoyable space.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- The improvements at Southwick Square will require extensive construction work. During this period it's anticipated there will be disruption to local residents and businesses in the immediate area, however the current plan is to fully retain access to the shops during the construction works. ADC, with guidance from Project Centre, will assess the impacts throughout and consider mitigating actions to reduce the disruption where possible.

3. Environmental

- The initial scheme design includes additional green infrastructure and the integration of sustainable methods, to include water retention. Environmental improvements will continue to be developed through the final design, in readiness for construction.
- The scheme will also support improvements to the cycling and walking infrastructure in Southwick town centre, encouraging residents and visitors to utilise the additional pedestrianised space to support their own wellbeing.

4. Governance

- The Growth Board and the Southwick Square Working Group are existing and functional, and they will act as the key governance control for this project. These will have strict oversight of all elements of the project (including spend and programme) through from final design to construction and completion.
- These groups combine Members and Officers from ADC and WSCC.

Steve Waight
Cabinet Member for Support Services and
Economic Development

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26 October 2022

Cllr Neil Parkin
Leader, Adur District Council
The Shoreham Centre
2 Pond Road
Shoreham-by-Sea
BN43 5WU

Hi Neil

Ref. Southwick Square Growth Deal Scheme

I understand that your Joint Strategic Sub-Committee is keen for a letter of intent from the County Council concerning the proposed Southwick Square Growth Deal scheme.

I am happy to let you know that I support the scheme in principle noting that it is in alignment with the Adur Growth Deal signed in 2017 and with our conversations supporting growth through improving access and key facilities in town centres and highstreets, including sustainable transport links and digital connectivity to support businesses, residents, and visitors.

The County Council's internal governance process is underway to draw up a formal decision report for me to consider in December detailing the scheme designs as drawn up with you and the required funding. I will ensure you are informed as soon as this is agreed and published.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Waight".

Steve Waight
Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development

Cc. Nick Burrell, Strategic Manager (OPE & Growth)



ADUR DISTRICT COUNCIL

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee
10 November 2022

Key Decision: [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All
Portfolio: Resources

Referral of Motion on Notice from Adur District Council

Report by the Director for Communities

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Adur District Council on the 20th October 2022.
- 1.2. Members of the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee support the motion and determine how further work is carried out; or,
- 2.2. That the Adr Joint Strategic Sub-Committee reject the motion.

3. Context

- 3.1. At its meeting on the 20th October 2022, Adur District Council received a motion from Councillor Catherine Arnold, seconded by Councillor Jeremy Gardener, 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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee for consideration and determination.
- 3.3 Where a motion has been referred by Full Council to the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee, the mover, or the seconder in the absence of the mover, shall be entitled to attend the relevant meeting of the Cabinet and explain the motion. Councillor Catherine Arnold has been made aware that the motion has been referred to this Sub-Committee.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee can either support or reject the motion.
- 4.2 Should the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Sub-Committee.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There may be direct financial implications in future depending on the course of action the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Adur District Council on the 20th October 2022

Officer Contact Details:-

Neil Terry

Democratic Services Lead

01903 221073

neil.terry@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Cost of business motion

For many of Adur's 2,200 businesses, simply surviving these last 2.5 years has felt like winning. This Council must do everything in its power to support our local businesses and prevent them from closing their doors.

The recent 6-month cap on price per unit of energy is a welcome government intervention for businesses. However, this will do little to tackle the other variables that are pushing businesses out of the marketplace. These include higher supply chain costs, business rates payments, delays in payment, difficulty recruiting staff and the cost-of-living crisis reducing spending in stores, cafes and on services.

Like individuals, businesses cannot reduce their fixed costs of: rent, business rates, employment costs and insurance. In a lot of cases, business owners are scaling back investment and expansion and reducing their take home pay, rather than passing on higher costs to customers. This means lower growth, less employment, reduced local spend and a smaller local economy.

May's 22 ONS statistics showed that 40%, or 2 million, of the UK's small businesses had less than three months' worth of cash left to support their operations. Of those 2 million, the Federation of Small Business's chairman said about 10% – or 200,000 – were in "serious trouble", and that another 300,000 "have only got weeks left".

In addition, the ONS showed that input price inflation for products (prices of goods bought and sold by UK manufacturers) rose to 24.0% in the year to June 2022 – the highest rate since records began in January 1985.

Businesses need the council's support as strategic partners, fundraisers and promoters through the council communications team. They need to be involved in a comprehensive plan of events, better signposting of businesses around the district and access to rescue packages for businesses to survive.

We note the good work the council is already undertaking through the small business grant programme.

On behalf of business we ask this Council to:

- ensure the take up of the small business grants to Adur is commensurate with that of Worthing

- urge central government to increase the business rates threshold
- examine the feasibility of establishing of a Town Centre Manager role to create a strategic programme for events to promote our high streets
- sign up to the Federation of Small Business's Good Business Pays movement and encourage contractors to do so. This is a campaign to stop late and slow payments
- improve signage for visitors to our high streets and town centres
- support our traders associations with funding applications to Save The High Streets
- encourage Council staff to shop local
- promote more widely the business support already on offer
- investigate the potential for bulk buying of energy with local businesses

Proposer: Cllr Catherine Arnold

Seconder: Cllr Jeremy Gardner

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ADUR DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee
10 November 2022

Key Decision: [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All
Portfolio: Communities & Wellbeing

Referral of Motion on Notice from Adur District Council

Report by the Director for Communities

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Adur District Council on the 20th October 2022.
- 1.2. Members of the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee support the motion and determine how further work is carried out; or,
- 2.2. That the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee reject the motion.

3. Context

- 3.1. At its meeting on the 20th October 2022, Adur District Council received a motion from Councillor Debs Stainforth, seconded by Councillor Robina Baine, 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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee for consideration and determination.
- 3.3 Where a motion has been referred by Full Council to the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee, the mover, or the seconder in the absence of the mover, shall be entitled to attend the relevant meeting of the Cabinet and explain the motion. Councillor Debs Stainforth has been made aware that the motion has been referred to this Sub-Committee.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee can either support or reject the motion.
- 4.2 Should the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Sub-Committee.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There may be direct financial implications in future depending on the course of action the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-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 Adur District Council on the 20th October 2022

Officer Contact Details:-

Neil Terry

Democratic Services Lead

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Cost-of-Living Emergency Motion

This council will do everything in its power to support its residents with the hardship they face.

The independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) said that households across the UK are facing the highest cost of living burden in 70 years.

The government's energy support may have averted a broad living standards catastrophe, but it won't prevent this winter from being tough for households. Energy bills will still be twice as high as they were last winter, and pay packets are still shrinking at an alarming pace amid double-digit inflation.

The mini-budget unnecessarily plunged the economy into crisis. The Bank of England had to intervene to prevent a run on the pound and the markets were in turmoil over the government's fiscal strategy. Many residents in our community have seen their pensions lose value. Rising interest rates are felt in higher mortgage payments which are also likely to have a knock-on effect with landlords increasing rents

The mini-budget may well increase inflation which is already at a 40-year high. The cost of staple foods rising by 12% will affect poorer households disproportionately as they have less flexibility in their budgets and fewer savings to fall back on.

We note that this council supports the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in full, ensuring the people most affected by the cost-of-living crisis do not have to pay any Council Tax.

This council thanks our officers for the additional work already being done to support residents amid this crisis which included processing the £150 energy rebates through council tax and setting up a cost of living hub on the council's website.

We ask this council to:

Declare a cost-of-living emergency by:

1. Increasing the availability of emergency housing within Adur
2. Improving signposting to benefits and other support
3. Working with non-for-profit organisations to access grants and provide financial advice across the district

4. Providing funding for food support and warm banks to charities supporting residents in dire need
5. Committing to extend the scope of the Councils' Proactive Project
6. Write to WSCC to urgently clarify the new criteria for the Household Support Fund, and to broaden its reach.
7. Writing to the government to deliver on the calls made by UNISON, the NEU and other education unions to expand the free school meals programme to all families receiving universal credit or an equivalent benefit.
8. Writing to the government to urge them to boost DWP benefits immediately in line with inflation and similar to the state pension 'triple lock', or risk plunging the most vulnerable people into financial chaos.

Proposer: Cllr Debs Stainforth
Seconder: Cllr Robina Baine

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