

Minutes of a meeting of the
Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Worthing)
12 January 2023
at 6.30 pm

Councillor Dr Beccy Cooper (Chair)
Councillor Carl Walker (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Rita Garner
Councillor Martin McCabe
Councillor Helen Silman
Councillor Emma Taylor

Councillor John Turley
Councillor Vicki Wells
Councillor Rosey Whorlow

JSS-C(W)/46/22-23 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Martin McCabe declared an interest in item 7 as a freehold landlord and announced that he would leave the meeting during consideration of that item.

JSS-C(W)/47/22-23 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee meeting held on 5th December 2023, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

JSS-C(W)/48/22-23 Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

JSS-C(W)/49/22-23 Members Questions

There were no pre submitted questions from Members.

JSS-C(W)/50/22-23 Items Raised under Urgency Provisions

There were no urgent items for consideration.

JSS-C(W)/51/22-23 UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Investing in Place

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 6.

The report outlined the opportunity to obtain funding from Central Government, as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and use this to deliver against predetermined interventions relating to People and Skills, Community and Place and Supporting Local Business.

The funding would assist the Council to deliver interventions against agreed core themes which are pertinent locally. These included; Cost of Living, Community-led Sustainable

Transport Solutions, Community Participation and Engagement, Fuel Poverty and Business Support.

Members were given an outline of the impact of the UKSPF and associated interventions for Worthing Borough Council (WBC) with particular reference to those priorities that have been identified through other work strands and presented with the rationale for WBC to deliver the projects and agree relevant delegations and budgetary requirements to facilitate this.

The Cabinet welcomed the investment that replaced lost EU funding.

Decision

That the Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee

- a) Noted that the s151 Officer has entered into a non-legally binding Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (SOS) regarding the administration and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- b) Delegated authority to the Director for the Economy and/or the S151 Finance Officer to enter into a binding Funding Agreement with the SOS for receipt of the funding (if required to do so) on terms substantially the same as those set out in the MOU and this report.
- c) Approved the virement of the UKSPF into the Council's budgets and for that budget to facilitate accurate reporting for the receipt and spend of funds.
- d) Delegated authority to the Director for the Economy, Director for Communities and Director of Digital, Sustainability and Resources to develop a procurement strategy for the delivery of the interventions and to enter into any necessary contract, grant funding agreement, or make any required investment under the Council's Treasury Management Policy, to enable the interventions specified in this Report, providing the spend does not exceed the UKSPF Budget.
- e) Agreed to an annual report being submitted to JSC to provide an update on the intervention delivery and monitor the spend against authorised budget.

JSS-C(W)/52/22-23 Outcome of the public consultation in respect of the locally-determined 100% one-month Council Tax discount in respect of unoccupied & substantially unfurnished properties

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources, presented by the Cabinet Member for Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 7.

At the meeting of the Worthing Joint Strategic Committee Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 November 2022 it was determined that a public consultation should be undertaken

by Worthing Borough Council with a view to ending the one-month 100% Council Tax discount in respect of unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties.

Members were given details of the consultation responses that had been received and recommended that the one-month 100% discount should end from 1 April 2023.

Members discussed the report and had noted that the response to the consultation had been disappointing and considered that it was an area the Cabinet would like to improve for the future.

Decision

That the Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee

- a) Noted the contents of the report;
- b) Recommended to Full Council that with effect from 1 April 2023 the one-month 100% discount should be discontinued.

JSS-C(W)/53/22-23 Memorial Gardens

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, presented by the Cabinet Member for Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 8.

The report outlined the investment required to enable the service to develop the memorial garden at Worthing Crematorium, which will add heritage value to the site through the conservation of the Muntham Court hard landscaping.

Worthing Crematorium had filled all its private garden interment plots and required investment to deliver further plots to meet demand. It was detailed for Members that sustainable design for the benefit of biodiversity lay at the heart of the garden plan. Funding would be approved and the second phase of procuring a construction partner and construction will proceed.

Members were provided details of the project and the costs and the income generating potential and why the Memorial Gardens were a heritage site of significance and why it was important to conserve some of the historic elements of the grounds in any development of the site.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment presented an update to 1.3 to the Executive Summary to the report and stated that "The policy actions in this report demonstrates the Council's commitment to address the climate and ecological emergencies. At the heart of the memorial garden plan is a sustainable design to ensure resilience to climate change impacts and for the benefit of biodiversity."

There were two amendments to recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 in the report which were proposed seconded and unanimously approved.

Decision

That the Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee

- a) Recommended that Full Council create a new capital budget of £315,000 funded through prudential borrowing with total repayment costs of £407,940 over the lifetime of the project which will be funded from the income generated by the sales of the memorials and to delegate to the Director for Communities authority to procure and enter into all necessary contracts (in consultation with the Cabinet Member) for the delivery of the memorial garden and repairs to the Munthan Estate Walls as incorporated in the design providing always the spend is within the approved budget.
- b) Authorised the annual revenue growth of on average £51,061 for Bereavement Services to deliver this investment. This revenue growth will form part of the sales in the memorial garden which are estimated to provide an annual average profit margin of £151,568 or return on investment ratio of 3.96%.
- c) Noted that Worthing Crematorium has limited land available for further development after this new memorial garden and the lifespan of the garden is estimated to be limited to five years for duo gardens and 10 years for quad gardens. If this development continues to be the success it is. Further investment in additional land and landscaping will be required

JSS-C(W)/54/22-23 Teville Gate Marketing

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Economy, presented by the Cabinet Member for Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as Item 9.

Members were advised of the proposed marketing of the Teville Gate site and to seek the Committee's approval for the assessment criteria for those bids received.

The Cabinet welcomed the report and thanked all of those that had been involved in attempting to find a resolution to the future of the site.

Decision

That the Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the seven site aspirations set out in paragraph 4.6.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm