

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Worthing Town Hall
on**

23 July 2019

The Mayor Councillor Hazel Thorpe
The Deputy Mayor Councillor Lionel Harman

Councillor Noel Atkins	Councillor Sean McDonald
Councillor Antony Baker	Councillor Dr Heather Mercer
Councillor Roy Barraclough	Councillor Richard Mulholland
Councillor Mike Barrett	Councillor Louise Murphy
Councillor Keith Bickers	Councillor Helen Silman
Councillor Ferdousi Henna	Councillor Jane Sim
Chowdhury	Councillor Dawn Smith
Councillor Rebecca Cooper	Councillor Sally Smith
Councillor Edward Crouch	Councillor Robert Smytherman
Councillor Jim Deen	Councillor Val Turner
Councillor Karen Harman	Councillor Nicola Waight
Councillor Paul High	Councillor Steve Waight
Councillor Margaret Howard	Councillor Carl Walker
Councillor Daniel Humphreys	Councillor Steve Wills
Councillor Charles James	Councillor Tim Wills
Councillor Kevin Jenkins	Councillor Mark Withers
Councillor Martin McCabe	

C/15/19-20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Paul Baker, Elizabeth Sparkes and Paul Westover and from the Chief Executive.

C/16/19-20 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared:-

Councillor Val Turner declared an interest in item 10 as a family member worked at Southern Water.

Councillor Lionel Harman declared an interest in item 4 as a trustee for South Downs Leisure.

Councillor Louise Murphy declared an interest as a Non-Executive Director of Worthing Homes.

Councillor Kevin Jenkins declared an interest in item 4 as a family member worked for South Downs Leisure.

Councillor Bob Smytherman declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Steve Waight declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Heather Mercer declared an interest in item 8b(v) as GBMet were supervising a research project.

C/17/19-20 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the annual meeting held on 17 May 2019 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Mayor.

C/18/19-20 Questions from the Public

The Mayor announced that there were 10 registered questions for the meeting.

John Cawdell, a Worthing resident, asked the following questions:-

1) What role did the current Head of Culture play in the recent exercise to externalise the management of the theatres, why were no other bids received and what efforts were made to encourage real competition?

2) What role will the Council have in the future management of the theatres, how will a management board be recruited and how will the enormous public subsidy currently supporting an unviable business be significantly reduced?

The Executive Member for Customer Services replied:-

The Head of Culture had been fully informed of the potential move towards externalising Worthing Borough Council's Cultural Services, however played no part in the framing, assessment or awarding of the tender.

The open tender process was advertised on the council's procurement portal as well as nationally via specialist arts media, Arts Professional.

Arts Professional is the 'go to' online publication for theatre management companies and cultural service providers. Concurrently six key theatre/cultural services operators were contacted and signposted to the tender process.

The Venues Tour, which formed part of the tender exercise attracted three bidders. Following the completion of the process all those companies, who requested a tender pack, were contacted for feedback as to why they did not continue with an application. Only one company responded.

It was for the newly formed Trust to decide on the make up of their board and in appointing trustees. However, a Worthing Borough Council Officer and elected member would have 'observer' status on the newly formed Trust Board.

A three year business plan, indicating a reduction in council subsidy, was presented by the Trust to the Council as a part of their tender submission. This was discussed again at the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 July 2019.

The financial and overall performance of the Trust would be evaluated through regular Service Level Agreement meetings, based on the original tender requirements.

Mr Cawdell asked the following supplementary question:-

A Member raised concerns at a recent Committee meeting that expert advice and guidance, which had been provided through a number of independent reports and emails, had been ignored. He suggested a pause to proceedings was the right course of action and that the additional £200k required in 2021 would be better spent on other services.

Are those reports and emails in the public domain, if not, could those reports be put in the public domain so that the advice provided could be considered by the public.

The Executive Member for Customer Services agreed to provide a written response to the question.

Ian Davey, a Worthing resident, asked the following questions:-

I congratulate this council on declaring a Climate Emergency.

It is an important first step towards Worthing playing it's part in preventing Climate Breakdown.

Given that transport contributes around a third of all the UK CO2 emissions, with the majority coming from road transport, could you please say how you will work with partners such as West Sussex / Greater Brighton / Coast to Capital / Transport for the South East and Highways England to reduce road traffic in the Worthing area and facilitate the necessary switch to travel by sustainable transport modes.

The Leader of the Council replied that the bodies responsible for transport in Worthing are West Sussex County Council and Highways England, the Borough Councils role was limited.

Worthing Borough Council had a seat on the boards of Coast to Capital and Transport for the South East which would enable the Council to lobby for the things needed in the local area to encourage people out of cars or into less polluting cars or onto alternative transport. The Leader of Worthing Borough Council had also recently taken over as Chairman of the Greater Brighton Economic Board for the forthcoming year.

In relation to public transport, Adur and Worthing Councils had adopted the Easit programme making public transport more affordable.

The Councils Joint Strategic Committee had recently considered a report regarding investment in ultra low emissions vehicles for the Council's fleet and work continued on an Electric Vehicle Strategy. Worthing's Local Plan would also consider sustainable transport matters.

Mr Davey asked the following supplementary question:-

We know that Highways England have wasted 10's of millions of pounds of public money without making any difference to the A27. Will the Council now withdraw any support for both

options of an A27 bypass and propose instead that money is used to provide local residents with sustainable, deliverable and affordable transport alternatives.

The Leader of the Council agreed that there had been an awful lot of wasted money over decades by Highways England and its for runners on the A27 through Worthing. The last proposal submitted from Highways England (18 months ago), aiming to upgrade and improve the A27 through Worthing, had been rejected by Worthing Borough Council as it was not good enough and was not a good use of money. The Leader was not going to rule out any future improvements to the A27 as they were needed in order to reduce congestion and pollution, however, the Council wanted to see all of these things i.e. A27 improvements and investment in alternative transport.

Stuart Field, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-

Councillor Yallop informed me during a telephone conversation in April, it is your intention to build a competition pool at the Worthing Leisure Centre. Since the closure of the Aquarena this will provide a much needed facility in our town. Councillor Yallop further advised me that the proposed pool is currently planned to be 25 metres in length.

In my letter dated 4 August 2017, addressed to Councillor Daniel Humphreys, I made clear that Worthing Swimmers need a proper swimming pool with a length of 50 metres.

Please do not repeat the mistakes the Council made in the planning and construction of Splash Point.

Why are Worthing Borough Council not installing a 50m pool?

The Executive Member for Environmental and Digital Services replied that the redevelopment of the Worthing Leisure Centre provided the Council with an opportunity to review the range of leisure needs in the community and he was keen to see a pool at this site.

However, as the business case and options were developed, the Council would need to consider those needs in the context of cost, financial viability, and the constraints of the site.

At this stage the Council was not ruling anything in or out.

Mr Field asked the following supplementary question:-

Would the Council consider having a 50m pool alongside the existing Splashpoint site?

The Leader of the Council replied that he was not convinced of the need for a 50m pool and stated that Splashpoint had been a fantastic success. It had provided 795 square metres of swimming pool space, compared with 575 square metres in the old aquarena. There had been over 700,000 visits to Splashpoint each year, compared with 300,000 to the old aquarena and Splashpoint was providing lessons for over 2,000 children, compared with 900 at the old aquarena.

The evidence suggested that the decision to build a 25m pool instead of a 50m pool, was the right one.

Lisa Vernelle, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-

On behalf of Transition Town Worthing Transport Group. What is the progress on the local walking & cycling infrastructure plan. How can the public influence this plan”.

The Leader of the Council replied partly through the Council’s own Cycling Walking Action Group, in partnership with West Sussex County Council, to deliver a Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan. The Leader extended an invitation to Transition Town Worthing to attend the action group and hear what work had been done.

Chris Owen, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-

Do Members know the true costs of running all four venues, the overall income of all four venues and the combined surplus or loss for all four venues? This information is needed to make an informed decision as to the future costs to the Council without the income or surplus.

The Executive Member for Customer Services agreed to provide a written response to the question.

Mr Owen asked the following supplementary question:-

Do Members know that it is not true that the real in-house service cannot access Arts Council grants when other councils have accessed grants?

The Executive Member for Customer Services replied that out of the 841 NPO organisations receiving funding between 2018 and 2022, 37 had been applied for by local authorities which was 4%. Of those 37, only 8 were combined arts, which was 1%. Aside from becoming an NPO, there are many financial benefits to Worthing Theatres and Museum becoming a charity.

As a charity the Trust would also have access to gift aid, and be in a position to promote and receive legacies, donations and individual and corporate giving. Those changes also allowed the exploration of social investment and other models, to aid the cultural activity in Worthing.

Samuel Baeza, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-

Can the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing explain, how the connection between dog offences and the number of dogs walked, by amongst others, professional walkers has been arrived at, as most incidents are caused by people with just one out of control dog?

The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that the Council had been made aware of some concerns with dogs under a persons care and sometimes this had related to a number of dogs in the care of one individual.

Given that the current PSPO’s were due to expire in December 2019, there was an opportunity to review their contents and test the communities views on this issue.

The public consultation would capture the community view on how PSPO's had performed so far, seeking views on proposed amendments and how PSPO's could be used going forward and if they were necessary.

Mr Baeza asked the following supplementary question:-

How will the Council prevent uninsured dog walkers taking over?

The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that the Council's Dog Wardens would be keeping this under observation and that dog owners also had a responsibility to check that dog walkers were insured. It was also noted that the figures had been provided by the Professional Dog Walkers Association and that a decision would only be taken once the consultation period had ended.

Julia Owen, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-

Do the members believe the decision to outsource to a trust is in the best financial interests of the council?

The Executive Member for Customer Services replied, yes.

Ms Owen asked the following supplementary question:-

How will the Council ensure that the Trust doesn't turn the cinema offer into a multiplex?

The Executive Member for Customer Services replied that the trust was a charitable trust, and had already been very clear in its business plan what it intended to do. What had already been done, over the last four years, had been closely scrutinised and gave the Executive Members no concerns that Ms Owen's concerns would arise.

Jill Guest, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-

Worthing has some fantastic, publicly owned community assets, one of which is the Lido. I know the council has leased it for its current purpose, but there is so much more potential for the building. Is the leader of the council and the current administration willing to look at how the Lido could be better used for the community.

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that the Lido was a fundamental part of the Council's Seafront Investment Plan and one that it continues to monitor.

We acknowledge that there might be other uses for the asset, beyond its current operation and we are currently monitoring other Lido's, or similar seafront buildings, to assess the potential of other uses.

Ms Guest asked the following supplementary question:-

Why does the Council not buy out the lease and redevelop the Lido?

The Executive Member for Regeneration reiterated that the site was part of the Council's Seafront Investment Plan but was the subject of a lease at present.

C/19/19-20

Petition Submitted to Worthing Borough Council - 'Worthing to be Zero Carbon by 2030'

Before the Committee was a report by the Director of Communities, which had been circulated to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed version of these minutes.

The report informed Members that a petition had been received on 15th May 2019 from Ms Joanne Paul, containing 1,055 signatures. The petition was received electronically by the Proper Officer and proposed that Worthing Borough Council declare a Climate Emergency and pledge to make Worthing Borough Council Carbon Neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption of emissions.

In accordance with the Council's petition scheme, Ms Paul presented the petition and addressed the Council.

Ms Paul suggested that exceptional measures needed to be put in place to tackle this issue. She proposed the following:-

1. A Climate Change Commission - composed of community representatives, business leaders and other stakeholders across Adur and Worthing.
2. A Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change - the first of these was held in Camden earlier in the week and it's recommendations will be going to the next Camden Council meeting. This could deliver a large transparent and diverse pool of resources from which to draw solutions to the climate crisis.
3. A dedicated budget to accomplish these aims - the Council had already earmarked £735k for moving towards net zero carbon. The other initiatives outlined, would also require funding via a dedicated budget

The Leader of the Council thanked Ms Paul and those that had signed the petition for their petition and addressed Council with their right of reply.

The Leader advised that the Council could look at a Climate Change Commission. The Council would set up a board within the Council, to be chaired by the Chief Executive. The board would look at the work of Worthing Borough Council both within the Council and externally in order to deliver the net zero carbon emissions target.

The Leader stated that he would consider a Citizen's Assembly but wouldn't be able to commit to that at the meeting. He also reaffirmed the Council's budget commitment of £735k.

The Leader proposed that the Council welcomed the petition, thanked all those who signed the petition, and moved forward by accepting all of the aims set out in the Joint Strategic Committee report on the 9 July 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Kevin Jenkins.

Members debated the petition and associated actions and stated a desire to work together on this issue.

An amendment, proposed by Councillor Helen Silman and seconded by Councillor Jim Deen, was not supported.

On a vote: For 33, Against 0, Abstain 1

Resolved that the Council welcomed the petition, thanked all those who signed the petition, and agreed to move forward by accepting all of the aims set out in the Joint Strategic Committee report on the 9 July 2019.

C/20/19-20 Announcements by the Mayor, Leader of the Council, Executive Members or the Head of Paid Service

Since the Annual Full Council meeting, the Mayor had attended many engagements accompanied by her Consort. Highlights included:

- The Mayor's Civic Service at the Tarring Baptist Church;
- The HMS Hood Service;
- A commemorative service for the 75th anniversary of DDay;
- The annual London Taxi Benevolent Association trip to Worthing;
- The Children's Parade;
- West Sussex Armed Forces Drumhead Service;
- The 24th anniversary commemoration of Remembering Srebrenica;
- The opening of the Worthing Observation Wheel;
- The annual Worthing Royal Naval Association Sea Sunday; and
- A number of charity events.

The Mayor announced the following awards:-

- Adur and Worthing Councils' Building Control Partnership team won the 'Best Partnership with a LABC team award' for their work with Westbrooke Developments (Roffey Homes) on major schemes in Lancing and Worthing;
- Worthing Borough Council with partners had received a Purple Flag at a special awards event run by the Association of Town & City Management (ATCM);
- Heene Community Association had been presented with the Queens Award for Voluntary Services;
- Mrs Elizabeth Mary Crockett had been made a member of the Order of the British Empire for services to the community; and
- Mr John Gibbons, Worthing Symphony Orchestra's Conductor, had been awarded a British Empire Medal.

The Mayor also highlighted the forthcoming 2019 Charity Variety Show event on 14 September at the Worthing Assembly Hall.

The following Executive Member announcements were noted:-

1. The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing congratulated Western Sussex Hospitals Trust for gaining an award as one of the countries best hospitals and for managing to achieve their targets, including the A&E target, for which the trust received £27m.
2. The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services announced that Cityfibre had recently announced significant investment in the town. Around £25m would be invested, bringing full fibre to homes, which would provide ultrafast gigabit connectivity to 14,000 homes. This was a really key piece of work which has tangible benefits including, increased GDP, productivity and the additions of public wi-fi. It was also

noted that the data centre was likely to be situated in Marine Ward, subject to planning.

3. The Executive Member for Regeneration highlighted that the Purple Flag Award was the result of collaborative working with businesses across the town centre, the TCI, West Sussex Police, Stagecoach, the Street Angels and taxi rank Wardens.
4. The Executive Member for Regeneration also wished to thank the 100 local heroes that attended the opening of the observation wheel.

C/21/19-20 Items raised under Urgency Provisions

There were no urgent items raised.

C/22/19-20 Recommendations from the Executive and Committees to Council

Council had before it recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Joint Strategic Committee.

Extracts of these minutes had been circulated as items 8A and 8B(i) to (v).

ITEM 8A JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20 JUNE 2019

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19

The JOSOC Chairman presented a recommendation from the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 June 2019, which was to approve the annual report.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman.

Members debated the role of scrutiny, its effectiveness, the need for party politics to be removed from the scrutiny process, the need for the JOSOC Task & Finish Group to report on its findings and acknowledged that the scrutiny process was only as good as the Members on the Committee.

On a vote: For 23, Against 11, Abstain 1

Resolved that the Council approved the JOSOC Annual Report 2018/19.

ITEM 8B(I) JOINT STRATEGIC COMMITTEE - 9 JULY 2019

Enabling the Digital Future for Adur & Worthing: Extending Ultrafast

The Leader presented the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 July 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Kevin Jenkins.

An amendment was proposed by Cllr Silman and seconded by Cllr Carl Walker. Members debated the proposed amendment but it was not supported.

On a vote: For 20, Against 10, Abstain 3

Resolved

That Worthing Borough Council:-

- (a) NOTED the overall final outturn for 2018/19;
- (b) APPROVED the net appropriations to General Fund Reserves in the year as detailed in paragraph 6.2 totalling:

Worthing Borough Council £1,450,685
- (c) AGREED the net carry over of revenue budget to 2019/20 funded from reserves as detailed in appendix 6:

Worthing Borough Council £425,900
- (d) APPROVED the transfer of additional business rates income to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserves to earmark funds to address the timing difference between the Business Rates income received in the General Fund in year (net of relief), and the grant income paid from Central Government to reimburse lost revenue as a consequence of Government policy decisions on reliefs.

Worthing Borough Council £480,174

ITEM 8B(II) JOINT STRATEGIC COMMITTEE - 9 JULY 2019

Financial Performance 2018/19 - Capital and Projects Outturn

The Leader presented the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 July 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Keith Bickers.

On a vote: For 32, Against 0, Abstain 1

Resolved

That Worthing Borough Council:-

- a. NOTED the overall capital final outturn for 2018/19.
- b. AGREED the net carry over of General Fund Capital underspends for Worthing Borough Council as detailed in paragraph 5.10.
- c. APPROVED the financing of the Worthing Borough Council 2018/19 Capital Investment Programme, including the use of capital receipts as set out in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8.

- d. APPROVED the carry forward of Council resources underspends to fund budget pressures as detailed in paragraph 4.2.2. And to fund a contingency budget as detailed in paragraph 5.13 and summarised in paragraph 5.14.
- e. APPROVED the use of capital receipts to fund redundancy costs associated with the Environmental Services restructure and the resulting Capital Flexibilities Strategy as detailed in paragraph 5.9.

ITEM 8B(III) JOINT STRATEGIC COMMITTEE - 9 JULY 2019

Becoming financially sustainable - Revenue Budget Strategy for 2020/21

The Leader presented the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 July 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Kevin Jenkins.

Members debated the current financial climate, the impact of Council Tax on the poorest residents and the possible impact of changes to West Sussex County Council funding.

On a vote: For 20, Against 0, Abstain 13

Resolved

That Worthing Borough Council approved the Budget Strategy for 2020/21, outlined in Section 9 of the report.

ITEM 8B(IV) JOINT STRATEGIC COMMITTEE - 9 JULY 2019

Becoming financially sustainable - Capital Strategy for 2020/21

The Leader presented the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 July 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Kevin Jenkins.

On a vote: For 21, Against 0, Abstain 11

Resolved

That Worthing Borough Council approved the Capital Strategy for 2020/23.

ITEM 8B(V) JOINT STRATEGIC COMMITTEE - 9 JULY 2019

Becoming financially sustainable - Revenue Budget Strategy for 2020/21

The Leader presented the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 9 July 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Kevin Jenkins.

Members welcomed the proposal.

On a vote: For 33, Against 0, Abstain 0

Resolved

That Worthing Borough Council:-

- i. NOTED support for the Greater Brighton Metropolitan College in its ambitions to create a Centre for Creative and Digital Industries at Pelham Street and a University Centre at West Durrington in partnership with the University of Arts London;
- ii. NOTED the significant benefits expected from these developments for students from the local area, in particular the provision of a higher education offer in Worthing as well as the improved offer at Brighton readily accessible to our local students;
- iii. AGREED to a loan of £5m to Greater Brighton Metropolitan College to facilitate the delivery of the scheme, funded by prudential borrowing, and providing an income to Worthing Borough Council of circa £100,000 per year;
- iv. AGREED to amend the capital programme accordingly, and increase the operational and authorised borrowing limits by £5m to accommodate the proposed borrowing;
- v. AGREED to amend the approved investments listing to include GBMet as an authorised investment;
- vi. APPROVED the amendment of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy to enable a provision to be set aside in line with the repayments principal, in respect of loans to third parties funded by borrowing.

C/23/19-20 Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by Executive Members and the Joint Strategic Committee since the last meeting of Council

The Leader of the Council presented his report on decisions taken by the Executive since the last Ordinary meeting of the Council; which were detailed in Item 9, on pages 25 to 34.

Questions were asked in relation to Worthing Theatres and Museum and press coverage regarding the provision of homes at Fulbeck Avenue.

C/24/19-20 Members Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12

The Mayor announced that the Proper Officer had received 10 questions from Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12. She advised that one supplementary question could be asked which must arise out of the original question, or, the reply.

Questions would be asked in rotation of the Groups represented in the Chamber and there was 30 minutes allowed for questions with 5 rotations of speakers possible. At the end of 30 minutes the Mayor explained that she would extend the time to conclude the current rotation of questions.

The Mayor announced that the following Councillors had submitted questions:

Councillors Barrett, Deen, McCabe, McDonald, S Smith, Smytherman, Walker and Withers.

The order would be

First rotation: Councillors Walker, Smytherman, Withers and McDonald

Second rotation: Councillors Deen, McCabe, and Withers

Third rotation: Councillor Barrett

Fourth rotation: Councillor S Smith

Fifth rotation: Councillor S Smith

First rotation:

Question from Councillor Walker to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services

Residents have been in touch to voice their concern and dismay at the dismantling of the current infrastructure in Brooklands Park. Many can see no immediate, detailed plans for replacing anything that has been removed. Could the Cabinet Member please explain how he intends to raise the requisite funds for his vision, and when the people of Worthing can expect to see a specific development plan and exact timeline for this much valued Community green space?

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that he was pleased to announce that the Council was in the process of appointing a renowned Landscape Architect company to further develop the Brooklands masterplan. Their brief included developing the technical design and costs for all the planned infrastructure. This would enable the Council to go out to tender this Autumn for the external business opportunities (indoor leisure barns / cafe) and ultimately procure a construction company to build the planned park infrastructure (pathways, landscape features, play area etc), as well as securing the required planning consent.

The Council was committed to funding the redevelopment of the park, and during the process would be actively exploring external opportunities to secure funding to help reduce the Council's financial commitment to the project. Those opportunities would include third party investment in the leisure facilities and also seeking external grants and sponsorship where appropriate.

The Executive Member assured Council that Officers were working tirelessly to progress the long term vision for the park which would take 2-3 years to complete, albeit in a phased approach.

In the meantime, the Council would continue to engage closely with the local community and Friends of group to keep them informed of the progress of the scheme, and to create opportunities for activities to take place (e.g. Summer forest schools and Cycal disabled cycling activities beginning this week).

Councillor Walker asked the following supplementary question:-

If there were insufficient investors, would the Council be prepared to make up the difference in funding?

The Executive Member for Digital and Environmental Services replied that the Council was committed to finding external funding.

Question from Councillor Smytherman to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services

Can the Executive Member advise what plans and timelines are in place to replace or refurbish the Litter Bins within the Town Centre and across the Borough?

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that the cleansing section had an annual budget that it used to replace a percentage of the 1,250 litter bins in place across the Borough that were damaged, missing or at the end of their life.

In addition to this, the Council was always looking to attract sponsorship opportunities or external funding from local businesses.

This had resulted in £5k funding from Southern Water and other local companies being obtained which allowed the Council to install an additional 12 new larger capacity bins on the promenade this Spring.

Councillor Smytherman asked a supplementary question regarding the condition of the black bins along the promenade.

The Executive Member for Digital and Environmental Services replied that the replacement of bins along the promenade would be dealt with in a considered, strategic way.

Question from Councillor Withers to the Executive Member for Regeneration

Will the council be reviewing procedures dealing with new house builders on local construction projects following the publicity in the national press about a certain well known housebuilder also operating locally who have run into problems with poorly built homes?

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that unfortunately, many national housebuilders did not use Local Authority Building Control and would seek to use Approved Inspectors.

As such, unless the Council was approached by the housebuilder, we would have no influence over checking compliance with the Building Acts. It should also be emphasised that Building Control does not have the remit to check the quality of a build.

Where the Council received any Building Regulation application, the Council would undertake a risk assessment which influenced the level of inspection to be undertaken. This

risk based approach took into account the experience of the building company, past examples of their work, and the nature of the development proposal.

The recent publicity would be taken into account in undertaking any such risk assessment if an application was received from the relevant national housebuilder.

In cases where there were problems with the quality of new build properties, such matters were generally covered by the National House Building Council (NHBC) warranties.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Withers asked whether there had been any discernible trend with complaints received.

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that the volume of complaints was not monitored as it was not one of the Councils performance measures. In cases where there were problems with the quality of new build properties, such matters were generally referred to the NHBC.

Question from Councillor McDonald to the Executive Member for Regeneration

As many of you know I am also a County Councillor and at a recent Full council meeting another County Councillor tabled a motion about the night time economy and a lack of things to do or places to go in the evenings. This County Councillor singled out Worthing for particularly unjustified criticism when he referred to parts of Worthing as a desolate place. He quoted the Worthing journal saying that Montague Place is "just a service road when the shops shut" and he said he could not argue with that.

Well firstly, Montague place is not the whole of Worthing but we will soon have the Worthing Observational Wheel at its southern end.

I was disgusted with this and felt I had to defend Worthing with its mix of great restaurants, theatres, cinemas, pubs, activities for all ages....I could go on but I think Worthing is a vibrant town and is getting better and better every month. After I had spoken in favour of Worthing the Councillor then staggered me by saying that he listened to residents and maybe I should. But more shocking he said that his colleagues on Worthing Borough Council agreed that Worthing is a desolate place after the shops shut.

Which colleagues was he referring to? Those Labour members I presume.

Will the Member for Regeneration agree with me that Worthing is improving all the time and is becoming a vibrant, energetic town with numerous hidden gems and not the bleak desolate place portrayed by a Councillor from Crawley and his alleged friends on Worthing Borough Council?

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that Worthing was going through a renaissance, it was growing and adapting to meet the demands of its residents. There were many successes, including; the growth deal with West Sussex County Council for the public realm committing money of £5m for a project up to £12m; the project at Brooklands Park where the Council is committed to taking this forward by attracting funding from external sources; Highdown Gardens has attracted £813k from the Heritage Lottery Fund; 5 parks had recently been awarded with green flags; Teville Gate House had been demolished and a planning application for the site had been approved; Teville Gate was going through planning; Union Place would be coming to planning in the near future; the arrival of Gigabit and the roll out to households for £28 per month and the award of the purple flag for the night time economy.

Councillor McDonald asked a supplementary question regarding the variety of restaurants in Worthing.

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that Worthing had a diverse range of restaurants which should be celebrated and used frequently.

Question from Councillor Deen to the Executive Member for Regeneration

When it comes to the development of Worthing town centre, our colleagues from West Sussex County Council have a record of under-delivering on the hopes and expectations of Worthing residents. Is the Cabinet Member for Regeneration confident that the proposed public realm improvements for Portland Road are not going to, once again, leave Worthing residents underwhelmed and questioning the priorities of this administration in terms of town centre improvement?

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied yes.

Question form Councillor McCabe to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services

How many FTE posts have been lost in refuse and recycling teams in the last ten years and how many are being lost following the introduction of the alternative weekly collections in September?

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that no staff had been lost on the frontline. A review of the service had been carried out to look at the efficiency of the routes used for collections to ensure that operatives were making the best use of their time. There were 5.5 fte support roles that had been lost during the service redesign in 2018 but the Council was committed to emptying 100,000s of bins every month and delivering a great service to the people of Worthing.

Councillor McCabe asked a supplementary question and the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied.

Question from Councillor Withers to the Leader of the Council

To what extent is the county lines drug trade a problem for Worthing and if so how is it being dealt with by the local council?

The Leader of the Council replied that as a coastal town with good transport links to London, Worthing was ideally geographically places for drug dealing networks known as 'County Lines' to develop their operations. This activity almost always involved the exploitation of vulnerable people (both children & adults).

Over the last two years the Council, alongside its partners, had been working to address this issue. This had seen the proposition of all Sussex County Lines coming to Adur and Worthing reduced from 45% in 2018 to 33% in most recent data.

The number of Cuckooed properties (where drug dealers take over a vulnerable person's property) had fallen and the level of violence associated with County Lines had reduced significantly.

Among the actions taken with partners were:

- *training front line staff, AirBnB providers and taxi drivers around County Lines, cuckooing and child exploitation, and ongoing education and training of our officers so they can keep up with developments;*
- *Creation of a Serious & Organised Crime Partnership for Adur, Worthing & Horsham. This partnership met monthly to share intelligence and information on persons of interest, as well as coordinate operations to disrupt drug activity;*
- *Commissioned a Locality Review conducted by the Government's Violence & Vulnerability Unit to review and make recommendations on best practice around these crime areas.*

This continued to be a priority for the Adur, Worthing and Horsham Serious and Organised Crime Partnership as well as the Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Partnership who had just been awarded further funding to tackle serious youth violence, often associated with County Lines.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Withers asked whether Councillors would be alerted to issues in their ward.

The Leader of the Council replied that the Police were not able to share this information.

Question from Councillor Barrett to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services

Can Councillor Crouch tell me when the Science Experience Development at Brooklands is rolled out who will be responsible for clearing the Brooklands site will it be the Council or any proposed developer.

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that the Council was responsible for any demolition.

Question from Councillor Sally Smith to the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing

Can the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing explain, how the Council will analyse and report on the responses to the consultation on the new proposed extension to the Public Space Protection Order relating to dogs, in particular the extension of the current exclusion area on Worthing Seafront and provide assurances that the Council will not proceed with the proposals if local residents are opposed to suggested measures?

The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that Officers would be compiling the input from the consultation after it had closed, and would summarise the results in relation to the types of comments received to each proposal.

From the data collected during the consultation, the Council hoped to have figures illustrating support by residents for each proposal, as well as the key thoughts and opinions associated with these positions.

The summary would be presented back to the Joint Strategic Committee with a full report and recommendations later in the year for a decision to be taken by elected members.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Smith questioned whether the Council would undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to the exclusion zone proposal.

The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that it would not as there were lots of places for residents to walk their dogs.

Question form Councillor Sally Smith to the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing

Noting the 200 job losses at Southern Water's Customer services department in Worthing and noting the recent £123m fine levied on Southern Water by OFWAT for polluting our environment and misreporting the results of their tests, why is the Council confident that Southern Water is a reliable and reputable partner to such an extent that it is prioritising the interests of Southern Water over those of local residents?

The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that Southern Waters regional 'Bathing Water Enhancement Programme' involved collaboration with numerous local authorities. With a focus on continual improvement of our bathing water, a number of actions had been taken, such as:

- conducting misconnection surveys and any corrective work necessary;*
- signage to encourage dog owners to observe beach exclusion zones and removing dog fouling;*
- regular patrols by Council teams to monitor these areas, and*
- measures to reduce the impact from birds.*

The Council's partnership with Southern Water was important in relation to the work to improve water quality for the residents of Worthing.

C/25/19-20 Motions on Notice

Before the Committee was a report by the Director of Communities, which had been circulated to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed version of these minutes.

The Council had before it, a motion which had been submitted by Councillor Martin McCabe.

The Council was asked to deal with the motion under provisions set out in paragraph 14 of the Council Procedure Rules (under part 4 of the Council Constitution - Rules of Procedure).

Councillor McCabe presented the motion to Council which was seconded by Councillor Sally Smith.

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services proposed an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman which was debated and on a vote, supported.

The Council expressed support for the amended motion.

On a vote: For 33, Against 0, Abstain 0

Resolved that Worthing Borough Council agreed the amended motion as set out below:-

Food Waste Collection

This Council recognizes that cutting down on food waste is a crucial part of the fight against climate change.

We agree with the government's ambition to cut down household food waste, as detailed in the Resources and Food Waste Strategy for England.

As such, Worthing Borough Council calls on the Government to:

- 1. Bring forward plans to reduce the amount of food and packaging waste by working with producers and retailers;*
- 2. Provide clarification on future requirements for separate food waste collections in particular, addressing the environmental benefit of collecting the waste separately as opposed to extracting it from residual waste; and*
- 3. Providing waste collection authorities in England with the required funding for the capital investments and revenue costs associated with collecting and processing food waste.*

C/26/19-20 Motions on Notice

Before the Committee was a report by the Director of Communities, which had been circulated to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed version of these minutes.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Richard Mulholland and seconded by Councillor Helen Silman.

Resolved

In accordance with the Constitution the Motion was noted and immediately referred to the Joint Strategic Committee and Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 10.20 pm, having commenced at 6.30 pm

Mayor