

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

20 July 2023

QE2 Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

Councillor Joe Pannell, Chairman
Councillor Joss Loader, Vice-Chairman

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

***Absent**

C/10/23-24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies from Councillors Mandy Buxton, Lee Cowen, Sharon Sluman and Rob Wilkinson were received by the Chairman.

C/11/23-24 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

C/12/23-24 Questions from the public

There were no questions from the public.

C/13/23-24 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

C/14/23-24

**Announcements by the Chairman, Leader of the Council,
Executive Members and / or Head of Paid Service**

The Chairman informed the Council about a number of meetings and events that he had attended since the Annual Council meeting. These included:-

- Meeting the Lord Lieutenant at Edes House, Chichester;
- Visiting Southwick Community Centre for the Dementia Friendly Certificate Presentation;
- Attending a branch meeting of West Sussex MNDA at Steyning;
- Attending the reading of the Sussex Charter at the Beacon on Lancing Beach Green;
- Attending the opening day of the Fishersgate Gateway Hub; and
- Attending the Heronsdale School Summer Fete.

The Leader wished to place on record the Council's thanks to Sarah Gobey, Chief Finance and Section 151 Officer, for all of her years of service and wished her a very well earned retirement

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing informed the Council of a local community workshop that had been held the previous week, thanking all of those who had attended and participated in the event.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment & Leisure invited Councillors to attend a visit to the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on Wednesday 26th July. Any Councillors interested in attending were asked to contact Cllr Evans for details regarding the trip.

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services provided an update on the implementation of the service improvement plan, advising Council that the regulator had expressed confidence in the approach being adopted.

The Head of Paid Service updated the Council on the recruitment to posts in the senior leadership team, advising the Council that a report would be brought to Council once all of the appointments had been made. She also wished to thank Sarah Gobey, on behalf of the organisation, for all her work, advice and guidance she had provided the Councils.

C/15/23-24

Items raised under urgency provisions

The Chairman announced that he had accepted an urgent item, under urgency provisions, relating to councillor non-attendance throughout a period of six consecutive months.

A report was tabled by the Director for Sustainability & Resources which sought approval for a six month absence for Councillor Rob Wilkinson.

The Leader of the Council introduced the recommendation set out in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Paul Mansfield and following a vote, was unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council approved the reasons given for Councillor Wilkinson's period of absence, as set out in the report, and authorised Councillor Wilkinson to continue in his position as Councillor until such time as he was fit to return to work, which was anticipated to be in the Autumn of 2023.

C/16/23-24 Recommendations from the Cabinet and Committees to Council

7(A) Joint Audit & Governance Committee - 30 May 2023

Joint Audit & Governance Committee Appointments: Parish Councillors

The Chairman of the Joint Audit & Governance Committee, Councillor Andy McGregor, introduced the recommendations from the Committee, which were seconded by Councillor Paul Mansfield and following a vote, were unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council approved

- (i) the appointment of Cllr Mike Mendoza as a Co-Opted Member for Lancing Parish Council on the Joint Audit & Governance Committee for 2023/24;
- (ii) the appointment of Cllr Paul Mansfield as a Co-opted Member for Sompting Parish Council on the Joint Audit & Governance Committee for 2023/24.

7(B) Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 8 June 2023

Annual JOSCS Report

The Chairman of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Joss Loader, introduced the recommendations from the Committee, which were seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn and following a vote, were unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council approved the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual report for 2022/23.

7(C) Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee

Acquisition of leasehold properties on the Southwick Estate to support estate improvement

The Leader and Chairman of the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee, Councillor Neil Parkin, introduced the recommendation from the Sub-Committee meeting, which was seconded by Councillor Carson Albury and following a vote, was unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council approved a budget of £2,250,000 to enable the acquisition of up to 10 homes on the Southwick Estate to facilitate the redevelopment of the estate and to provide temporary accommodation in the interim. This was to be funded from £0.9m retained right to buy receipts and £1.35m from borrowing.

7(Di) Joint Strategic Committee

Financial Performance 2022/23 - Revenue outturn

The Leader introduced the recommendations from the Joint Strategic Committee, which were seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn, debated and following a vote, were unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council:-

- i) noted the overall final outturn for 2022/23; and
- ii) approved the net appropriations from General Fund Reserves in the year as detailed in section 6 of the report totalling £749,839 for Adur District Council.

7(Dii) Joint Strategic Committee

Developing a revenue budget for 2024/25 in difficult economic circumstances

The Leader introduced the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee, which was seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn and following a vote, was unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council approved the Budget Strategy for 2023/24.

7(Diii) Joint Strategic Committee

Investing for our future - Capital Strategy 2024/27

The Leader introduced the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee, which was seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn and following a vote, was unanimously supported.

Resolved: that the Council approved the Capital Strategy 2024/27.

C/17/23-24 Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council presented his report on decisions taken by the Cabinet since the last meeting of the Council, which were detailed in Item 8.

The Council noted that the Leader had taken a number of decisions in relation to Adur Homes whilst the Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services was away attending to a family matter.

Questions were raised in relation to Flood Defences, a Shadow Youth Cabinet and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

C/18/23-24 Pay Policy Statement 2022/23

Before the Council was a report by the Director for Sustainability and Resources, which was circulated to all members and is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 9.

The Monitoring Officer advised the Council of a minor amendment to the recommendation in the report to say 'that the Council was recommended to note and approve the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 set out in Appendix 1'.

The Leader proposed the recommendation as amended, which was seconded by Councillor Carson Albury and following a vote, was unanimously supported.

Resolved, that the Council noted and approved the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

C/19/23-24 Members question time under Council Procedure Rule 12

Rotation One

Cllr Arnold asked the following question:

In late 2021 we asked the Council Executive to call for a meeting with Southern Water's CEO to demand immediate action on sewage in our River Adur and sea.

At the time the Cabinet member for Communities and Wellbeing said that Ofwat was a strong enough mechanism for appropriate fines. Since then Southern Water was required to hand back £30m to customers at the end of 2022, but we now see a potential 73% rise in bills to pay for improvements in the sewer system. Adur is among 40 councils working together to hold Southern Water to account over pollution and infrastructure failures.

What progress is being made in this?

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration replied that the Southern Water stakeholder group was facilitated by Wealden Council. However, the group was unwieldy due to the large number of Councillors sitting on it. The stakeholder group was in the process of establishing a working group and the Cabinet Member would keep Council informed of progress.

Cllr Carol Albury asked the following question:

Perhaps Councillor Neil Parkin could explain if there is any truth to the rumours that the Frost Site has been sold to Croydon Council, and they have been bought by Croydon to house their Council Tenants.

The Leader replied that he was pleased to confirm that Officers had checked with Croydon Council representatives that there was absolutely no truth to the rumour. Similar rumours had been circulated relating to other sites; the focus remained very much directed towards delivering affordable homes for local people in need.

Rotation Two

Cllr Harvey asked the following question:

We have a government that lacks urgency in meeting net zero targets. The recently published 2023 progress report from the Climate Change Committee states "Our confidence in the UK meeting its goals from 2030 onwards is now markedly less than it was in our previous assessment a year ago".

In this context we are fortunate to have Shoreham Port; an innovative enterprise which is being taken into a net zero future and is showing how all aspects of building, industry and employment can be managed sustainably.

Can we be assured that sustainable, renewable developments at the port will be supported and enabled by this council, with due diligence and timely engagement in planning processes?

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning replied that he shared the councillors excitement about development coming forward at the Port and the Port team should be commended for their proactive approach to delivering new accommodation for businesses and their commitment to integrating sustainability into the operation of the Port when delivering new development.

The recent launch of the Hydrogen Strategy for Sussex highlighted the potential for the Port to play a leading role in the production of green hydrogen and, as Members would be aware, this was a project the Port had been developing as part of its overall strategy.

On the matter of Planning, it would have been inappropriate at this stage to comment on the merits of any prospective planning application and in applying due diligence, it was always very important to ensure that the Planning Committee considered proposals with an open mind and taking all of the material considerations into account.

Rotation Three

Cllr Arnold asked the following question

The transport studies we ask of developers talk of service provision and transport journeys. Cases in point were the Free Wharf study or the Mannings plans citing frequency of trains and 12% journeys by rail.

In light of the proposed rail ticket office closures and the potential for a resulting reduction in rail travel will you be asking for transport plans to factor in this consideration - particularly as transport facilities have been often used as a reason to go to below the 0.8 parking spaces per dwelling recommended by West Sussex County Council?

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Strategic Planning replied that everyone had heard the news about proposals to consult on the closure of ticket offices.

All of the stations in Adur District were busy and everyone could agree that having someone around to assist passengers would be helpful. The Cabinet Member couldn't understand why the Councillor thought there would be any fewer trains though as that would be the key factor when it came to putting together travel plans and calculating car parking space ratios.

C/20/23-24 Motion on Notice regarding the NHS

Council received a motion on notice proposed by Councillor Robina Baine and seconded by Councillor Jeremy Gardner.

The motion was debated and the following amendment was proposed, seconded and approved.

That the 4th proposed resolution be amended to say:-

'Lobby the Health Secretary and representatives of hospital consultants, junior doctors and other NHS staff representatives to work together to ensure staff feel valued and supported and to resolve industrial action'.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.00pm and reconvened at 9.05pm.

The meeting was adjourned again at 9.16pm and reconvened at 9.23pm.

Following the adjournments, the substantive motion as amended was put to a vote and supported unanimously.

Resolved:

That Adur District Council resolved to:-

- Acknowledge that many Adur residents were facing unprecedented waiting times for hospital treatment;
- Lobby NHS Sussex to be more ambitious in its improvement plans in the interests of local residents, while recognising it is limited by its Government funding and its ability to recruit and retain staff. The NHS Sussex Shared Delivery Plan for improvement had set modest priorities including:
 - people would be able to access a GP appointment within two weeks if they need it
 - no-one would wait more than 65 weeks for elective treatment
 - no more than 548 people would be waiting over 62 days for cancer treatment.
- Write to NHS Sussex to ask for urgent action to improve access to NHS dentistry services; and
- Lobby the Health Secretary and representatives of hospital consultants, junior doctors and other NHS staff representatives to work together to ensure staff feel valued and supported and to resolve industrial action.

C/21/23-24 Motion on Notice - Rights of the River

Council received a motion on notice proposed by Councillor Gabe Crisp and seconded by Councillor Julian Shinn.

In accordance with the constitution, the motion was debated and then referred to the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee for consideration and determination.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.48 pm, having commenced at 7.00 pm

Chairman