

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

**19 October 2023**

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

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

Councillor Julia Watts	Councillor Angus Dunn
Councillor Jude Harvey	Councillor Emma Evans
Councillor Julian Shinn	Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor Carson Albury	Councillor Jeremy Gardner
Councillor Carol Albury	Councillor Paul Mansfield
Councillor Robina Baine	Councillor Andy McGregor
Councillor Kevin Boram	Councillor Steve Neocleous
Councillor Mandy Buxton	Councillor Neil Parkin
Councillor Lee Cowen	Councillor Sharon Sluman
Councillor Gabe Crisp	Councillor Debs Stainforth

**Absent**

Councillor Tony Bellasis, Councillor Dan Flower, Councillor Ann Bridges, Councillor Catherine Arnold, Councillor Vee Barton, Councillor Carol O'Neal and Councillor Rob Wilkinson

**C/27/23-24                    Apologies for Absence**

Apologies from Councillors Catherine Arnold, Vee Barton, Tony Bellasis, Ann Bridges, Dan Flowers, Carol O'Neal and Rob Wilkinson were received by the Chairman.

**C/28/23-24                    Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

**C/29/23-24                    Questions from the public**

A question was received on the night from Trudy McGuigan seeking clarification as to when the Council would be filming meetings again.

The Chairman advised Ms McGuigan that a written response to the question would be provided.

**C/30/23-24                    Confirmation of Minutes**

**Resolved**, that the minutes of the meetings held on the 20th July and 22nd August 2023 be approved as correct records and be signed by the Chairman.

**C/31/23-24**

**Announcements by the Chairman, Leader of the Council,  
Cabinet 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 July Council meeting. These included attending:-

- The Esteem Open Day;
- The Pioneer Run at Shoreham Airport;
- The 15th anniversary of the Elmcroft Nursing Home;
- The opening of the newly refurbished Southwick Square;
- The opening of a new coffee shop, Azul, in Lancing; and
- Mr Kenneth Turner's 100th birthday celebration.

The Leader advised Council of the following changes to committee memberships:-

- Councillor Andy McGregor replaced Councillor Tony Bellasis on the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
- Councillor Andy McGregor replaced Councillor Tony Bellasis on the Adur Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader also proposed that Councillor Andy McGregor replace Councillor Joss Loader as the Council's representative on HASC. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Paul Mansfield and supported unanimously.

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services advised the Council that as at Friday 13th October, no residents were being placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation. The Cabinet Member wished to place on record his thanks to officers for all of their work in this area.

The acting Head of Paid Service informed Council that the Head of Paid Service was required constitutionally to report to Council periodically in regards to organisational design, the staffing structure and the deployment of staff. At item 7A on the agenda was a recommendation from the Joint Audit & Governance Committee for noting. During consideration by that committee, questions were raised about performance reporting. Although not part of this report, it was confirmed that a report would be taken to the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration in the near future.

**C/32/23-24**

**Items raised under urgency provisions**

The Chairman announced that there were no urgent items.

**C/33/23-24**

**Recommendations from the Cabinet and Committees to Council**

**7(A) Joint Audit & Governance Committee - 26th September 2023**

**Organisational design and capability building - progress update**

The Chairman of the Joint Audit & Governance Committee, Councillor Andy McGregor, introduced the recommendations from the Committee, which were seconded by Councillor Jeremy Gardner and noted by the Council.

**Resolved:** that the Council, in compliance with the Councils' Constitution, noted the overall departmental structure of the Councils, the management structure and the deployment of Officers.

## **7(B) Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee - 27th September 2023**

### **Financial Performance 2022/23 - Capital and Projects Outturn**

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 Angus Dunn and following a vote, was unanimously supported.

**Resolved:** that the Council

- a) Noted the overall capital final outturn for 2022/23;
- b) Noted the net carry over of General Fund Capital underspends for Adur District Council as detailed in paragraphs 5.4;
- c) Approved the financing of the Adur District Council 2022/23 Capital Investment Programme, including the use of capital receipts as set out in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2;
- d) Approved the carry forward of Council resources underspends to fund budget pressures as detailed in paragraph 4.2.2. and summarised in paragraph 5.4; and
- e) Noted the final projected benefit from completed invest to save schemes as outlined in Appendix 3.

## **C/34/23-24 Report of the Leader on decisions taken by the Executive**

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.

Questions were raised in relation to progress with New Salts Farm, the release of s106 monies for the replacement of play equipment at Shadwells Road open space, the Housing Improvement Plan, the use of right to buy receipts to fund hidden homes and the Western Harbour Arm Review.

## **C/35/23-24 Members question time under Council Procedure Rule 12**

### **Rotation One**

**Cllr Debs Stainforth asked the following question:**

*Back in July this council voted to approve a budget of £2.25 million to enable the acquisition of up to 10 homes on the Southwick Estate to facilitate the redevelopment of the estate in order to provide temporary accommodation in the interim.*

*Could you inform this council on its progress please?*

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes & Customer Services replied that in anticipation of more people wanting to take up the Council's offer than the Council budget would allow, Council Officers were developing an acquisitions policy and selection criteria to assess applications. The Council had tested this with the Residents Leaseholder Group and were making changes based on their comments. The Council was planning to launch the scheme through a mailout to leaseholders week commencing 30th October 2023.

**Cllr Mandy Buxton asked the following question**

*We saw recently some media coverage about the financial situations of local authorities and of course there are a number of councils that are in a tough financial situation. Both Adur & Worthing were mentioned as being authorities that might be in financial trouble but I wonder if you could explain some of the detail behind this and whether we should be concerned about the financial position of Adur District Council in particular as I am concerned that the reporting might not have been accurate?*

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources replied that the recent press releases had provided debt to core spending ratios. In the case of Adur District Council this was inaccurate as it included debt associated with the Housing Revenue Account which sat outside of the General Fund budget. In addition, the core spending power was only one indicator relating to the net budget position funded from taxation. Within the net budget there were income streams that directly related to debt associated with the purchase of strategic assets. The council was in an under borrowed position which means that it had not relied solely on borrowing to fund its capital expenditure.

**Cllr Lee Cowen asked the following question**

*With Westridge Construction Limited going into administration, do you have an update on the stalled Albion St development? What are the estimated costs to the council for this delay?*

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes & Customer Services replied that the Council had taken back possession of the site and were looking to get a contractor in place before Christmas to finish the scheme. The Council was protected by a performance bond which ensured any additional costs of completing the scheme were reimbursed.

**Cllr Robina Baine asked the following question**

*The government's u-turn on plans to force landlords to improve the energy efficiency of rented accommodation will cost renters about £325 a year in higher bills, according to a report published by the Climate Change Committee last week. The transition to net zero is essential but must also be a just transition, fair and inclusive as possible.*

*What will this council do to ensure private tenants can enjoy the benefits of efficient energy in their homes. Will you be publicising the services of the Local Energy Advice Partnership and pressing the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to take action to provide consistent energy grants to residents?*

The Cabinet Member for Communities & Wellbeing replied that Adur District Council remained committed to ensuring residents in private sector housing received as much

support as possible in making their homes energy efficient. The Council would continue to work with other Councils across West Sussex and the CAB in delivering the West Sussex Energy Advice Service. The Council had recently worked with Portsmouth City Council's Warmer Homes programme to secure over £41m of funding across a wide consortium area to deliver insulation, heating upgrades and renewable energy installations on eligible properties without gas boilers that was worth up to £38,000 per house.

The Private Sector team had previously taken action to ensure that properties were not privately rented out in breach of the current Minimum Energy Efficiency (MEES) Regulations which prohibited renting properties with an EPC of F or G. If the Regulations were subsequently amended, the PSH team would enforce against the revised standard.

### **Cllr Sharon Sluman asked the following question**

*The Adur and Worthing Health and Well-being Strategy states: "We will develop a more participatory approach that finds ways to involve people, and will work with communities so as to use their strengths (their skills, passions and time) to influence and shape health and wellbeing locally for all of our communities." Walking groups are mentioned as an example. What progress has there been on this approach and how far has the inclusive nature of this been achieved?*

The Cabinet Member for Communities & Wellbeing replied this strategy was predicated on key principles including:

- fairness and tackling health inequalities, therefore much of this work was about targeting more of our work with the poorest people in our communities.
- Asset based approaches - working with the strengths in our communities and thereby working with our communities to design solutions to local problems around Health & Wellbeing.

The strategy was being reviewed and renewed for next year. In the meantime, some key headlines included:

- The Wellbeing Programme continued to provide 121 behavioural interventions for residents to prevent / reduce cardiovascular disease. This alongside a range of programmes (alcohol, falls prevention, NHS health checks, smoking cessation...)
- The LCN work with the NHS and community partners focused on food security, mental health and physical activity;
- Going Local - covered the work with people to identify and strengthen their capacity around some of the factors that drive good / bad health & wellbeing (including housing and loneliness)
- The Cost of Living programme supported the most vulnerable around warm spaces and provided help with finances.

### **Cllr Jude Harvey asked the following question**

*The Government's intention to roll back targets for the country's pathway to net zero will damage the UK's ability to meet its carbon-cutting goal according to the the Climate Change Committee, the independent statutory body that advises the government on emission targets.*

*The decision comes at a time when the effects of the climate emergency are clear. The UK experienced record temperatures. Fires and floods have caused devastation in parts of Europe, North America and Australia. Environmental degradation in the developing world*

*means increasing inequality, increasing poverty, crises in the provision of clean water, political instability and has driven millions\* from their homes.*

*Can the cabinet member assure us that there are no plans for Adur to relax our targets to become carbon neutral by 2030?*

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure replied that the council had no intention of relaxing either its commitment to becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030 nor for the district of Adur to become net zero carbon by 2045. Whilst the Council was under no illusion that the targets remained difficult, it continued to make progress in both areas. For example the Council had recently reduced its reliance on fossil fuels to heat council buildings by commissioning air source heat pumps at the Shoreham Centre and the Council would be setting out its strategy for decarbonising in the first half of next year.

The Council was also committed to working with partners to reduce emissions outside of its direct control. For example the most recent Solar Together Sussex programme had installed over 1500 new solar PV systems on private homes across Sussex and the Council recently worked with other councils from across the South East in order to secure funding to retrofit energy efficiency measures to households without access to a gas boiler.

#### **C/36/23-24                      Motion on Notice (1)**

Council received a motion on notice proposed by Councillor Andy McGregor and seconded by Councillor Kevin Boram.

The motion was debated and the following amendment was proposed by Councillor Jeremy Gardner, seconded by Councillor Sharon Sluman and was unanimously approved.

That an additional bullet point be added to the aspirational initiatives to be worded as:-

*‘Ensure that all Council front line services are known by care leavers, are accessible and sensitised to the needs of care leavers, recognising the West Sussex County Council decision to treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic’.*

Following further debate, the substantive motion as amended was referred to the Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee for consideration and determination.

#### **C/37/23-24                      Motion on Notice (2)**

Council received a motion on notice proposed by Councillor Lee Cowen and seconded by Councillor Jeremy Gardner.

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 8.40 pm, having commenced at 7.00 pm

Chairman