

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

Councillor Carl Walker (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Caroline Baxter  
Councillor Sophie Cox  
Councillor Rita Garner  
Councillor Emma Taylor-Beal

Councillor John Turley  
Councillor Vicki Wells  
Councillor Rosey Whorlow

**Absent:**

Councillor Dr Beccy Cooper

**JSS-C(W)/26/23-24 Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Caroline Baxter declared an interest as member of West Sussex County Council

**JSS-C(W)/27/23-24 Minutes**

**Resolved:** that the minutes from the Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee meeting held on 12 September 2023, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**JSS-C(W)/28/23-24 Public Question Time**

A resident asked the following question: How does the Sub-Committee justify marketing the Grafton site at this time when the Union Place and Teville Gate developments have not yet been built? No one wants another vacant site for years and there is no suggestion that the Grafton Car park poses an immediate danger to users and needs to be demolished urgently.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration: The redevelopment of Grafton is another example of a strategically important site that has eluded previous administrations. As you may know, we are working with Homes England on a plan for Teville Gate and as you may also have seen, the plans for Union Place brought forward in a joint venture with Roffey Homes are ready to be submitted for planning permission. So it makes sense to focus attention on Grafton. We know that there is investment interest out there and the responsible thing to do is to test that interest to determine how it could benefit the town centre and our local communities. This is such an important site - it has the potential to connect the seafront and the town and to contribute to re-imagining our public realm. The Council has directed CIL contributions to a major improvement of Montague Place and other developers have come forward with their proposals for the town centre - to bring more people and make it a more vibrant place.

A resident asked the following question: Where and how many are the 'new and proposed' car parking spaces in the town centre to replace the 440 lost in this proposal? Currently there are no buses on many routes after 6.30 pm. and some routes have been severely curtailed, such as the No. 7 route which now only runs at 90 minute intervals, making car journeys to the town centre a necessity.

Response: There will be alternative MSCP facilities - refurbishment and new being constructed for the town which will off-set the loss of this underutilised parking facility. We are also committed to working with local bus partners to improve access to the town centre, and in that spirit have re-established the bus partnership as we look to work together to improve access and accessibility.

A resident asked the following question: Finding parking spaces is already becoming increasingly hard for local residents. Has any consideration been made of the effect of closing Grafton car park on the local residents that have to use their cars?

Response: There will be alternative MSCP facilities - refurbishment and new being constructed for the town which will off-set the loss of this underutilised parking facility. The meeting was also told of an upcoming WSCC review of on street parking.

A resident asked the following question: The green space next to the car park was due to be planted and set up as a gardens. Is this going to be built on?

Response: Should the committee agree to market the site, we will work with potential partners, stakeholders and through the planning system to develop an attractive new mixed-use development in this core, central site. However, it is too early to consider the specific configuration of any redevelopment at this early stage.

The Chair read out a question on a Resident's behalf: If Grafton car park is removed where will the 440 car parking spaces go, if the car park was sold or repurposed?

Response: There will be alternative MSCP facilities - refurbishment and new being constructed for the town which will off-set the loss of this underutilised parking facility.

The Chair read out a question on a Resident's behalf: Will there also be more disabled parking as so much of this has been lost with all of the local changes to disabled parking access and car parks?

Response: Accessibility is a priority for the council. Redevelopment of this central, core site, in addition to alternative MSCP facilities, will allow us to work with partners to better enable disabled access to the town centre.

A resident asked a question about the effect a development would have on resident's access. It was explained to the meeting that potential developers would be asked to be sympathetic to the needs of local communities and businesses. There would be further consultation with residents in the future

A resident asked how the development would affect the local businesses in the area and was told that there would be engagement with local businesses and residents.

A resident asked for details about how the site would be marketed. Details of the marketing process were given and it was advised that it was too early in the process to give details of how the legal marketing pack would be published.

A resident asked about parking at the new medical centre and was told that 200 spaces were being provided as part of the development.

### **JSS-C(W)/29/23-24 Members Questions**

A Member asked about the situation of the bowling alley situated in the Grafton site and was told that it was important to the town. It was acknowledged that any potential development would need to include the requirement to ensure an appropriate leisure offer either within the development or elsewhere in the Town Centre.

### **JSS-C(W)/30/23-24 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions**

There were no urgent items

### **JSS-C(W)/31/23-24 Greening Principles - Approach to greening our spaces**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Sustainability and 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 6.

The purpose of the report was to outline the Council's approach to greening our spaces and to deliver the headline principles that guide the approach. The key pillars of the Council's support of greening, across the borough, were taken from the administration's values to be Fair, Green and Local.

In recognising the breadth and passion of local residents, Friends of, and environmental associations and in understanding the administration's vision to be a 'Council for the Community' and in light of the Council's commitment to the climate and ecological emergencies, the report outlined the need for wider community participation and stewardship of our green spaces.

### **Decision**

1. That the emerging Greening Principles for Worthing and to adopt them for use across the council's practice be affirmed.
2. That the authority embeds the emerging Greening Principles as foundation values within the new Parks & Open Spaces Management and Town Centre Management Plans.
3. That the Greening Principles be used as core to the Greening Guide.
4. That the Greening Principles as pivotal policy in all aspects of environmental growth and development be endorsed

5. That the authority promote the Greening Principles as a way to harness community power and engagement in the fight against climate change and the ecological emergency.

### **Call-in**

The call-in deadline for the decisions will be 5.00pm on 21 November 2023.

### **JSS-C(W)/32/23-24 Carbon Emissions 22/23**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Sustainability and 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.

Worthing Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019. As part of the declaration, Members committed to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The report before members presented the fourth annual update on progress towards that target.

Since the previous report, the council had completed a number of decarbonisation projects that had significantly decreased gas consumption across the councils' property portfolio. As a result, reported emissions for 22-23 decreased by 5.4% when compared to the previous year.

Members were given an update on carbon reduction projects and were told that a fleet strategy would be introduced in the following year.

Members discussed the report and noted that the update presented part of the councils work. There was other work ongoing towards the climate emergency that would involve other stakeholders within the community.

### **Decision**

1. That the councils' current carbon emissions and carbon reduction work programme be noted;
2. That it be noted that further funding bids may be made, in consultation with the relevant executive member, and that if required further reports would brief members on the outcome of the bidding process

### **Call-in**

The call-in deadline for the decisions will be 5.00pm on 23 November 2023.

## **JSS-C(W)/33/23-24 Marketing of Grafton Multi-Storey car park**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Place, 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 before members advised members of the proposed marketing of the Grafton Multi-Storey car park (GMSCP) and adjoining council owned properties and sought the Committee's approval of the assessment criteria for those bids received.

### **Decision**

1. That the contents of the report be noted and that the key development priorities for the site be agreed.
2. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director, Regenerative Development to:
  - a) Proceed with the marketing of Grafton Multi-Storey car park and adjoining council owned properties.
  - b) Present a report back to the Joint Strategic Sub-Committee following the outcome of the marketing process (set out in Pg 5-6).
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to sign off the Marketing Brochure.

### **Call-in**

The call-in deadline for the decisions will be 5.00pm on 23 November 2023.

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The meeting ended at 7.36 pm