

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

14 December 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 Julian Shinn	Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor Ann Bridges	Councillor Jeremy Gardner
*Councillor Mandy Buxton	*Councillor Jude Harvey
Councillor Carson Albury	Councillor Paul Mansfield
Councillor Carol Albury	Councillor Andy McGregor
Councillor Catherine Arnold	Councillor Steve Neocleous
Councillor Robina Baine	Councillor Carol O'Neal
Councillor Vee Barton	Councillor Neil Parkin
Councillor Kevin Boram	Councillor Sharon Sluman
Councillor Lee Cowen	*Councillor Debs Stainforth
	Councillor Rob Wilkinson

*=Absent

C/38/23-24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies from Councillors Mandy Buxton, Jude Harvey and Debs Stainforth were received by the Chairman.

C/39/23-24 Declarations of interest

Councillor Catherine Arnold declared an interest as the Chair of Adur Voluntary Action.

C/40/23-24 Questions from the public

There were no questions from the public.

C/41/23-24 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th October 2023 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

C/42/23-24

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

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

- Attending the Adur & Worthing Business Awards;
- Attending the Shoreham and Lancing Remembrance Events;
- Meeting with the Leader and the Deputy Liaison Naval Officer to receive the artefacts from the now decommissioned HMS Shoreham;
- Attending the High Sheriff of West Sussex's Judges Service held at Chichester Cathedral; and
- Meeting with Honorary Alderman Brian Boggis to present his certificate.

The Council was also reminded about the Chairman's Christmas Carol Service which was due to be held on Saturday 16th December at 7.30pm.

The Leader announced that he laid a wreath on behalf of Adur District Council at the Southwick Remembrance event.

In addition, he also wished to place on record the Council's thanks to the Councils' Officers and Councillor Emma Evans for all their work with the Light up Shoreham event. He also thanked all the councillors who came along to take down the lights following the event.

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services advised the Council that a decision regarding works at Albion Street had been published on the 13th December. The Council had awarded a contract to Cheesmur Building Contractors for the completion of the 49 flats.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing welcomed the recent visit from Stuart Andrews MP, who came to look at the work on Pro Active and TellJo.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Regeneration updated the Council in relation to the lost planning appeal in regards to the former Howard Kent Site. The Cabinet Member also updated the Council in relation to the Western Harbour Arm Place Making Study and Infrastructure Providers Forum.

There were no announcements from the Head of Paid Service.

C/43/23-24

Items raised under urgency provisions

The Chairman announced that there were no urgent items.

C/44/23-24

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

7(A)

Adur Licensing Committee - 11th September 2023

Licensing Act 2003 - Review of Statement of Licensing Policy

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee, Councillor Paul Mansfield, introduced the recommendations from the Committee, which were seconded by Councillor Kevin Boram and unanimously supported by the Council.

Resolved: that the Council approved the adoption of the Statement of Licensing Policy.

7(B) Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 30th November 2023

Review of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Chairman of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Joss Loader, introduced the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Carol Albury.

Members wished to register their disappointment that Southern Water had refused a request from the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee to attend a meeting in early 2024. Councillor Joss Loader advised that she would be writing to the CEO of Southern Water to express the Committee's disappointment.

Following a vote, the recommendation was unanimously supported.

Resolved: that Adur District Council noted the changes made to the JOSOC Work Programme since it was agreed by both Councils in April 2023.

7(C) Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee - 7th December 2023

Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25

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 agreed that the Council Tax Support scheme for Adur District Council in respect of working age customers for 2024/25 should

- a) Be based upon the scheme for 2023/24 with no restrictions; and
- b) Not be further altered with any other changes beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit.

C/45/23-24 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.

Questions were raised in relation to the virement of right to buy receipts to support new Emergency & Temporary Accommodation in Lancing, the Southwick Estate Acquisition Programme, Eskan Court Refurbishment, Buckingham Park Funding Release, Carbon Emissions and Budget Engagement Insights.

Rotation One

Cllr Carol O'Neal asked the following question:

On 23rd November councillors were invited to a presentation at Shoreham Port. Port CEO Tom Willis outlined achievements and the vision for the future of the port. He also explained the obstacles and difficulties experienced in realising his ideal of running the port sustainably with its expanded small fishing facility and ambitious and innovative technology projects. In what ways will the council be able to support and promote this vision?

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Strategic Planning thanked all those Councillors who attended the recent presentation at the Port.

The Council was already very supportive of the ambitions at the Port. The Cabinet Member described the current working relationship between the organisations as excellent and we're keen to continue the positive engagement.

The Port's recent bid for a hydrogen powered tour boat was supported by the Council, and we were working closely with the Port on the Sussex Bay project with them as key founding partners. The Council had also been exploring opportunities for a 5G network at sea with them, to support maritime uses and environmental research and monitoring. Sussex Bay would aim to provide the Port with opportunities to showcase their work at forthcoming major events in 2024. Adur Council participated in the Port's Sustainability Week last year, and would do so again in 2024.

The Council was happy to provide letters of support and endorsement for a range of projects at the Port and this included the fishing facility as part of the Port's wider plans around decarbonisation. This was extremely exciting and further details about the collaborative working around this would be shared in the new year.

In addition, the Council was keen to continue to engage with the Port to ensure we're listening and responding to the views of the Port, and it's businesses, whilst we're happy to endorse and further publicise via our social media channels.

Cllr Gabe Crisp asked the following question

There have been ongoing issues with the boiler at Wadurs. Residents have been writing to me (and Cllr Evans) regarding the water temperature and the unpleasant experience of using the changing facilities and the showers. Can Cllr Evans please clarify the current situation, with a bit of historical context, so we can understand how we got here? Is Cllr Evans aware of the use of ASHP combined with a solar array at the Salt Ayre Leisure Centre scheme in Lancashire, highlighted in the LGA Sustainability webinar on Monday 6th Dec?

The Cabinet Member for the Environment & Leisure was pleased to advise that the repair work was started on 4th December and had been completed on time and to budget. The cost of this work would be funded 50/50 with South Downs Leisure.

It was noted that there was some outstanding redecoration required as a result of this work which would be completed asap.

Cllr Jeremy Gardner asked the following question

The Council Leader in a news release of 30 November noted that this council is facing tight financial restrictions “caused by a reduction in central government funding” and inflation. According to figures prepared by the Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities, money that has been made available to Adur by the Government through the Local Government Finance Settlement has been reduced by 33.3% since 2010. This compares with a 7% reduction for Horsham and 19% for Chichester. Could you tell us if the Executive has made representations to the Government on this reduction, which amounts to around £158 per household?

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources replied that the comparison of funding reductions between councils across the country since 2014 was impacted by the introduction of the New Homes Bonus Scheme and allocation of this funding.

Adur District Council has had a low level of New Homes Bonus funding due to the geographical constraints and the ability to increase housing within its boundaries. The limitation in housing growth had also impacted on the level of council tax funding achievable.

The Council finances were reported to the government through a number of statutory returns and the Council had also made representations to the government through consultations and network bodies to highlight these financial pressures.

Cllr Julian Shinn asked the following question

Anti-Social Behaviour. Can Cllr Boram please update us on the meeting he recently held with local traders and some councillors on the ASB across the district and any follow up actions that have been agreed?”

The Cabinet Member for Communities & Wellbeing replied that the meeting with local traders followed on from meetings held with Lancing businesses and separate meetings with the Co Op, Asda and rail partners. Our valuable small independent traders were a key part of the local economy and had very different resources and expertise available to them to keep their businesses and staff safe from ASB.

The meeting was attended by the Council’s lead for Safer Communities and the local police officer together with a contribution by Crime Stoppers. Issues discussed included shop layout, security cameras and the recording of crime and how and when to contact the police. A recording of the meeting would be available shortly.

Whilst the prevalence of ASB had recently declined, the situation would always be monitored and action taken with the community, businesses and the police to reduce its prevalence as far as possible.

Cllr Catherine Arnold asked the following question

We know some EPC certificates have been captured for Adur Homes. Can you provide us with an update on this and whether we will capture the amount needed in order to apply for the next round of the social homes decarbonisation fund - deadline of 15th January 2024?

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes and Customer Services replied that Adur Homes continued to collect Energy Performance Certificate data in respect of its accommodation. (a little over 90% of stock had an EPC). The average EPC rating across the stock was 'C'.

The Council continued to prioritise working through its Adur Homes Housing Improvement Plan alongside the Regulator of Social Housing and continued to see improved compliance in key areas including fire, electrical, gas, water safety and asbestos surveys.

Given the focus detailed above, the Council was not in the position to submit a bid for the next round of Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund whilst it continued working with the Regulator of Social Housing.

Rotation Two

Cllr Catherine Arnold asked the following question

We know there is a shortage of disabled accessible homes in Adur, can you tell us the proportion of new council homes (being built by this council) and what moves there are to increase these in future please?

The Cabinet Member for Adur Homes & Customer Services replied that there were currently 15 households identified on Adur District Council's housing list needing a range of adapted accommodation from one to three bed properties.

New developments being delivered across Adur would provide a number of adapted properties. These developments included current garage sites which would provide eight adapted properties including bungalows and houses.

Each development was assessed against its suitability to provide adapted properties but on average, around a third of properties in the development pipeline met adapted accommodation standards.

Cllr Gabe Crisp asked the following question

According to a recent Wellbeing Survey by the Office for National Statistics, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/april2022tomarch2023>

Adur is one of the most miserable places in the UK. While this does not accord with my own life experience, and I acknowledge many of the excellent initiatives that our officers and members from all parties bring to enhance the wellbeing of residents, can Cllr Parkin explain why this might be the case?

The Leader of the Council replied that this was a headline sitting on top of some interesting data - last year it was Colchester and next year it was likely to be somewhere else!

The data was actually looking at various aspects of wellbeing rather than asking individual people how happy they were.

In Adur, we know that a lot of people have struggled over the last year, which is why we still retain the Council Tax Support Scheme and our cost of living programme as well as proudly being a social landlord.

Moving forward, the Council would look at the real data underneath the headline to see where it can help us develop that work.

Cllr Julian Shinn asked the following question

Can Cllr Neocleous inform this meeting on the progress being made with the long awaited revision of the Adur Local Plan? In particular conserving our historic links to the river as a fishing community, the completion of the tidal walls scheme to protect our town from sea flooding and the progress with the A259 cycle lane project?

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Strategic Planning replied that the Adur Local Development Scheme was published in September 2023 and set out the timetable for preparation of the Local Plan and indicated a Regulation 18 consultation in the summer 2024.

A range of studies necessary for the evidence base of the Plan have been commissioned and are underway. These include:

- Transport assessment;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
- Landscape assessment;
- An Employment Land Review;
- Retail and town centres study;
- Air quality work.

Biodiversity work, and an update of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment are anticipated next year, resources allowing.

Should there be any delay in progressing the Local Plan, the above work would of course form the evidence base for a Local Plan prepared under the new, emerging planning system.

Regarding the Western Harbour Arm, consultants have been engaged to commence the Place Making Study which will take a place-making, design-led approach looking at the remaining sites within the Western Harbour Arm character area which have not yet come forward for development.

New flood defences and cycle infrastructure continue to be secured through new planning permissions along the Western Harbour Arm. The Council is working with WSCC (as the highway authority) to progress the A259 cyclepath which will require securing all the necessary land and additional external funding to implement the entire scheme.

With regards to the river, Policy 11 of the adopted Local Plan states:

The setting of the River Adur will be protected and opportunities taken through new development and other measures to improve public access to and along the river (where consistent with this aim) and open up views to it.

It is anticipated that visioning work (involving stakeholder participation) for the emerging Local Plan will commence in the next few months, resources allowing. This will provide an opportunity to identify a vision and objectives for the emerging Plan. This could well include the river and related matters where these can be addressed through the planning system. In addition, green infrastructure work will provide an opportunity to address the river and associated habitats.

Regarding the provision of the flood defence at Sussex Yacht Club the Council. The council has advertised the stopping up of the restricted byway through the site and the consultation period closes on the 22nd December 2023.

C/47/23-24 Motion on Notice

Council received a motion on notice proposed by Councillor Catherine Arnold and seconded by Councillor Sharon Sluman.

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

The meeting closed at 8.38 pm, having commenced at 7.00 pm

Chairman