

Minutes of a meeting of the  
Worthing Council  
22 October 2019  
at 6.30 pm

Councillor Hazel Thorpe (Chair)  
Councillor Lionel Harman (Vice-Chairman)

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

**C/27/19-20                      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ant Baker, Mike Barrett and Louise Murphy.

**C/28/19-20                      Declarations of Interest**

The following interests were declared:-

Councillors Karen Harman and Lionel Harman declared an interest in item 7C(i) as the parents of Alex Harman.

Councillor Elizabeth Sparkes declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Noel Atkins declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Paul High declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Bob Smytherman declared an interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council and an interest in Item 10 as a Member of the Worthing Action Alliance.

**C/29/19-20**

**Confirmation of Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2019 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Mayor.

**C/30/19-20**

**Questions from the Public**

The Mayor announced that there were 5 registered questions for the meeting.

*Q1 - Mr Field, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-*

*What is the Council's strategy to encourage tenants to set up businesses in vacant retail space in the town of worthing?*

*Has the Council considered relaxing the planning regulations regarding the use of space in the town?*

*I would refer you to the 'Shops, Offices and Railway Premises Act' and current planning bye laws as these could be relaxed. As such, these changes would allow the use of existing office and retail premises to be converted to residential housing, research and development or light industrial use.*

*Steps must be taken to address this matter. The town of Worthing today looks sad and neglected and is in need of the Council's urgent attention.*

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that the existing retail policies for the town centre sought to protect the primary retail frontages and the key retail function that had traditionally been prevalent in town centres across the country.

However, it was acknowledged that the retail sector was experiencing rapid change and, as a consequence, to ensure that town centres remained vibrant and economically active relevant policies and strategies were having to react to this changing market.

For this reason, in recent years the Council had applied a good degree of flexibility when applying these policies for proposals where it could be demonstrated that an alternative (or more flexible) use would help to meet wider objectives and deliver vitality and economic growth to the heart of the town.

Furthermore, within this context, the Council was currently assessing it's policies in relation to town centres and retail as part of the Local Plan review.

A number of developments had already been seen, including Beales, where this would add greater activation but the Council knew there was still a lot to do.

The Council was working with partners, including the Town Centre Initiative and Community Works, to identify projects to generate greater interest in Worthing town centre for new businesses and investors.

After an inspiring session with Bill Grimsey at the Waves Ahead Conference earlier in the year, the Council was also exploring the viability of business models that allowed the Council to work with commercial agents and landlords to create short-term / pop up use lettings.

The Council was also continuing to identify good practice around this as other town centres were facing similar challenges.

*Mr Field asked a supplementary question regarding the use of the Shops & Railways Premises Act to assist.*

The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that the Council would be looking at the legislation but pointed out that changes were already happening, e.g. a number of units in the Montague Centre.

*Q2 - Mr Davey, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-*

*On taking the role of chair of the Greater Brighton Economic Board in July, Cllr Humphreys identified his priorities which included clean growth and improving transport infrastructure, particularly the A27.*

*Could the leader of the council please outline his vision for improving the A27 around Worthing and explain how that vision has been informed by the councils declaration of a Climate Emergency.*

The Leader of the Council replied that finding a long term solution to the A27 remained an important priority for Worthing and its partners on the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

The vision should allow low or zero emission vehicles to move more freely as currently there was far too much congestion and too little infrastructure to support electric vehicle use. In addition, currently, it was not as safe as it could be for pedestrians and cyclists.

*Mr Davey asked a supplementary question regarding the knock on effects of the Arundel Bypass.*

The Leader of the Council replied that Arun was supporting the Magenta route proposed, However, it was really important that all of the A27 was taken into account when considering these proposals.

*Q3 - Mr Davey, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-*

*Poor air quality is of great concern to many residents locally. According to Public Health England air pollution is responsible for nearly 5% of deaths in Worthing. Whilst a recent report from the British Lung Foundation identified unsafe levels of particulates (PM2.5) around Worthing hospital and 4 local GP surgeries.*

*Could the leader of the council please let us know what actual measures the council are taking to improve air quality and bring the level of particulates down to less harmful levels, particularly around sensitive areas such as schools and the hospital.*

The Leader of the Council replied that the Council was currently developing its approach to reduce fine particulate matter in partnership with West Sussex County Council and other local authority officers in Sussex-air through a number of actions, including:-

- The Clean Burn campaign - funded by DEFRA;

- Sussex wide schools intervention programme;
- Air quality mitigation from new local developments;
- Working with the County Council and Highways England; and
- The formation of the Cycling and Walking Action Group.

*Mr Davey asked a supplementary question regarding the Leader's attendance at the Clean Air Summit being held on the 23 October 2019.*

The Leader of the Council replied that he wasn't able to attend the conference but was committed to working with them on issues regarding air quality.

*Q4 - Mr Devlin, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-*

*I understand from the minutes that there is a Joint Oversight and Scrutiny Committee working group reviewing the cultural services procurement. In light of this, the potential large sums of public money involved in the procurement and the controversy surrounding it, can the process be paused until we hear the JOSOC group's findings?*

The Executive Member for Customer Services replied that the Council was following the recommendations that were formally agreed at the Joint Strategic Committee meeting of 9 July 2019. Scrutiny of the Council's democratic processes performed an important role, but was not in itself, a reason to delay implementing a formal decision of the Council.

The rationale for the move to a Trust was set out in the original Committee report of 10 July 2018 to the Joint Strategic Committee.

*Mr Devlin asked a supplementary question regarding pausing the process on the basis of best value considerations.*

The Executive Member for Customer Services replied that a decision had been made and that the Council would be criticised for delaying implementation. The Executive Member confirmed that the assets would remain with the Council and that the trust would be able to access additional funding.

*Q5 - Ms Thornton, a Worthing resident, asked the following question:-*

*On 30 September, Jo Paul of the Worthing Green party submitted a petition of 355 qualifying signatures, which called on the council to institute a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change, in the hopes of engaging the community in tackling the Climate Emergency. Can I request an update from the Leader of the Council on the progress of decision-making in regard to this petition?*

The Leader of the Council replied that the matter was currently under a consultation period, until 24 October, after which time, he would be able to fully consider the matter and make a decision. The Leader confirmed that he was due to meet the petitioner on the 4 November but was unable to comment further on the report at this time, as it could appear as predetermination on the matter.

*Ms Thornton asked the following supplementary question - should the Council decide to support a Citizen's Assembly, it would take a sustained and serious approach to its establishment and recommendations.*

The Leader of the Council replied that without prejudging any future decision, that if the Council were to, it would take it very seriously.

*Q6 - Mr Baeza, a Worthing resident, asked a question regarding the effectiveness of new bin collections.*

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that initial indications were positive and that once data was available, he anticipated that it would demonstrate an increase in recycling.

*Mr Baeza asked a supplementary question regarding contamination of recycling.*

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that once the data had been available for a meaningful period of time, it would be analysed and shared.

*Q7 - A Worthing resident, asked a question about a recent petition regarding the future use of the Lido and the expiry of its current lease.*

The Leader of the Council replied that he was aware of the petition and that he had been advised that there was 6 to 7 years left on the current lease. If the petition reached a 1,000 signatures it would be debated by Full Council, if it gathered less than 1,000 signatures, the petition would be determined by the Leader of the Council.

*A supplementary question was asked in relation to the Council's support for small local businesses.*

The Leader of the Council replied that Councillors should support businesses and not put them down in anyway and that he had been advised that a number of small businesses had been angered by the approach of the petitioner.

## **C/31/19-20                      Announcements by the Mayor, Leader of the Council, Executive Members or the Head of Paid Service**

A minute silence was held for former Councillor Geoffrey Hart, who served as a Councillor on Worthing Borough Council from 1998 to 2004.

The Mayor informed Council of the events she had attended since the Full Council meeting in July 2019 and encouraged Members to support her at the remembrance commemorations by the Town Hall War Memorial on the following dates:-

- Monday 4 November - Opening of the Garden of Remembrance
- Sunday 10 November - Service and Parade
- Monday 11 November - Armistice Day 2 minute silence

A Vote of Thanks was presented to Councillor Paul Baker in order to commemorate his year in Office.

The Mayor also highlighted a number of forthcoming Mayor's Charity Events.

The following Executive Member announcements were noted:-

1. The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing congratulated Western Sussex Hospitals Trust for achieving 'Amazing Outstanding', the first in the country.
2. The Executive Member for Regeneration highlighted that the observation wheel had left Worthing for the winter. He advised that the wheel had attracted 40,000 visitors and was due to return in March 2020.

**Resolved** that the Mayor write a letter of congratulations on behalf of the Council.

### **C/32/19-20                    Items raised under Urgency Provisions**

There were no urgent items raised.

### **C/33/19-20                    Recommendations from the Executive and Committees to Council**

Council had before it recommendations from the Joint Governance Committee, the Joint Strategic Committee and the Licensing & Control Committee 'B'.

Extracts of these minutes had been circulated as items 7A, 7B, 7C(i) & (ii), 7D and 7E.

#### **Item 7A            Joint Governance Committee - 30 July 2019**

##### **Joint Governance Committee Appointments: Parish Councillors**

The JGC Chairman presented a recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee meeting held on 30 July 2019, which was to appoint representatives from Lancing and Sompting Parish Councils to the Joint Governance Committee as co-opted Members in accordance with the Constitution.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman.

On a vote: For 32, Against 0, Abstain 2

##### **Resolved**

That the nomination from Lancing Parish Council of the appointment of Cllr Ann Bridges as a Co-Opted Member of the Joint Governance Committee for 2019/20 be approved

That the nomination from Sompting Parish Council of the appointment of Cllr Caroline Baxter as a Co-Opted Member of the Joint Governance Committee for 2019/20 be approved

#### **Item 7B            Joint Strategic Committee - 10 September 2019**

##### **Our Growing Regional Economy - An Update on the Greater Brighton Economic Board**

The Leader presented the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 10 September 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Kevin Jenkins.

On a vote: For 34, Against 0, Abstain 0

### **Resolved**

That Worthing Borough Council ratified the proposed amendment to the Greater Brighton Economic Board's Head of Terms relating to Arun District Council's membership of the Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee (which meets with the Greater Brighton Business Partnership as the Greater Brighton Economic Board), subject to the decision of other constituents authorities, and delegated authority to the Solicitor to the Council to make consequential changes to the Joint Committee Agreement and the Councils' Constitutions.

## **Item 7C(i) Joint Governance Committee - 24 September 2019**

### **Appointment of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen to Committees**

The JGC Chairman introduced a recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee meeting held on 24 September 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Rebecca Cooper.

The council debated the recommendation. Some members supported the recommendation suggesting that without a secret ballot at Committee the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committees were political appointments along party lines.

In opposition to the recommendation, it was stated that a secret ballot did not conform with open, transparent or accountable government.

On a vote: For 12, Against 19, Abstain 3

### **Resolved**

The recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee was not supported.

## **Item 7C(ii) Joint Governance Committee - 24 September 2019**

### **Conferment of Honorary Alderman - Alex Harman**

The JGC Chairman introduced a recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee meeting held on 24 September 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman.

On a vote: For 34, Against 0, Abstain 0

## **Resolved**

That Worthing Borough Council approved that a special meeting of the Council be arranged under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act for the specific purpose of conferring the title of 'Honorary Alderman' to Alex Harman.

## **Item 7D Licensing & Control Committee 'B' - 30 September 2019**

### **Gambling Act 2005 - Review of Statement of Licensing Policy**

The Chairman of the Licensing & Control Committee 'B' introduced a recommendation from the meeting held on 30 September 2019.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Keith Bickers.

On a vote: For 34, Against 0, Abstain 0

## **Resolved**

That Worthing Borough Council approved the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy, as amended.

## **Item 7E Joint Strategic Committee - 8 October 2019**

### **Consultation response and recommendations on the extension and amendment of Public Space Protection Orders (Dog Control) for Adur and Worthing Councils**

The Leader of the Council introduced the recommendation from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 8 October 2019 and invited questions from members.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Val Turner.

Having been moved and seconded, the recommendation was approved unanimously.

On a vote: For 34, Against 0, Abstain 0

## **Resolved**

That Worthing Borough Council approved:-

- i. that both current PSPO's be extended for a period of 3 years;
- ii. that the fixed penalty fine be increased to £100;
- iii. that the existing exclusion zone be retained along Worthing Beach;
- iv. that the number of dogs that can be walked by dog walkers should remain at 6.

## **C/34/19-20                      Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by the Executive**

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 8.

It was noted that decisions JAW/010/19-20 and JAW/011/19-20 were decisions taken by the Executive Member for Regeneration rather than the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services.

Questions were asked in relation to Boundary Signage, the Climate Emergency and Ash Dieback.

## **C/35/19-20                      Pay Policy Statement 2019/20**

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

The report before members sought approval of the Pay Policy Statement 2019/20, which was a statutory requirement under Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.

The Pay Policy Statement was proposed, seconded and, on a vote, was approved unanimously.

**Resolved:** that the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 be approved.

## **C/36/19-20                      Members Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12**

The Mayor announced that the Proper Officer had received 6 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 4 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 Jim Deen, Martin McCabe, Sally Smith & Bob Smytherman

The order would be

First rotation: Councillors Sally Smith and Martin McCabe

Second rotation: Councillors Jim Deen and Martin McCabe

Third rotation: Councillor Bob Smytherman

Fourth rotation: Councillor Bob Smytherman

## **First rotation:**

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

Could the Executive member for Health and Wellbeing please provide us with an estimated cost for the recent dog- related PSPO consultation?

*The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that the Public Health & Regulation costs were estimated to be £1,900. These costs reflected staff time and printing.*

Councillor Smith's supplementary question asked about the amount of research undertaken before the consultation was published.

*The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that the PSPOs were coming up for review and would be subject to a continuous cycle of review over the next 3 year period.*

### **Question from Councillor Martin McCabe to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services**

Does the Executive Member agree with me and our European friends from the Netherlands that our bus stops could be converted to Bee Stops?

*The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that the Council was committed to the exploration of innovative initiatives such as Bee Stops and other best practice related ways of increasing biodiversity. He was happy to look at the proposal alongside a number of other initiatives to improve biodiversity.*

Councillor McCabe's supplementary question asked whether the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services would meet with Councillor McCabe to take this forward.

*The Executive Member for Digital and Environmental Services replied that he would.*

### **Question from Councillor Jim Deen to the Executive Member for Regeneration**

Could the Executive member for regeneration confirm the current projected costs for the proposed scheme of public realm improvements for Portland Road.

*The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that Portland Road was part of a £5m shared project between Worthing Borough Council and West Sussex County Council. It was noted that following consultation, various proposals were on the table and currently, a decision hadn't been taken to decide which model would be taken forward.*

As a supplementary question, Councillor Deen sought clarification regarding the details of the scheme put forward for public consultation.

*The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that the consultation went out with the original plans. Following engagement with local businesses and residents, the architects*

*had come back with alternative models. The budget window required for the various schemes was between £1m and £2.7m.*

### **Question from Councillor Martin McCabe to the Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services**

With 20 new Changing Places toilets registered around the country in September, will the Member join me in calling for more Changing Places toilets to be installed in Worthing for people with a range of disabilities?

*The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that the Council should promote the installation of Changing Places toilets wherever possible. It was noted that there were changing places toilet facilities in Worthing Town Centre and there were plans to include changing places facilities in the Worthing Library redevelopment.*

Councillor McCabe's supplementary question sought clarification regarding the timetable for providing additional changing places facilities.

*The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services replied that these facilities were due to be provided at Durrington Community Centre imminently and inline with the project timelines at Worthing Library.*

### **Question from Councillor Bob Smytherman to the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing**

Does the Executive Member agree with me that there is currently a postcode lottery for people living with Dementia and their Carers when accessing Admiral Nurse services in Worthing & would the Executive Member raise this inequality with Chief Executive of the Clinical Commissioning Group?

*The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that the Council was awaiting confirmation from the Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group.*

Councillor Smytherman asked a supplementary question regarding the need to highlight the deficiency in the number of ambulances provided in our area.

*The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing replied that the issue would be raised.*

### **Question from Councillor Bob Smytherman to the Executive Member for Regeneration**

Following the retirement of our excellent Beach Inspector can the Executive Member confirm there will be no plans to close the popular Beach Office or reduction in this vital service?

*The Executive Member for Regeneration replied that there were no plans to close the Beach Office.*

**C/37/19-20****Motions on Notice**

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

The motion was proposed by Councillor Martin McCabe and seconded by Councillor Bob Smytherman.

Council debated the motion, raising concerns regarding the suitability of the motion before Council.

On a vote: For 2, Against 31, Abstain 1

**Resolved** that Worthing Borough Council did not support the motion.

**C/38/19-20****Motions on Notice**

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

The motion was proposed by Councillor Bob Smytherman and seconded by Councillor Martin McCabe.

In accordance with the Constitution, the Motion was noted and immediately referred to the Joint Governance Committee.

**Resolved**

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

**C/39/19-20****Motions on Notice**

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

The motion was proposed by Councillor Sally Smith and seconded by Councillor Dawn Smith.

Council debated the motion and were in general agreement with the issue. An amendment was proposed to the motion by Councillor Daniel Humphreys which was seconded by Councillor Val Turner.

The motion, as amended, was approved unanimously.

**Resolved:** This Council pledges support for the state pension inequality for 1950's women campaign. This Council supports the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group

on state pension inequality co-chaired by the excellent MP's Carolyn Harris and Tim Loughton since 2016. We thank our local MP for the work on this matter both nationally and with local women affected and the proposals that they have brought forward. This council will join 150+ Councils across the Country in calling upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for women born in the 1950s, including those in our own community, who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age (SPA) with little or no appropriate notification.

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The meeting ended at 9.21 pm