

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Joint Strategic Committee
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

Gordon Room, Stoke Abbott Road

1 October 2024

Councillor Sophie Cox (Chair)
Councillor Rita Garner (Vice-Chair)

Adur District Council:

Jeremy Gardner
Becky Allinson
Jude Harvey
Saffa Jan
Sharon Sluman

Worthing Borough Council:

Ödül Bozkurt
Dom Ford
John Turley
Vicki Wells

Absent

Councillor Lee Cowen

Councillor Rosey Whorlow

JSC/33/24-25 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

JSC/34/24-25 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 12 September 2024

JSC/35/24-25 Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

JSC/36/24-25 Members Questions

There were no pre submitted questions from Members.

JSC/37/24-25 Items Raised under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JSC/38/24-25 Financial Strategy and Budget Update 2025/2026

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.

In July 2024 the councils adopted a new financial strategy. The report before members both introduced the new financial strategy and highlighted the key supporting strategic reviews that are aimed at delivering better long term strategic direction in key areas and enabling more coordinated and realistic programmes of activity which would deliver on the priorities of the two administrations and the statutory obligations of the councils

The report provided members with an update on the financial strategy and the medium term financial plan, including the current position on the 2025/26 revenue budgets. It also introduced the new format for the medium term financial plan, which was aligned to the supporting strategies and provided more information on the financial assumptions.

Work continued to ensure a balanced budget while acknowledging the ongoing uncertainties around future funding arrangements. This report represented the next step in the reporting process and demonstrated 'work in progress' and a milestone in the budget process.

Decision: That the contents of the report including the working 5 year forecasts as at appendix 1 be noted

Call In: The call-in deadline for decisions will be 5.00pm on 11 October 2024

JSC/39/24-25 New Approaches to funding community outcomes

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.

This report before members proposed that Adur & Worthing Councils extend and broaden approaches to the securing of external funding and investment to support the delivery of the administration priorities of each council.

In the context of constrained core council funding, inflation and other cost pressures, along with reduced commercial income post-covid, it was more important than ever for the councils to achieve the delivery of community outcomes through innovative, externally funded propositions, which would often be developed with partners and communities themselves.

The councils had achieved some significant success in securing external funding in recent years such as Gigabit, the Worthing Heat Network, Colonnade House and Sussex Bay. New opportunities had emerged such as natural capital (e.g. biodiversity net gain developer payments) that the councils needed to be able to fully exploit. More recently still, early stage government announcements regarding local energy, point to the need to prepare Adur & Worthing propositions with partners and communities.

Members were given an overview of what had been learnt about how to secure external funding support, and the principles that had driven success, this should be applied to a wider set of challenges and opportunities.

The Committee were updated on the development of central capacity (a funding & investment team) as part of organisational design to allow us to embed core competence and capacity, and upskill a wider group of officers across the organisation. The result of the work would be to secure significant additional funds for either directly council-led projects, or for partners able to access other forms of funding who may take the lead, enabling the creative and collaborative local delivery of priorities for and with the community.

The report also included a specific request to accept grant monies into the councils' capital budget for the proposed delivery of improvements to the Rotunda building on Worthing Seafront for the provision of a storage facility for fish caught by local commercial small boat fishers with a separate retail unit.

Decision:

- 1) That the principles of proposition development outlined in the report, aligned to the priorities of both administrations be supported.
- 2) That the establishment of the funding and investment team as part of the organisational design process be supported along with its role in proposition development alongside council commercial income growth .
- 3) That the Committee receive an annual report from the funding and investment team on funding success and programme impact.
- 4) That, on behalf of the Worthing Fishermen's Society, a grant from the Marine Management Organisation of £33,632.59 be approved, to be added to agreed CIL funding of £16,000 to create a capital project budget of £49,632.59 for "improvement works to the Rotunda building on Worthing seafront".

Call In: The call-in deadline for decisions will be 5.00pm on 11 October 2024

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 6.52 pm, it having commenced at 6.30 pm

Chairman