

**Minutes of a meeting of the  
Joint Strategic Committee  
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils  
QEII Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham by Sea**

**14 January 2020**

Councillor Neil Parkin (Chairman)

**Adur District Council:**

Angus Dunn  
Carson Albury  
Brian Boggis  
Emma Evans  
David Simmons

**Worthing Borough Council:**

Daniel Humphreys  
Kevin Jenkins  
Edward Crouch  
Elizabeth Sparkes  
Val Turner

**Absent**

Councillor Dr Heather Mercer

**JSC\74\19-20          Declarations of Interests**

Councillors Crouch and Evans declared personal interests in item 7 as both were landlords.

**JSC\75\19-20          Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 3 December 2019, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**JSC\76\19-20          Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public.

**JSC\77\19-20          Items Raised under Urgency Provisions**

There were no questions from the public.

**JSC\78\19-20          Delivering our Housing Strategy - Housing Development Next Steps**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, 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 5.

The report updated Members on the latest progress with the housing development programme across the two Council areas, and the next steps in regards to the small sites programme (Hidden Homes).

The Committee's approval was sought for the release of funding for the Small Sites Programme.

A Member sought clarification to the source of the funding requested. Officers confirmed that the development budget would come from the Adur District Council Housing Revenue Account.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee is recommended to:

- I. noted the progress on the schemes;
- II. approved the release of £235,000 from the development budget to progress work on the Small Sites Programme;
- III. delegated authority to the Director for Communities, following a tender process, to award the contract for design and consultancy services in respect of the Small Sites Programme;
- IV. noted that a further report would be presented in February 2020 updating members on the final cost of Cecil Norris development, and detailing the outcome of the tender process for Albion Street together with the associated updated budget requirements.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 24 January 2020.

### **JSC\79\19-20            Council Tax Support Schemes for 2020/21**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital & 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.

Members were asked to recommend to their respective Full Councils the Council Tax Support Schemes in respect of 2020/21.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

1. noted the contents of the report;
2. recommended to Adur District Council that the Council Tax Support scheme for Adur District Council in respect of working age customers for 2020/21
  - a. should be based upon the scheme for 2019/20 with no restrictions; and

- b. no other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit
3. recommended to Worthing Borough Council that the Council Tax Support scheme for Worthing Borough Council in respect of working age customers for 2020/21
    - a. should be based upon the scheme for 2019/20 with the £5.00 weekly restriction retained; and
    - b. that the discretionary budget to support those in severe financial difficulties should be retained; and
    - c. no other changes should be made beyond necessary technical amendments required to keep the scheme consistent with the national rules in respect of Housing Benefit

Call In:

There is no call-in for recommendations to Adur and Worthing Councils.

### **JSC\80\19-20 Council Tax “long-term empty” premium and discounts**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital & 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.

It was noted that the Joint Strategic Committee had considered a report on 10 September 2019 and agreed that a public consultation should be conducted about possible changes to the “long-term empty premium” and two locally-determined discounts in respect of periods when no Council Tax was payable for properties that were either

- unoccupied and unfurnished; or,
- undergoing or requiring structural alteration or major repair.

The report set out the outcomes of the public consultation and invited Members to consider whether they wished to increase the “long-term empty premium” and the two local discounts.

Members sought clarification regarding the definition of furnished properties and the situation with properties affected by probate.

The Committee considered and debated the merits of

- reducing, retaining or abolishing the two local discounts in respect of unoccupied and unfurnished properties and properties undergoing or requiring structural alteration or major repairs; and
- increasing the long-term empty premium and whether a discretionary policy should be introduced.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

1. noted the content of the report;

2. recommended to Adur District Council
  - a. that the “long-term empty premium” should be increased in accordance with the maximum figures detailed in paragraph 3.5;
  - b. that a discretionary policy should not be introduced;
  - c. that the local discount in respect of unoccupied properties undergoing structural alterations should be abolished with effect from 1 April 2020;
  - d. that the local discount in respect of unoccupied and unfurnished properties should be abolished with effect from 1 April 2020.
3. recommended to Worthing Borough Council
  - a. that the “long-term empty premium” should be increased in accordance with the maximum figures detailed in paragraph 3.5;
  - b. that a discretionary policy should not be introduced;
  - c. that the local discount in respect of unoccupied properties undergoing structural alterations should be abolished with effect from 1 April 2020;
  - d. that the local discount in respect of unoccupied and unfurnished properties should be retained as is with effect from 1 April 2020.

Call In:

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

### **JSC\81\19-20            A Climate Assembly for Adur & Worthing**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital & 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 8.

The report set out Adur & Worthing Councils’ strong commitment to tackling climate change locally, outlining progress so far, including community engagement activities

It proposed the establishment of a Climate Assembly in 2020/21, to create a robust, independent and representative engagement approach with our local communities on climate change and ecological issues.

Members gave consideration to the cost of facilitating the proposed Climate Assembly, the procurement process for including the number of interested parties and who would sit on the assembly.

The Committee expressed support for the proposals and welcomed the progress made so far. It was also noted that the assembly was not just about climate change, but how the community got involved with Adur and Worthing Councils decision-making.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

1. noted the strong progress made with the climate change agenda;

2. agreed to establish a Climate Assembly in 2020/21, funded from the Business Development budget at a cost of £42,000 for Worthing Borough Council and £28,000 for Adur District Council

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 24 January 2020.

**\* At 7.23pm Adur Councillors Dunn, Boggis, Evans and Simmons left the meeting in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement.**

**JSC\82\19-20 Preventing anti-social behaviour: Trialling the extension of Community Protection Notice powers with Worthing Homes**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, 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 9.

It was noted that Community Protection Notices were part of the legal remedies available to the Councils to address anti-social behaviour and were used as an early intervention warning and enforcement measure.

The report considered a request to extend those powers to Worthing Homes for a one year pilot, as an early intervention measure with tenants that were involved in anti-social behaviour.

A Member sought clarification regarding the compliance rates following Community Protection Warnings set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report. Officers confirmed that there was compliance of 72% following the issue of Community Protection Warnings and compliance of 96% following the issue of a notice.

The Committee welcomed the proposals, acknowledging the importance of joined up working in relation to this issue.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

1. noted the background to Community Protection Notices as an early intervention approach for anti-social behaviour;
2. considered the proposals set out in the report and agreed to delegate authority to Worthing Homes for issuing Community Protection Warnings and Notices for a pilot period of one year;
3. noted that the pilot, if agreed, would be subject to review meetings and monitoring of these measures.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 24 January 2020.

**JSC\83\19-20****Creation of a new Trust for Highdown Gardens**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, 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 10.

The report sought authority to set up a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to act as an independent development trust charity to raise future funds for Highdown Gardens, following the successful application for funding to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), in order to form part of the long term business plan for the sustainability of the Gardens.

The report provided the background to the recommendations and a number of options that had been considered as part of the process, including information on the legal status of Highdown Gardens, which were bequeathed to the Council in Trust, by Lady Stern in 1968. The existing Charitable Trust was set up in 1968 in response to this bequest, with the Council being the sole Trustee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i. approved the establishment of an independent development trust charity (CIO), whose sole aim was to raise funds for Highdown Gardens;
- ii. approved the appointment of the Head of Environmental Services to the Board of Directors of the new CIO;
- iii. delegated authority to the Director for Communities to appoint the trustees of the new CIO in consultation with the Worthing Borough Council Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services;
- iv. approved the objectives of the CIO as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- v. approved the Director of Communities registering the new CIO with the Charity Commission.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 24 January 2020.

**JSC\84\19-20****Referral of Motion on Notice from Worthing Borough Council**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, 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 11.

The report set out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Worthing Borough Council on the 17 December 2019.

Members of the Joint Strategic committee were asked to consider and determine the Motion. It was noted that Members could either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members could reject the motion.

It was noted that neither the mover, or, the seconder of the motion, were in attendance to explain the motion.

The Committee acknowledged the work already going on with community groups on this issue.

Decision:

That the Joint Strategic Committee rejected the motion.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 24 January 2020.

### **JSC\85\19-20                    Referral of Motion on Notice from Worthing Borough Council**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, 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 12.

The report set out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Worthing Borough Council on the 17 December 2019.

Members of the Joint Strategic Committee were asked to consider and determine the Motion. It was noted that members could either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members could reject the motion.

Councillor Carl Walker, mover the motion, attended the meeting to present the motion to the Joint Strategic Committee. It was suggested that the proposed Masterplan for Brooklands Park did not relate to the outcomes of the consultation undertaken. A number of consultation responses had not sought a radical overhaul of the park but simply wanted the facilities and amenities to be improved. Councillor Walker challenged the mandate for significant change to the park and also raised concerns that the decision taken regarding the go kart track had supposedly been based on consultation responses received.

The Executive Member for Digital & Environmental Services welcomed the analysis provided by Councillor Walker but suggested that he had missed the point about ambition. The Executive Member advised that a number of residents had engaged with the evolution of the masterplan and had raised a number of issues. It was noted that 800 plus residents had been consulted via an online survey and there had been further engagement along the way. The Executive Member felt it would be a mistake to start the process afresh and was unsure what alternative option was being proposed instead.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee rejected the motion.

Call In:

The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 24 January 2020.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7.51 pm, it having commenced at 6.30 pm

**Chairman**