



ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
11 October 2020

Key Decision No

Ward(s) Affected: All

Our Plan - The new corporate plan for Adur & Worthing Councils

Report by the Chief Executive

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1. Purpose

1.1 Adur & Worthing Councils' previous corporate plan, Platforms for Our Places: Going Further (2020-22), has now reached the end of its delivery period.

1.2 Since that plan was adopted much has changed and the councils have taken the opportunity to review the challenges and opportunities ahead. Through this process a new plan for Adur & Worthing, covering the next three years, has been drafted called 'Our Plan'.

1.3 Our Plan will enable the successful delivery of Adur District and Worthing Borough Council's priorities by effectively supporting the work of each individual council, and where appropriate, both councils together through the shared partnership agreement.

1.4 The plan will inform the budget setting work of both councils and will direct overall organisational service planning and performance management.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) is invited to consider the draft 'Our Plan' and recommend its approval to both Councils as a core strategic document for the next three years.

2.2 JSC invites the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review 'Our Plan' and review subsequent progress reports.

3. Context

3.1 Adur & Worthing Councils' previous corporate plan, Platforms for Our Places: Going Further (2020-22), has now reached the end of its delivery period. Since that plan was adopted much has changed, which presents an opportunity for us to review the challenges and opportunities ahead. This means reflecting not only on how difficult and uncertain things may feel at this moment in time, but to think more carefully about what connects us and our services together with our citizens. It is a time to reconsider our fundamental, long term purpose as local councils and to set the direction for everything we do from there.

3.2 There are a number of drivers for doing things differently. Local changes, like a new political administration for Worthing Borough Council and a new Chief Executive appointed to manage the organisation. Clearly, there are significant external challenges too, such as rapidly rising running costs and not least energy prices; the impact of successive years of change in national policy and public sector funding; the toll of the pandemic on the resilience of our staff, our residents and businesses; and the growing awareness and need to adapt to and address the impacts of climate change.

3.3 What is needed is a more radical and deep rooted plan, which articulates and brings together all of the work we have been doing to change and reorientate the organisation. To remain relevant we must evolve with our communities, involving them in what this should mean for how we work and the services we provide. It requires a forward looking, longer term approach, making sure we are not just coping or dealing with the challenges of now and the latest 'emergency', but more importantly making sure we build toward a more hopeful and positive future for our places.

- 3.4 Over the past year, the Chief Executive, the Corporate Leadership Team and the wider staff leadership team have been working collaboratively together in order to design a new corporate plan for the organisation. This plan, which has come to be known as 'Our Plan', is there to help us plan and prioritise our work while creating the right culture and environment for staff. It is also intended to help us navigate the complexity of being one workforce supporting two different administrations in the most effective way possible.
- 3.5 The Leaders and Cabinets of both councils have also been involved in the process of developing the plan to ensure the distinct and shared ambitions of both councils can be seen and effectively delivered through this new framework. Work to further engage our staff with the plan and what it means for them and their team, wherever they are in the organisation, is underway, helping to ensure organisational priorities and ways of working are shared and understood.
- 3.6 Our Plan therefore seeks to bring together the following factors, to ensure the best use of our resources, our staff and our services:
- Priorities guided by the political process in Adur and in Worthing
 - Listening to and learning from citizens - our residents, visitors and communities
 - Partnership working, for example with West Sussex County Council, other District and Borough councils, business and the Third Sector.
 - National political priorities as well as legislation and duties we are governed by as councils
 - Our own professional knowledge and expertise as employees of the Councils.
- 3.7 It is a guiding and evolving plan, the supporting detail of which will adapt and evolve with us and the involvement of our communities over the next 3 years. Collaboration with communities and partners is central to the type of organisation that we want to be, as set out in our Principles in the Plan. There will be an ongoing process of community engagement and involvement in how we develop and deliver services and help to shape places in Adur and Worthing. This will begin with engagement and consultation on the budget setting process which will start in the Autumn.
- 3.8 The writing of the plan has been kept as short and simple as possible, while reflecting the complexities of the context in which we operate and the many

different things that we do. If approved, Our Plan will be designed simply, from the text as presented, allowing it to be edited and changed over time as our work evolves.

- 3.9 The audience for the document is primarily staff, but with a secondary audience of members and partners. We will create a communications strategy to convey the priorities and different elements of the plan for wider public consumption. This will use internal and external communications channels, rather than being reliant solely on the document itself. Putting Our Plan into action through actions and behaviours is, ultimately, more important than the written words alone.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The draft Our Plan document outlines our purpose and our priorities. It is set out in distinct parts, each of which is relatively short and provides a summary explanation of what we are seeking to do or how we will work. The main parts of the plan are as follows:

- **Our Purpose** - what we as Councils are fundamentally here to do
- **How we work** - how we will treat each other as colleagues, customers and partners
- **Our Principles** - the collective principles which allow us to work effectively and to evolve as an organisation
- **Our Foundations** - the universal services that citizens see and use every day; the core services without which the councils cannot function
- **Our Missions** - focussed areas of work that allow us to tackle complex and longer term issues with others

- 4.2 Our plan sets out **Our Purpose** as being to provide good and lasting stewardship for both Adur and Worthing. This means taking a long-term view about how we can help to nurture people and places. It uses our influence as Councils to make sure everything works well together. It is a supportive role in which we must involve and listen to others.

- 4.3 **How we work** is as important as what we do. As representatives of the Councils we are judged not only by what we do, but how we conduct ourselves. We have developed a set of ways for how we should all treat people. They are for everyone in the Councils to meet, regardless of their role.

- 4.4 The Plan sets out three governing **Principles** to help us work well and to evolve as an organisation. To be able to provide reliable and quality services.

But also, to recognise changes in the world around us and respond positively to them in the long term. Each Principle is supported by a number of key actions, as listed in the plan and are, in summary:

- We are **resilient**, making the best of our finite resources and investing in our people
- We are **adaptable**, finding creative and effective ways to meet changing needs
- We are **participative**, putting people at the heart of decision making and services

4.5 **Our Foundations** are the essentials which keep us and our places working. They are the most visible, outward facing universal services. We deliver these day in and day out. They are the way we reach the most people most often. They are also the core services within the Councils. The people with skills and expertise who work unseen to keep all our staff and our services working well.

4.6 **Our Missions** are the big ambitions and complex issues we must address for Adur and Worthing to thrive long-term. By their nature, our missions are bigger than the individual services we provide. They need creative solutions that cut across our teams and other organisations. We must work together with residents, businesses, visitors, communities and partners. In doing so, we stand to achieve better things for everyone, making what we have go further.

- **Thriving People:** Residents can lead positive, healthy and independent lives. Access to the right support is there when they need it. They are included and valued in their local community. They can take part in decisions about their area and the services they receive.
- **Thriving Places:** All of our places are vibrant, inclusive and sustainable. They are loved by residents, businesses and visitors alike. People help to shape neighbourhoods which provide a good quality of life, affordably and close to home.
- **Thriving environment:** Thriving people and places depend on a thriving environment. Everyone pulls together to rapidly reduce our impact on it. By reducing carbon emissions and waste. Protecting and enhancing nature. And adapting to climate change.
- **Thriving economy:** A varied and resilient economy works for everyone. Our local business strengths are known worldwide. Businesses create jobs to support local people and create aspiration in our communities. They respect and nurture the environment.

- 4.7 Our Plan is the framework which allows us to coordinate all of our activity under purpose and overarching priorities, but does not list the full range of what we do or will do over the coming 3 years. Crucially, achieving what we set out in our Plan will be supported by a range of more detailed delivery plans. We are creating a 3 year rolling programme of delivery, with a focus on Year 1.
- 4.8 All of these parts will be overseen and coordinated by a cross-organisational working group of senior managers, reflecting the need to prioritise all activity to meet the big ambitions and complex issues which affect us all.
- 4.9 The success of Our Plan ultimately rests on organising and resourcing ourselves in ways to make it happen. We will do this in a way which is reflective of the principles. Resilient: we create a sustainable pace, for our staff and to make best use of our resources. Adaptive: we continuously learn and adapt our Our Plan based on what we learn. Participative: people have a voice in and can be part of the process.
- 4.10 To make sure that we are achieving the things and the priorities that we have set out, over the lifetime of Our Plan, we will review and report our progress within and outside of the Councils using formal and informal channels. We will develop and use new capability for live and historic data to adapt our plans and make sure they reflect the current concerns and lives of our communities.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 Over the past year, the Chief Executive, the Corporate Leadership Team and the wider staff leadership team have been working collaboratively together in order to design this new corporate plan for the organisation. The Leaders and Cabinets of both councils have also been involved in the process of developing the plan to ensure the distinct and shared ambitions of both councils can be seen and effectively delivered through the new framework. Work to further engage the staff with the plan is underway, helping to ensure organisational priorities and ways of working are shared and understood.
- 5.2 Data, information and feedback from our communities, residents and businesses has been used to inform and shape the plan. Ongoing participation work and the use of data will keep this process live and help the ongoing review process of the plan.
- 5.3 If agreed by JSC and both councils, further work on the plan's design will be undertaken to help ensure residents can access, understand and engage with

the plan. This work will enable the councils to frame conversations with communities and partners about our priorities and intent, including service design and budget setting work.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no unbudgeted financial implications in this report. Specific commitments that have capital or revenue consequences are individually assessed as part of the decision making process and built into the Councils capital and revenue budgets. The ongoing intention is that the activities set out in “*Our Plan*” and budget strategy become ever more closely aligned.
- 6.2 Our Plan should therefore be considered with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the same period, and will consequently inform the budget setting process for 2023/24 and beyond. The new approach to working and addressing complex challenges set out in the plan will help the councils respond to the difficult fiscal environment being created through high inflation and increasing interest rates.
- 6.3 Monitoring progress against performance measures is a key element of the councils performance and risk management approach; any financial risks or resource requirements will be identified as a result.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Corporate Plan forms part of each council’s policy framework, which means any decisions of Committees or officers need to be consistent with the Plan. The adoption of the plan will help the councils deliver their shared and different priorities, whilst also helping them in the effective prioritisation of resources. The delivery of the plan through each councils’ individual actions and in collaboration with each other, through the shared partnership agreement, will enable them to both deliver their distinct ambitions, whilst also complying with best value duty under the Local Government Act 1999.

Background Papers

- [Worthing New Priorities](#)

Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Item 4) - 5th July 2022

- [Adur New Priorities](#)

Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Item 5) - 29th September 2022

- [Platforms for our Places - Going Further \(2020-2022\) : Unlocking the Power of People, Communities and our Local Geographies Report](#)

Joint Strategic Committee (Item 6) - 3rd December 2020

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

1.1 Thriving Economy is one of the four Missions identified in Our Plan and will therefore become one of the key documents informing the direction and prioritisation of the councils' work with regard to economic development across Adur & Worthing. Missions identified include:

- An inclusive economy which provides people with skills and opportunities to secure good quality jobs
- Ambitious, high growth companies locate in Adur and Worthing and smaller independent businesses thrive
- Economic growth regenerates places and high streets, helping communities to prosper

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

2.1.1 Residents and communities are central to Our Plan's development and delivery and 'Thriving people' is one of the four Missions identified in Our Plan. Missions identified include:

- People are healthy, resilient and resourceful; they can access the right help when they need it
- Everyone has a safe, secure and sustainable home
- Everyone is able to enjoy a wide range of cultural, leisure and sporting opportunities

2.1.2 One of the three overarching Principles in the plan is Participative, which is based on the explicit intention to work more closely with citizens to involve them in deeper and more meaningful conversations about service design and delivery. Focused on collective outcomes and better use of cross sector experience, capacity and assets.

2.2 Equality Issues

2.2.1 The councils are subject to the general equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This duty covers the following protected

characteristics: age, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

2.2.2 In delivering the plan the councils must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

2.2.3 The participative principle describes the councils' commitment to providing truly inclusive services by listening to underrepresented voices, creating equal access and meeting our equality duties.

2.2.4 Given the breadth of Our Plan and the complexity of relevant protected characteristics and their intersections it is not possible to analyse all the impacts of the plan in relation to legally protected characteristics. However, the council's legal duties (Equality Act 2010) have shaped the development of the plan and will inform its delivery, in relation to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

2.2.5 Actions and areas of investment identified in the plan, as well as other decisions relating to implementation of the plan, will require Equality Impact Assessments as proposals are brought forward to relevant committees.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

2.3.1 The councils are committed to the promotion of communities as safe places. Our Plan will progress the delivery of the councils' community safety commitments by strengthening working partnerships with the Police, communities, businesses and multidisciplinary teams across the council.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

2.4.1 The services and projects set out in the report will enable the councils to identify solutions with other partners that will enable our residents, communities and neighbourhoods to flourish.

3. Environmental

- 3.1 Thriving Environment is one of the four Missions identified in Our Plan and key actions include coordinated activity on prioritised issues of achieving net zero carbon, resilience to climate change and increased biodiversity by restoring natural habitats and creating a circular economy by minimising waste and keeping materials in use. Other Missions will support Thriving Environment, for example Thriving Places includes making sure our places are designed for people and nature, they are clean, safe and feel looked after.

4. Governance

- 4.1 This report provides the Committee with an overview of Our Plan, setting out priorities for the Councils going forward. Each Council's Constitution provides that the Joint Strategic Committee has responsibility for formulating the Corporate Plan, whereas formal approval of the final version is a matter reserved to each Full Council. Future strategic and resourcing decisions will need to be guided by the Corporate Plan.