



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
13 July 2021
Agenda Item 5

Key Decision No

Ward(s) Affected: All

“Platforms for our Places: Going Further” 6 Month Progress Report for January to June 2021.

Report by the Interim Chief Executive

1. Purpose

1.1 “Platforms for our Places: Going Further” is the Council's ambitious strategic programme designed to help create the healthy, prosperous and well connected communities our residents and businesses have told us they want to see.

1.2 This is the update report to the Joint Strategic Committee describing the strong progress made by the Councils in achieving these commitments and ambitions over the past 6 months.

1.3 This report reflects our shift from pandemic response and reflects the impact of the pandemic on the Platforms ambitions. Whilst progress against some of the commitments has slowed because of the pandemic, most are on track. The impact of the pandemic on other commitments has enabled them to develop further and faster (for example some economic interventions) than might otherwise have been the case. This report also picks up progress against the “And Then ...” objectives (Adur & Worthing Councils’ initial response to the easing of the first national lockdown)

1.4 Looking forward, we will be embedding the lessons we have learned from the pandemic and the opportunities it has given us to accelerate some of our strategic ambitions into the next phase of work on the Platforms strategy.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note and consider the 6 months progress report on the implementation of “Platforms for our Places: Going Further” over the period January to June 2021 and agree to refer this report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.

3. Context

3.1 In December 2019 Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils adopted “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” as the Councils’ direction of travel for the next three years.

3.2 “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” builds on progress under the previous Platforms agenda and sets out significant ambitions, it recognises we as Councils cannot and should not do everything for everyone. Our role as Councils (as well as providing great services and vital safety nets) is to create and maintain five essential platforms upon which our communities can build happy, healthy, prosperous and connected places.

3.3 “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” identifies five platforms underpinned by a series of commitments namely:

- 1) Prosperous Places
- 2) Thriving People and Communities
- 3) Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment
- 4) Good Services and New Solutions
- 5) Leadership of Place

Platform	Commitments	Activities & Projects
Prosperous Places	10	68
Thriving People and Communities	5	23
Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment	10	40
Good Services and New Solutions	7	43
Leadership of Place	6	18

Table A: Five Platforms and associated commitments, activities and projects

- 3.4 Progress reporting draws on the progress of the 192 projects and activities and the Councils' broader activities to provide a snapshot of progress in developing the 5 identified Platforms.

Status Indicators	Status Definitions
Blue	Completed
Green	In progress: on track and on time
Amber	In progress: but delays anticipated or minor issues to be resolved (no apparent 'show stoppers' identified)
Red	Significant difficulties in implementation
Grey	Yet to start

Table B: Status Indicators and definitions

- 3.5 Table B shows how the status of projects and activities are determined. In the light of the considerable amount of work required to respond to the pandemic, in this report "amber" should be taken to include things that either are delayed or have not yet started (the red and grey categories will be used in future 6 month reports).
- 3.6 All previous six-monthly update reports to the Committee have also been considered by the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JOSC).

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The progress report (Appendix A) provides an overview of highlights and challenges in the development of the 5 Platforms over the last 6 months, which has continued to be shaped by the challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic. Where relevant it also references "And Then ..." activities. The strong ongoing progress continues to demonstrate the ability of the Councils to respond to the complex challenges posed by the virus whilst maintaining a focus on the longer term commitments established in "Platforms for our Places : Going Further". For each of the 5 platforms we have identified a number of activities that seek to respond to the needs of our communities experiencing the pandemic, to build resilience and catalyse recovery action, and these are described in the progress reports.
- 4.2 Our experience over the past 12 months is that the platform's approach has provided a strong and creative framework for the Councils to provide quality and highly responsive public service in the most challenging of circumstances.

Our overall approach, characterised by adaptivity and resilience, has proven invaluable during the pandemic. Indeed, in the face of the many challenges, we have taken the opportunity to move further and faster on key commitments wherever possible. The speed and scale of the challenges we face continue but they are met by the appetite of communities, businesses and elected Councillors to respond with tenacity, speed and ambition.

- 4.3 The progress report provides an overview of the current status (in percentage terms) of Platform commitments. In evaluating the progress of these activities and projects, objective analysis has been employed and the overall assessment seeks to give a clear and accurate view of our progress.
- 4.4 These commitments are not “everything we do”. Whilst progressing our Platforms agenda we have continued to provide a full portfolio of universal services and essential safety nets to the communities we serve. Going forward, officers will be looking to address the impact of the pandemic on the resilience and design of these services to ensure that the learning and experience of the last year is captured and embedded in the organisation.
- 4.5 It is not intended, in this covering report, to comment on each and every issue flagged in the progress report. This is the first 18 months of a 3 year programme and these 18 months have been extraordinary in the life not just of these Councils, but across the UK.

5. Progress in the context of the Covid 19 Pandemic

- 5.1 COVID-19 has created an ongoing global public health emergency and its economic and social impacts continue to cause harm to individuals, communities and businesses across Adur and Worthing. We must expect that these impacts will last for some time creating increased and changing demands on public services. We are also constantly horizon scanning to better understand the challenges and opportunities for Adur and Worthing in the post pandemic social and economic context and these observations are also described in the report.
- 5.2 Beyond the personal and community damage caused by the virus, the potential fragilities of our economy and society have been exposed by the pandemic. Our work on better understanding and building resilience continues as a result. We see our work on building resilience as a process of increasing our ability to respond to the unexpected and, critically, give us the capacity to develop, change and improve as a result. The Councils see resilience as more than just gaining additional operating capacity, it is also about having an

adaptive workforce that can flex around shifting needs as well as a focus on removing unnecessary duplication or disconnection of skills within the organisation. Importantly, building resilience seeks to help our staff feel that they have what they need to do their job and that we remove constraints where need is growing or where operational issues hold back our ability to deliver our strategy and respond to community needs. This work is situated in our Good Services platform but will be reflected across all platforms.

- 5.3 The attached commitment trackers seek to summarise the progress made across the full breadth of the “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” programme. For each of the 5 platforms we have focused on key catalytic activities that have both responded to the needs of our community and started to build increased resilience across the district and borough. A number of these activities are highlighted below and are provided in more detail in Appendix A.

6. Lessons Across the Platforms during this 6 month period

- 6.1 Whilst the following sections of this report (and perhaps more significantly the Appendix of Commitment Trackers) gives a comprehensive view, it is worth pausing to look across the Platforms at the approach of the Councils during the past 6 month period.
- 6.2 The Councils have during this time sought to provide strong leadership of our places (often jointly with others) in the midst of a public health crisis that is unprecedented in recent times. Your officers have continued to move forward at pace with an ambitious agenda showing resilience and an ability to innovate. Adur and Worthing is rightly seen as a progressive organisation and we need to lean into this future perspective and deepen our work to modernise if we are going to face the challenges and opportunities of the post pandemic world robustly and effectively.
- 6.3 We have continued to perform well financially and delivered a balanced budget as a result of the government support received over the course of the pandemic. Our financial and operational performance has been helped by some impressive redeployment of staff to priority areas and high quality, cost effective in-house digital work. Operational leaders are now looking at the upstream impact of these redeployments to make sure that medium term plans and the need to address valuable maintenance and incremental improvements to services are back in focus for service managers.

- 6.4 Going forward, we will anticipate the need to plan to manage without the additional funding we have received during this extraordinary period while expecting considerable pressures on income from things like parking which represent a major challenge. The national skills investment programme provides significant opportunities to address historic and emergent skills gaps created by disadvantage and the pandemic, enabling residents to access new employment opportunities and local business to thrive. Beyond funding, our communities continue to grapple with the impact of the pandemic and there is a very real risk of sustained long term unemployment if we do not see a recovery in the retail and hospitality sectors. This makes our work to reactivate high streets as well as the medium to long term skills agenda critical to our recovery.
- 6.5 Our work with communities, supported by recent pieces of national research including the Marmot Review, have found that the pandemic has disproportionately affected those communities who were already experiencing significant health and wellbeing inequality. These groups include older people, those with pre-existing health conditions, those on low incomes and insecure employment and housing. The pandemic has also significantly affected black and minoritised communities, young people and those with disabilities. Very significant resources of £1.5 million have recently been secured from Central Government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) for 2021/22 to help reduce transmission and the effects of Covid 19 in these communities and progress on this investment will be described in the next 6 month review.
- 6.6 In many ways, a sense of greater connectedness is one of the positive outcomes from the pandemic; mutual aid groups and community response have been a huge success, supported by the Council's skills and infrastructure. There is much to build on here with more asset based practice, working alongside our communities, but in doing so we also have to acknowledge that our communities are also fragile and exhausted from the pandemic with a growing concern about mental health issues, especially in young people. Our staff similarly emerge from the pandemic rightfully proud of what we have achieved and we need to think about how we can help individuals build their resilience as we consider resilience at an organisational and systemic level.
- 6.7 As we start to look at the work needed to catch up on maintenance and other activities which were delayed through the pandemic we will continue to work closely with our communities as we prioritise and plan our work.

6.8 We have seen the benefit of the investment in our technology and a growing confidence around our planned investment around data. The new reality of our gigabit infrastructure raises the bar in terms of what can and should be achieved. Moving outside of the digital, our interest in modern methods of constructions and new environmental technologies means we need to look widely at the technical skills we need as an organisation. Our work on sustainability is amongst the best in the sector and beyond; and the report presented alongside SustainableAW on the agenda demonstrates the remarkable range of sustainability initiatives across our communities and businesses.

7. The 5 Individual Platforms

7.1 Members of the Committee are referred specifically to the Appendix to this report which sets out in greater detail some of the specific highlights and challenges of the last 6 months.

Platform 1 Prosperous Places

7.2 Of vital importance has been the distribution of over £57m in grant funding to almost 4,000 businesses across Adur and Worthing.

7.3 84 local businesses have benefited from the councils' Small Business Growth Grant and we have continued to work with the University of Chichester to promote the Coast to Capital wide HotHouse Programme which focuses support on financial, innovation and productivity skills for small and medium sized enterprises.

7.4 We know that we need to focus on skills to support economic recovery. Local data generated, for example through our Proactive project, but also directly from DWP and national studies has helped us to better understand the impact of the pandemic on key groups and has informed our focus on training and skills. We have continued to develop our “Good Work Programme” that assists people back into work, whilst also helping to address wider wellbeing issues such as mental health, domestic violence, vulnerable housing and addiction.

7.5 We have continued our successful Kickstart programme and more than 50 high quality work placements have been created for 16- 24 years olds across Adur and Worthing. The Councils are currently actively supporting 21 young people as part of this Kickstart programme and we will continue to take advantage of this government programme to help young people into work.

- 7.6 We have begun a workstream with local employers to look at the role of innovation in supporting economic recovery. As part of this, we have begun to explore the potential for an innovation centre and have played an active role in the development of Hydrogen Sussex with partners such as Shoreham Port; the Airport and other local employers and stakeholders.
- 7.7 Place based initiatives build confidence and support our town centres and high streets. We have purchased the former Lancing Police Station with a view to bringing this forward as a new community and co-working project aimed at helping people gain new skills and work. Portland Road, Worthing is on site and a further scheme to improve Railway Approach is being consulted upon by West Sussex County Council.
- 7.8 The creative and cultural economy is vital for our places. The business plan and planning permission have been agreed for Colonnade House to be rebuilt as a creative and digital hub. New exhibitions have been installed at the outdoor exhibition sites at West Buildings Shelter and the gabions opposite the Lido. The Council's are also supporting the return of running events such as the Three Forts Challenge and the South Downs Way 50.
- 7.9 We have secured capital funding; gained planning permission and reached a lease agreement with AudioActive to move former shop premises into Montague Street in Worthing. AudioActive will provide a range of activities from this site, including the opportunity for young people to gain essential knowledge and skills to enhance their prospects of securing employment.
- 7.10 The Councils have sought to secure public and private investment from a number of sources during this time and have, for example, worked with Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership in the development of regionally significant 'pipeline' projects. We have submitted projects for both Adur and Worthing to the national Levelling Up Fund in partnership with several of our major employers and with the support of our MPs.
- 7.11 Adur & Worthing Councils' pioneering investment in gigabit ultrafast infrastructure is progressing well and making the area one of the most digitally connected places in the south east. A total of 27,000 homes have now been passed, with Zen, Talk Talk and No-one broadband providers offering services to residential customers with a 1Gb service available for as little as £40 a month. Agreement on the Adur fibre exchange is almost complete and this will enable fibre build to commence east of the river. Whilst fibre build in Worthing town centre is now scheduled for a January 2022 start, Citizen WiFi

is still expected to begin rollout in 2021, building out from the fibre point at Colonnade House.

- 7.12 We have reached significant milestones on a series of important major projects. The Adur Civic centre redevelopment has reached the planning application stage and work continues on Free Wharf and as a series of major projects in Adur. New Monks Farm has reached the 100th new home built and infrastructure completed such as the new pumping station. We have also started work to consider the future of the Southwick estate, working closely with residents in order to identify the best path for regeneration.
- 7.13 We have completed a very significant £4.8m project to decontaminate Decoy Farm and make the site 'development ready'. The full business case for the ground breaking Worthing Integrated Care Centre, as part of a new Civic Quarter, has been agreed and a build contract is now being finalised prior to a start on site. Our partnership with London & Continental Railways (LCR) has moved forward to the point where we are now actively marketing Union Place to potential development partners. Another major step forward is that we have now extended our partnership with LCR to take forward a similar approach to securing the development of Teville Gate.

Platform 2: Thriving People and Communities

- 7.10 The impacts of the pandemic continue to be central to our work on the Thriving People and Communities platform with our focus as Councils, on keeping people safe, in supporting the recovery process and ensuring our communities are able thrive in the post pandemic context. The "Thrive" platform is central to this work and the last 6 months have supported activity around secure housing, strengthening our food networks, making sure support measures are in place for anyone who needs to self isolate as well as launching a work platform that is there to help people navigate the complex job seeking environment. Rather than seeing the pandemic as distracting from the Thrive agenda we have been focusing our work on this agenda to support communities and build resilience through this difficult period.
- 7.11 Continuing to underpin this approach has been our digital infrastructure (see Platform 4) where our in house Digital Team, working collaboratively with Communities and Customer Service, have built and developed our community response platform. The platform enables individuals to register for support, ranging from help with getting food to people requesting support with mental health and wellbeing and linking those people to volunteers or organisations

who also registered through the portal. Through this work we have supported 2355 people and continue to support 426 of these. In response to changing needs we have started looking to transition our community response work into a more self-managed peer support approach.

- 7.12 We have spent time over this period supporting and enabling the Adur and Worthing Emergency Food Network. Which includes three established food banks plus 12 new emergency food providers. A more preventative approach is being developed with groups aimed at helping people before they reach crisis point, and being there to help when they do. Work has also begun around food as a whole system, with the Councils providing a platform to connect across all aspects of food, from commissioning a community kitchen/ pop up community kitchen spaces, to developing work around food growing in our green spaces.
- 7.13 The Councils have adopted a Pathways to Affordable Homes strategy to deliver and/or enable the construction of 1,400 affordable homes by 2025. Work is underway on the major development at New Monks Farm and the final phase of the West Durrington scheme is progressing well. In Adur, redevelopment of Cecil Norris House is progressing at pace and Council contractors Westridge are now well underway at Albion Street transforming the disused brownfield site into much needed homes. Albion Street is just one of a number of schemes underway in the area which will help to provide a total of 100 new Council homes in Adur in the next couple of years. A key part of this work includes Adur's hidden homes programme seeking to deliver up to 57 new homes, In each of these projects the Councils have taken the initiative, established strong partnerships, developed a shared vision and done what is necessary to support businesses and build local homes.
- 7.14 Our focus on reducing homelessness continues and has made consistent progress in the last 6 months. We have worked hard to ensure the positive effects of the work undertaken through the 'Everyone In' approach during the first lockdown and we are working with a range of landlords to make similar offers of accommodation to everyone who is in need. A key part of this work has included development of our Housing First Offer (with funding support from MHCLG) and we are working to strengthen ways to introduce residents and landlords to the scheme before they are in crisis through "Opening Doors". The approach, which includes a range of incentives to sign up to the scheme, such as no commission or fees and a guaranteed rent for up to two years, is transforming our ability to help families most in need.

- 7.15 The wider community safety, health and wellbeing work being undertaken through this platform is extensive and seeks to be person centred and psychologically informed. Much of our work also draws on the principles of contextualised safeguarding as appropriate. In the period January to May 2021 there were some 339 referrals to the our social prescribing service 'Going Local' from over 16 GP surgeries across Adur and Worthing. This is an increase of 30% compared to the same period in the previous year. Key themes continue to include mental health, housing, finances, social isolation and lifestyle factors. Officers have just secured £66,000 for a OneStop Employment Youth Hub - to work in partnership with DWP to support 200 young people (16-24 year olds) who are claiming Universal Credit and who are struggling to find work, and who have additional issues that may prevent them to find employment. In January Adur Council secured a deal with South Downs Leisure to take over the running of Adur's leisure centres and ensure the provision of quality leisure facilities going forward. Adur also formed a partnership with Age Concern UK so that the charity can take over the running of Eastbrook Manor Community Centre and develop improved community services and activities in the area.
- 7.16 A very significant area of focus under the Thrive Platform but also the Platform 4 (Good Services and New Solutions) has been our multidisciplinary Proactive Project. Proactive uses data from our systems in new and smart ways to identify key groups at risk of financial exclusion. A cross service Proactive Team formed in February is bringing together colleagues from Customer Services, Wellbeing, Housing and Revenues & Benefits to undertake this work. The team uses data to identify specific groups that might benefit from targeted, proactive interventions that aim to increase household income and/or decrease household debt. The team uses an asset based approach and signposts residents to support available from inhouse teams and from outside the Councils. The work of the Money Mentors has been fundamental in developing this approach, ensuring access to good support and advice, and in sharing skills (such as motivational interviewing) and referral routes with the wider project team. Through Proactive and other referrals 'Money Mentors' has responded to 135 complex money referrals which has led to an increase of income of approximately £100k.

Platform 3: Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

- 7.16 Whilst Covid 19 had created a public health, economic and financial crisis the climate crisis has not gone away. To this end the Councils have continued apace with our *“Platforms for Our Places : Going Further”* and associated climate change, green space and biodiversity conservation actions. Through a number of energy, waste reduction and biodiversity initiatives the councils are successfully working towards its ambition of being a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030.
- 7.17 Supporting this agenda has been the establishment and delivery of the highly successful Climate Assembly, a representative group of 43 residents who presented their recommendations to the Joint Strategic Committee in January 2021. These recommendations are now informing the work of the Councils and members of the Assembly are participating in a range of civic initiatives linked to these sustainability priorities.
- 7.18 Investment in Adur and Worthing green spaces continues at a pace and includes developments at Brooklands Park, the new Forget Me Not memorial Garden at Worthing Crematorium and the £1 million upgrade to Highdown Gardens. The Brooklands Park Master Plan is progressing at pace and there is a separate report on the JSC agenda describing the work that will commence in the autumn including the construction of the new cafe, family leisure development, and landscaping and planting to encourage wellbeing through outdoor activity.

The purchase of Shepherds Mead, Pad Farm and New Salts Farm and our associated partnership working with the Environment Agency, the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, Surrey Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park and Sussex Wildlife Trust aims to secure much needed greenspace for local communities. The work also seeks to support our objectives around ecological protection by dedicating these sites for the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, enhancing biodiversity, and contributing to carbon neutrality.

Responding to the Climate Assembly recommendation, Adur & Worthing Councils have been working with partners in recent months to drive forward the restoration and management of the kelp forest and other “blue” habitats at the pace the climate emergency demands, and the purchase of Pad Farm and New Salts Farm in the Adur Estuary is a key investment in this programme. This work is being brought together under an emerging initiative called Sussex Bay, which aims to bring partners together, and build the funding and governance infrastructure needed to make a real impact. The Councils believe restoration of these habitats could create enormous opportunities for our

coastal communities in terms of new local jobs in fishing, aquaculture, recreation and tourism under the compelling identity of Sussex Bay, the blue counterpart to the South Downs. The project also offers significant opportunities for the Councils and their partners to offset their Carbon emissions as kelp and estuarine habitats are able to take up and store significant amounts of carbon. To progress this work the Councils are making excellent progress in forging a highly innovative partnership with The Crown Estate, who are owners of the seabed and in March 2021, an application for £79k was made to the DEFRA Investment Readiness Fund (IRF), requesting support for the financial and legal work required to create a trial product.

- 7.19 During the pandemic, work has been accelerating to develop a project pipeline to decarbonise the Councils' estate and offset residual emissions. In the past 6 months we have secured Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding to deliver £2m of capital projects identified as part of the Carbon Neutral Plan work with Technical Services and Adur Homes. Within a year, these should reduce emissions from the Councils' estate by approximately 12% and a pipeline of future projects. Projects include 2 large Heat pump projects, insulation and energy efficiency projects and solar PV installations. The Worthing Heat Network project is now approaching the commercialization stage for a £12m scheme and has had £250k support from BEIS to date. In March 2021 a BEIS HNIP funding application was submitted (for £6m) for Commercialisation & Construction funding. The scheme proposes to deliver a Worthing Town Centre heat network that will enable heat decarbonisation at scale based on a 3MW sewer source heat pump. The Worthing Heat Network project consists of 28 connections of which 18 are public sector buildings or with 7 owners, 16 are Worthing Borough Council owned buildings or sites. The Worthing Heat Network is expected to deliver 2454 tonnes CO2 savings per year when fully developed.
- 7.20 The Councils have been working with Ricardo, Shoreham Port and the Greater Brighton Economic Board to establish a Hydrogen Sussex Group that backs projects seeking to use the fuel, particularly in transport and heating systems and also helps position Greater Brighton as a centre of innovation and production. The Solar Together Sussex (STS) scheme, supported by councils across Sussex, including Adur and Worthing Council, is progressing extremely well. STS is a group buying scheme that enables residents to install high-quality, roof-mounted solar panels and battery systems at competitive prices. To date over 700 households in A&W registered interest to have PV and/or battery storage installed in their homes.

- 7.21 Our recycling rates continue to rise, with a 4.09% point increase on last year's rate in Adur, and 2.14% in Worthing. We collected 6,162.36 tonnes of recycling material in Adur, up 643.52 tonnes on last year, and we collected 10,772.87 tonnes of recycling material in Worthing, up 1,124.55 tonnes since last year. Overall we are still running at a 5.05% point increase on recycling rates compared to the pre alternate weekly collection rate.
- 7.22 The increasing interest in walking and cycling during the pandemic provides the Councils with the opportunity to support residents in making lower carbon journey choices, in improving exercise levels and achieving associated health and wellbeing outcomes. The JSC agenda has a further update on the proposed extension to the Brighton and Hove Bikeshare scheme to Adur and Worthing, including the development of a proposal to provide 322 bikes (including 161 e-bikes) to Adur & Worthing served from 43 hubs.

Platform 4: Good Services and New Solutions

- 7.23 The Councils have been and will continue to manage a period of significant financial uncertainty, with planning assumptions set at the beginning of the year needing near constant revision and updating. In financial terms there have been significant challenges in terms of income (e.g. car parking and other fees) and expenditure (for example, homelessness, leisure, emergency community support etc.). With prudent and robust financial management (and support from MHCLG) the Councils in 2020/21 have managed to both keep within budget and release resources where required for pandemic response.
- 7.25 The Proactive project and digital work referenced elsewhere are examples of how the councils are changing the way they work so they can be more responsive, more efficient and more effective. Collaborative, networked and data informed ways of working are increasingly being developed across the Councils' teams. To enable this work and release the potential of our staff, our learning offer has continued apace, upskilling and developing staff to gain the skills needed to develop as 21st century public servants leaders. We have adapted to the pressing needs of our people through our learning offer, providing resilience training, Mental Health First Aid training and management learning sets focusing on leading remote teams. Support for our leaders is key to the success of this approach and continues with the quarterly Leadership College bringing around 80 senior managers together to learn and develop together. The second cohort of the Leadership Lab is currently providing intensive development support to 14 of our most talented leaders.

- 7.26 An effective communication channel during the pandemic has continued to be our upgraded website (www.adur-worthing.gov.uk) where the Covid web pages have drawn many thousands of views, guiding people to advice, information and support including our community and business support schemes. This emphasises the importance of our website as a communication channel which has been designed to GOV.UK standards. We continually update and streamline our content in our efforts to make the site easier to navigate.
- 7.27 A significant outcome from the pandemic has been the ability of Councils to work differently and we are keen to avoid going back to an 'old normal' that no longer serves our staff or our communities. WorkspacesAW is a programme to deliver the transformation in our working model, post pandemic. Funded through income generated by the lease of part of Portland House, Worthing Town Hall will be refurbished, and different types of office space will be provided to support blended working (working from home, quiet office spaces, workshop spaces, meeting rooms with new audio-visual technology, improved WiFi) and improved customer services.
- 7.28 We have continued to develop our Good Services work with the appointment of a data lead who will be able to develop our data practice and capability.

Platform 5: Leadership of Place

- 7.29 In *"Platforms for our Places: Going Further"* and *"And Then ..."* we set out a range of place based leadership activities that, in the current context, we are seeking to actively develop further and faster. Our regional and national profile as a place of innovation and as being 'open for business' are continuing to bring forward exciting partnerships and opportunities.
- 7.30 As part of this work we fast tracked our place brand "A Time for Worthing" which is guided by a Management Board made up of local businesses, partners and third sector organisations. Since January, the focus has been on the visitor economy and, specifically, the staycation market in response to the Government's Roadmap. Successes include the refreshing of the Visitor Guide (released in June), a 'Summer in Worthing' campaign, whilst the most significant piece of work is an upgraded and broader website that will be launched in July. The next 6 months will see a combination of maximising the staycation messaging and a phase two programme of works around inward investment, which primarily will look to capitalise on the domestic market.

- 7.31 We continue to influence a range of partnerships and this has perhaps been most evident with the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB), Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership (LEP), West Sussex County Council, other District and Borough Councils, housing partners, various NHS and Economic bodies as well as the Police and Community Safety organisations. As part of the GBEB we are helping to shape the board's Covid recovery work and as a part of the LEP we are actively engaging with the "Building back Stronger, Smarter and Greener" plan. At a regional level, the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) has brought together a variety of local players to deal with the pandemic response at a Sussex wide level. As systems leader we are supporting, driving and leading a wide number of economic and sustainability projects including Sussex Bay, Hydrogen Sussex, and our affordable homes programme.
- 7.32 With regard to Community Safety we have been working with Sussex Police and our community safety partners on the development of our next Safer Communities Strategy which includes a focus on developing safer spaces and places for women within our communities. As part of this work we continue to focus on building the partnership response to serious and acquisitive crime and the harm caused to vulnerable people. We have been developing a multi-agency response to reducing school exclusions and tackling youth violence through mentoring and outreach. As described above our housing partnerships continue to work well together, skillfully and compassionately seeking to provide rapid and comprehensive support to those affected by homelessness.
- 7.33 We have developed better relationships with our communities through the pandemic and our experience of closer working and deeper trust, especially with our diverse and often excluded communities, means we are able to work more effectively. Maintaining and developing this improved way of working will be critical if we are to support those in need now and prevent further disadvantage and inequality from taking root in our communities in the future. Our work with the local Community and Voluntary Sector as part of this is developing well. We have built stronger relationships with the growing food network and mutual aid groups in Adur and Worthing and have shifted into a more enabling and supporting role as we move through the pandemic. Officers have recently secured significant Covid funding and are using some of this in creative ways to support and enable the sector and improve health outcomes for our communities. We have also begun to develop our Asset Based Community Development Communities of Practice to improve and strengthen our work with communities.

8. Engagement and Communication

- 8.1 As outlined in the progress report, engagement with our communities and partners has proved critical in realising our objectives and delivering the individual commitments outlined in "*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*" over the last 18 months. This remains an important area of focus and one for continual development as we move forward.
- 8.2 Delivery of specific projects are communicated through the Councils' communications channels, press releases, social media etc. as appropriate.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 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
- 9.2 The revenue and capital budget reports elsewhere on the agenda demonstrate the Councils' commitment to funding the initiatives contained within "*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*". The ongoing intention is that the activities set out in "*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*" and budget strategy become ever more closely aligned.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications relevant to this report. The legal implications relevant to any individual commitment are reported in the usual decision making process.

Background Papers

[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

[Platforms for our Places : Going Further](#)

[And Then: Bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing](#)

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

1.1 Creating and enabling Prosperous Places is one of five Platforms for development in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”. The progress report ([Appendix A](#)) provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this Platform.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

2.1.1 Thriving People and Communities is one of five Platforms for development in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”. The progress report ([Appendix A](#)) provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this Platform.

2.1.2 A particular focus on several elements of “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” is how to build vital capacity within our communities and community partners to enable them to shape and lead our places, while at the same time ensuring the Councils provide a robust “safety net” for the most vulnerable.

2.2 Equality Issues

2.2.1 The Council is subject to the general equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Councils’ legal duties (Equality Act 2010) have shaped the development of the plan, for example, “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” objectives include building the capacity of our communities, engaging with them to find solutions that ensure that our services (and interventions) are designed to meet specific needs and address areas and issues of historic disadvantage and inequality.

2.2.3 Our experience of working with communities during the pandemic has deepened our relationships with diverse and often marginalised groups and we are seeking to actively capitalise on these new ways of working and new relationships to better understand and respond to those most in need. Areas of investment identified in the plan, including funding from Central Government’s Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI), as well as other

decisions relating to implementation of the plan, will require additional equality impact assessment.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- 2.3.1 There are specific commitments in “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” which relate to the promotion of communities as safe places. Delivery of these commitments are in progress.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- 2.4.1 Through the implementation of “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” the Councils are seeking solutions with other partners to enable our residents, communities and places to thrive.

3. Environmental

- 3.1 Developing the Councils’ and communities’ role in Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment is one of five platforms for development in “*Platform for our Places : Going Further*”. The progress report ([Appendix A](#)) provides an overview and highlights on how the Councils are working to develop this platform.

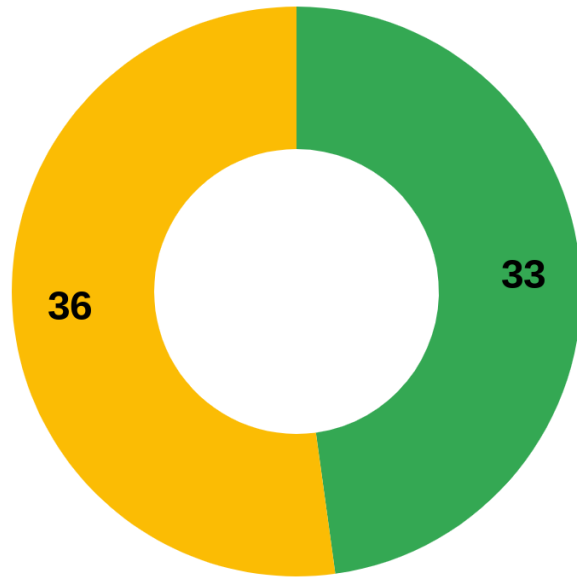
4. Governance

- 4.1 This report provides Joint Strategic Committee an overview of the progress being made to implement “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*”, the Councils’ three-year plan to enable our places to thrive.

Appendix 1: The Commitment Trackers

- **Platform 1** Prosperous Places
- **Platform 2:** Thriving People and Communities
- **Platform 3:** Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment
- **Platform 4:** Good Services and New Solutions
- **Platform 5:** Leadership of Place

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : last six months

Over the past 6 months we have continued to support our local businesses through our Platform objectives. We have now distributed over £57m in grant funding to almost 4,000 businesses and continued to offer advice and support.

We have begun a workstream to better understand the role of innovation in supporting our local economy over the longer term and our role in helping to secure inward investment. We have actively supported a series of projects themed around the production and application of hydrogen-based solutions in our local economy working with partners at **Shoreham Port**; the **Airport**; and in the businesses aiming for high growth.

We have continued to focus on supporting our town centres and providing a safe and welcoming environment for people to return to. The **gigabit fibre programme** has continued with only some reduction in pace during the pandemic, now reaching 27,000 homes and with the fibre exchange east of the river Adur now on its way.

We have answered the call from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership for regionally significant **'pipeline' projects** aimed at supporting innovation; inward investment; town centre regeneration; creative industries; sustainable business and environmental stewardship of the land (and sea). We have submitted projects for both Adur and Worthing to the national **Levelling Up** Fund in partnership with several of our major employers and with the support of our MPs.

Overview : last six months

Platform Highlights : Last six months

In line with our “Platforms for our Places : Going Further” (and our recovery plans set out in “And Then ...”) ambitions, we have reached significant milestones on a series of important major projects:

We have completed a £4.8m project to decontaminate **Decoy Farm** and make the site ‘development ready’. In parallel, we have been actively engaging with our business community around the best way to bring the site forward and meet the considerable demand for high quality employment space to promote expansion and inward investment.

84 local businesses have benefited from the councils' **Small Business Growth Grant** and we have continued to work with the University of Chichester to promote the Coast to Capital wide HotHouse Programme which focuses support on financial, innovation and productivity skills for small and medium sized enterprises.

We have developed a **Good Work Programme** to assist people to develop the skills needed to get back into work; we have used the Apprenticeship Levy to support apprenticeships across the Councils and we are actively supporting 21 young people as part of the **Kickstart** programme.

The full business case for the ground breaking **Worthing Integrated Care Centre** as part of a new Civic Quarter has been agreed and a build contract is now being finalised prior to a start on site.

Southern Housing has made considerable progress on the flood defences and groundwork necessary to support 540 new homes at **Free Wharf** in Shoreham, supported by grants from Homes England. We have now received the proposal from Hyde to develop the **Adur Civic Centre** site and deliver **172** new homes.

Cala homes have completed 90 homes at **New Monks Farm; the new travellers site has been completed with 16 new homes now occupied; and the riverside Pumping Station is substantially complete**. Many of the 120 new homes at **Ropetackle North** are now occupied.

Projects to deliver the former EDF car park site at **Southdown View Road** in Worthing and the former **Police Station in Lancing** are underway where we are looking to re-purpose space to provide opportunities for start-ups, scale ups, re-skilling and learning.

Following planning approval for **Union Place**, our partnership with London & Continental Railways (LCR) has moved forward to the point where we are now actively marketing the opportunity to develop the site to a potential development partner. A major step forward is that we have now extended our partnership with LCR to take forward a similar approach to securing the development of **Teville Gate**.

The **Boklok** scheme deliver 150 high quality modular homes at Fulbeck Avenue has moved forward to site set up and work will now begin in earnest.

Our public realm project at **Portland Road** is on site. A further scheme to improve **Railway Approach** now that the **new HMRC building** is complete and occupied is being consulted upon by West Sussex County Council.

We have secured planning permission and agreed a business plan to secure the extension and redevelopment of **Colonnade House** and transform the space into a Cultural and Digital Hub for new and expanding businesses - building on the success of the existing facility.

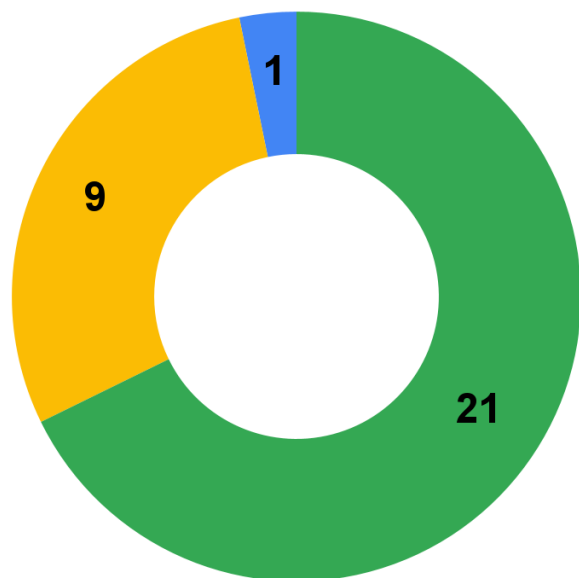
A total of 27,000 homes have now been passed, with Zen, Talk Talk and No-one broadband providers offering services to residential customers with a 1Gb service available for as little as £40 a month. Agreement on the Adur fibre exchange is well progressed, and this will enable fibre build to commence east of the river. Whilst fibre build in Worthing town centre is now scheduled for a January 2022 start, Citizen WiFi is still expected to begin rollout in late 2021, building out from the fibre point at Colonnade House.

During this past 6 months we have secured capital funding; gained planning permission and reached a lease agreement with **AudioActive** to move former shop premises into Montague Street. AudioActive will provide a range of activities from this site, including the opportunity for young people to gain essential knowledge and skills to enhance their prospects of securing employment. The project will provide a major boost to the local music economy.

Challenges -

Our Platform commitments to working in partnership to support local people and to plan for recovery and the 'new economy' are vital. We will continue to work alongside businesses to promote access to new markets, supporting people to reskill to find new jobs, supporting likely growth in micro-entrepreneurialism and working to support employers, businesses and education providers to make better use of apprenticeships to help particularly young people entering the job market.

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : last six months

The health, social and economic impact of the pandemic is central to our Thrive agenda with a focus on recovery, keeping our communities safe and enabling them to thrive. The “Thrive” platform is driving and connecting a number of key themes that will support and enable our communities, especially those that are most vulnerable through secure housing, developing and strengthening our food system, supporting people with their finances (including those that needed to self isolate), developing a good work agenda and promoting safety.

Platform Highlights : last three months

Safer Communities

We are working on the development of our next Safer Communities Strategy and have been focusing our work around some key themes, including: safer spaces and places for women; reducing school exclusions and tackling youth violence through mentoring and outreach; providing support to 77 victims of Anti Social Behaviour - holding perpetrators to account; supporting 3 Closure Orders on problematic properties; extending our delegated powers to Worthing Homes to issue Community Protection Notices; extending our efforts to develop a workforce that is trauma / psychologically informed (training a further 14 members of frontline staff); reducing school exclusions and influencing Worthing High Schools to undertake Therapeutic Thinking training, through the No More Exclusions Pilot co-led by the Early Help and Wellbeing Lead.

We have also been focusing our external funding on issues around young people, prevention and early intervention in our communities. The Mentivity mentoring project for children entering High School has supported the transition of young people at risk of not coping. We are using NHS funding to support young people back into school following remote learning, successfully enabling one child to return to school following a 14 months' absence. We have applied for funding to pilot approaches to reducing school exclusions by school workshops and one to one mentoring (to be confirmed early June). We have extended the original VRU programme to fund a community approach to youth violence which was impacted by Covid. In early June, 15 youth ambassadors will be trained to carry out awareness raising in the community.

Supporting and enabling our food system

We have spent time over this period supporting and enabling the A&W Emergency Food Network. A more preventative approach is being developed with groups aimed at helping people before they reach crisis point, and being there to help when they do. Funding secured through the COMF grant is being used to support and enable this work, including a community kitchen/ pop up community kitchen spaces.

Homelessness

The trend in increased demand for homeless services continued and we provided housing for anyone who was homeless through the winter via MHCLG funding for our Next Steps Accommodation Programme(NSAP) and winter provision. Through 'Everyone In' and winter provision, 169 Worthing and 26 Adur residents were provided with housing and support. Since January, 64 of them have been supported to move on into settled or

supported accommodation with 24 who remain in accommodation and supported under discretionary duties whilst suitable housing is sourced.

Despite the constraints of the pandemic we are continuing to develop our work to prevent rough sleeping with our key aims of Prevention, Intervention and Relief. We were able to deliver a programme of psychologically informed training funded through our Rough Sleeper Initiative(RSI) for two cohorts of housing, outreach and Turning Tides staff who deliver services and support to single homeless and rough sleepers.

Under our NSAP work, additional HMO's were leased with the councils providing inreach support and security, this was a pilot to 'test' tenancy readiness in a group where landlord confidence is low. Three landlords are now working with the team to convert these onto the Opening Doors scheme with assured shorthold tenancies and will backfill with a further HMO lease to meet the demand of single people needing temporary accommodation.

To support our Domestic Abuse work in response to increasing incidents we now have an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) co-located and working in partnership with the housing teams and a further support worker is to be recruited as part of the work being delivered with the recently secured COMF funding.

The service has begun transitioning from meeting the immediate needs of the pandemic which presented itself in increased homelessness from people who had no security of tenure, to a preventative approach to work with those with security of tenure or mortgage holders who are at risk of homelessness. Notice periods are beginning to taper back to normal levels and the Eviction Ban ended on 1 June 2021. There are a variety of work streams being

Thriving People and Communities

commissioned both locally and countywide to provide targeted meaningful support to those in need to prevent homelessness.

Housing Strategy 2020/2023 - Our progress continues with Worthing development Downview phase 2 due online for occupation in July and Rowlands Road in August, which will provide 27 additional units of local temporary accommodation, with the Adur site at Albion Street expected by March 2022.

Work is well underway for 17 new Council homes at the former Cecil Norris House in Shoreham with completion expected in Summer 2021. A programme to build 56 new Council homes on redundant garage sites has been agreed and planning applications progressing at pace.

Opening Doors Scheme - Opening Doors despite the challenges presented by our local buoyant private sector market continues to attract landlords and the work for 'Scaling up Opening Doors' has begun.

Health and Wellbeing

We are re-invigorating the Adur & Worthing Local Community Network with our wider NHS and community partners.

Alcohol Programme - Alcohol remains a key driver for wellbeing and over the last period our new Wellbeing Advisor has been developing her work providing specialist support for people from January, who are drinking at increasing and higher risk rates - i.e. people who are not yet dependent. We have been working with a small number of cases and been focusing on campaign work to raise awareness in our communities.

Going Local - In the period January to May there were some 339 referrals to the service (an increase of 30% compared to the same period in the previous year) from over 16 GP surgeries across Adur and Worthing. Key themes continue to include mental health, housing, finances, social isolation and lifestyle factors.

Financial Capability

Our multidisciplinary Proactive Project has progressed well and is using data in smart ways to identify key groups at risk of financial exclusion and issues and through proactive work, provide good information, advice and support.

The multi-disciplinary team is testing how it can mitigate the impact of the covid pandemic on the councils' more financially vulnerable residents, using data to identify specific cohorts that might benefit from targeted, proactive interventions that aim to increase household income and/or decrease household debt. Using an asset based approach to signpost residents to support available from inhouse teams and from outside the councils.

The work of the One Stop programme 'Money Mentors' has been fundamental in supporting the Proactive Project and supporting the community more widely. During the period Jan 2021 to May 2021 there have been 135 complex money referrals into OneStop which has led to an approx increase of income £100k

Good Work - We are developing our Good Work approach to connect employment, skills and wellbeing. Our initial focus has been focused on supporting and information and advice.

Thriving People and Communities

One Stop has helped 125 employment referrals during the period, with 29 people being offered full time employment, including 6 young people's referrals to the youth hub (started on 06/05/21) We have loaned out over 19 digital devices to provide access to the internet for our most vulnerable residents and signposted 12 referrals to gain digital skills via course or support. Officers have just secured £66,000 for a **OneStop Employment Youth Hub** - to work in partnership with DWP to support 200 young people (16-24 year olds) who are claiming Universal Credit and who are struggling to find work, and who have additional issues that may prevent them to find employment. A physical venue is being sourced in Worthing Town Centre to co-locate DWP and Council officers to create opportunities for building stronger professional relationships between our two organisations. This will also provide a safe & friendly space where young people can meet their work coaches and our youth support coaches who will be focusing on supporting personal barriers such as mental health, housing and financial issues to help build resilience during these uncertain times. We are also hoping to provide advice and access to opportunities for young people who might not be claiming Universal Credit

Community Assets and Resources

During this period we have secured a tenant for Eastbrook Manor Community Centre - Age UK West Sussex. We have also provided £20,000 of grants to support those disproportionately affected by COVID to 4 organisations focusing on young people, adults with learning disabilities, a safe space for people to come together and connect and support for the community efforts and emergency provision due to the direct impacts of COVID.

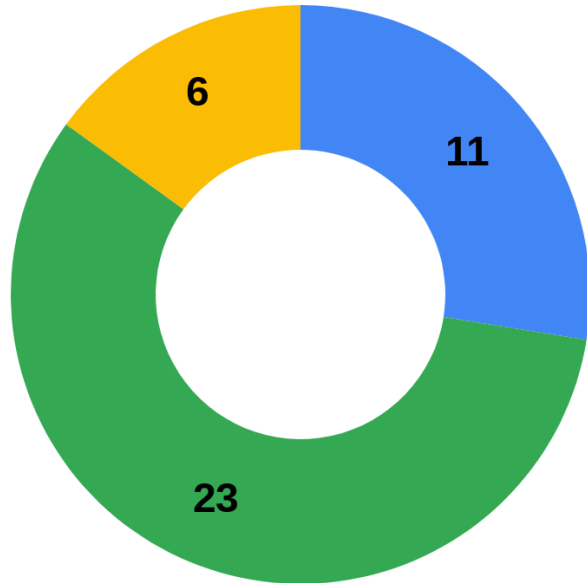
Covid Recovery

Our PH&R Team have continued to work hard to support the public and businesses during the Covid pandemic, using our new Covid Information Officers to provide support and guidance to local residents and businesses. We have used our wise regulatory approach to provide good advice and information to businesses and communities and have managed to deal with incidents of non compliance informally, with no enforcement notices being required. The team have also worked with the HSE since December 2020 to carry out spot checks and inspections on local businesses and ensure business safety. A total of 847 businesses in Adur and 1567 in Worthing have been or will be contacted. So far we have received 18 referrals.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, the Food Hygiene Inspection service has managed to carry out inspections of approved premises and A & B rated premises and supported a number of new businesses, particularly home caterers.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : Last six months

The last six months have continued to see very significant progress with the sustainability agenda. A very successful Climate Assembly with a representative group of 43 residents reported its recommendations to the Councils in January 2021.

Despite the challenges of COVID, the Parks & Foreshore team delivered the largest tree planting scheme the Councils have ever undertaken.

The Councils have attracted widespread praise for their acquisition of 213 acres of land for nature restoration over three sites, Shepherds Mead, Pad Farm and New Salts Farm, with exciting plans forming for each. The Councils are working in partnership with South Downs National Park, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency.

The Councils also made national news recently, in a groundbreaking move to lease the seabed from The Crown Estate, with the aim of attracting blue carbon investment in support of kelp forest restoration. A wider concept, Sussex Bay, has the potential to create a blue mirror to the South Downs, promoting a range of sustainable fishing, nature restoration, tourism and recreation opportunities.

The Worthing Civic Heat Network, which aims to use excess heat from the sewer system, is also receiving significant support from BEIS, and is a leading project nationally, predicted to be one of the lowest carbon heat networks in England.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

The Councils were successful in securing £2m from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund which is funding a significant programme of carbon reduction projects. A 13% reduction in carbon emissions was reported for the year 2019/20 against the 2030 Net Zero target.

A new **commercial food waste** service is set to roll out from the summer, powered by our digital platform and marketing support from the communications team.

Platform Highlights : last six months

- Our recycling rates continue to rise, with a 4.09% point increase on last year's rate in Adur, and 2.14% in Worthing. We collected 6,162.36 tonnes of recycling material in Adur, up 643.52 tonnes on last year, and we collected 10,772.87 tonnes of recycling material in Worthing, up 1,124.55 tonnes since last year. Overall we are still running at a 5.05% point increase on recycling rates compared to the pre alternate weekly collection rate.
- Our collected refuse figures this year totalled 11,023.87 tonnes in Adur which is a reduction of 626.75 tonnes from last year. In Worthing we collected 21,072.01 tonnes, an increase of 1,001.87 tonnes. This increase is caused by a number of factors, Covid, an increase in side waste and a number of new developments coming live.
- Delivery of the highly successful Climate Assembly, a representative group of 43 residents who presented their recommendations to the Joint Strategic Committee in January 2021.
- Development of a proposal to join the Greater Brighton City Bike Share scheme, providing 322 bikes (including 161 e-bikes) to Adur & Worthing served from 43 hubs.
- Secured Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding to deliver £2m of capital projects identified as part of the Carbon Neutral Plan work with Technical Services and Adur Homes. Within a year, these should reduce emissions from the councils' estate by approximately 12% and a pipeline of future projects. Projects include 2 large Heat pump projects, insulation and energy efficiency projects and solar PV installations.
- The Worthing Heat Network project is now approaching the commercialization stage for a £12m scheme and has had £250k support from BEIS to date. In March 2021 a BEIS HNIP funding application was submitted (for £5m) for Commercialisation & Construction funding. The scheme proposes to deliver a Worthing town centre heat network that will enable heat decarbonisation at scale based on a 3MW sewer source heat pump. The Worthing Heat Network project consists of 28 connections of which 18 are public sector buildings or with 7 owners, 16 are Worthing Borough Council owned buildings or sites. The Worthing Heat Network is expected to deliver 2454 tonnes CO2 savings per year when fully developed.

Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment

- Delivery of Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Green Homes Grant Programme in consortia with other south east local authorities. LAD aims to decarbonise homes through installing measures such as insulation, new heating technologies and solar PV to homes EPC rated D,E,F & G:
 - LAD (1A), with SE Warmer Homes consortium, £3m to deliver measures in 300 homes across SE
 - LAD (1B) with SE Warmer Homes consortium, £60m to deliver measures in 900 homes across SE, March-Sept 21
 - LAD (2), South East Local Energy Hub led, £79m, Sept-Dec 21.
- Under the Solar Together Sussex scheme, over 700 households in A&W registered interest to have PV and/or battery storage installed in homes - a phenomenal rate of interest. Due to expected drop off rates these are predicted to reduce to around 100 installations which will deliver an estimated 100tonnes CO2/year. A 2nd auction is planned for late autumn 2021.
- The Councils are leading the development of an exciting vision for Sussex Bay with many local partners. Sussex Bay aims to drive nature restoration at scale and pace across our marine, coastal and intertidal habitats, along the whole of the Sussex coastline. The vision will be underpinned by development of a “blue natural capital” model, which aims to attract investment into blue habitats, including carbon capture, water quality, flood risk management and biodiversity. Adur & Worthing are the first councils in the UK to propose a “natural capital seabed lease” from the Crown Estate to enable the investment scheme, and many national bodies are taking a keen interest in developments. Work to build a strong local partnership continues, and Sussex Bay aims to support the work of the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project along with a

growing number of other projects, including restoration of intertidal and estuary habitats in Sussex rivers, with the Adur Estuary as a leading exemplar.

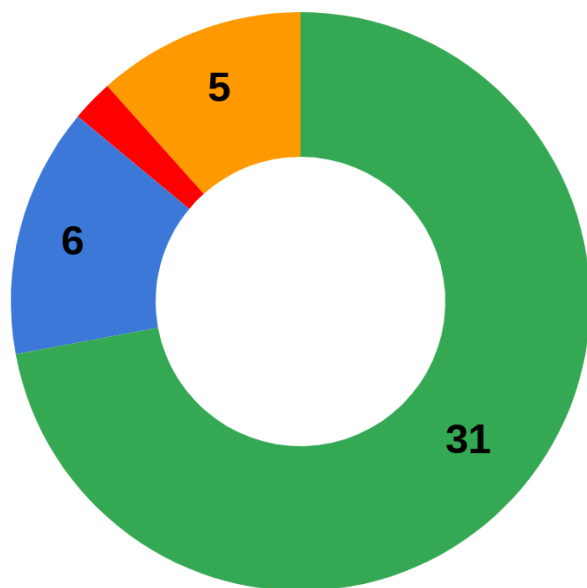
- The Councils’ land acquisitions for nature restoration are also among the most innovative interventions made in the UK by any local authority. Partnership working locally is very strong, and restoration plans are progressing well. The Councils have commissioned Surrey Wildlife Trust to create natural capital plans for each site which will establish a before and after view, enabling the creation of biodiversity net gain credits, which will be made available to developers under the new regime coming forward in the Environment Bill. Initial feasibility is underway at Pad Farm for saltmarsh/habitat restoration, with the Environment Agency keen to support progress through to potentially significant capital works. At New Salts Farm we are working with the Rivers Trust to develop a proposal for the National Heritage Lottery Fund, based on the successful model at the EPIC project, Sompting, and at Shepherds Mead, we are working with the South Downs National Park to restore chalk grassland and meadow, working in partnership with the community.

Platform Challenges: last six months

- We plan to increase our focus on Adur Homes social housing decarbonisation, by recruiting a RETROFIT coordinator to develop a programme of work.

Good Services and New Solutions

Commitment Tracker



● Blue (complete) ● Green (On track) ● Amber (some issues) ● Red (significant issues)

Overview : last six months

The digital team has continued to support our **COVID response** by providing new digital services that support both the provision of assistance and access to grants. These services are robust, easy to use digital products delivered rapidly through partnership working with service teams.

With reference to our working practices, WorkspacesAW has seen the Councils respond quickly to learning gained through the pandemic. By leasing a part of Portland House, revenue has been generated to support the Councils' finances while providing the financial capacity for significant modernisation of office spaces. WorkspacesAW will deliver different kinds of office space (meeting rooms, quiet spaces, collaboration spaces) while supporting home working and making a **blended model of working** the norm. Our staff travel policy being developed in parallel is helping staff shift modes of transport helping secure reduced commuting and business miles, helping reduce carbon emissions.

Our digital estate continues its migration to the cloud, with the **Revenues & Benefits** system on target for launch in August. The provision of much needed digital self service is expected to make a big impact on convenience for customers and should reduce call volumes in the autumn.

With new internal service design expertise in place, work to design **Citizen Hub** is underway. This will help us track resolution of customer issues into service areas, and provide better customer satisfaction and feedback data to support continuous improvement tracked through the Good Services Board.

Good Services and New Solutions

Platform Highlights : last six months

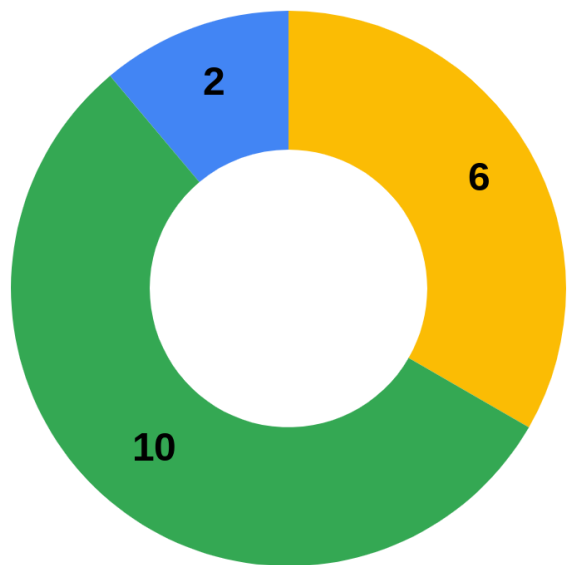
- Our customer service team has continued to deliver excellent levels of service throughout the pandemic period, embracing the opportunity to proactively support the most vulnerable, making calls out to help customers facing financial or housing difficulties, and referring them on to further support from housing, well-being or third party support services. This proactive work, described in more detail in Platform 2, is data led, person centred, and focuses on improving household income and/or reducing household debt. Customer service has established and led a cross service team that can take a more holistic view of residents to support those already in crisis, and can also take an early intervention approach to minimise the numbers of residents tipping into crisis. A simple pathway has been tested with 100 residents, just over a third of whom were happy to engage with the team and have been signposted to additional benefits they were eligible for and/or provided with money mentoring and/or befriending services. Over time, we will be able to track financial and wellbeing impacts resulting from the pathway.
- A digital “citizen hub” project has started, focusing on digitising the proactive service described above and in Platform 2. Designed to enable joint working across teams and track outcomes for those receiving support, citizen hub will be expanded over time to enable tracking of customer experience end to end, across multiple services using our low code platform and the exciting new features available in a newly upgraded platform.
- The Good Services Board has been created to work to help services meet the Good Services Standard. The Board will use data to help services understand their performance, and get closer to the experiences and needs of their customers.
- WorkspacesAW is a programme that aims to deliver post pandemic transformation in our working model. Funded through income generated by the lease of part of Portland House, Worthing Town Hall will be refurbished over the summer, and different types of office space will be provided to support blended working.
- A major programme to move our Revenues and Benefits system to the cloud is well progressed with additional digital self service capabilities scheduled for later in the year.
- Support for our leaders continues, with the quarterly Leadership College bringing around 80 senior managers together to learn and develop together. The second cohort of the Leadership Lab is currently providing development support to 14 of our most talented leaders.
- A pilot programme has begun to explore the opportunities presented by the procurement green paper. This has identified a number of procurements where greater emphasis will be placed on the opportunities to drive social and environmental value.

Good Services and New Solutions

Platform Challenges : last six months

- A new asbestos management system has been successfully procured and implemented, however the broader need for a shared digital asset management system has not progressed as hoped, largely due to pressures brought by the pandemic and the redeployment of staff and other resources to support our communities and businesses (flagged as a red in the pie chart above). This project will be given renewed focus over the next six months as part of the corporate landlord agenda.

Commitment Tracker



● Complete ● On Track ● Potential Risk

Overview : last six months

The councils have continued to focus on responding to the economic and social turbulence created by the pandemic. Work has also progressed on building resilience and shaping post pandemic opportunities for our residents and local businesses.

In light of the magnitude and complexity of the pandemic's impact, especially on business and vulnerable communities, the councils have actively taken the role of systems leader, helping to address the immediate and longer term issues faced in Adur and Worthing with our partners.

The challenge of the public health crisis and the economic and social consequences of lockdowns, as well as seeking to meet higher needs within constrained budgets has not been easy.

Our work on better understanding and building resilience continues to be a key theme in our partnership working. We see our work on building resilience as a process of increasing Adur and Worthing's ability to both respond to the unexpected but also to develop, change and improve as a result.

In “*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*” we highlighted the need for **strong relationships** with communities, businesses and public service providers locally, regionally and nationally. These relationships over the last 6 months have, in the context of the Covid 19, continued to be essential. In responding to the pandemic we have relied upon these strong relationships to further the health, wellbeing and long term prosperity of our communities. Through these mature and strong partnerships we have been able to be there for our residents and our businesses when they have most needed us. Examples of where those relationships have born valuable fruit can be found across all four the preceding Platform reports.

With the economic and social turbulence of the past year some of the activities have inevitably either been put on hold or have been rapidly repurposed to support pandemic activity. As we anticipated in “And Then” the pandemic and the implications of it have created new opportunities, for example by intervening in commercial sites, accelerating gigabit build out, supporting community action, developing skills opportunities, and progressing our ambitious sustainability agenda. Officers and Members have continued to work extremely well together to seize the opportunities as identified.

Platform Highlights : last six months

Critical Relationships - The councils have sought to maintain and develop a wide number of critical relationships including the Greater Brighton Economic Board, housing partners, various NHS and Economic bodies as well as the Police and Community Safety organisations. Our relationships with other Districts and Boroughs continue to be positive and productive. Our work with West Sussex County Council in many areas is also progressing well. At a

regional level the Local Resilience Forum has continued to bring together a variety of local players to deal with the pandemic response at a Sussex wide level.

Place Campaigns- “Time for Worthing” continues to be guided by a Management Board made up of local businesses, partners and third sector organisations. Since January the focus has been on the visitor economy and, specifically, the staycation market in response to the Government’s Roadmap. Successes include the refreshing of the Visitor Guide (released in June), a ‘Summer in Worthing’ campaign, supported by the TCI, whilst the most significant piece of work is an upgraded and broader website. Outside of this, the Council have been active with a number of other campaigns, notably focused on the reopening of the economy as part of the government’s roadmap. Success include “WelcomeBackAW” and “WinterWelcome” that covered both Adur and Worthing. These campaigns included direct business and Member engagement.

Community and Voluntary Sector - Our work with the local Community and Voluntary Sector is developing well. We have built stronger relationships with the growing food network and mutual aid groups in Adur and Worthing and have shifted into a more enabling and supporting role as we move through the pandemic. Officers have recently secured significant Covid funding and are using some of this in creative ways to support and enable the sector and improve health outcomes for our communities. We have also begun to develop our Asset Based Community Development Communities of Practice to improve and strengthen our work with communities.

Leadership of Place

Community Safety - We have been working with the Sussex Police and our community safety partners on the development of our next Safer Communities Strategy which includes a focus on developing safer spaces and places for women within our communities. As part of this work we continue to focus on building the partnership response to serious and acquisitive crime and the harm caused to vulnerable people. We have been developing a multi agency response to reducing school exclusions and tackling youth violence through mentoring and outreach.

Housing and Homelessness - Housing partnerships continue to work well together, skillfully and compassionately seeking to provide rapid and comprehensive support to those affected by homelessness. We have continued to make progress in tackling homelessness and we are actively seeking to learn from the positive effects on the work undertaken through the 'Everyone In' approach. The impacts of domestic violence, unemployment and family breakdowns have taken their toll and we are seeing this reflected in those presenting as homeless. Partners are working well together in constantly reviewing cases to ensure we are able to prevent homelessness and assist residents with housing problems.

Emergency Planning and Civil Contingency Work - In "*Platforms for our Places : Going Further*" we made specific reference to the importance of Emergency Planning and Civil Contingency work. Over the past 15 months we have been focussed on supporting West Sussex County Council, the lead authority for public health, to ensure that vulnerable people in our communities are supported. This work has been wide ranging and includes secure housing, developing and strengthening our food system, supporting people with their finances (including those that need to self isolate), mental

health support, addiction services, developing a good work agenda and promoting safety.