



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee  
9 November 2021  
Agenda Item 12

Key Decision: [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All Adur

## **Referral of Motion on Notice from Adur District Council**

### **Report by the Interim Director for Communities**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. This report sets out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Adur District Council on the 28th October 2021.
- 1.2. Members of the Joint Strategic committee are asked to consider and determine the Motion.
- 1.3. Members can either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members can reject the motion.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. That the Joint Strategic Committee support the motion and determine how further work is carried out; or,
- 2.2. That the Joint Strategic Committee reject the motion.

### **3. Context**

- 3.1. At its meeting on the 28th October 2021, Adur District Council received a motion from Councillor Catherine Arnold, seconded by Councillor Jeremy Gardner, details of which can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The motion submitted to Council contained subject matter that is within the remit of the Joint Strategic Committee, as defined in para 14.4.1 of the Council's Procedure Rules. Therefore, it was moved and seconded, immediately noted by the Council and referred without debate to the Joint Strategic Committee for consideration and determination.
- 3.3 Where a motion has been referred by Full Council to the Joint Strategic Committee, the mover, or the seconder in the absence of the mover, shall be entitled to attend the relevant meeting of the Executive and explain the motion. Councillor Catherine Arnold has been made aware that the motion has been referred to this Committee.

### **4. Issues for consideration**

- 4.1 The Joint Strategic Committee can either support or reject the motion.
- 4.2 Should the Joint Strategic Committee support the motion, then the Committee should ask Officers to prepare a further report on the substantive issues to be presented at a future meeting of the JSC.

### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There may be direct financial implications in future depending on the course of action the Joint Strategic Committee wishes to take.

### **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 Rules concerning motions are set out in the Council's Constitution under paragraph 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

**Background Papers**

Motion to Adur District Council on the 28th October 2021

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## Appendix 1

This Council notes that

This summer Southern Water (SW) was fined a record £90m for deliberately dumping between 16 billion and 21 billion litres of raw sewage into the seas and rivers of Kent, Hampshire and Sussex (including Chichester Harbour) between 2010 and 2015

The judge summed up “each of the 51 offences seen in isolation shows a shocking and wholesale disregard for the environment, for the precious and delicate ecosystems along the North Kent and Solent coastlines, for human health, and for the fisheries and other legitimate businesses that depend on the vitality of the coastal waters”

This criminal activity has put the health of residents and visitors to Adur and Worthing at risk through the contamination of the seas of the Sussex coastline and contamination of local sea food, damaged the reputation of local beaches and the local environment and threatens local businesses, particularly the Shoreham Port Authority and anyone involved with the harvesting of sea food.

Just days after the £90m fine Peacehaven treatment works carried out an “emergency arrangements release” of raw sewage into the sea after a build up of disposable items. Let us also not forget of late, the forced closure of beaches from Lancing to Ferring for six days.

Furthermore, raw sewage threatens the council's seabed lease initiative to boost marine conservation and to help in the council's bid towards carbon neutrality by 2030.

The water industry has accumulated debts of £48billion since 1989 which cost £1.3billion in annual interest. In that time the industry has paid £57billion in shareholder dividends, while customer bills have increased by 40% above inflation.

It further notes that

A number of incidents have taken place during the summer along the Adur and Worthing coast involving the release of raw sewage which emphasise the need for urgent investment in the area's wastewater treatment facilities.

The Council resolves to:

Write to the Chief Executive and Director of the Environment at SW insisting that they meet with the Council to account for the impact of SW's behaviour on local communities, to give a clear picture of the current inadequacies of the waste water infrastructure servicing in West Sussex and to lay out their plans for how they will remedy the situation...demanding that Southern Water make the investment needed to:

- ensure that local water treatment works are functioning legally and safely and that our rivers, streams and shoreline are not affected by serious pollution incidents in the future
- improve the capacity and effectiveness of the local waste water infrastructure so that sewage is not discharged into the River Adur and the sea

Write to local MP's and the Department of the Environment asking for:

- The Environment Agency be given more power and resources to fine water companies, acting as an incentive to radically invest in their water treatment plants
- That fine income be used to support improvements in the regulatory arrangements for water companies and to provide compensation to local authorities and local businesses that have suffered from the criminal activities of SW.
- That the current management arrangements for the water industry are revised so that private companies like SW cannot secretly pursue criminal activities over many years in order to avoid financial penalties and the cost of upgrading infrastructure.

**Proposed by Cllr Catherine Arnold**  
**Seconded by Cllr Jeremy Gardner**