



Report of the Leader on Decisions taken by Cabinet Members and the Joint Strategic Committee since the last meeting of Council

A Decisions Taken by Individual Cabinet Members

Listed below is a summary of decisions taken by the individual Cabinet Members since the dispatch of the agenda for the last Ordinary Council Meeting. Full details can be found on the Cabinet Members Decisions webpage

Leader

None

Deputy Leader

None

Cabinet Member for Regeneration

None

Cabinet Member for Resources

None

Cabinet Member for Citizen Services

None

Cabinet Member for the Environment

None

Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing

None

Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure

None

Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

None

B. Decisions taken by the Joint Strategic Committee on 7 June 2022

Items related to Adur District Council are not reproduced on this agenda.

Full details can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

The matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:-

JSC/005/22-23 Chief Executive's use of urgency powers to settle the waste dispute

The Committee was informed that a significant proportion of staff in the Waste and Cleansing team started industrial action on the 14th March 2022. Following negotiation with both the GMB and Unison, both sides reached agreement on the 8th April 2022 allowing the strike to come to an end.

The resulting settlement had significant unbudgeted cost implications for the Councils. Under the Council's financial regulations, officers were not allowed to enter into agreements with unbudgeted financial consequences, consequently the Chief Executive approved the use of the Council's reserves to fund the costs associated with the strike and associated new pay arrangements using urgency powers as set out in the constitution.

A Member asked a question regarding the financial risks posed to residents following the settlement. Officers advised that the risks were primarily related to inflation on the Council's budgets which was showing up in several different places. The Council was expecting pay awards of at least 4%, provision had been made in the budget for a 5% increase. Until the pay settlement was agreed, the Council wouldn't have certainty on this figure. In addition, inflation was also affecting energy costs. Since the budget was set, the war in Ukraine had had a significant impact on the energy markets. Diesel costs were expected to rise by 50%, electricity costs were expected to rise by 50% and the cost of gas was expected to rise by 300%. At this early stage in the financial year, officers were expecting cost pressures in Worthing of £750k excluding the cost of the strike action. As a result, a recommended programme of action would be proposed to the Council to help bring the budget back in line by the end of the financial year. This would form the basis of a report to the Committee in July 2022.

As a supplementary question, the Member asked how the withdrawal of the sum of £371k would affect the percentage of net revenue expenditure, which ideally should be held between 6 and 10%. Would the Council still achieve this? Officers advised that it would be recommended that the sum be taken from the capacity issues reserve, rather than the working balance, to preserve the working balance to manage the in year risks that the Council was experiencing. Therefore, the working balance would be at the upper limit and was currently around 10%.

A Member highlighted that reserves could only be replaced from one source, the Council taxpayer. Therefore, he sought clarification as to how many Worthing Labour Councillors had been supported by the GMB? Councillor Walker agreed to provide a written response to the question following the meeting.

Members welcomed the report and thanked officers for their work to resolve this matter. The recommendation in the report was proposed by Councillor Vicki Wells, seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn and unanimously supported.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee noted the content of the report and endorsed the urgent decision made by the Chief Executive to settle the industrial action.

JSC/006/22-23 Improving our Democracy and Governance Practices

The Committee was informed that over the last two years, both Adur and Worthing Councils had developed plans and established new resources to enable the increased participation of residents and communities in policy development and decision making. New posts had been established including a Participation Lead and a Data Lead to improve our ability to understand and engage with our communities.

In support of the aim of continuing to improve participation and transparency in decision-making, an internal review by the councils' Monitoring Officer had identified opportunities for modernising both Council's constitutions, and this was about to enter the member consultation stage over summer 2022, via a Working Group, agreed to be set up by the Joint Governance Committee at its meeting on 31 May 2022. This work would be carried out independently but with parallel timetables where possible for each Council.

Further, the change of Administration at Worthing Borough Council created a need to consider how decisions were best made in both the joint and individual authority arenas.

The report proposed the creation of sub-committees of the Joint Strategic Committee - Worthing Executive and Adur Executive - to which would be delegated in full any decisions solely affecting the relevant Council. The intention was that it would improve the ability for our communities to understand how and where key "place based" decisions were taken, and how they were able to more fully participate.

The new arrangements would be piloted over a period of 6-12 months during which they will be reviewed to assess the impact on communities, decision-making and resources.

Options were also being developed for holding meetings away from the usual council buildings, enabling the Executives (subject to budget availability) to take decision-making even closer to the communities they serve, if they choose.

Both Councils continued to highly value the joint arrangements in place, and all decisions in the joint arena would continue to be made at the Joint Strategic Committee as part of these proposals.

Similar proposals were being developed for the greater utilisation of the separate Worthing and Adur Overview and Scrutiny Committees and/or the establishment of sub-committees of JOSC for individual-authority matters, whilst JOSC would remain the forum for all joint matters. This would be considered as part of the constitution Working Group, and may require amendments to be made to the Joint Committee Agreement, which will be brought to the Joint Strategic Committee as well as the Joint Governance Committee for consideration in due course, before being ratified by both Full Councils.

Subject to approval by the Joint Strategic Committee, the first sub-committee meetings would start in July and take place monthly, subject to requirements. To ensure efficient use of officer and member time and costs, meetings would only take place if there were sufficient agenda items, or subject to urgency.

It was anticipated that the Joint Strategic Committee may be able to meet less frequently under the new arrangements, although this was subject to trial and review during the pilot period.

Given the disparity in the sizes of each Council's Executives, agreement would need to be reached on the principle that the same number of Executive Members from each council would be present at each JSC meeting to ensure equality of voting.

For information, it was expected that the reviews to the constitutions would be presented to the Joint Governance Committee on 27 September 2022 for consideration and onward recommendation to Full Councils for approval in October 2022.

The Leader of Adur District Council clarified that the Adur Sub-Committee meetings would continue to have a full membership of 6 Executive Members and would continue to meet in the Shoreham Centre.

The Deputy Leader of Worthing Council welcomed the positive direction set out in the report, highlighting that there was a movement amongst progressive local authorities to do more place based work. For a lot of people, the nature of the town hall was quite intimidating and didn't necessarily feel open to the public. To be successful in the community, the Council would need to build successful engagement and communications strategies that let people in an area know that the Council was coming and wanted to listen and engage with residents. He believed that the proposed changes would lead to a much closer relationship between the Council and residents.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Emma Evans, seconded by Councillor Angus Dunn and unanimously supported.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- a. approved the establishment of a Worthing Executive Sub-Committee and an Adur Executive Sub-Committee, with the terms of reference as set out in paragraph 3.11 of the report; and
- b. noted the process for reviewing the constitutions and the proposed changes to scrutiny arrangements.

JSC/008/21-22 Delivery of Housing for Emergency & Temporary Accommodation - Victoria Rd, Worthing

The report followed the publication of the Adur and Worthing Housing Strategy for 2020-2023, 'Delivering Pathways to Affordable Homes' document and subsequent Delivery Plans and outlined the increasing demand for emergency and temporary accommodation (EA/TA) in Worthing, the Council's commitment to owning its own stock of EA/TA, and reviewed the options available to the Council for the future of the Victoria Road site, with development of the site as EA/TA the preferred option both economically and in terms of meeting an established local need.

The report sought agreement of Councillors to redevelop this site for the purpose of providing Council owned EA/TA and approval of a budget to progress both a planning application and development on site.

A Member sought clarification in regards to the financial risks associated with the proposals, in particular, whether the financial figures took into account price inflation and whether the optimism bias would be sufficient. Officers advised that a stage approach had been adopted to mitigate these risks. An inflation figure had been applied to the anticipated cost plus an additional optimism bias at 25%. It was acknowledged that the construction industry was very volatile at the moment, but officers had confidence that the project could be delivered within budget.

It was noted that the Council was constantly balancing the cost of building against the rising costs of Emergency and Temporary Accommodation. It was also noted that the proposals were born from the previous administration's strategy and a paper would come back to the Worthing Sub-Committee in due course.

Consideration was also given to the sustainability measures included within the proposals.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Rosey Whorlow, seconded by Councillor Vicki Wells and supported by the Committee.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee

- a) approved the preferred option for the future of the Victoria Road site to enable the council to fulfil its statutory housing duties under S188 and S193 of the Housing Act 1996;
- b) approved a virement of £440,000 to the temporary and emergency accommodation budget funded by external funding from Homes England. This would increase the overall available budget to £3.541m;
- c) approved the release £3.403m from the Temporary and Emergency Accommodation budget to enable the project to progress through planning and to completion of the construction stage;
- d) delegated authority to the Head of Major Projects & Investment to invite tenders for the construction work, and to enter into all necessary contracts to enable the project to progress through the construction phase to completion, in consultation with Executive Members;
- e) noted that a further report will be presented to the Executive Member post procurement, to confirm the final costs associated with the scheme and the viability of the proposal.

C. Decisions taken by the Joint Strategic Committee on 5 July 2022

Items related to Adur District Council are not reproduced on this agenda.

Full details can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

The matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:-

JSC/016/21-22 Phase 1: Organisational design and capability building

Since the appointment of Dr Catherine Howe as Chief Executive (CEX), the organisational leadership team, made up of senior officers within Adur and Worthing Councils, had been meeting to develop a new Corporate Plan to replace 'Platforms for our Places' as well as looking at what organisational changes were needed. The next phase of this work was for staff, member and community engagement to allow a wider group of people to contribute to this work over the course of the summer in order to inform budget conversations into the Autumn.

The report outlined the first phase of organisational changes, which were targeted at creating the capability and capacity needed to deliver wide ranging changes. It was

built around the principles of participation, resilience and adaptability, which would be needed in order to deliver the Corporate Plan once it was agreed.

Also included were changes needed to reflect a renewed emphasis from both Councils on communication and engagement (both internally and externally), and the additional capacity needed to support democracy and participation.

A Member asked questions about the timing of the two phases of work and the increased focus on democracy and participation. Clarification was provided in regards to the timetable for the two phases of work and officers advised that in regards to participation, the report was about building capacity to do some of these things better. Conversations will be required with both Councils as to what they want to do with that capacity around communications, engagement and participation.

Another Member asked what was the priority, meeting the budget or maintaining front line services. Officers advised that the National Pay Award was outside of the Councils control and the Chief Finance Officer was having to make assumptions about what the likely outcomes of those negotiations would be. This process would require the working up of a set of agreed priorities across both Councils finding a balance between what the Councils invest in and what they don't. The report signalled the start of that process and set out the parameters of how the Councils wanted to do this work.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Carl Walker, seconded by Councillor Steve Neocleous and unanimously supported by the Committee.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee

- a. noted that the Chief Executive would be proceeding with the phased organisational design changes outlined in the report;
- b. requested that the Chief Executive bring back the developed three year programme for implementing the new Corporate Plan to this committee for consideration in advance of the budget setting process and prior to its consideration by both Councils;
- c. agreed that the Corporate Plan be the basis of the next phases of organisational change.

JSC/017/21-22 Proactive interventions to support low income residents

The report described changes in the national and local context since the start of the year and included information about a further 66 residents that the Proactive team had been able to engage by mid May 2022 (out of a total of a further 294 that were contacted via phone since our last report).

The report detailed progress in moving from an experimental approach to a more embedded programme within the Councils, using the learning from the case review approach detailed at section 5.6, additional digital tools to enable residents to self help, and improved insight into residents contact with other council teams. The report also set out how the Councils partnership working on the cost of living was progressing and outlined plans for joint working between the Councils and relevant partners.

A Member asked questions about the inclusion of Universal Credit data, whether the work to call residents on the housing application waiting list had started and when the dashboard would be ready. Officers advised that work was already underway with the DWP in regards to the inclusion of universal credit and data sharing. Responses to the questions regarding calls to residents on the housing application waiting list and the dashboard would be provided following the meeting.

An amendment requesting a progress report in 6 months, was proposed by Councillor Emma Taylor, seconded by Councillor Kevin Boram and supported unanimously.

The recommendations in the report, as amended, were proposed by Councillor Kevin Boram, seconded by Councillor Carson Albury and supported unanimously by the Committee.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee

1. noted the contents of the report; and
2. requested that the Interim Director for Communities reports back in 6 months on progress against the next steps outlined in the report.

JSC/018/21-22 JOSC report on the review of Adur and Worthing Evening and Night time economy

The Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) was asked to receive and note the findings and recommendations of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) review on the Adur and Worthing evening and night time economy (ENTE). Those recommendations followed on from the discussions of a Working Group set up by JOSC. A copy of the report from the Working Group to JOSC was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The JSC was also asked to consider the findings and recommendations from a previous report which was tabled at the cancelled JOSC meeting on 19 March 2020.

The JOSC Working Group recognised that the challenges faced by the ENTE had not gone away and it found, from speaking with some business owners, relevant stakeholders and receiving comments from members of the Adur and Worthing communities, that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was still being felt and the future remains uncertain.

The Working Group had identified a number of findings and the Working Group considered that its report and findings/research could help the Councils and other agencies in developing the ENTE for the benefit of local communities, businesses and visitors to the areas.

Members queried whether this work had been focused on the post covid position or was an amalgamation of the work carried out both pre and post covid. It was noted that other covid recovery work could incorporate some of the recommendations outlined in the report and one of the difficulties experienced in opening up the night time economy post covid, was the lack of people wanting to work in the sector. Therefore there was an employment issue as well as a recovery issue going on which was not covered in the working group's findings.

It was proposed that the report be referred back to JOSC and brought back to this Committee at a later date. In the meantime, the comments from the Joint Strategic Committee would be relayed back to JOSC, via the JOSC Chairs.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Committee requested that the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee take another look at the report in light of the comments made with a view to the report being brought back to a future meeting.

D. Decisions taken by the Joint Strategic Sub-Committee on 5 July 2022

Full details can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

The matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:-

JSS-C(W)/004/22-23 New Priorities for Worthing Borough Council

Following the May 2022 local elections a Labour administration was formed to lead Worthing Borough Council. The administration sought to form a Council that delivers change and further improves the lives of all who live and work in Worthing.

The report set out the ambitions of the administration, including actions started in the first 100 days, as well as ambitions for the medium and longer term. Additional reports enabling the delivery of specific ambitions would be prepared and brought to members for agreement at later meetings, as and when required.

The plans identified for delivery in 2022 to 2023 would be resourced through existing budgets, with the exception being some additional community engagement work. The report therefore included a recommendation for the release of £76,500 from reserves to resource this activity.

The plans described in the report were helping to shape and would be delivered through the new joint delivery plan currently being developed with Adur District Council.

Members welcomed the report and thanked the Officers for their work.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Carl Walker, seconded by Councillor Helen Silman and unanimously supported.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Sub-Committee:-

- 1.1. noted and approved the plans for change and delivery set out in the report; and
- 1.2. approved the release of £76,500 from the capacity issues reserves to resource additional activities supporting community engagement, inclusion and participation.

JSS-C(W)/005/22-23 The Future of Public Space Protection Orders

Worthing Borough Council was committed to ensuring that public spaces were safe, vibrant and welcoming places to live, work and visit. Achieving this was a careful balance of using legislative tools and powers, balanced with a supportive approach to those who need it to live safely and well.

Tackling anti-social behaviour was a key part of this approach and was a priority under the Safer Communities 3 year strategic plan as endorsed by the Joint Strategic Committee in October 2021.

In August 2016, Worthing Borough Council introduced three Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) as a key tool to prevent and reduce anti-social behaviour. All three orders were extended for a further three years in August 2019 and needed to be reviewed before they expired on 21 August 2022.

In order to extend or vary a PSPO, the Councils must be satisfied that the behaviours and activities addressed in the Order had or would have a detrimental impact on the community. There was then a requirement to consult with key stakeholders and community representatives on the proposals.

From March 1st 2022 to April 12th 2022, Worthing Borough Council undertook public consultation to extend the PSPO for public place drinking for a further 3 years until 21st August 2025. This proposal was supported by key stakeholders and 92% of consultation respondents and therefore, was recommended for extension.

During the same period, Worthing Borough Council consulted on the variation and extension of the PSPO to address unauthorised camping to cover Goring Greensward only. Again this was supported by partners and 86% of respondents and therefore, was recommended for approval.

An amendment to the recommendation regarding PSPO 1 to include 'a request for....' was proposed by Councillor Vicki Wells, seconded by Councillor Martin McCabe and unanimously supported.

The recommendations, as amended, were proposed by Councillor Martin McCabe, seconded by Councillor Vicki Wells and unanimously supported.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Worthing):-

- 1) approved the extension of PSPO 1 (Public Place Drinking) in its current form for a further three years until 21 August 2025 and requested that a detailed report on their use be submitted to the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 12 months;
- 2) agreed to allow PSPO 2 (Begging in Worthing Town centre) to expire on 21 August 2022 without being extended;
- 3) approved the variation of PSPO 3 (Unauthorised Camping) to cover the Goring Greensward only for a further three years until 21 August 2025;
- 4) requested that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews all Worthing Borough Council PSPOs on an annual basis.

The report advised Members of the Town Centre Initiative's (TCI) proposal to ballot businesses located within the existing Worthing Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID), with a view to extending the term of the BID for a further five years.

Members were asked to consider how to best use this opportunity to strengthen partnership working between the TCI and the Council. It was recommended that Members ensure both parties work collaboratively, in a spirit of mutual trust and cooperation, to align resources and activities that support shared priorities and to communicate the work of BID partners in a way that enhances their reputation and that of the Town.

It was also noted that the Business Improvement District would provide an annual report to the Council.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor John Turley, seconded by Councillor Rita Garner and unanimously supported.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Worthing):-

1. agreed to support the proposal for a fourth term of the Worthing Town Centre BID for a period of five years to commence on 1st April 2023, and approved the BID levy proposed by the TCI of 1.25%
2. delegated authority to the Director for the Economy to:-
 - a. receive the regulatory Notice to Renew the BID from the TCI; to agree any minor amendments to the renewal BID proposals and to work with Civica to hold the renewal ballot;
 - b. finalise the terms of, and enter into, the BID Agreement between the TCI and the Council, and to incorporate into that Agreement the recommendations at paragraph 6.5 in the report; and
3. acknowledged the JOSOC Working Group's response to its review of the Worthing Business Improvement District in 2022 and the Working Group's input into the recommendations contained in this report.

The report set out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Worthing Borough Council on the 5th April 2022.

Members of the Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Worthing) were asked to consider and determine the Motion. Members could either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members could reject the motion.

Councillor Wells presented the motion to the Sub-Committee which sought a plan to employ safe and environmentally friendly alternatives and phase out the use of glyphosate and other synthetic herbicides and pesticides in all parks, public green spaces and hard standing areas within the next 18 months.

It was noted that there were a growing number of non-chemical alternatives to glyphosate that had been adopted by other local authorities including Hackney, Glastonbury and Hammersmith and Fulham. The alternatives trialled and adopted included Hot Foam Systems, Acetic Acid Solutions and Electric Control Systems. In addition, more traditional methods, including mulching and hand weeding were also effective in reducing weeds.

Members were informed that a Health & Safety task force had been established to look at the Council's safe use of hazardous substances. As part of this work, officers were conducting an audit of items used by the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor McCabe that the motion be supported. This was seconded by Councillor Taylor and unanimously supported.

Decision

The Joint Strategic Sub-Committee (Worthing) supported the motion and determined that a plan be worked on and reported back to the Sub-Committee for its consideration.

E. Urgent Decisions taken by the Cabinet

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

None.

Local Government Act 1972

Background papers

(Reports and decisions are available on the Council's website or as indicated in each of the paragraphs above)

**Councillor Dr Beccy Cooper
Leader of the Council**