



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Worthing Joint Strategic Sub-Committee  
5 December 2022

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All

## **New Economic principles for Worthing**

### **Report by the Chief Executive**

#### **Officer Contact Details**

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### **Executive Summary**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline Worthing Council's approach for supporting and developing the local economy and to outline those activities that will help us to deliver a new approach.
- 1.2. The key pillars of the Council's economic approach reflect the vision of the Council: fair, green and local. This paper outlines what these mean in economic terms.
- 1.3. The report sets out the commitment to make the best use of council assets to deliver excellent quality services for our residents together with the wider economic benefits associated with places that people value and enjoy.
- 1.4. A foundation to this economic approach is community wealth building. This is a people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. Set up a working group to manage progress which should include officers, members and representatives from the local business and community groups and to delegate authority to the Director for Digital Sustainability and Resources to agree the terms of reference for the working group in consultation with the Leader which shall include the requirement to report back to the Committee (at such intervals to be agreed in the terms of reference) with further recommendations to the Committee.
- 2.2. Design and develop outcome measures to be published every 6 months to this committee once they have been agreed.
- 2.3. Initiate review of identified policies in section 7 in order to embed these principles.

## **3. Fair**

- 3.1 Worthing Council believes in an inclusive, resilient economy which provides stability, high quality opportunities for all and a social safety net at its core.
- 3.2 People should have access to good quality work which offers a living wage, decent conditions and good working practices. This means championing 'Good Work', the ability for people to access the right work for them, that provides the right work life balance and a good income, with the opportunity to learn and develop and live a good and healthy life. This means we will focus on:
  - 3.2.1 Access to work, a key determinant of wellbeing
  - 3.2.2 Job quality, including pay, work life balance, access to development and autonomy
  - 3.2.3 Partnering with local further education and higher education institutions to build a local workforce that meets the employment needs of the town and access to lifelong learning, through both formal

and informal qualifications.

3.2.4 Support for key sectors, helping to promote inclusive and green growth, distributed fairly and with creative opportunities for all.

3.3 The Council also believes that access to safe, secure and sustainable housing, delivered by a local and green supply chain, is critical for all our residents. By investing in sustainable housing growth we can help create a fair deal for citizens now and into the future. This means we will:

3.3.1 Invest in delivering new homes for local people directly through the re-use and redevelopment of our land and buildings;

3.3.2 Actively support community land trusts and co-operatives that empower local communities to build new homes;

3.3.3 Support and invest in sustainable council housing and those elements of the supply chain that support their development. This could include the manufacture of the components of modular homes to support local projects and minimise the 'journey to site'.

3.3.4 Support the development of community owned energy provision

#### **4. Green**

4.1 We want to support businesses to decarbonise their operations and supply chain by:

4.1.1 With business partnerships and networks, providing effective tools to enable businesses to better understand their carbon footprint and take action to drive to net zero, supporting our ambition for Worthing to be net zero by 2045

4.1.2 Support public sector organisations and businesses who want to connect to a Heat Network, providing advice on grant funding opportunities to improve building efficiency and to connect to renewable energy thermal systems

4.1.3 Establishing a networked group of businesses that showcase their journey to decarbonisation, to inspire others to take action and

contribute to the expansion of a new sector dedicated to net zero commercial activities

4.1.4 Working with social and private housing sectors to help share good practice on the transition to low carbon heat and renewable power, and promote the uptake of grants and new national schemes as they are announced

4.1.5 Promoting, supporting and facilitating local community owned renewable energy generation and supply power and thermal systems

4.1.6 Developing a local approach to circular economy initiatives to reduce waste and increase reuse. This will be a focus of our response to the implementation of the Environment Bill.

4.2 Worthing Council wants to focus on and encourage sustainable growth in our local area.

This means we will:

4.2.1 In partnership with local education leaders, develop local and regional opportunities for young people and others to pursue skills through education, training and experience in green growth sectors

4.2.2 Develop an inward investment approach that establishes Worthing as a key hub in the South East for fairer, greener, sustainable zero carbon business activities

4.2.3 Work with local and regional business and community partners to explore the potential for a Sustainable Growth Summit in 2023

4.2.4 Develop a green business park at Decoy Farm

4.2.4 Through our own procurement and contracts, and by working to assemble partners, buyers and community investors, support the development of local, sustainable, low carbon renewable energy infrastructures, including district heat networks, green hydrogen production and supply, solar power and offshore and onshore wind power

## 5. Local

5.1 We will adopt an approach of community wealth building; a people-centred approach to local economic development that seeks to provide resilience where there is risk and local economic security where there is uncertainty. There are various components to community wealth building, including:

- **Wealth:** Harnessing the power of the money that the councils and other stakeholders are spending on procuring goods and services. Working within Fair Trade principles we will aim to localise as much of that spend as possible, securing investment in local supply chains and improving local economic competitiveness. Work with place-based “anchor institutions” to localise economic activity and further reduce leakage and financial extraction.
- **Workforce:** Maximising the benefits of investment in staff by building a skilled and committed workforce and providing an exemplar to local businesses. Paying the Living Wage to all employees, advancing trade union rights and encouraging staff to spend local and save local, including through Credit Unions.
- **Assets:** Using council and where possible, partner assets, to lever in additional investment, to encourage the development of new green businesses and support ethical banking systems. To consider asset transfer to community or private sector interests where this best serves the interests of the wider community.
- **Economic Democracy:** Supporting the growth of alternative models of economic governance which give citizens greater investment in and control over their economic future. This can mean the development of new co-operatives as well as other ways of helping people feel ownership of assets and decision-making processes.

5.2 Through membership of the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN), the Council will collaborate with other local authorities to find better ways of working for and with local people for the benefit of the local community.

5.3 We will design our Growth deal with WSCC as well as our Levelling up bid in order to develop green critical infrastructure for the town:

5.3.1 Focus attention on increasing and upgrading active travel infrastructure, including cycling, to encourage people to make their first choice active travel as their preferred way to get around

5.3.2 Create new green and shady public realm corridors through the heart of the town, fuelled by additional greening and new active travel opportunities, that supports the overall economic vitality of the urban centre

5.3.3 Build on our digital infrastructure to ensure digital inclusivity and accessibility across the town

5.3.4 Continue to invest in our cultural provision and celebrate our heritage, with the Lido as priority, to ensure Worthing has a unique and identifiable offer

5.3.5 To maximise publicly owned assets for the benefit of the community and the local economy

5.4 We will actively curate and invest in the green regeneration of our land and buildings and work in partnership with those who invest in the town to ensure that the benefits to our local communities are maximised. A focus across the town will help ensure that our major developments are not delivered 'in isolation' but contribute to the fabric of the Town and where necessary, its repair.

5.5 We will work with and support local business organisations such as the Worthing & Adur Chamber of Commerce and the Adur & Worthing Business Partnership to promote local business support and networking, access to skills and training and in celebrating the success of our local businesses.

5.6 We will work closely with our high street businesses to create the best possible trading environment through initiatives such as the Big Clean. We will actively partner with and support the Town Centre Initiative to achieve this.

## **6. Commitment to Coastal West Sussex**

6.1 Many of our local businesses are active across Coastal West Sussex and have strong local supply chains. Keeping in mind the

administration's vision of a fair, green town and our commitment to having a net zero town by 2045, the Council will actively support the Coastal West Business Partnership and our neighbouring authorities to secure ethical investment in our local businesses and green improvements to the local infrastructure.

- 6.2 As part of our commitment to our existing businesses, the Council will support the med-tech and electronics sectors that have found Worthing and the Coastal West Sussex area an excellent location for their businesses. We will actively foster the considerable potential that has been identified for further growth in sectors such as the creative/technical (CreaTech) industries.
- 6.3 The Council's wider approach to supporting Coastal West Sussex will include close cooperation with and support for our schools, colleges and universities, in particular around the development of skills and training to support our economic ambition and our vision of becoming a fair and green town and our ambition to be a net zero town by 2045.
- 6.4 As the leaders and incubators of Sussex Bay - a vision for marine and river nature restoration at scale along the Sussex coast - we will continue to work with committed entrepreneurs and coastal businesses to develop new opportunities for natural capital investment, the growth of local fishing, innovation in aquaculture business, eco-tourism and new ways to promote and sell local seafood and kelp products.

## **7. Our Roadmap**

- 7.1 In addition to the specific commitment above we will also ensure our economic thinking is embedded into the daily operations of the council.
- 7.2 We will therefore develop a roadmap in Q1 2023 to review relevant policies and strategies in order to reflect these economic principles. This roadmap will include:
  - Economic Development Strategy
  - Housing Strategy
  - Corporate Asset Strategy
  - Review of our approach to Procurement and Commissioning
  - Our approach to investment
  - Workforce Strategy

## **8. Engagement and Communication**

- 8.1 This document sets out plans to engage with the local businesses and the wider community in order to develop the strategies and policies needed to respond to the principles and priorities laid out here.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 Contained within the report are the actions required to support and develop the local economy. It is expected that much of the costs of this programme will be funded from our existing budgets or via external funding. However, if this is not possible then members will be consulted on the release of additional resources.

## **10. Legal Implications**

- 10.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 10.2 s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation
- 10.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

## **Background Papers**

None.



## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

This document describes a new approach to economic activity which reflects the objectives and priorities of the council administration. As such it is intended to have an ongoing effect on the Borough's economic activity and an action plan to support this will be developed to support this work. This will be done with support of the proposed working group to ensure we develop it with the participation of our communities.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **3. Environmental**

Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **4. Governance**

Matter considered and no issues identified.