



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
6 December 2022

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected: N/A

JOSC report on the review of Adur and Worthing Evening and Night time economy

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

1.1 The Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) is asked to receive and consider the findings and revised recommendations of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) review on the Adur and Worthing evening and night time economy (ENTE). These recommendations follow on from the discussions of a Working Group set up by JOSC and also the earlier consideration by the JSC on 5 July 2022. A copy of the revised recommendations from the Working Group to JOSC is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

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

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the JSC refers the findings and recommendations from JOSC and its Working Group to the relevant Adur and Worthing Cabinet Members who have responsibility for this area of work, for consideration and action, the outcomes from which should be reported back to JOSC as part of the annual review.

3. Context

- 3.1 In 2020 as part of its Work Programme, the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) agreed to set up a Working Group to review the Adur and Worthing ENTE to help improve the ENTE and to assist in the recovery process during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 Former Councillor Bob Smytherman Chaired the Working Group and the other Members were Councillors Carol Albury and Joe Pannell (Adur) and Sally Smith (Worthing). Councillor Andy McGregor (Adur) was a co-opted member of the Working Group. The following terms of reference were agreed:-
1. To review the evening and night time economy in Adur and Worthing post Covid-19; and
 2. To consider if there is a need for any new approaches/changes to be introduced in Adur and Worthing to improve the evening and night time economies and to assist in the recovery process post Covid-19.
- 3.3 Recommendations from the Working Group report were agreed by JOSC in March 2022 for referral to the JSC which considered these at the meeting on 5 July 2022 but asked JOSC to review the report again in light of issues raised by JSC relating to the emerging cost of living crisis and the impact on the ENTE and wider economic planning. JSC asked JOSC to review if the recommendations are post-pandemic or general economy recommendations, to prioritise the recommendations based on realistic delivery and resource and to reframe the JOSC report to reflect that ENTE is part of a wider economic strategy question and any recommendations moving forward to be consumed into wider economic planning.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 In order to consider the request from JSC, JOSC reconstituted a small Working Group to review the ENTE report again and then prioritise the recommendations in the report for JSC to consider. Councillors Carol

Albury, Daniel Humphreys (appointed as Chairman), Paul Mansfield and Dan Hermitage (replaced by Councillor Jon Roser) were appointed to the Working Group which met on 31 August to undertake its work. The Working Group has now reviewed and prioritised the recommendations, the details of which are set out in Appendix A to this report and these were also endorsed by JOSOC at its meeting on 13 October.

- 4.2 The Working Group was advised at the time of its meeting in August 2022, that the Worthing evening and night time economy situation was appearing to be holding up well with bars and restaurants opening, not closing. Nando's were planning on investing in Worthing and 4 places to eat and drink were due to open in the Autumn period.
- 4.3 At that time, Worthing footfall appeared to be strong with the visitors, both day and overnight, helping to keep restaurants and bars busy - a mix of both daytime and evening customers. Footfall covering Saturdays in August had been over 41,000 which was a lot higher than the average footfall of 32,000 and the feedback was that people were still treating themselves to evenings out.
- 4.4 However, whilst things were positive in Worthing, all businesses, not just pub bars and restaurants were extremely worried. The margins on food had already been cut back due to inflation and cost of living increases; therefore, the fuel and commodity increases in the winter were expected to make many businesses unsustainable. Another early sign that businesses were starting to see tough times ahead was an increase in 'businesses for sale' and over the previous 2 months prior to August 2022, 6 food related businesses had been advertised. Generally, it was considered that the weather and staycations had helped get businesses through the summer but October and November were set to be extremely challenging.
- 4.5 In Adur, business levels were holding up in Shoreham and Southwick, however, Lancing had experienced issues with some businesses closing.
- 4.6 Recruitment to the hospitality businesses was also an issue and businesses were having to offer inflated salaries to attract employees. Some restaurants had not been opening on a Monday or Monday and Tuesday to enable the staff they have to get time off, and some business owners were putting a shift in to cover absence. More businesses had managed to operate 7 days a week during the summer as they were able to take advantage of University students being home for the holidays, however, the impact of losing them back to University from Mid September was uncertain.

- 4.7 Since then, as Worthing moves into Autumn, footfall has dropped both for daytime and night-time businesses, this is in line with previous years so expected. The recent bad weather has kept people out of the Town Centre in the evenings on weekdays but the weekends are holding their own and footfall remains strong. Profits are substantially lower than earlier in the year. Businesses are mindful they cannot pass on all their increased costs to customers or this will discourage them eating out. The squeeze on margins appears to be affecting the smaller independents more than the larger restaurants as having more covers does help with absorbing the higher costs for food and energy.
- 4.8 Customers appear to be tightening their belts on a night out with more people driving into town and not drinking, it is not clear if this is down to the recent poor weather or a way of reducing the cost of a night out. This will be monitored to see if the trend continues.
- 4.9 The Town Centre Initiative has advised that without support, there will be businesses that will close in the New Year as profit margins continue to be squeezed. Two independent restaurants have decided not to renew leases in the new year and will be closing and another three businesses have gone up for sale recently. Businesses are still opening, and changing hands, but due to the uncertainties ahead, demand for property does seem to be slowing.
- 4.10 The impact of the World Cup may have a positive impact on trade if England do well in the competition but a winter competition with many day time games may have little impact on trade. Christmas, however, is looking positive though with a few restaurants already fully booked over the festive period; all businesses are committed to getting through Christmas and hoping that customers come out to enjoy themselves. Usually December takings help to cover the quiet January / February period and there is concern that many businesses won't have this cushion.
- 4.11 Although the information set out above is mainly a Worthing focus it is likely to be generally representative of Adur as well as there are national trends which cover a squeeze on margins for all businesses, larger businesses 'surviving', recent weather affecting trade and optimism for the World Cup and Christmas to help improve trade.
- 4.12 JSC is requested to consider the review from the JOSC Working Group and its revised recommendations as part of considerations of its work on the wider local economy and to provide the formal response from Cabinets. It should be

noted that the JOSC Working Group has highlighted in its revised recommendations an assessment on the potential impact and level of resources required from the Councils if the recommendations are implemented and some of these are higher than others. Further financial assessments and feasibility checks may need to be undertaken prior to implementation of the recommendations.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1 The JOSC Working Group that undertook the ENTE review has held discussions with relevant Council Officers, local stakeholders, partners and those members of the community with an involvement in ENTE matters. As part of this process a public survey was also undertaken.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications relating to this report but if implemented, some of the recommendations from the Working Group might have financial implications for the Councils.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 7.3 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

Reports to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 March and 13 October 2022

Report to the Joint Strategic Committee on 5 July 2022 [Covering report and JOSC report](#)

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Matter considered. The issues contained in the Working Group report relate to the economic recovery of the evening and night time economy.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered. An improved evening and night time economy will improve social value for the communities of Adur and Worthing and visitors to the towns and village centres.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered. The report from the Working Group has investigated public safety and other community safety issues.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

3. Environmental

The report from the JOSC Working Group has reviewed the environmental issues connected with the evening and night time economy and identified some issues to help climate change, air quality and encourage sustainability.

4. Governance

Matter considered. The JOSC Working Group was set up in accordance with the JOSC Procedure Rules and formed part of the agreed JOSC Work Programme. Recommendations from the review need to be presented to the Joint Strategic Committee for consideration and to provide a formal Executive response.

Appendix A - 2022 JOSCE ENTE Review report recommendations	Type of recommendation	Potential impact	Level of resource required to deliver	Overall priority (Y/N/Later date) - Comments from Working Group
<p>(a) That the Councils should recognise and promote the ENTE as being a key part of the overall Adur and Worthing economy and do more to promote the ENTE and this should be seen as central to campaigns to rebuild confidence in the Sector; and (b) That this recognition and promotion should be included as a commitment in the Councils new Corporate Strategy that will replace 'Platforms for Places: Going Further'. The Councils should also measure the success of this commitment. Reason - To recognise the value of the ENTE. The ENTE should be seen as central to any future promotional campaigns for the areas and as a cornerstone of the local economy. This will demonstrate the Councils commitment to help it recover during the pandemic and beyond.</p>	<p>Post pandemic and general economy recommendation - Potentially easy to implement. New Corporate Plan being finalised now.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Priority 1</p>
<p>That the Councils should continue to support businesses and help them recover as we now deal with the cost of living crisis by promoting the availability of any business grants and seeking external funding opportunities available and applying for these grants. Support should also include providing advice on changes to legislation and governance issues and also consider reintroducing its business pre planning advice service which will help businesses seeking to rebuild. There needs to be a consistent and clear messaging approach to promote the ENTE and rebuild confidence. Reason - The Working Group welcomes the support that has already been provided to support businesses throughout the pandemic but considers that it is important that the support should continue to make businesses aware of the support available and help them. Evidence provided to the Working Group had indicated that some businesses were not always aware of support and grants available and were experiencing financial difficulties and also that the withdrawal of the pre planning advice service was potentially impacting on business growth. Communication on these issues should be clear and consistent to promote the ENTE.</p>	<p>Post pandemic</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Priority 2 - The Working Group has now referenced the cost of living crisis as part of this recommendation rather than the pandemic as now considered more relevant than the pandemic at this time.</p>

<p>That the Councils, working with stakeholders including the Police and the Safer Communities Partnership to address the aims of the 3 Year Partnership Strategy that has recently been approved, should review closely what action is being taken to improve general public safety in Adur and Worthing for all groups in the context of the ENTE. This review should be set out to address the concerns raised during this scrutiny review by stakeholders interviewed and public responses. It should also include tackling the issue of 'drink spiking' which appears to be a growing problem across the UK. Better messaging, information and advice and best practice for businesses and the public should be put in place to help with reporting this crime and to enable them to help businesses keep their customers safe. Reason - Public safety has been a key strand running through this review and a number of issues relating to public safety were raised as concerns from residents and stakeholders interviewed by the Working Group. The Working Group believes that these issues need to be reviewed to see what more can be done to make people feel safer whilst being out in the ENTE.</p>	<p>General economy and public safety recommendation. The Councils will need to work with other partners to achieve this recommendation.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Priority 3</p>	
<p>That the Adur and Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee should continue to monitor the recovery of the ENTE by either receiving an annual report or agreeing to set up the ENTE Working Group again to closely monitor progress and recovery. Reason - Because of the need to continue to monitor the recovery of the ENTE which is a vital part of the local economy.</p>	<p>General economy recommendation.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Priority 4 - JOSOC has agreed to receive an annual report as part of its Work Programme.</p>	
<p>That the Councils should review its programme of events and consider any new opportunities for events, which will help facilitate longer visitor stays to help promote the ENTE and overnight stay economy. The events should be publicised using Time for Worthing and liaison with Worthing Theatres - Reason - The Working Group has heard from stakeholders that there is a need for more events to be held in Adur and Worthing, all year round, and considers that this will help promote the ENTE and also help with the recovery process. The Councils should ensure that these events take into account consultation with the local communities.</p>	<p>General economy</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Priority 5</p>	
<p>That the Councils working with other stakeholders monitor progress of the Levelling up Bill and explore the use of new powers they can use where possible to utilise the use of buildings for the evening and night time economy to help it recover rather than always being focused on using these buildings for day time activities. - Reason - To help in place making and the overall recovery of the ENTE.</p>	<p>General economy</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Priority 6 - The Working Group has amended this recommendation to incorporate Levelling Up options if possible.</p>	

<p>That, working closely with the appropriate agencies, the Adur and Worthing Neighbourhood Watch coordinators are enlisted to help with an ENTE audit of the town and village centres, if possible, to identify areas for improvement covering issues such as street lighting, street furniture and other safety issues. - Reason - The Working Group has been made aware of the need to improve street lighting and street furniture in some areas of the town and village centres and believes that the Neighbourhood Watch coordinators could assist with this as they had volunteered to undertake the role.</p>	<p>General economy recommendation. Medium priority but the Councils will need to work with the Neighbourhood Watch coordinators to achieve this and it could take time to coordinate this.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Priority 7</p>	
<p>That the Councils should help coordinate the setting up of an Adur ENTE Hospitality Scheme (operating in a similar way to a Pub Watch but which also includes other licensed premises). - Reason - To address concerns from Licensees about crime and anti social behaviour in licensed premises in the Adur District. The Working Group has seen how the Worthing Pub Watch operates and the success of this system and considers that the introduction of an Adur District ENTE Hospitality scheme will help the ENTE, address concerns and reduce crime and anti social behaviour in Adur. The Working Group also acknowledges that a Hospitality scheme of this type will need to be designed to meet the needs of the area and will be different from the Worthing scheme in that the Adur District is more disperse and, for example, therefore, it may not be practical to ban customers from every premises in the areas as is done in the Worthing scheme.</p>	<p>General economy and public safety recommendation. High priority. The Council will need to help get the scheme off the ground but it is important to ensure that it is owned and run by the businesses. The Councils will not have the resource to run the scheme on a permanenet basis.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Priority 8</p>	
<p>(a) That the Councils and other stakeholders involved in the ENTE should help influence where possible to ensure that all the strands of improvements to the ENTE are in line with commitments to tackle climate change, which include helping in the shift to sustainable transport and improve air quality as well as ensuring that there is a reduction in waste, re-use is increased and there is more recycling. (b) That food premises in the ENTE should be encouraged to adopt sustainability practices and promote healthy eating.</p>	<p>Wellbeing and sustainability recommendation which can be achieved through proactive education and discussions with businesses.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Priority 9</p>	
<p>Additional recommendations -</p>					
<p>That the Councils should explore working with employers, local colleges, the Youth Hub and the Department for Work & Pensions to help signpost people into careers in the local hospitality sectors.</p>		<p>High</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Reason - The Working Group considered that this additional recommendation will help local hospitality traders long term with the workforce shortage and help the sector recover and help boost training for a new generation of skilled hospitality staff.</p>	

That the Councils be requested to apply a pro rata charging schedule for tables and chairs on pavement licences to ensure that those businesses who have less tables and chairs pay less than those who have more tables and chairs.		High	Medium	Reason - The Working Group considers that this recommendation will assist local smaller businesses and apply the charge proportionately based on the number of chairs and tables required.	
2020 JOSC ENTE report recommendations	Type of recommendation - All recommendations from this review relate to the general evening and night time economy and include suggestions for improving public safety and public transport.	Impact	Level of resource required to deliver	Overall priority (Y/N/Later date) - Comments from Working Group	
(a) That the Councils help to coordinate the setting up of some form of focussed evening and late night Transport Working Group and (b) That the Councils request that the Worthing Quality Bus Partnership should be reconstituted as soon as possible and to include the Adur District	As above. The setting up of a Transport Working Group will rely on the input of others and not just the Councils.	High	High	Priority 1	
That the Councils help to coordinate a review of the lighting in the town and village centres and the delivery of other public realm improvements connected to the evening and night time economy. This should include improvements to the car parks run by the Councils.		High	High	Priority 2	
That the Councils review the issues which it is responsible for as raised by the witnesses and set out in Paragraph 5.5 of the report and also those issues raised in the public survey that relate to improvements to car parks and improvements to make the areas cleaner. This will enable the Councils to assess whether or not any interventions need to be made in the Councils approach to those issues to help improve the vitality of the areas;	As above	Medium	High	Priority 3	
That the Councils investigate the case for establishing longer opening hours for retail and eating establishments in partnership with the Chamber of Trade and Commerce/Worthing Town Centre initiative. This should also take into consideration appropriate licensing controls.	As above	Low	Medium	Priority 4 - The Working Group considered that this recommendation should also include a reference to the licensing controls.	
That the Councils consider providing some additional funding to promote Adur and Worthing town and village centres at night utilising the help from Time for Worthing;	As above	Low	Medium	Priority 5 - The Working Group considered that this recommendation should also include some support from Time for Worthing and should be included as part of recommendation 5 of the 2022 report.	
That the Working Group welcomes the various strategic commitments in place identified in 'Platform for our Places: Going further' and the excellent work being undertaken by the Councils to help create a vibrant and diverse ENTE and commends the Councils for its work in helping to achieve the 'Purple Flag' award for Worthing in Summer 2019;		High	Medium	Priority 6	

<p>That the Councils consider setting out its approach to the ENTE in an holistic ENTE policy;</p>	<p>As above. The 2022 review includes a recommendation to promote the ENTE in the new Corporate Strategy.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Recommendation to be removed as the Working Group considers that the issue is now covered in the 2022 report and proposal for the matters to be included as part of the new Corporate Strategy.</p>	
<p>That the Councils lobby Government to introduce the same controls and regulations for Air BnB accommodation as applies to B&B and Guesthouse accommodation.</p>	<p>As above. This can be achieved via letter to Government and LGA.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Recommendation to be removed as Working Group considers that, whilst the issue is important, it is not directly relevant to the evening and night time economy and this review. A detailed accommodation analysis is currently taking place.</p>	