

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Joint Strategic Committee of
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

Thursday 7 November 2013

Councillor Neil Parkin (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

Councillor Pat Beresford
Councillor Keith Dollemore
Councillor Angus Dunn
Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor Julie Searle
Councillor David Simmons

Worthing Borough Council:

Cllr Daniel Humphreys
Councillor Mary Lermite
Councillor Clive Roberts
Councillor Bryan Turner
Councillor Tom Wye
Councillor Paul Yallop

*Absent

Other Members Present

ADC – Councillors Carson Albury, Brian Boggis, Paul Graysmark and Mary Hamblin

WBC – Councillors Roger Oakley, Keith Sunderland, Hazel Thorpe and Vino Vinojan

JSC/048/13-14 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bryan Turner declared a personal interest in items 8 and 13 as a member of West Sussex County Council.

JSC/049/13-14 Public Question Time

Mr Paul Doran addressed the Committee regarding a petition which had been submitted to Worthing Borough Council, at its meeting on 15th October 2013 by Sue White and Gina Hawthorne, which related to the East Beach Chalets in Worthing and made reference to a further submission, circulated to members of the Committee, in response to the Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing's report attached to the agenda as item 12.

Mr Doran raised a number of points during his presentation including:-

- concerns were expressed as to why a cost benefit analysis had not been undertaken in relation to the conversion of the Beach Chalets to Artist Studios;
- tenants had struggled to obtain information from the Council and were forced to invoke the Freedom of Information Act;
- the converted chalets would not provide suitable studios for local artists;
- tenants questioned how the Council could justify such non-essential expenditure at this time;

- concerns were raised about the lack of transparency in the Council's approach and lack of consultation;
- both tenants and those people who signed the petition did not feel that the case for change had been made.

A question was received from Sue White, tenant of beach chalet no.39, who asked why management of the artist studios was being handed to the manager of Coast Café and not being put out to tender?

A question was received from Gina Hawthorne, tenant of beach chalet no. 36, who asked why no cost benefit analysis had been conducted? If it had been, why could the tenants not see it?

The Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing confirmed that no cost benefit analysis had been undertaken. Whilst management of the original 5 artist studios had been undertaken by Coast Café, arrangements for the management of the additional 10 studios had not yet been determined. A planning application had been submitted by Mr Sykes of Coast Café in relation to the additional 10 chalets which would be considered by the Council's Planning Committee.

JSC/050/13-14 Minutes

Resolved, that the minutes from the Joint Strategic Committee meeting held on 1 October 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

JSC/051/13-14 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no urgent items for consideration.

JSC/052/13-14 Change of Order to Agenda Items

The Chairman announced that agenda item 12 'Proposed Conversion of Beach Chalets to Artist Studios' would be taken as the next item of business.

JSC/053/13-14 Proposed Conversion of Beach Chalets to Artist Studios

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 12.

The report considered the proposed change of use of beach chalets 32-41 from family leisure and recreation to additional artist studios, set out the background to the proposal and recommended that the original decision taken by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration be endorsed by the Committee.

Members stated that Worthing had changed significantly since the 1930's and had not done as well as other seaside resorts in terms of tourism. Worthing's Masterplan identified East Beach as an ideal site for an 'Active Beach Zone' which had been developed to

include the Coast Café, Mini Golf in Denton Gardens, the Splashpoint Leisure Centre and a new play area. Members stated that there was a need to continue to redevelop the seafront in this way.

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council reiterated that the change of use proposal had already gone through a democratic, decision making process and therefore the Council should be happy with that original decision. He requested that the chalet owners receive first refusal on the new beach huts being built.

The Leaders of Adur and Worthing Councils expressed concern about the petition being sent to Joint Strategic Committee for consideration / debate and asked that this process be reviewed by the Joint Governance and Audit Committee.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee endorsed a previous decision to proceed with the conversion of the additional ten chalets subject to planning permission being granted.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

**JSC/054/13-14 2nd Capital, Revenue Budget and Performance Monitoring
2013/14**

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Financial Services, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 5.

The report updated the Committee with the latest expenditure and income projections for each Council in the 2013/14 financial year, compared to the Revenue Budget approved by both Councils on the 21st February 2013 (Adur District Council) and 19th February 2013 (Worthing Borough Council). Information was also provided in respect of earmarked reserves and capital expenditure for the 2 constituent authorities.

The Committee was asked to consider and recommend to Adur and Worthing Councils where appropriate:-

- the current projections of variations in the two Councils' General Fund Revenue Budgets and the anticipated position relating to the staff vacancy provision;
- the current projections of variations in the Adur Housing Revenue Account;
- the progress of the 2013/14 Capital Investment Programme for Adur and Worthing Councils;
- any amendments and virements to budgets for each Council;
- an updated corporate risk register; and
- the progress on some key local performance monitoring indicators.

Members sought clarification regarding the additional £25,270 required to replace 2 refuse collection vehicles. It was noted that the additional funding was a result of a change in exhaust emission standards which required cleaner engines to be fitted from January 2014.

Additional information was sought in regards to the pedestrian crossing facility on Western Road / Bowness Avenue and the school safety zone improvement scheme to address safety concerns at the junction between Manor Road and Mill Road. Members suggested delegating the release of funds in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member. Overall, Members were pleased to see a much improved situation when compared with quarter 1. Further details were requested about the shortfall in Development Control income and the situation with building at West Durrington.

The Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing confirmed that the number of planning applications received was still down which was partly due to an increase in the number of developments covered under permitted development rights. The consortium of developers for West Durrington, had recently concluded a deal with the landowner and were still to decide on how the site would be developed. The Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing was due to meet the consortium in a couple of week and agreed to provide an update to Councillors following the meeting.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

(a)

- noted the report and projected outturn position for the Joint, Adur and Worthing revenue Budgets and proposed use of reserves (Appendices 1b and 2b);
- With respect to the revenue budget, approved the virement as detailed in paragraph 3.7.

(b) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme for Adur District Council

- noted the reprofiling of the Adur District Council capital schemes listed in paragraph 8.2 and the possible reprofiling of capital schemes listed in paragraph 8.3;
- approved the use of the capital investment programme contingency to fund the overspend on the replacement of the 2 refuse vehicles as advised in paragraph 8.5;
- approved the amendment to the 2013/2014 Capital Investment Programme to include a budget provision for the purchase of community alarm equipment funded from revenue resources as advised in paragraph 8.6;
- approved the use of the capital investment programme contingency to fund the overspend on the resurfacing of Lancing South Street car park as advised in paragraph 8.7;
- approved the release of S106 receipts, subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to contribute towards WSCC safety schemes and to recommend to Council an amendment to the Adur District 2013/2014 Capital Investment Programme to include these capital schemes as advised in paragraph 8.8;
- noted that the Empty Homes Grants scheme funded by the Homes and Communities Agency is unable to proceed as advised in paragraph 8.9.

(c) With respect to the Capital Investment Programme for Worthing Borough Council

- noted the reprofiling of the Worthing Borough Council capital schemes listed in paragraph 9.2 and the possible reprofiling of capital schemes as listed in paragraph 9.3;

- approved the use of the capital investment programme contingency to fund the overspend on the replacement of the 2 refuse vehicles as advised in paragraph 9.5;
- approved the use of the budget for Denton Lounge blinds to fund new cash tills for Denton Lounge subject to the outcome of the options appraisal as advised in 9.6;
- noted that the Empty Homes Grants scheme funded by the Homes and Communities Agency is unable to proceed as advised in paragraph 9.7.

(d) Noted the updated list of Corporate Risks as included in Appendix 6 and the performance monitoring items included in section 11.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/055/13-14 Change of Order to Agenda Items

The Chairman announced that agenda item 8 'Adur and Worthing Play Streets Pilot' would be taken as the next item of business.

JSC/056/13-14 Adur and Worthing Play Streets Pilot

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 8.

The report informed the Committee about the Play Streets pilot carried out during 2013. Play Streets is a resident-led activity for the purposes of children's play, supervised by parents, which involved restricting traffic on a road / street for a limited period.

The pilot had several benefits including; getting residents and families active in their own streets and working together, improving the health and wellbeing of children and their families, reducing social isolation for older people, developing more cohesive and joined up neighbourhoods and improving the Councils' reputation (as an enabler for community action) in local communities.

The Committee was asked to consider the benefits of the work and the lessons learned and to approve its continuation into 2014.

Members expressed support for the scheme whilst acknowledging that the community benefits were hard to measure, although likely to be significant. They also noted the way the scheme had challenged the Councils' approach to risk and demonstrated the way this can be done and result in some good achievements.

The Committee wished to place on record its thanks to both residents and officers who helped to make the pilot a success.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee

- i) noted the report, lessons learned and benefits to this scheme as outlined in the report;
- ii) approved the continuation of Play Streets into and beyond 2014, as set out within Section 3 of the report, whilst ensuring that it adheres to the recommendations set out under 3.5.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

JSC/057/13-14 Impact of the Public Service Network Requirements

Before the Committee was a progress report from the Executive Head of Financial Services, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 6.

The report informed members on the implications of the Public Services Network for Adur and Worthing Councils and requested that Adur and Worthing Councils approve the addition and funding of the new ICT projects as considered by the CenSus Joint Committee at its meeting held on the 29th September 2013.

Concerns were expressed at the mounting costs of ICT for the purpose of statutory compliance. Members questioned why access to the officer telephone directory had become restricted as part of the requirements. Members were being encouraged to incorporate paperless working into their role whilst at the same time additional restrictions were being placed on remote access to Council systems which hampered progress in this area and necessitated the roll out of Council equipment to all Councillors. It was noted that Committee felt that a tipping point had been reached and that it was time for the Councils to take a stand.

The Leaders of Adur and Worthing Councils proposed writing a joint letter to the Prime Minister regarding the PSN requirements and their associated costs.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) approved additional capital funding for PSN accreditation work of £112,000 funded as detailed in paragraph 3.2 of the report;
- ii) approved additional revenue budget of £98,000 funded from the capacity issues reserves of both Councils as follows £46,000 from Adur District Council and £52,000 from Worthing Borough Council;
- iii) requested that the Leaders of Adur and Worthing Councils write to the Prime Minister regarding how the PSN requirements prevent the Councils saving money.

Call-in:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

JSC/058/13-14 Business Support Project

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Customer Services, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 7.

The report updated Members on the progress of an initiative called the Business Support Project, which sought to generate efficiency gains and cashable savings by redesigning, automating and centralising routine administrative activities across departmental boundaries.

The requirement for a Business Support Manager role was highlighted and it was recommended that it should be combined with the duties of the existing Partnership Programme Manager role to constitute a new Partnership and Business Support Manager post.

The Committee were advised that the project had lost momentum due to management capacity issues which would be addressed by the creation of a new Partnership and Business Support Manager post. It was anticipated that the project could deliver significant savings as outlined in the report.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) agreed the creation of a new combined role of Partnership and Business Support Manager with effect from 1st October 2013 for an initial period of 2 years, and the associated transfer of the EDRMS Project Manager;
- ii) agreed to fund the costs from the Capacity Issues Reserves of both Councils, based on a 60/40 split between Worthing and Adur respectively, subject to an annual review.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

JSC/059/13-14 Introduction of a Credit Card Handling Fee

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Financial Services, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 9.

The report sought approval for the introduction of a handling fee for Credit Card payments made to the Council in view of the significant increase in costs being incurred for this type of payment, £35k over the past year.

Members stated that the scheme should only be used to recoup the costs incurred by the Council and should not be profit making.

It was confirmed that the fee would only apply to credit cards, not debit cards. Members requested that a message be added to the relevant pages of the website to say 'the Councils can keep their costs down by receiving payments from debit cards'.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) agreed to a charge on appropriate credit card transactions of 1.75% as soon as the software can be implemented;
- ii) agreed to the purchase of software amendments and support as detailed in paragraph 6.2 of the report.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

JSC/060/13-14 Assets of Community Value

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 10.

The report set out the requirements of the Localism Act relating to Assets of Community Value and the procedures to be followed when considering buildings or land nominated by local communities and Parish Councils for listing.

It was recommended that initially the decision should be made by an Executive Head of Service in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members. It was also recommended that any subsequent review of a listing decision should be considered by one of the Strategic Directors in consultation with the relevant Leader.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i) endorsed the approach set out in the joint guidance note;
- ii) agreed to delegate authority for determining whether to list land or buildings as a community asset to the EHoS for Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members; and,

- iii) delegated any subsequent review of a listing decision to a Strategic Director in consultation with the relevant Leader.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

JSC/061/13-14 The Money Tree

Before the Committee was a report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 11.

It was noted that last year Worthing Borough Council agreed to run a pilot participatory budgeting exercise focussing on youth and was to be run by the Youth Council. The scheme was branded 'the Money Tree'.

Following last year's pilot of the Money Tree, the overall success of the project was evaluated by the Participatory Budgeting Working Group. It was recommended that the project be managed by the Corporate Strategy team, further developed and run for a second year.

Members affirmed that the scheme hadn't worked quite as they had hoped for but believed in the idea and supported the continuation of the project.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- i. agreed that the pilot be extended for a second year and run as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report;
- ii. noted that £10,000 remains in the budget from last year's process;
- iii. approved a further £10,000 be allocated from the Worthing Borough Council Capacity Issues Reserves, to top up the budget to £20,000, with any promotion and set up costs being funded from the current Corporate Communications and Engagement budget.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

JSC/062/13-14 Coastal Communities Fund - Bids for Decoy Farm and the Guildbourne Centre

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 13.

This report updated Members on the progress regarding the bids to the Coastal Communities Fund for the development of Decoy Farm and the Guildbourne Centre and recommended that funding be released to progress the two projects.

The Leader of Worthing Borough Council expressed concern about the funding allocation for the survey work as benefits would be derived in both Adur and Worthing. He was also concerned that there was a significant cost associated with the survey work which might identify further significant costs to open up the site.

The Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing emphasised that the key requirements had been outlined by the fund manager. He confirmed that money needed to be spent to open up the Decoy Farm site which could enhance a Council owned asset.

It was noted that a contractor would be appointed shortly to undertake the contamination survey at Decoy Farm and once completed the survey should provide a clearer idea of future costs for opening up the site.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee:-

- (i) agreed that the Guildbourne Centre project was a priority project for the two Councils;
- (ii) supported the proposal to resubmit the Guildbourne Centre project for Coastal Community Funding in 2014;
- (iii) recommended Worthing Borough Council to fund survey work for the Guildbourne Centre costing £50,000 from the Capacity Issues Reserve and to defer a decision on the funding of survey work at the Decoy Farm site subject to the completion of a contamination survey;
- (iv) supported the establishment of a Corporate Project Board and agreed that the Cabinet Members for Regeneration be part of the Board;
- (v) agreed to the submission of a planning application for the Guildbourne Centre site.

Call In:

The call in deadline for parts (i), (ii), (iv) and (v) of this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

There is no call-in for recommendations to Council.

JSC/063/13-14 The Queensway Project - Lancing Vision

Before the Committee was a report by the Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 14.

The report recommended that Capital funding be made available to replace the existing paving and improve the Public Realm in Queensway and Queens Parade, Lancing. This project was the first major scheme identified through the Lancing Vision Strategy, adopted in 2012.

Dr Hilsum, a Lancing resident, questioned why the Council wished to pursue these schemes as the outcome of a recent public consultation exercise indicated that residents didn't want them.

Members stated that it was clear that a number of people were crying out for changes in this area and that the consultation exercise had been promoted as much as possible. It was noted that 2 or 3 vacant premises would be filled as a result of implementing the schemes.

There was a real, identified need to regenerate Lancing even though some residents didn't want to see any change.

Decision:

The Joint Strategic Committee approved the release of up to £163,000 capital funding for the delivery of the regeneration of Queensway and Queens Parade.

Call In:

The call in deadline for this decision will be 5.00pm on 19th November 2013.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9.01pm, having commenced at 6:30pm.

Chairman