



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

# Adur and Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19



## **Message from the Chairmen**

In 2018/19 the Joint Committee has continued in its valuable role as the watchdog of both Councils, ensuring that the Joint Executives(Joint Strategic Committee) are scrutinised for the decisions made on residents' behalf and to ensure greater transparency within the process.

The Joint Committee has played its part in scrutinising a number of important issues and the Leaders of the Councils, Executive Members, the Chief Executive and local stakeholders have all been invited to attend meetings to answer questions on relevant issues within their areas of responsibility including:-

- Interviewing and 'holding to account' the Adur and Worthing Council Leaders (September 2018 and March 2019) and Executive Members to ensure that they are delivering the Councils' priorities. This helps ensure that their decision making on service provision is transparent and provides value for money for Adur and Worthing residents' benefit.
- Regular reviews of financial information are considered by the Committee each year. Financial Scrutiny is vital to ensure that the Council Executives are held to account and making decisions in the best interests of the communities. Scrutiny takes place year round and in 2018/19 the Committee undertook a review of the Revenue Outturn for 2017/18 and

## Scrutiny of the Worthing Budget for 2019/20 and the setting of Council Tax.

- The Committee has also interviewed the Adur and Worthing Councils' Chief Executive in September 2018 and March 2019 on the progress made in delivering the commitments in the strategic vision 'Platforms for our Places'. Relevant Executive Members have also been questioned as part of this process. This in-depth Scrutiny will continue during 2019/20 to enable the Committee to check on the status and delivery of the activities and commitments for the three year Strategic vision.
- The Committee has also heard from Southern Water for their account of the sewage spill incident which affected the areas in July 2017 and reports on bathing water quality. The Committee has called for a more detailed report back on progress with the bathing water quality status and this will be presented during 2019/20.
- The Committee was also pleased to interview, Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner and local Adur and Worthing District Police Commander, Miles Ockwell at its meeting in February. This interview covered local operational policing matters and matters within the remit of the Police & Crime Commissioner such as Police priorities and Police budgets and gave the Committee the opportunity to hold the Commissioner to account on these matters in a public setting. This also gave the opportunity to local residents to put forward questions for discussion.

- The Committee has also received a detailed briefing from representatives of West Sussex County Council on the parking enforcement procedures undertaken in Adur & Worthing in order to find more about how these procedures operate and to assess if change is needed.
- Reports on the littering and dog control processes and a review of the dog warden service were presented to the Committee following a request from Lancing Parish Council asking the Committee to assess whether or not the Councils could instigate a private enforcement service to be responsible for the issuing of fixed penalty notices for breaches under the Public Spaces Protection Order for dog control and littering offences.
- At the request of the Joint Strategic Committee, the Committee has also undertaken a fundamental review of the effectiveness of the Council's consultation processes and looked at how to maximise the responses to the consultations. A series of five recommendations aimed at improving the consultation processes were identified and reported to the Joint Strategic Committee for consideration. The Joint Strategic Committee has agreed to support three of the recommendations to improve the consultation process and the JOSOC will receive a further report on the proposed draft engagement principles, to provide additional scrutiny, during Summer 2018.
- The Committee has heard from the Chairman of the West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Committee (HASC), Councillor Bryan Turner, on the important work of the West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Committee in scrutinising

West Sussex Health services. Scrutiny of health services sits legally with the HASC but this discussion with the HASC Chairman has enabled the Committee to have a better understanding of the work of the HASC and help improve the links between HASC and JOSOC to ensure that West Sussex health service provision can be held to account in more detail.

- As part of its role in scrutinising crime and disorder, the Committee has also heard from the Chairman of the Adur & Worthing Safer Communities Partnership, Councillor David Simmons, on the work being undertaken by the Partnership to help reduce crime and disorder in Adur and Worthing and was able to challenge and hold the Chairman to account to assess how effective the partnership has been in reducing crime and disorder.
- The Committee has also undertaken scrutiny follow up work to review the progress made in Youth engagement by the Councils. The Committee undertook a review of Youth engagement in 2018 and wants to ensure that progress is made in engaging with young people in Adur and Worthing.
- To ensure that the Councils are maintaining the strength of the town centres as strong retail, leisure and business locations, the Committee has reviewed the Worthing Strategy for parking re-provision in Worthing town centre and the refurbishment projects being implemented.
- At the request of the Committee, in depth scrutiny of the delivery of the Councils Housing Strategy has been undertaken. This review enabled the Committee to assess the progress being made to implement the requirements of the

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and work being undertaken to prevent homelessness and the supply of new homes. The Committee will ensure that more scrutiny of these important housing issues is undertaken as part of the 2019/20 Work Programme.

- **Note** - During 2018/19 the Committee have also set up a separate Member Task and Finish Working Group to review the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function alongside new statutory guidance for Scrutiny Committees which has recently been produced by the Government. Other Member Task and Finish Groups this year have been reviewing the early evening and night time economies in Adur and Worthing, reviewing traveller encampments and the traveller transit site and also reviewing transport strategy issues. The findings from these Working Groups will be reported to the Committee during 2019/20 and any relevant recommendations for change will be made to the Councils' Executives and other outside stakeholders as considered appropriate.

The Committee also has Procedure Rules which assist members in providing strong scrutiny, transparency and also to ensure that all local decision makers are held to account for their decisions.



**Councillors Stephen Chipp and Roy Barraclough Joint Chairmen of the Adur and Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2018/19**

## **What is Overview and Scrutiny?**

The Local Government Act 2000 first introduced the requirement for every local authority to include provision for at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Subsequent amendments to the Act have further developed the role of Overview and Scrutiny within local authorities.

Although not a decision making body, effective Overview and Scrutiny has enormous potential to influence and inform decisions made by both the Councils and partner bodies connected with the areas.

The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee can review and scrutinise any matters which affect the Councils, the areas or residents from those areas, in order to provide greater transparency and accountability in the delivery of local services.

**The following key roles have been identified as areas which Overview and Scrutiny should be concerned with in Adur and Worthing:-**

- **Representing the views and wishes of Adur and Worthing residents about the services which they receive;**
- **Holding the Joint Executives (Joint Strategic Committee) to account and reviewing the decisions made;**
- **Monitoring Council performance;**
- **Reviewing Policy;**
- **Developing Policy; and**
- **Scrutinising external issues of public concern beyond the remit of the Councils.**

There is one Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee made up of sixteen Councillors (eight Adur and eight Worthing) representing wards across the areas. The Committee as a whole meets usually at least seven times a year and the meetings are open to the public.

Detailed procedure rules regarding the operation of overview and scrutiny can be found in the Council's Constitution at <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/media,140002,en.pdf>

### **Membership of the Committee in 2018/19:**

Adur District Council – Councillors Stephen Chipp (Co-Chairman), Carol Albury, Catherine Arnold, Kevin Boram, Joss Loader Paul Mansfield, Andy McGregor, (Co Vice-Chairman) and Lavinia O'Connor

Worthing Borough Council – Councillors Roy Barraclough (Co-Chairman), Keith Bickers (Co-Vice-Chairman), Rebecca Cooper, Karen Harman, Charles James, Sean McDonald, Bob Smytherman and Steven Waight

### **Have your say...**

You can find out more about our work on the internet at <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/meetings-and-decisions/committees/joint/overview-and-scrutiny/> where you can look at the reports we

have received, our recommendations and the minutes of our meetings.

Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council are committed to being more responsive to the way in which they provide services. They want more people to feel that they have the opportunity to influence matters that affect them. The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee can look at these issues and the Committee would like to give more people the chance to contribute to its work.

### **Suggest a topic for scrutiny**

Each year the Joint Committee sets a Work Programme of issues that it would like to review. A copy of the Work Programme for 2019/20 is attached to this Annual report. The Joint Committee reviews its Work Programme regularly throughout the year to make sure that it is working on topics that it can make a major impact on. The Work Programme is, therefore, subject to change in agreement with the Committee. The Committee would like local residents and stakeholders to get more involved in the scrutiny process so if there is an issue or service which you think that Councillors should review, please make a 'scrutiny request' using the online Scrutiny request form which is accessible at

<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/about-the-councils/scrutiny/>

The Committee will consider your request and when considering items for the Work Programme will be guided by the Council's Strategic Objectives set out in the strategic vision 'Platforms for our

Places', the ability of the Committee to have influence and/or add value on the subject and the PAPER criteria (Public Interest (P), Ability to change (A), Performance (P), Extent (E) and Replication (R). Requests are then considered initially by the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen and reported to the next available meeting of the Committee.

### **Come along to a meeting**

The Committee would also like more public engagement in its meetings and would encourage you to attend the public meetings which are held at least seven times a year at either the Shoreham Centre, Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea or the Town Hall, Chapel Road, Worthing. You will also have the opportunity to ask a public question relating to Council Services at the start of the meeting.

**To find out more you can contact Mark Lowe, Scrutiny and Risk Officer at Town Hall, Chapel Road, Worthing on 01903 221009 or on [mark.lowe@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:mark.lowe@adur-worthing.gov.uk)**

**Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20**

<b><u>Date of meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Items for discussion</u></b>	<b><u>Report Author</u></b>	<b><u>Executive Members to be invited</u></b>
20 June 2019	Annual JOSC report for 2018/19	Joint Chairmen of JOSC	N/A
	Report from the Transport issues Working Group	Chairman of the Working Group	N/A
25 July 2019	Joint Revenue Outturn report 2018/19	Director for Digital & Resources/Chief Financial Officer	Executive Members for Resources
	Outline Budget Strategy 2019/20	Director for Digital & Resources/Chief Financial Officer	II

19 September 2019	<p>Review of the Progress in delivering the activities in Platforms for our Places - Questioning Chief Executive</p> <p>West Sussex Air quality Strategy</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Director for Communities/ West Sussex County Council</p>	<p>Adur &amp; Worthing Executive Members</p> <p>Executive Members for Wellbeing</p>
17 October 2019	<p>Annual interviews with Council Leaders</p>	<p>Director for Digital &amp; Resources</p>	<p>Leaders</p>
21 November 2019	<p>Adur and Worthing and Joint Outline 5 year forecast and savings proposals - Executive Member interviews.</p>	<p>Director for Digital &amp; Resources/Chief Financial Officer</p>	<p>Adur and Worthing Executive Members</p>
30 January 2020	<p>Worthing Budget Estimates 20/21 and setting of 2020/21 Council Tax</p> <p>Presentation from Southern Water on bathing water quality issues</p>	<p>Director for Digital &amp; Resources/Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Worthing Executives</p> <p>Adur Executive Member for the Environment, Worthing Executive Member for Regeneration, Executive Members for Wellbeing</p>
19 March 2020	<p>Review of the Progress in delivering the activities in Platforms for our Places - Questioning Chief Executive</p> <p>Leader interviews</p> <p>Annual Work Programme setting 2019/20</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Director for Digital &amp; Resources</p> <p>Director for Digital &amp; Resources</p>	<p>Adur and Worthing Executives</p> <p>Leaders</p> <p>N/A</p>

Date to be confirmed	Major Projects being undertaken in partnership with West Sussex County Council - Update	Director for the Economy	Executive Members for Regeneration and relevant West Sussex County Council Cabinet Members
	Review of Corporate Assets	Head of Major Projects & Investment/Director for Economy	Relevant Executive Members
	Regular updates on the delivery of the Housing Strategy - Review of progress	Director for Communities/Head of Housing	Executive Members for Customer Services
	Worthing Theatres - Review of the operation of the new contract	Director for the Economy	Worthing Executive Member for Customer Services
	Report from the JOSC Effectiveness of OSC's Working Group	Chairman of the Working Group	N/A
	Report from the Working Group reviewing recycling	Chairman of the Working Group	N/A
	Report from the JOSC Working Group on evening and Night Time economy	Chairman of the Working Group	N/A
	Report from the Working Group on the review of the procedures for dealing with traveller incursions in Adur and Worthing and use of the transit site.	Chairman of the Working Group	N/A

**Note** - A progress report on the delivery of the work contained in the Work Programme will be presented to each meeting.

All timings are provisional and subject to change in agreement with the Joint Chairmen and the Committee.

