

Town Hall,  
WORTHING.

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To: **All Members of the Council**

Dear Councillor

**Notice of Council Meeting**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Worthing Borough Council to be held on **Tuesday 27 March 2007** at **6.00 p.m.** at the Town Hall, Chapel Road, Worthing, to transact the business set out below.

Dated this 19<sup>th</sup> day of March 2007.

Yours sincerely



Interim Chief Executive

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to any items on this Agenda. The declaration should refer both to the nature of the interest as well as its existence.

Members and Officers may seek advice upon any relevant interest from a Legal Officer prior to the meeting.

3. **Petitions**

To receive any petitions submitted under Standing Order 2.10.

4. **Public Question Time**

To receive any questions from Members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 2.11.

*(Note: Question Time will last for a maximum of 30 minutes).*

5. **Minutes**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 February 2007.

6. **Mayor's Announcements**

7. **Adur and Worthing Partnership Strategy - High Level Business Case and Possible Single Officer Structure**

To **NOTE** the following decisions taken by the Cabinet at its simultaneous meeting with Adur's Policy and Strategy Committee on 15 March 2007:-

- 1) that Capita be thanked for its evaluation, which was delivered in a timely and constructive manner and staff, Unison, Members, the Audit Commission, the IDeA and SECE be thanked for their help with and contributions to the work;
- 2) that Officers be authorised, in conjunction with both Leaders, to make minor changes and additions to the High Level Business Case and the Implementation Strategy, once feedback on the further work has been received from Capita, before both Council meetings in March 2007;

To consider the following **RECOMMENDATIONS** from the Cabinet at the same meeting:-

That Officers be authorised to progress immediately with implementation of Phase 1 of the Partnership Strategy and that both Councils:-

- a) adopt the Vision and Objectives of the Partnership Strategy and adequately resource it in consultation with the S.151 Officers and the two Leaders, and actively seek external funding for the project;
- b) agree the recommended officer structure as the basis for the way forward;
- c) agree to extend the current shared arrangements for the Interim Chief Executive until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007;

- d) ratify the Joint Appointments Committee (for staffing and employment issues) to consider options and a process for the appointment of a fixed term Joint Chief Executive, the Directors and the Service Heads, in the event of the Partnership Strategy being taken forward; Members of the Committee to be appointed at each Council's Annual Meeting in May 2007;
- e) agree that Officers refine the recommended service blocks, further develop appropriate financial and governance arrangements for Members to consider in July 2007 and investigate and seek external funding to help progress the development of appropriate financial arrangements, in consultation with the Joint Working Party (set up by SEMs on 21 September 2006);
- f) place any savings achieved in 2007/08 in a Partnership Contingency Fund to help dampen the effect of departure costs in 2008/09.

8. **Medium Term Financial Plan**

To consider a recommendation from the Cabinet at its meeting on 13 March 2007 that the Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2007-2010 be approved.

9. **Leader's Report on Decisions Taken by the Cabinet**

To receive a report from the Leader on decisions taken by the Cabinet since the last Council Meeting and to receive questions/comments from Members thereon.

10. **Leader's Report on Urgent Decisions**

To receive a report from the Leader on urgent decisions taken since the last meeting.

*(Note: Background papers relating to items 7-10 have been previously circulated. If any Member requires further copies please contact Democratic Services).*

11. **Reports of the Cabinet Members**

To receive reports on decisions taken by:-

- (a) The Leader  
(Councillor Keith Mercer)
- (b) Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Services  
(Councillors John Rogers)
- (c) Cabinet Member for the Environment  
(Councillor Nick John)



*This Council further notes:*

- *That the approach of the Conservative and Labour Governments in treating back gardens as "brownfield" sites is wrong, and fails to acknowledge the ecological, environmental and social value of these important green spaces.*

*This Council therefore calls on the Government to:*

- a) change planning policy to remove back garden land from "brownfield" site designation, and;*
- b) asks the Borough's two MPs to support the Liberal Democrat campaign in Parliament to allow local authorities, through planning policies to protect back garden land from over-development and preserve the important ecological corridors they provide".*

The Motion was referred to the Deputy Leader who **RECOMMENDS:-**

1. That (a) - *"the need for housing, particularly affordable homes"* and (b) - *"that the redevelopment of previously built-on "brownfield" areas is preferable to building on "greenfield" or green belt areas"* - be endorsed.
2. That bullet point 1 - *"the demand for more homes is increasing housing density in suburban areas, often resulting in the loss of back gardens"* - be noted.
3. That the rest of the Motion be rejected on the following grounds:-
  - The Deputy Leader believes there is adequate provision in PPS3 (housing) to give the Development Control Committee powers to refuse permission on back garden development.
  - The Deputy Leader is mindful that, if there are not sufficient brownfield policies for the Council, there is a real and present danger of development on greenfield sites.
  - The Deputy Leader is also confident that the final paragraph of the Officers' briefing note in relation to the Local Development Framework (see below) will give more authority to the Council's Development and Control Committee in determining future applications.
  - **(Extract from briefing note: -**  
*It will not be possible to provide a blanket ban on new development in residential gardens, as there will be some instances where this is an acceptable form of development which can provide much needed housing. However, the framework provided by the Core Strategy should ensure that environmental considerations are given significant weight. This can then provide a robust framework for future development control policies to ensure that the existing character of the Borough is enhanced.)*

(b) **Fairtrade**

To consider the following Motions, notice of which have previously been given by Councillor Bob Smytherman in accordance with Standing Order 2.9:-

- (i) "That the following Motion be considered forthwith in accordance with Standing Order 2.9.10".

**(Note:** Under Standing Orders, this Motion shall be moved, seconded and put without comment).

- (ii) *"This Council reaffirms its commitment to fairtrade and to maintaining Worthing Borough Council's fairtrade status; recognises the work done by local businesses and community organisations in promoting fairtrade and the support shown for fairtrade by the local media and the residents of Worthing; charges the Worthing Fairtrade steering group with continuing working to expand the availability of fairtrade goods in Worthing and calls on the government to build on the Fairtrade Mark to allow one set of standards across all products that consumers can have confidence in."*

(c) **Worthing Post Offices**

To consider the following Motions, notice of which have previously been given by Councillor Michael Donin in accordance with Standing order 2.9:-

- (i) "That the following Motion be considered forthwith in accordance with Standing Order 2.9.10".

**(Note:** Under Standing Orders, this Motion shall be moved, seconded and put without comment).

- (ii) *"Worthing Borough Council regrets the loss of 15 local post offices in both Worthing constituencies between 1999 and 2005 AND notes with concern the Announcement by the Government on 14 December 2006 of Ministers' plans to close 2500 Post Office branches across the UK.*

*This Council further notes the social importance of Post Offices to the well being of both communities and individuals in Worthing.*

*This Council believes that the recently announced closure programme is unnecessary and calls on the government to:-*

1. *end the branch closure programme;*
2. *remove the Royal Mail restrictions on the Post Office to open up further business opportunities for the network;*
3. *stop removing Government business from Post Offices;*

4. *carry out a review of which additional Government functions could be carried out through Post Offices;*
5. *invest in the Post Office network.*

*This Council welcomes the decision of the Government to withdraw its previous proposals to scrap completely the Post Office Card Account (POCA) but calls on Ministers to ensure that any replacement POCA should be open freely to all pensioners and benefit recipients who want one.*

*This Council calls on the Government to avoid putting pressure on current and future POCA users to switch to having benefits and pensions paid directly into bank accounts.*

*This Council calls on the two local MPs for the Worthing area to lobby Ministers to save the Post Office from gradual demolition and to protect this vital service for the people. This Council further calls on the MPs to report back to this Council on the actions."*