

Public Document Pack

Subject to approval at the next Vision Working Party meeting

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COUNCIL VISION WORKING PARTY

19 September 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Tandy (Chair), Stanley (Vice-Chair), Ayling, Gunner and Huntley.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Working Party

RESOLVED

That Councillor Tandy be appointed Chair of the Council Vision Working Party.

The Working Party

RESOLVED

That Councillor Stanley be appointed Vice-Chair of the Council Vision Working Party.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence.

Councillor Gunner attended the meeting and confirmed that he would fill the vacant Conservative seat.

This was noted by the Working Party.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no items for this meeting.

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5. START TIMES

The Working Party

RESOLVED

That its start times for meetings for 2023/2024 be 6.00 pm.

6. REVIEW OF COUNCIL VISION INDICATORS

Following the establishment of this Working Party by the Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting held on 11 July 2023, the Working Party received a report from the Group Head of Organisational Excellence asking members to review the current Vision indicators and to agree what changes they might wish to recommend to the next meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee for eventual approval by Full Council.

The Group Head of Organisational Excellence drew Members' attention to Appendix 3 setting out the responses received from Political Groups in terms of the existing Vision Indicators. She suggested that the Working Party work through the table line by line to assess each indicator against any responses received and to confirm whether that indicator should remain or be removed or if there were new indicators Members wished to add and to explain these changes.

The original principle was that it was necessary to be able to identify progress against the four overall Vision aims and the key areas within these.

The Working Party was reminded that the current vision had been included as an appendix within the report and the four key themes covered:

- Wellbeing
- Housing
- The Environment; and
- The Economy

The Vision covered a four year period, with the Council approaching the halfway point. As well as a change in administration, it was explained that priorities could always change for varying reasons, requiring a review.

It was highlighted that there was also a fifth potential additional theme, not included, which the Working Party might wish to consider adding which was about Arun the organisation and the way in which it worked on areas such as efficiency and consultation. The joint interim Chief Executive and Director of Growth explained that the fifth theme would focus on how the council would work to deliver the Vision by being a more efficient and effective organisation.

Discussion then focused on where to start in reviewing the indicators and how this should be approached.

The joint interim Chief Executive and Director of Growth highlighted that if it was the Working Party's wish, the thoughts collated [Appendix 3] could be discussed allowing Officers to explore all points made for the next meeting of the Working Party. He outlined that a useful starting point might be to check first with the Working Party whether the four Vision themes were still relevant and were themes that the council wished to go forward with.

Discussion took place and it was agreed that the starting point to this work should be to firstly focus on the four key themes of the Vision and if any changes were required. If the Working Party was happy with these four themes, it could then review the overall aims and objectives sitting under these.

The Working Party confirmed that it was happy with the four themes and what they were hoping to achieve.

The Working Party then reviewed each of the overall aims of each theme and how these would be achieved by looking at each of the objectives sitting behind these, as set out below:

Improving the wellbeing of Arun

Comments made were:

- Looking at the seven objectives, these included areas that the Council was not directly responsible for such as dental facilities, with the Council having limited influence to be able to make this objective achievable.
- Aims and objectives should not be removed just because the Council has limited influence on how could be achieved.
- Section 106 and CIL contributions could be used to influence this objective. Dentistry should be retained within objective (4) even though the Council could not directly manage or improve it, it could continue to assist through continued partnership working.
- Should there be a more explicit statement about partnership working? It was agreed that a separate statement be added to confirm what the council was trying to achieve through partnership working as this very important.
- Mr Roberts referred to a previous KPI that the council used to have around educational attainment which had been very difficult to achieve, through partnership working this has been changed to skills attainment – a more achievable target. This was something for the Working Party to think about.
- The Working Party was advised that it also needed to think about what the council could directly influence or should continue to include that could be achieved by working with other partners or by getting them to deliver using different approaches.

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Having discussed the above points, the Working Party turned its attention to the 49 Vision indicators, stating that it felt that many of these should be 'trimmed down' or split into two sets of indicators. Those that should just be reported to Service Committees to scrutinise and those that the Council could directly influence.

A suggestion was made that corporate indicators continue to be included within the Vision with service related ones being reported through to Committees with KPIs.

The question was asked that if the Council proceeded with this approach, what would be corporate and what would be for Committees to review?

In continuing with this discussion, the following points were made:

- Committees were consistently poor at demonstrating self-scrutiny.
- A separate Scrutiny Committee should be established to review all indicators.
- Were the reporting timelines correct and should they be reviewed as it was difficult with some of the bigger corporate projects to review targets linked into the current quarterly KPI reporting.
- If any KPIs or Vision indicators were to be removed, or added, the Working Party would need to heavily highlight why and put forward a case for this.

A suggestion was made by Mr Roberts that in view of the many views submitted by political groups, that these be reviewed further by the Group Head of Organisational Excellence and represented in a different way for the Working Party to work through, indicating what should be reported to Committees on one level and then what was the corporate indicator to be measured from a corporate perspective. An example provided was the many indicators coming under Planning where there were indicators that were national indicators and so were corporate with the rest being relevant for review by Committee.

This approach was agreed by the Working Party, especially in terms of how all the information was presented. Discussion also focused upon illustrating where performance was good and how to address the challenges where they existed and whether this should be through a specific Committee or Service Committees.

Officers would review the suggestions put forward, to include the two new KPIs recommended for inclusion from the last meeting of the Housing & Wellbeing Committee, making suggestions for the Working Party to review at its next meeting to include reporting levels.

The Working Party then worked through the four vision themes.

Delivering the right homes in the right places

- The overall aims were agreed.
- The seven objectives were agreed.

No further comments or observations were made.

Supporting our environment to support us

- Looking at the overall aims, the point was made that the Council needed to be robust in defending the district. It was felt that the wording in the first aim needed to be stronger, making more of a statement about climate change and standing up for future generations.
- The following change in wording was agreed by the Working Party:

“To ~~consider~~ **reduce our adverse impact on the environment**, climate change, sustainability and biodiversity in everything the Council is responsible for and encourage its community and local businesses to do the same”.

- Objective 5 mentioned percentages as a target. As targets were not featured in any other objectives it was agreed that the targets be removed with the revised wording agreed as follows:

“Working with our community **to reduce improve** waste **and increase reduction and recycling to meet future targets of 55% recycling by 2025 and 60% by 2023**.”.

Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential

- The Working Party discussed the position on culture as it was felt that cultural development was important in terms of measuring the arts which assisted in stimulating economic growth. Was culture sitting under the correct theme in the Vision – it was currently sitting under wellbeing – should it be moved to economy?
- Following discussion, it was agreed that the aim “Use regeneration opportunities to attract new and relocating businesses to the district” be reviewed perhaps by having active leisure as one aim and culture as another. It was agreed that the Group Head of Organisational Excellence would review this further and bring wording to the next meeting of the Working Party for Members to approve.

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Having mostly agreed the Vision document, its overall aims and objectives, the Working Party turned its attention again to the 49 vision indicators set out in Appendix 3, and it was confirmed that the Group Head of Organisational Excellence would review how these would be presented for the next meeting, considering comments already received.

A suggestion was made that the Working Party firstly consider whether the new fifth vision theme, mentioned earlier by the Group Head of Organisational Excellence, should be approved.

Councillor Gunner confirmed that he was against the fifth theme. The rest of the Working Party supported it stating that the culture of the Council was very important and that the new fifth theme should be easy to measure by the production of staff surveys etc.

It was highlighted that some of the existing KPIs were linked to this already for example staff vacancies, complaints, absences which were all measures of what represented a good organisation or not. This new set of statements about what kind of organisation the Council needed to be to deliver the key vision themes would underpin the Vision. It would not have the same prominence; it could feature in the covering report leaving it as something that members and officers could understand but not part of the outward facing document.

A further suggestion was made that the photograph taken before the last Council Meeting in July of Members be used as part of this theme, reflecting the new alliance.

In view of the mixed views expressed, the Group Head of Organisational Excellence offered to conduct some further research returning with some ideas presenting what the fifth theme might look like for next meeting, exploring what other councils had done. This would build on the continuing culture change work that was ongoing.

Returning to Appendix 3, the Working Party was asked if there were any particular actions or tasks that it wished Officers to work on or add for the next meeting?

It was explained that the colour coding in the appendix represented each political party's responses. It was acknowledged that within the 49 indicators there were a mix of projects, aims and measures which were not necessarily indicators. In explaining the indicator in the table – did the outcome also need to be featured?

It was agreed that in looking at all the indicators some were very different to others and needed further sorting. It was agreed that Officers would work in sorting them into groups as a starting point and as some had a very definite timelines, also looking at the value of some being reported in this document against updates being provided at each committee meeting or as part of an annual report, before being removed, if that was appropriate.

As the next meeting of the Working Party was on 23 October 2023, Members were invited to submit any further views to the Group Head of Organisation Excellence by the end of the week so that these could form part of the revised document that the Members would consider at the next meeting. This being comments on the Vision and comments on the indicators contained within appendix 3. This approach was agreed.

To assist further, it was agreed that Officers would provide the reviewed documents ahead of the next meeting allowing time for members to review and feed comments into the next meeting.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Working Party noted that its next meeting would be held on 23 October 2023.

(The meeting concluded at 7.30 pm)

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