



NOTES of the **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP MEETING** held in the Council Chamber on **28th July 2025 at 19.00hours.**

Committee Present:

Robert Eggleston	Chairman
David Eggleton	Vice Chairman
Cedric de Souza	
John Orchard*	
Janice Henwood	
Bob Foster	
Andy Stowe	

Also Present:

Cllrs;
Diane Black
Anne Eves
Simon Hicks
Tofojjul Hussein

Others: Julie Holden (Chief Executive)
1 member of the public

**denotes non attendance*

58. Open Forum

The Chairman opened the meeting and invited any questions from the public gallery. There were no questions therefore the Chair moved to the substantive agenda.

59. Election of Vice Chair

RESOLVED: Cllr Eggleton was elected as Vice Chair for the year.

60. Apologies for Absence

None were received.

Post meeting note: John Orchard (unwell) apologies were received post meeting.

61. Substitutes

There were none

62. Declarations of Interest

No new declarations were made

63. Chairmans Announcements

The Chairman congratulated the Lionesses on retaining their Euro Champions Crown and a nail-biting victory in Basel.

64. Notes of the Meeting 24th February 2025

RESOLVED: To sign the notes as an accurate record of the meeting.

65. Local Government Reorganisation

The Chair advised that he was as Leader of the District Council, involved in the regular meetings between the Districts, Boroughs and County of West Sussex for the formulation of the options, he would only introduce and provide clarity but would not vote on any resolution.

It was commented that we need to know what the public want regarding services or assets being transferred to the parishes and their preference for the new model.

It was commented that the current survey was about the model not the role of the Town Council in the reorganisation, Town and Parish Councils are hardly being mentioned and are not party to the reorganisation itself.

There are two options presented in the survey, it was felt the single unitary would be too remote with far too much responsibility on the shoulders of the serving Councillors who would have a hugely increased resident base. It was commented that it was unfortunate that proportional representation had not been brought in for these elections as first past the post is not fit for purpose. It was good however that combining county and district services meant there would be no more passing from pillar to post with enquiries.

It was asked who funds the transition? The answer was the Councils involved but this is not a precept matter, they will find efficiencies through the combining of the authorities.

Tax harmonisation will average out over time with residents in some districts paying more and some less than currently as the figure unifies.

It was asked whether the costs have been established, in reply it was stated that the Districts and Boroughs have taken on staff to do this work.

It was confirmed that the Parishes had been briefed today by the District on the current work and survey.

It was thought a well-designed unitary council would be better able to hold developers to account.

It was felt that 2 unitary councils for West Sussex would give a better representational option, with potentially 70 councillors for each unitary whereas if there were only one Unitary the maximum would be 100.

It was clarified that Brighton and Hove was not looking to expand into any part of West Sussex at this time, its aspirations seemed to be in to East Sussex.

It was asked if Burgess Hill could make a bid to return to East Sussex, this was thought to be very unlikely to succeed as the Government were looking for proposals on the existing county boundary. The Reigate and Crawley request was refused which is essentially the same. Small realignments of settlements such as the Lewes district builds on the outskirts of Burgess Hill are not subject to this legislation.

It was felt that the Council should make a submission and that individuals should also be encouraged to do so.

It was commented that as the response date is 13th August and preparing a response and calling a Council meeting to approve may be difficult that a delegated decision may be best.

RESOLVED:

The KAG would express an opinion of preference, the CEO would draft the response in discussion with Chair and Vice Chair and circulate via email for all Councillors to view and comment before the submission date of 13th August.

The KAG then considered the options in the survey

RESOLVED: the KAG preference was for 2 unitary authorities, they would support B1 or B2 regarding the placement of Adur District, as the data evolves.

66. Neighbourhood Plans

The Chief Executive introduced this item explaining it was another one that needed careful consideration. The District Council are encouraging Towns and Parishes not to undertake wholesale reviews resulting in new plans at this time. The District Council Plan was in a position of limbo as the Inspector has not yet failed the plan and the Kings Counsel is working hard to persuade the Government not to go down that route. The District are hopeful that the plan will not be failed and will be able to progress to the next stage, but as to when or if that will happen is an unknown.

In the meantime, with the government moving new planning legislation forward at pace and the introduction of National Development Management Policies, which are believed to be in favour of development and will affect all of England with no local variance, the District feel that reviewing the NPs and introducing new policies is risky as the emergence of these policies may mean that the plans are not in conformity and will largely be weightless in planning.

The Burgess Hill plan is old and has some areas where it is out of conformity so it does need reviewing, however it is a question as to when and how. There is no current budget for reviewing the plan and this was a very resource heavy project first time. It has been clarified by the District that a plan removing or adding policies will not be light touch and will require the full process from plan drawing to referendum.

It was asked what the costs may be, it was difficult to say as when it was done last time there were other projects that were carried out alongside it so determining what was NP alone is not easy to establish. Potentially around £80,000 and some of that was met by government funding which is no longer available. It is likely to be in the same region for a full plan.

It was felt that a plan was needed, residents should be asked to workshops or other collective means to start their ideas and thoughts for the town.

Doing the comparable with the existing neighbourhood plan against the District Plan and draft District Plan for conformity would still be useful as this would put us in a starting place to know how much has to be changed before inserting new policies and this is work that the working group could get along with.

There were concerns as to raising expectations of the public that the NP could deliver on town planning matters when we have learned this may not be so. For an example of redundant policies, the existing neighbourhood plan had allocated the old gas holder site for housing and it is now the Lidl site.

We need to ensure that any new policies arising from local engagement are not “strategic”, as they will not be able to be included. So, setting expectation and managing disappointment will be important.

It was asked how LGR affected the district plan, it was advised that the existing plans remain valid and are used for the appropriate areas until a new all-encompassing plan is developed by the new unitary.

RESOLVED: 1) To review the existing Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and identify what is redundant.
2) Establish from the Planning Authority what would be relevant as non-strategic policies for a NP

67. Beehive

The chair introduced the report and a supplemental hand out (appended to the notes) giving the revised costings of the build as determined during the RIBA 2 process which has been undertaken. He advised that a still further set of costs had been received today and the initial cost of £5.8m has been reduced to £5.5m. the design has been modified to increase the floorspace by 16% while bringing the overall cost down.

He explained that a shell and core approach has been taken with some items held back for client fit out which will reduce overall costs as the professional fees and contingency are not increased for those items. It is hoped that yet additional savings to bring the cost down further can be achieved.

The full report (some 90 pages) will be made available to all Councillors prior to a meeting of the Community Land and Buildings Design Group. The working group will then come back to the KAG and on to Council with their views of next steps to be taken.

It was clarified that the building is a steel frame with brick and hung tile finishing. The Urban designer will need to be involved to ensure that the design is acceptable for planning purposes.

It was asked who the stakeholders would be who are invited to the working group. The chair advised there is a list and this list would be shared with the papers, not individuals but the organisations and yes it would include Cyprus Hall users. More consultation would later include the general public.

It was further commented that the lower ground floor of Cyprus Hall would not be affected by the works, any disruption during works would be given notice as set out in the new lease.

There was a comment that the reduction in costs was significant and should be applauded. It was heading in the right direction.

In response to when the meeting would take place it was confirmed this would be mid to late August.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1) Chief Executive to convene a meeting of the CLBDG to consider the revised plan and costings and receive stakeholder feedback.
 - 2) The list of stakeholders invited will be included with the papers for the CLBDG

68. St Johns Park Pavillion

The Chair introduced the item and explained where the Cricket Club plans were at this time regarding potential development of the pavilion. It was confirmed that the pavilion would not need demolishing but the current thoughts are that it would need "stilts" to allow the potential for flood water to pass by the pavilion in the event of flooding.

The costs of the project that the Cricket Club are working on is not known, nor is the design of what they are considering. When and if they are able to proceed, they will advise the Town Council of their plans.

The item was noted.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 20.42

Beehive project – RIBA 2 update

1. At the end of last week, we received the drafts of the cost plan from Greenwoods and the RIBA stage 2 report from Unknown Works. There has not been an opportunity to fully analyse these reports in this short amount of time. The following is a summary of key observations.
2. As part of the RIBA 2 redesign, it became evident that the original **GIFA of 825 sq.m.** made for a constricted circulation and foyer space with a substantial portion of that area being occupied by washroom and WC facilities.
3. Furthermore, there was a very strong feeling that to be properly inclusive the building should include a Changing Places Facility and this could not be incorporated in the footprint without sacrificing other usable space.
4. It was also felt that to minimise disruption to Cyprus Hall it would be preferable to build a new kitchen as an extension to the building rather than use the storage space off the main Hall.
5. In response to stakeholder feedback the LGF has now been redesigned to include BoH washroom facilities reducing the need to use those in Cyprus Hall.
6. Accommodating these changes has led to a 16% increase in **GIFA to 954 sq.m.** This allows, in particular, for an increase in the foyer size with the female washroom accommodation situated beneath a new mezzanine/first floor seating gallery in the auditorium.
7. These changes have, inevitably, added to the cost of the project such that many of the savings from the RIBA stage 2 work have been reinvested in the design. However, as expected the RIBA stage 2 work has identified savings to mitigate cost increases together with an evaluation of works that could be undertaken by the client direct. A comparison of the cost changes is shown on the next page.
8. In terms of design Unknown Works are proposing to build with a steel frame from recycled steel. The building will then be finished with a mix of solid brick and hung tiles. The design also maximises the use of the terracotta artefacts from the museum store and reusing the bricks from the front of Cyprus Hall.
9. Sustainability in energy is also a key feature with provision for ASHP and solar PV.

COST REVIEW

Pre RIBA stage 2 GIFA 825 sq. m.

Item	Total	Cost per m2
Total construction costs	£4,346,839.35	£5,268.90
Contingency	£543,354.92	
Inflation	£279,230.09	
Total project costs	£5,169,424.36 *	
Professional fees	£652,025.00	
Total	£5,821,449.36 **	

* Adjusting down for a VAT addition in the original cost plan summary

** cost excludes sound and lighting installation from auditorium fit out.

**Latest DRAFT RIBA stage 2
GIFA 954 sq. m.**

Item	Total	Cost per m2
Total construction costs	£4,013,978.66	£4,471.41
Contingency	£461,607.55	
Inflation	£202,599.55	
Total project costs	£4,678,185.76	
Professional fees	£602,096.80	
Client Fit out	£397,501.78 ***	
Total	£5,677,784.34 ****	

*** includes inflation at 3.99%

**** Includes auditorium fit out including acoustics, sound and lighting.

There are opportunities to move other topline construction elements into Client fit out. This does not necessarily mean a decrease in the cost of the work, but it reduces the contingency and professional fees as these are calculated at 15% on the cost of the work (for each, i.e. 30% in total).