

Subject to approval at the next Subcommittee meeting

BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION SUBCOMMITTEE

27 February 2017 at 6.00 pm

Present: - Councillors Hitchins (Chairman), Ambler, Bence, Bower, Mrs Brown, Dillon (Substituting for Councillor Mrs Madeley), Mrs Maconachie, D. Maconachie and Wells.

Councillors Brooks, Oppler and Mrs Rapnik were also present at the meeting.

15. APOLOGY

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Mrs Madeley.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer has advised Members of interim arrangements to follow when making declarations of interest. They have been advised that for the reasons explained below, they should make their declarations on the same basis as the former Code of Conduct using the descriptions of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Reasons

- The Council has adopted the government's example for a new local code of conduct, but new policies and procedures relating to the new local code are yet to be considered and adopted.
- Members have not yet been trained on the provisions of the new local code of conduct.
- The definition of Pecuniary Interests is narrower than the definition of Prejudicial Interests, so by declaring a matter as a Prejudicial Interest, that will cover the requirement to declare a Pecuniary Interest in the same matter.

Where a Member declares a "Prejudicial Interest" this will, in the interests of clarity for the public, be recorded in the Minutes as a Prejudicial and Pecuniary Interest.

Councillors Bower, Dillon, Hitchins, Mrs Maconachie, Maconachie and Wells declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5, The Regis Centre and Hothampton Car parks Feasibility Studies Update, as members of the Development Control Committee and reserved their right in terms of planning applications as they might arise.

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Councillor Dillon also declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 as he worked as a volunteer for Arun Arts.

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2016 were approved by the Subcommittee as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillors Bower, Dillon, Hitchins, Mrs Maconachie, Maconachie and Wells had declared a personal interest and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote.)

18. THE REGIS CENTRE AND HOTHAMTON CAR PARKS FEASIBILITY STUDIES UPDATE

The Chairman introduced this item by advising that the Council had consulted widely over the years regarding the regeneration of Bognor Regis and had listened to and taken on board, where possible, the comments and input from various groups and individuals. A wish list had been made up of the need for a hotel, a glass fronted building, all year round tourist attraction, iconic land mark building, a new theatre and a form of development that would stand out from the crowd that would increase footfall and bring people back to the town time and time again. He was pleased to advise those present that the Council's Consultants, Urban Delivery, in partnership with a number of other companies, had now prepared the Bognor Regis Masterplan Options Report which set out options for the Council to consider in order to achieve regeneration of the Regis Centre and Hothamton sites. He welcomed Mr Simon Davis to the meeting, who was in attendance to give a detailed presentation on the aspirations for the town and he requested Members to save their questions until the end.

Mr Davis appraised the meeting in detail of the conceptual designs at the Regis Centre site for either a new or refurbished theatre with a winter garden and indoor space for year round activities for all ages, together with a hotel, residential accommodation and retail outlets. He then moved on to the Hothamton site where it was envisaged that the New Park option to provide significant public realm improvements would greatly enhance the site and provide a new childrens' play area, with new development in the form of residential and retail and rearranged parking. This option proposed utilising the site of the existing health centre but could also proceed without it. The alternative of Perimeter Development Option could establish new development around the perimeter of the site and replace the current parking spaces within a decked facility, with retail uses being accommodated at ground floor level and residential, student and other forms of residential use at upper floors. The existing childrens' play area and sunken gardens would be refurbished as part of the project.

Mr Davis said that the summary report sought to give a feel for what it was hoped could be achieved and he stressed that there was nothing wrong

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with being ambitious. A lot more work would have to be undertaken to progress matters.

Members thanked Mr Davis for his presentation and used words such as exciting, brilliant, ambitious, and were generally extremely positive with the proposals. Notes of caution were raised with regard to the future use of Bognor Regis Town Hall and its possible inclusion in the proposals and the need to ensure the young were adequately catered for in the new scheme. However, it was highlighted that what was on the table were concepts and nothing concrete was being agreed at this stage, other than to continue with progressing the work based on these concepts to enable an assessment to be made with regard to viability and deliverability.

The Head of Economic Regeneration then presented her report, as set out in the agenda, and advised Members on the reasoning behind the recommendations therein. She stated that a review of the theatre had shown it to be a good facility and that, with support, it could be viable in the future and so should be retained. To improve the leisure offer for the town and following extensive research, it was felt that incorporating a winter garden with the theatre would provide a unique experience for residents and visitors alike, particularly as it would be an all weather, all year round facility. It was acknowledged that it would be challenging to make the scheme viable but there were options to access external funding and that would be the next stage of the process. In addition, specialist legal and technical advice needed to be sought to ensure the best approach was taken.

The Council would be working with a range of partners and stakeholders so they could advise on the functioning of the new building. The proposals in front of Members had gone a long way to reflect the views and key themes of the 10 community groups the consultants had met with and a number of individuals that had come forward in the previous consultation and it was hoped they would continue to participate in the process.

A concern was raised that the Subcommittee must be kept informed as the proposals were worked up and it was proposed and duly seconded that an additional recommendation be worded to reflect that view. The Director of Place provided wording, which was agreed by Members as follows:-

“That progress reports be provided to the Bognor Regis Regeneration Subcommittee at regular intervals, focussing on the intended decision making process and timetables”.

The Subcommittee then

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL – That

1) The Gardens by the Sea / Winter Gardens concept as described in the 2017 Bognor Regis Masterplan Options Report and the conclusions described in the 2017 Regis Centre & Hothamton Masterplans Market, Viability & Delivery Report, be supported;

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2) Option 2 for the Regis Centre site (New Theatre Option) is the preferred Masterplan option. Officers may progress this proposal to develop a more thorough understanding of the opportunities and risks of implementing such a proposal, the appropriate scale and phasing, and the potential funding packages and delivery vehicle approaches that might support it. Option 1 (Refurbishment of Theatre) will remain as an alternative option should the scale of the funding package for Option 2 be unachievable;

3) Option 1 for the Hothamton Car Park site is the preferred Masterplan option and officers progress this proposal, taking into consideration the potential funding and delivery vehicle approaches that might support it, ready to market the site;

4) The Council supports the principle of including the area of the Esplanade between Clarence Road and Place St Maur within any new public realm scheme for the wider regeneration of the site;

5) The Council supports the Bognor Regis Place Branding initiative developed in partnership with other agencies;

6) Authority be given to the Director of Place to begin discussions, early in the project development process, with specialist advisors and key external partners of the proposed theatre, cultural hub and Winter Gardens, and in consultation with the Head of Corporate Support Group, to ensure the operational business plan and governance arrangements (legal structure) are fully considered and will influence the functionality and scope of the new building(s) and potential funding opportunities;

7) Authority be given to the Director of Place to enter into discussions with the NHS Trust / Community Health Partnerships to include the Health Centre site within the Hothamton car park site development area, subject to a satisfactory agreement being found;

8) Authority be given to the Director of Place to engage with the Bognor Regis Town Council regarding the future use of the Bognor Regis Town Hall and investigate options to include this building within the development site;

9) Authority be given to the Director of Place to enter into discussion with West Sussex County Council, as the highway authority, to consider any highway implications and costs associated with the above and to prepare concept plans for any proposed works;

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10) In furtherance to the supplementary estimate agreed and resolution made at the Council meeting on 20 July 2016 (Minute 145), the Director of Place is authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and subject to the Council's Procurement Standing Orders, to draw down and authorise expenditure, for the commissioning of any of the necessary reports and professional advice required to progress the implementation of the 2017 Masterplan options; and

11) progress reports be provided to the Bognor Regis Regeneration Subcommittee at regular intervals, focussing on the intended decision making process and timetables.

(Councillor Wells wished his vote to be recorded that he abstained at recommendations (2) and (4) and voted against at recommendation (8).)

19. BUSINESS SUPPORT AND ENTERPRISE IN ARUN

The Business Development Manager presented this report which advised on the detail of the help and support the Council provided to businesses in the District.

With regard to Worklessness, she was pleased to advise that the scheme had been spectacularly successful over the last three years. However, the DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) was about to change the way they funded such work but that a bid had been made to the West Sussex Strategic Fund for additional funding to carry on that work for the next two years.

She went on to advise the meeting that the LEAP Project, for which the Council had agreed funding to the University of Chichester to deliver, was also producing excellent results. To date:

- 74 people had been engaged on the support programme
- 41 delegates had attended Start up Saturday
- 52 delegates attended the Business Boot Camp
- 55 delegates had attended workshops
- 36 people were taking part in the peer to peer work groups
- 35 people had received one to one business coaching.

The other part of the LEAP Project was small business grants and to date 63 businesses had received grants of up to £2,000 and 16 apprenticeships had been created.

The Subcommittee was pleased to note the report.

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(Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillor Wells declared a personal interest due to his involvement with the Pier Trust.)

20. BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION POSITION STATEMENT

In considering this matter, a question was asked with regard to when Rolls Royce would be erecting its name and logo on its buildings following the granting of planning permission. The Head of Economic Regeneration stated that she would make enquiries and inform Members accordingly.

The Subcommittee noted the remainder of the report.

(The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.)