

‘Subject to Approval at the Next Working Group Meeting’

ENVIRONMENTAL & LEISURE WORKING GROUP

6 September 2016 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: - Councillors Hitchins (Chairman), English (Vice-Chairman), Bicknell, L.Brown, Mrs Maconachie, Maconachie, Mrs Neno, Northeast, Oliver-Redgate, Mrs Porter, Purchase, Dr Walsh, Warren and Wheal.

[The following Councillors were absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to at the Minutes referred to:- Councillor English, Minutes 11 to 15; and Councillor Mrs Neo and Dr Walsh, Minutes 16 to 18.]

Councillor Wotherspoon was also present for part of the meeting.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Buckland, Cates, Mrs Daniells, Dingemans, Reynolds, and Wells, together with the Cabinet Member for Leisure & Amenities.

12. 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 interest of clarity for the public, be recorded in the Minutes as a Prejudicial and Pecuniary Interest.

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13. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14. SAFER ARUN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REVIEW 2015-16

Prior to presenting this report, the Community Safety Manager introduced Acting Chief Inspector Mark Clothier and Emily King from West Sussex County Council to the meeting, who were in attendance to answer any questions Members might have.

The Community Safety Manager supplemented her written report with a visual presentation which highlighted the key activities and achievements of the Safer Arun Partnership (SAP) during the period 2015/16. The following strategic priorities had been agreed in the Partnership Plan as:-

- Tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour
- Street Communities
- Arun Think Family Programme
- Improving Public Confidence

She was particularly pleased to advise that a Memorandum of Understanding had been agreed with the Chichester and Arun Community Safety Partnership, the first to agree joint working in West Sussex. The agreement articulated the commitment and expectations to seek joint strategic responses to shared priorities and aimed to identify opportunities to pool funding in response to shared issues to promote sustainable outcomes and ensure best value for money.

The Working Group then participated in a question and answer session with the Community Safety Manager, Acting Chief Inspector Mark Clothier and Emily King which covered a range of issues relating to

- ✓ Crime figures
- ✓ Domestic Violence
- ✓ Littlehampton Men’s Shed Project
- ✓ Young single homeless

On behalf of the Working Group, the Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager for a very good report and thanked Mark Clothier and Emily King for their attendance at the meeting.

The Working Group then

RECOMMEND TO CABINET – That

- (1) the work of the Safer Arun Partnership be endorsed and the importance of partnership working in contributing to

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reducing anti-social behaviour and addressing Street Community issues is recognised;

(2) the need for all Arun District Council services to contribute to delivering the Think Family programme through the flexible use of resources and close working with external partners and internal services;

(3) recognition is given to the work of the Safer Arun Partnership in contributing to the delivery of the Council’s strategic priority “supporting you if you need help”; and

(4) the Council’s contribution to overall working of the Safer Arun Partnership(SAP) and achieving SAPs strategic priorities will be considered as part the Council’s Vision and restructuring process.

15. BOGNOR REGIS VISITOR INFORMATION POINT

The Tourism Business Development Officer was pleased to advise Members that the Bognor Regis Visitor Information Point was working well with the operation partner, Johnstone Press at the Bognor Regis Observer office. Alternative ways of providing information were being provided and new additions were constantly being investigated to ensure information was accessible to visitors and residents alike when the Information Point was closed, due to the Observer staff’s contracted hours.

In the course of a brief discussion, the Tourism Business Development Officer was informed of a concern that a public convenience was closed during the peak period in Bognor Regis and it was suggested that details of all such facilities should be advertised so that visitors could locate alternative sites. She thanked the Member for raising the matter and stated she would investigate the possibility of providing a list in the window of the Information Point. It was also confirmed that the information was also available in the Sussex by the Sea Visitor Guides which were on display outside the Visitor Information Point at all times.

Following some further general comments, the Tourism Development Officer was thanked for her update.

16. LITTLEHAMPTON LEISURE CENTRE

The Principal Landscape Officer provided the Working Group with a power point presentation to update Members on the progress of the project to provide Littlehampton with a new leisure centre. She was able to advise that the site surveys undertaken now provided more certainty with respect to the position, shape and layout of the new building; informed construction methodology and materials; and identified requirements for the planning application. Drawings of the outline designs were shown and the timetable highlighted to indicate that a report would be considered by Cabinet on 17

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October 2016, with submission of a planning application week commencing 24 October 2016. The public planning consultation would take place from 3 to 10 October 2016 and Members were reminded of the letter that had been sent out to all Members of the Council inviting their contribution to the process.

In the course of discussion, queries were raised as to why Members had not been provided with the drawings sooner to enable them to make more informed comments and advice was given that they had only been received that afternoon. In addition, they were still very much in embryonic form and it was anticipated that there might well be further changes following feedback from the user group meetings and the public consultation. It was agreed that a copy of the drawings, presentation and letter would be circulated to Members following the meeting. In addition, Councillor Northeast requested a copy of the findings of the underground survey.

Members participated in general debate and questions were asked and responded to at the meeting relating to funding; capacity of the pool for an expanding local population; public input to the final design of the building; and the timetable.

The Director of Environmental Services advised that officers were working to an incredibly tight timescale which, if not met, would result in the centre not being built due to significant financial issues.

The Chairman thanked the Principal Landscape Officer for her presentation and update.

17. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES STRATEGY UPDATE

(During the course of discussion on this matter, Councillors English, Purchase and Warren declared a personal interest as members of their respective Parish Councils.)

The Greenspace & Cleansing Contract & Development Manager provided the Working Group with a verbal update on the meetings he had held with Parish and Town Councils with regard to the Public Conveniences Strategy so that their comments/views/suggestions could be fed into the decision making process.

Each Town and Parish had been provided with a response template and assisting information specific to the public conveniences within their respective Parish, as well as context in terms of the Council's 2020 Vision programme and level of savings required by 2020. The Councils were requested to assess the options available to them prior to sending an official response to Arun by the end of September 2016. They were also invited to gauge local public opinion and feed this back through the response process. Any ideas around any options and innovative approaches would be welcomed and, once official responses had been received, that information would be built into the future report on the matter.

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Members then participated in a full debate. Concern was expressed that the Parishes and Towns had still not been provided with more detailed financial information to assist them in coming to an informed decision. However, the Greenspace & Cleansing Contract & Development Manager was able to advise that he had presented the most up to date and accurate financial figures at the meetings - he had gone through costs and responded to questions and was of the view that they were satisfied with what had been provided. It was agreed that the costings would again be sent out to members of the Working Group with updated information and costings, as requested by the Chairman.

A question was asked with regard to a community facility option and a response given that that would not be investigated further until it was known which public conveniences might be closing following the consultation with the Towns and Parishes.

The Chairman stated that that no-one wanted to see any public conveniences closed and that the Towns and Parishes had to prioritise the needs of their residents and assess whether they could assist with funding to keep facilities open. Unfortunately, in the present economic climate and with the need for the District Council to find £4m savings, it was not going to be possible to fund everything and difficult decisions would need to be taken. All options would be explored to keep as many public conveniences open as possible.

It was anticipated that, subject to responses being received back from the Parishes, a report would be presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 14 November 2016, with the Working Group being able to make comment at its next meeting on 1 November 2016.

The Chairman thanked the Greenspace & Cleansing Contract & Development Manager for his update.

(The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm)