

'Subject to Approval at the Next Working Group Meeting'

## ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE WORKING GROUP

24 October 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: - Councillors Hitchins (Chairman), Warren (Vice-Chairman), Ambler, Mrs Bence, Bicknell, Brooks, Buckland, Cates, Dingemans, Oliver-Redgate and Dr Walsh.

Councillors Clayden (part), Bence (part) and Wotherspoon were present at the meeting.

### 14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Maconachie, Mrs Neno, Purchase and Reynolds.

### 15. 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.

Councillor Buckland declared a personal interest in any matters pertaining to Littlehampton Town Council and West Sussex County Council as he was a member of both bodies.

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Councillor Dr Walsh declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7, Events in Arun District, as Littlehampton Town Council arranged a host of events, of which he was a member.

Councillor Warren declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6, Arun’s Play Area Strategy and Item 7, Events in Arun District, as a member of Littlehampton Town Council.

Councillor Brooks declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7, Events in Arun District, as a member of Bognor Regis Town Council.

16. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 August 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

17. SAFER ARUN PARTNERSHIP (SAP) ANNUAL REVIEW 2016-17

*(Prior to consideration of this item, Councillor Buckland had declared a personal interest and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate.)*

The Community Safety Manager advised the meeting that, unfortunately, Chief Inspector Burtenshaw was not in attendance as he had given his apologies.

The Community Safety Manager informed the Working Group that the purpose of the report on the table was to provide an update of the work of the Safer Arun Partnership (SAP) and to give feedback of the work undertaken to date to tackle crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour in the District. She then went on to highlight particular aspects of the report she felt would be of particular interest to Members and concluded by stating that the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner was currently undertaking a review of the community safety grant, the results of which would be published in November 2017, so funding for SAP for 2018/19 was still unclear at the present time.

Members heard that SAP had a good reputation, was well regarded as being effective and disciplined and was working well with Chichester District Council.

In opening up the debate, the Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager for a comprehensive report and congratulated the team for the positive outcomes listed.

Members participated in a full discussion on the matter and a number of concerns were raised relating to:-

- The dramatic increase in violent crime – disappointment was expressed that Chief Inspector Burtenshaw was not present to answer questions on this matter. It was felt that, as the Police did not publish detailed figures across any part of Sussex, it was difficult to drill down

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to see just what and where it was happening. It was acknowledged that the number of police personnel to cover the Arun and Chichester area was inadequate but that the Police must attend these meetings to inform Members of what the position was in terms of response times and tackling violent crime. It was suggested that a report be brought to the Working Group in the future regarding violent crime, together with comparisons with neighbouring areas. The Community Safety Manager advised that, at the Partnership meeting in December, violent crime was due to be discussed and she would share the outcome of that with the Working Group following that meeting.

- ASB and Street Communities in Littlehampton – local concern was highlighted that the problem had not gone away and the perception was that the street drinking and inappropriate behaviour was not being adequately tackled - that was the biggest single concern of the traders. It was felt it was an ongoing and worsening situation that needed to be addressed. The Community Safety Manager was well aware of the concerns and stressed that complaints still needed to be made as it was important to capture that information to be able to use it to obtain the tools to tackle disruptive behaviour and use viable enforcement where appropriate. Two criminal behaviour orders had been successfully applied for to address concerns relating to two street community individuals in Littlehampton town centre. She stated that she would go back to the key partners to highlight the concerns being expressed.
- ASB and Street Communities in Bognor Regis – Comment was made that Bognor Regis was experiencing the same problems as Littlehampton. The traders were appalled with the lack of improvement and it was felt that the Business Wardens were never around when needed. Members were advised that a meeting had been set up for Friday 3 November between Chief Inspector Burtenshaw, the Town Centre Manager and the Business Wardens to share the concerns raised. The Community Safety Manager informed the Working Group that there were interventions in place to help the rough sleepers and street drinkers off the streets but the challenge was that some of those individuals were deeply entrenched and were not willing to engage and take up the support offered.
- Rough sleeping – Members were advised that in November all housing authorities were being required to undertake a rough sleeping count – the Community Safety Manager would then be able to advise them later in the month of an accurate figure for rough sleepers in the District.

More general discussion took place on serious and organised crime; cuckooing; child sexual exploitation; and modern slavery. With regard to street drinking, the question was asked as to whether anything could be done to stop retailers selling single cans of alcohol to the perpetrators of street drinking and its consequential anti-social behaviour. A response was given that the Licensing Team was aware of the problem but they needed hard evidence to take action.

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The Chairman drew an interesting debate to a close by thanking the Community Safety Manager for her detailed report. The Working Group then

RECOMMEND TO CABINET – That

(1) the work of the Safer Arun Partnership is endorsed and the importance of partnership working in contributing to 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 resource and close working with external partners and internal services be agreed;

(3) recognition be 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 SAP’s strategic priorities will be considered as part of the Council’s Vision and restructuring process.

18. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

At the request of the Chairman, the order of the agenda was changed to bring forward the item relating to Events in Arun District.

19. EVENTS IN ARUN DISTRICT

*(Prior to consideration of this item, Councillors Brooks, Buckland, Dr Walsh and Warren had declared a personal interest and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate).*

In introducing this report, the Marketing & Events Assistant informed the Working Group that there was a problem with the presentation she had prepared to show Members on screen and this was therefore circulated as a hard copy at the meeting.

The Working Group heard that the Council helped to facilitate events by supporting the organisers through the event application process; reviewing the events to ensure they were planned and managed safely on Council land; and offering guidance to events on private land through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG). The number of events held across the District had increased year upon year.

In opening up the debate, the Chairman stated that the number of events that were held across the District was phenomenal and he paid tribute to the army of volunteers that enabled them to take place.

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Concerns were raised as to the lack of funding that Arun was able to contribute to the events in the District and the Marketing & Events Assistant advised that the Council assisted as much as possible by having a dedicated resource offering advice and assistance to organisers and thereby facilitating these events so they could be planned, organised and run successfully and safely.

A query was raised as to the attendance at the various events listed and the Marketing & Events Assistant confirmed that the figures were taken from the application forms before any event had taken place so there would be a variation, particularly if it was more successful than anticipated.

General discussion took place around promotion of specific venues in the District, e.g. Stage by the Sea and the East Bank performance area; public liability insurance; use of web site to promote events; and free Wifi. The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services undertook to look into the matter of assisting organisers with public liability insurance.

The Chairman thanked the Marketing & Events Assistant for her informative report.

## 20. ARUN'S PLAY AREA STRATEGY 2018-2028

*(Prior to consideration of this item, Councillor Warren had declared a personal interest and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote.*

*During the course of consideration of this matter, Councillor Dr Walsh declared a personal interest as a Member of Littlehampton Town Council.)*

The Greenspace & Cleansing Contract & Development Manager presented this report which provided an update on the work that had been carried out in reviewing the Council's Play Strategy to align with its 2020 Vision; to provide a balanced budget; reduce costs; and improve the customer experience. A comprehensive consultation exercise had been undertaken and 357 responses had been received and that information, together with information relating to the recorded use of all of the Council's play areas over an 18 month period, had been collated to put together a strategy for the period 2018-2028. Members were advised that where play equipment was removed, that area would still remain as an open space to be utilised by the public.

Discussions would be undertaken with the Towns and Parishes and it was hoped that everyone would work together to fund the improvements required for priority areas.

The Greenspace & Cleansing Contract & Development Manager was congratulated for a comprehensive and well informed report which had responded to Members' concerns and brought together public consultation.

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A number of questions were asked and responded to at the meeting relating to skate parks; gym equipment in parks; external funding; and vandalism in parks. A query was raised about the play area at Guildford Road, which was very well used and an officer response given that the comments made would be looked at as, although not considered a priority from the Council’s perspective, it was clearly an area of interest and needed to be revisited.

Comment was also made that there must be more joined up thinking between developers and the Council to provide the right facilities for the new developments.

A query was raised as to whether any progress had been made with regard to sponsorship and it was agreed that the play area strategy action plan would be amended to include that sponsorship would be sought for key play areas to help support running costs.

The Chairman thanked the Greenspace & Cleansing Contract & Development Manager for his detailed report and the Working Group then

**RECOMMEND TO CABINET**

That Arun District Council adopts the 2018-2028 Play Area Strategy.

**21. UPDATE ON LITTLEHAMPTON LEISURE CENTRE**

The Working Group noted the update provided by the Principal Landscape Officer.

(The meeting concluded at 7.59 pm)