

‘Subject to Approval at the Next Working Group Meeting’

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE WORKING GROUP

20 February 2018 at 6.00 p.m.

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

Councillors Brooks and Dr Walsh were absent from the meeting during discussion of the matters referred to at Minute 34.

Councillors Charles (part) and Wotherspoon were also present at the meeting.

29. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Reynolds.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration of interest was made:-

- Councillor Buckland declared a personal interest in any item on the agenda that might arise in connection with his roles as a member of Littlehampton Town Council and West Sussex County Council.

31. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

In the course of consideration a concern was raised with regard to recommendation 20 under Minute 26 – Strategic Vision for the Future of Public Convenience Services in Arun – which had been forwarded to Cabinet for resolution at its meeting on 12 February 2018. Members were advised to raise these concerns at the meeting of Full Council on 7 March 2018 under the relevant Cabinet Minute.

32. UPDATE ON LITTLEHAMPTON LEISURE CENTRE

In considering the written report update, the Working Group received a further verbal update from the Principal Landscape Officer as follows:-

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- Work on the sewer pipe diversion had now been successfully completed by Southern Water – reinstatement was still to be completed as there had been a delay due to waiting for the land to dry out.
- Piling had been completed.
- A Non Material Planning Amendment was being submitted to the Local Planning Authority as the gas metre had to be relocated nearer to Sea Road.
- Stakeholder engagement continued to be extremely positive and two coffee mornings had been arranged for visits to the site.
- Dates were being arranged for Members to visit the site in the near future.

The Principal Landscape Officer then gave a slide presentation to illustrate the current status of the development and Members were pleased to note the progress.

With regard to paragraph 2.3 of the report and the options being explored to reduce the glare in the pool hall, comment was made that it was hoped that the natural light would not be so diminished as to replicate what had happened in the existing pool hall. The Group Head of Community Wellbeing advised that they were having to work within the guidelines of the Health & Safety Executive and Sport England to reduce the glare but were well aware of the concerns around this and were liaising with the architects and Freedom Leisure to resolve the matter satisfactorily for all parties.

The Working Group noted the updates and the Chairman thanked the Principal Landscape Officer for her presentation.

33. MOVING THE VISITOR INFORMATION POINT IN BOGNOR REGIS

(In the course of consideration of this item, Councillor Brooks declared a personal interest as a voting member of Arun Arts and a member of Bognor Regis Town Council.)

The Group Head of Economy presented this information report which advised on the relocation of the Visitor Information Point (VIP) from the Bognor Regis Observer offices at 1-2 Place St Maur to the foyer of the Regis Centre, for the reasons outlined in the report. Tribute was paid to the Tourism Business Development Officer, Margaret Murphy, for the huge amount of work and effort she had put into relocating the VIP into a venue that enabled much better access for visitors and residents alike. The self-service provision would be further improved in the future.

The Working Group welcomed the move and, whilst acknowledging and thanking the staff at Sussex Newspapers for their co-operation and support of the facility, felt that the move would be of great benefit due to its greater accessibility.

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In the course of a brief discussion, a request was made for improvements to be made to the Sussex By the Sea website as that was a major medium for attracting visitors to the District.

The Working Group noted the report.

34. VARIATION TO PARKING CHARGES

(During the course of discussion on this item, Councillor English declared a personal interest as he was a user of the Culver Road car park, Felpham.)

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services presented this report which sought authority for the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services to put forward for consultation a proposed increase in seasonal car parking charges, to be introduced after 1 April 2018 and as outlined at Appendix A to the report. Members were advised that the proposed increase was in line with the rate of inflation.

In the course of consideration of this item, views were expressed that car parking charges should not be increased and it was confirmed by the Outdoor Services Manager that the town centre car parks remained unaffected whilst the seasonal car parks would be subject to increased charges.

There was a general consensus of opinion that the 1 hour parking charges should remain unchanged as local residents were the main users of that tariff. It was felt that short term charges did affect local residents in the main and that was a way of providing some benefit to them. This was formally proposed and seconded and, on being put to the vote, was agreed.

Further general discussion took place around other aspects of car parking relating to the Retail Price Index; Council's budget; car park improvements; and ring fencing of car park income.

A request was made and agreed that the Working Group would be circulated with the results of the public consultation to be undertaken.

The Working Group then

**RECOMMEND TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

That the proposed parking charges, as set out at Appendix A to the report, are put out for consultation with a view to introducing these charges after 1 April 2018 and that there be no increase to the first hour charge.

35. ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL TREE POLICY

Prior to consideration of the matter, it was confirmed that the Tree Policy referred to those trees on Arun District Council land which were the responsibility of the Council.

The Tree and Landscape Manager presented the report which provided the detail of a comprehensive Tree Policy for a 10 year period from 2018 to 2028 in order to provide a transparent and consistent framework, formulated on a risk based approach, for all decision making in relation to Council owned trees.

In discussing the draft policy, the following suggestions were made by Members:-

- More detail should be provided in the policy with regard to the positive aspects of looking after and maintaining trees in the District. The Tree Policy for Petersfield was cited as a good example.
- Training standards should be listed under paragraph 2.3.5 of the policy.
- Under Section 3 – Environmental Policy – it was agreed to include “Soaking up Water”.

Comment was also made with regard to when a tree was on Council owned land but was owned by, for example, a tenant and where responsibility lay with ensuring that the tree presented no hazard to the public. The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services advised that the tenant was bound by the Tenancy Agreement but, in exceptional circumstances, the Council could undertake remedial work.

Following further general comment, the Working Group

RECOMMEND TO CABINET

That the Council’s Tree Policy 2018-2028 be adopted, subject to the amendments made.

(The meeting concluded at 7.35 pm)