

Subject to approval at the next meeting

LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

21 July 2015 at 6.00 pm

Present: - Councillors Bicknell (Chairman), Dingemans (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Ayres, Blampied, Cates, Dendle, Gammon, Mrs Porter and Dr Walsh.

Councillor Dr Walsh was absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters raised in Minutes 1 to 4.

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillors Mrs Ayres, Blampied, Cates, Dingemans and Mrs Porter as new members of the Subcommittee and looked forward to their input in forthcoming discussions.

2. 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 Blampied declared a personal interest as a member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board.

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3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2015 were approved as a correct record by the Subcommittee and signed by the Chairman.

4. START TIMES

The Subcommittee

RESOLVED

That start times of meetings for the remainder of 2015/16 be 6.00 p.m.

5. 9 BIG IDEAS FOR LITTLEHAMPTON

(During the course of discussion on this item, Councillor Bicknell declared a personal interest as he was an employee of Southern Water.)

The Chairman was pleased to welcome Mr Phil Graham to the meeting in his new role as Economic Regeneration Officer.

Prior to providing a verbal update on the 9 Big Ideas for Littlehampton, the Economic Regeneration Officer gave a brief resume of his career at the Council, which spanned 19 years to date. He stated that he had been brought up in Littlehampton and had a strong understanding and desire to help develop the town as he felt it had so much more potential with the harbour and seafront, above and beyond the current offer.

The Economic Regeneration Officer advised that his new role would predominantly assist in the development of economic regeneration for Littlehampton and the 9 Big Ideas (which had first been aired in 2014 and had been drawn up by Consultants, Placemarque). He would be working with the Subcommittee, stakeholders, Town Centre Regeneration Officer and the general public to deliver these concepts.

The Subcommittee was reminded that at the meeting on 17 March 2015, 3 of the 9 Big Ideas had been put forward to progress to feasibility stage, as resources became available, and these had been ratified by Full Council on 15 July 2015 as:-

- Improve the Promenade
- Pier Lookout
- New Green and Beach Link

Members were advised that it would be important whilst developing these initial 3 projects, to be mindful of feeding into the overall strategic context of the pedestrian link, as outlined in the Concept Investment Plan. In addition, careful consideration of the processes that were required in the short and long term would be needed. These would be phased projects with

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different options presenting themselves as the plans evolved and progressed to the next key milestones. Site specific analysis would be essential to establish and ensure there was a clear understanding of the main factors associated with these areas, such as land ownership/covenanted land and restrictions such as Southern Water underground services.

The Economic Regeneration Officer stated that his intention would be to scope the essential ingredients required to produce a detailed action plan and to present a report to a future meeting of the Subcommittee. His initial approach would be to:-

- Create a town/beach team to scope the project requirements
- Produce a Consultation and Communications Strategy
- Undertake initial consultation and engagement (through site visits and a survey) with key stakeholders and external partners
- Design plans from this initial consultation would be created, which would require funding. Concepts would be presented to the Subcommittee to demonstrate what would be feasible and to agree these initial outline plans with the Subcommittee before consulting with the general public
- Following creation of the indicative plan, undertake consultation with the general public through social media to gauge opinions and to start public debate.

The Subcommittee also heard that the Council had just been made aware of an opportunity to apply for Coastal Revival funding, with a maximum of £50,000 funding being available per project. The deadline for submitting bids was Monday 14 September 2015 and every effort would be made to formulate bids to assist with preparing detailed plans for at least one of the projects, if not all three. The fund was available for both revenue and capital expenditure and must be spent by 31 March 2016.

Members then participated in a lengthy debate on varying aspects of developing the 9 Big Ideas for Littlehampton, covering the introduction of a social media page; financial constraints; prioritisation; and “quick fixes” to improve the visual amenity of the town.

The Director of Planning & Economic Regeneration encouraged Members to welcome the work on developing a bid to the Coastal Revival Fund because, even though the deadline was tight and the Council had only just been notified of the opportunity, there could then be further opportunity to access funding from the Government’s recently reinstated Coastal Communities Fund. It would appear that the three chosen projects complied with the criteria for the Coastal Revival Fund and every effort would be made to work up comprehensive bids. Members urged officers to find the resources to enable the bids to go ahead.

The Chairman thanked the Economic Regeneration Officer for his update.

6. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PUBLIC REALM IN LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN CENTRE

The Town Centre Regeneration Officer presented this report which outlined proposals to improve the public realm elements in the town centre and environs to encourage investment and, possibly, more markets and events to increase footfall to the town.

During the course of discussion, the Subcommittee felt that there was potential to make small scale improvements quickly, with other suggestions having to wait to be included in the full design brief. Members also touched on:-

- Street level power supply
- Replacement of planters
- Trees in Beach Road
- Cleaning and enhancement of the Arcade
- Street drinkers

Following consideration, the Subcommittee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL – That

(1) officers, in consultation with key stakeholders, develop a design improvement brief for Littlehampton town centre;

(2) design experts be commissioned to produce the design template for Littlehampton town centre public realm; and

(3) officers develop a costed proposal for improvements to the public realm area in the High Street outside Casino (the bench area).

7. LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION POSITION STATEMENT

The Subcommittee considered the Position Statement and participated in general discussion on a number of items. Particular comment centred around the following:-

- **St Martin's Car Park:** Comment was made that this was the biggest unsolved problem in Littlehampton, particularly as Waitrose had now relocated to Rustington. A request was made that a new report needed to be prepared on a way forward. The Director of Planning & Economic Regeneration advised that attempts were being made to contact the freehold owner to gauge their long term plans for the site.
- **Littlehampton Markets:** Concern was expressed relating to the proposal for an occasional Sunday car boot sale in St Martins Car Park as it was felt it would engender the wrong image for

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the town. The Subcommittee was advised that the traders were supportive as they felt it would increase footfall as Sunday could be a poor trading day, However, the Subcommittee indicated that it did not support the idea of a car boot sale on the St Martins Car Park site.

- **West Bank:** The Director of Planning & Economic Regeneration advised that the Council was expecting to receive the views of the Inspector on the Local Plan by 30 July 2015 and Members would receive a report back at the next meeting with specific reference to the West Bank.
- **East Bank:** Members welcomed the completed enhancement and tidal work and viewed it as a fantastic success. A note of caution was raised with regard to safety issues as ROSPA had been requested to prepare a report following an incident. A letter was to be sent to West Sussex County Council regarding the double yellow lines and signage. Signs regarding cycling were required as it was important that cyclists realised that pedestrians had right of way on the Promenade.
- **Enterprise Hub – Wick:** The Director of Planning & Economic Regeneration advised that the process had commenced with regard to serving an Enforcement Notice on Morrisons for breaching the planning condition to bring forward an enterprise hub and that the issue of the Health Centre was ongoing. Cllr Dr Walsh also advised that the West Sussex County Council Health Scrutiny Committee was extremely concerned about the lack of progress and pressure was being applied.

In noting the remainder of the Position Statement, a request was made that the “*Civic Block*” should be added for consideration at future meetings.

(The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm)