



Public Document Pack

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3 December 2020

CABINET

A virtual meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Monday 14 December 2020 at 5.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Dr Walsh (Chairman), Oppler (Vice-Chairman), Coster, Mrs Gregory, Lury, Stanley, Mrs Staniforth and Mrs Yeates

PLEASE NOTE: *This meeting will be a 'virtual meeting' and any member of the press and public may listen-in and view the proceedings via a weblink which will be publicised on the Council website at least 24 hours before the meeting.*

Different meeting arrangements are in place for the period running from 4 April 2020 to 7 May 2021 from the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and the meeting regulations 2020, to allow formal 'virtual meetings'.

This Council's revised Rules of Procedures for 'virtual meetings' can be found by clicking on this link: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/constitution>

Any members of the public wishing to address the Cabinet meeting during Public Question Time, will need to email Committees@arun.gov.uk by 5.15 pm on Friday, 4 December 2020 in line with current Procedure Rules. It will be at the Chief Executive's/Chairman's discretion if any questions received after this deadline are considered.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact: committees@arun.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers are invited to make any declarations of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda, and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the item or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Members and officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interest
- c) the nature of the interest
- d) if it is a pecuniary or prejudicial interest, whether they will be exercising their right to speak under Question Time

3. QUESTION TIME

- a) Questions from the public (for a period of up to 15 minutes).
- b) Questions from Members with prejudicial interests (for a period up to 15 minutes).

4. URGENT BUSINESS

The Cabinet may consider items of an urgent nature on functions falling within their responsibilities where special circumstances apply. Where the item relates to a key decision, the agreement of the Chairman of the Overview Select Committee must have been sought on both the subject of the decision and the reasons for the urgency. Such decisions shall not be subject to the call-in procedure as set out in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules at Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

5. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 18)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 16 November 2020 (as attached).

6. BUDGET VARIATION REPORTS

To consider any reports from the Head of Corporate Support.

7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO LEISURE OPERATING CONTRACT (Pages 19 - 24)

Freedom Leisure is in receipt of a support package to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's leisure operating contract. This report sets out the current situation with recommendations for the period January 2020 to March 2021.

8. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SITUATION (Pages 25 - 30)

This report updates Cabinet on the Council's response to the pandemic situation and possible proposals for economic recovery.

9. THE GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD - DRAFT COVID-19 SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY PLAN (Pages 31 - 52)

This report updates Cabinet on the Greater Brighton Economic Board draft Covid-19 Sustainable Recovery Plan and the Council's support for the 10 Pledges to the Environment.

10. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 3 DECEMBER 2020

Cabinet is asked to consider recommendations from the meeting of the Standards Committee relating to the adoption of a new Social Media Guidance document for Councillors. The minutes will be circulated separately to this agenda. To view the report that was submitted to the Standards Committee, please click on these links - [Report](#) and [Appendix – The Policy](#)

11. PLANNING REVIEW WORKING PARTY

The minutes from the first meeting of the Planning Review Working Party are to be considered by Cabinet. These will be circulated separately to this agenda.

ITEMS PUT FORWARD BY THE OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS

12. HOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP - 5 NOVEMBER 2020 (Pages 53 - 58)

The Minutes from the meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group held on 5 November 2020 are attached and contain recommendations for Cabinet to consider at:

- Minute 12 [Additional and Selective Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation] – to view the Officer's report – please click on this link – [Report](#) and [Appendix](#)
- Minute 13 [Water Safety Policy] – to view the Officer's report - please click on this link – [Report](#) and [Appendix](#)
- Minute 14 [Gas Safety Policy – to view the Officer's report – please click on this link - [Report](#) and [Appendix](#)

13. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE - 1 DECEMBER 2020

To consider a recommendation from the Overview Select Committee from the meeting held on 1 December 2020, in relation to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22. An extract from the minutes of the Overview Select Committee will need to be circulated separately to this agenda. To view the minutes from the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Working Party – please click on this link [Council Tax Support Task and Finish Working Party Minutes](#)

Note : Members are reminded that if they have any detailed questions would they please inform the Chairman and/or relevant Director in advance of the meeting.

Note : Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings - The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link – Filming Policy - [The Policy](#)

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 5

Subject to approval at the next Cabinet meeting

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CABINET

16 November 2020 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors Dr Walsh (Chairman), Oppler (Vice-Chairman), Coster, Mrs Gregory, Lury, Stanley and Mrs Yeates

Councillors Bennett, Bicknell, Bower, Brooks, Charles, Clayden, Mrs Cooper, Cooper, Dendle, Dixon, Edwards, English, Gunner, Kelly, Mrs Pendleton, Roberts, Ms Thurston, Tilbrook and Mrs Worne were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

273. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members, members of the public and Officers to what was the seventh virtual meeting of Cabinet. He provided a brief summary of how the meeting would be conducted and the protocol that would be followed and how any break in the proceedings due to technical difficulties would be managed.

274. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An Apology for Absence had been received from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Mrs Staniforth.

275. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Coster declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Items 12 [Place St Maur, Bognor Regis] and 13 [Sunken Gardens, Bognor Regis] and confirmed that he wished to make this meeting aware that prior to his role as a District Councillor he had been involved and engaged with the community in his area with regard to regeneration through the Bognor Regis Civic Society and that the understanding he gained from his experiences with the Civic Society had caused him to make comments in connection with or in accordance with these subject matters. These were Councillor Coster's views that he held at the time and so he wished to make it clear that he had an open mind regarding these items and that he would listen and consider all the relevant issues and interests presented and would then reach his decision on merit. Councillor Coster asked that this Personal Interest and Declaration be recorded in the minutes of this meeting.

276. QUESTION TIME

The Chairman confirmed that three questions had been submitted for this meeting in line with the Council's Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules amended by Full Council on 15 July 2020

Two questions related to the A27 Arundel By-Pass and all were for the Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh to respond to.

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The first question related to the recent Highways England public consultation of local affected citizens around Arundel regarding a proposed bypass, where an overwhelming 64% of respondents had been against any change or were for the "Arundel Alternative." A tiny amount supported the grey route - 7%. The remaining 29% supported other offline routes. Arun District Council had not supported the Grey route.

The questioner asked why the Council supported it now and in light of the Council's very own emergency declaration on climate change. He also asked if the Council thought that this consultation had been worthwhile in any shape or form?

Councillor Dr Walsh responded stating that he had been an advocate of an offline solution for an Arundel Bypass for many years. With all the routes considered there were clearly positives and negatives for each option, and he would have preferred that Highways England had chosen the Magenta route option. They had not and had opted instead for the Grey route. There were clearly issues with this route that Highways England need to address but now the route had been identified as the preferred route it had his support in principle.

Regarding the broader questions, this country was not yet able to abandon the need to improve its road network. That required the Government to make far reaching decisions about how it moved people, goods and services around. In terms of the consultation, he believed it was important that there had been an opportunity for everyone to express an opinion.

The questioner then asked a supplementary question which was responded to at the meeting.

The second questioner explained the situation that he now found himself in as he had exchanged contracts on a house at Avisford Grange in February 2020 and so the new announcement from HE had been devastating for him and others in a similar situation. The questioner asked how the Council would make sure residents and homeowners were going to be protected from this plan and whether the Council would stand behind residents and help them to oppose this route?

Councillor Dr Walsh responded outlining that the Council had granted outline permission for the Avisford Grange development in February 2018, before the Grey route had emerged as an option. Councillor Dr Walsh stated that he was disappointed that Highways England, in making its statement on the preferred route, had not provided greater clarity to the residents affected in terms of how they intended to mitigate the impact of the proposed road. Councillor Dr Walsh confirmed that he intended to write to the Chief Executive of Highways England to ask that they provide the questioner and other similarly affected residents on this development with clarity on what they proposed to mitigate the impact of the scheme at the earliest opportunity. A copy of the response received would be provided.

The questioner then asked a supplementary question which was responded to at the meeting.

The third and final question related to the 3D art installations in Littlehampton Town Centre approved by Littlehampton Town Council (LTC) and the Council (ADC), and the Cabinet. The questioner confirmed that she could not find reference to this in agendas or minutes and could the payment be recouped by insurance for unacceptable outcome from Artist and installer?

Councillor Dr Walsh responded outlining that this initiative was being progressed by Littlehampton Town Council and he declared his own personal interest as a Member of the Littlehampton Town Council. The Town Council was involving and consulting with Arun District Council as the scheme progressed. ADC had passed the scheme to LTC and its Policy and Finance Committee agreed on 15 June 2019 to delegate authority to its Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman to authorise to progress phases 1 and 2 of this scheme – in view of the fact that the Chairman was also a District Council Member, that authority was also delegated to also include the Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee in all discussions and decisions. This work resulted in a contractor being selected from three quotations and confirmation of this could be found from the September and October meetings of the Policy and Finance Committee by looking on the Town Council's web site. This was approved with no discussion and it had been noted at the October meeting with no concerns raised. The artwork had been installed and since repaired so there was no need to consider an insurance claim as the product was in place.

(A schedule of the full questions asked and the responses provided can be found on the Pubic Question Web page at: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/public-question-time>)

The Chairman then drew Public Question Time to a close.

277. URGENT BUSINESS - RECRUITMENT OF THE ROLE OF GROUP HEAD OF COUNCIL ADVICE AND MONITORING OFFICER (EXEMPT - PARAGRAPH 1 - INFORMATION RELATING TO INDIVIDUALS)

The Chairman confirmed that there was one urgent item for this meeting to consider which related to the recruitment of the role of Group Head of Council Advice and Monitoring Officer. This was being considered as urgent as Cabinet needed to be updated on the recruitment of this key post. As this was an Exempt report, this would be considered at the end of the meeting.

278. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 19 October 2020 were approved as a correct by Cabinet. The Chairman confirmed that these would be signed at the earliest opportunity to him.

279. BUDGET VARIATION REPORTS

There were no matters discussed.

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280. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SITUATION

The Chairman introduced this report confirming that it provided a formal update on progress on Covid-19 related issues since the last meeting of Cabinet held on 19 October 2020. He outlined that just when some may have thought that the virus was easing, on 5 November everything changed with another National Restriction.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (previously known as Shielded) response, was again being led by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) with this Council supporting in any way necessary. Furthermore, East and West Sussex, with Kent and Brighton & Hove Councils had requested a local response to the contact part of the test and trace approach (only) by the Government which may involve the Council being involved in some way in the future.

Questions asked covered the administration of the Covid enforcement grant of £75k and the local restrictions support grant to assist those not being able to work due to having to self-isolate, an update was requested in terms of how the Council was managing this. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council was processing grants for those that were self-isolating and that the Council had received a grant of £75k to cover enforcement or guidance for the public.

Congratulations were extended to the Council's Officers who continued to work long hours in processing the various grants for the benefit of residents and businesses as well as dealing with all aspects of the Council. It was reported that the Council's Revenues and Benefits section had to date dealt with claims totalling more than £30m in addition to the normal day job.

Other questions raised by non-Cabinet Councillors related to the work of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB) in terms of the Arundel Chord and its importance in allowing economic vitality and resilience for the Brighton mainline routes between London and Brighton as such a route would allow trains from Brighton to get to London via the south coast. They have confirmed lobbying for the Brighton man line but not for the Arundel Chord. As the Council paid to be a member of the Greater Brighton Economic Board assurance was sought that the Council continued to lobby for this vital piece of infrastructure. Reassurance was given that the Arundel Chord had been raised at virtually every meeting.

Further questions raised related to the Covid-19 current grant applications. Although the work completed to date was acknowledged it was fact that small businesses faced hard challenges and many representations were being forwarded to Ward Councillors on this issue. Was the portal now open for businesses to be able to claim small business grants and when would businesses be able to apply? Also, what were the timescales for getting applications out, it was felt that this process needed to be speeded up. It was explained that following the Government's announcement local Councils were putting together the criteria across West Sussex and that the two parts to this process would hopefully go live this week.

There was concern that some businesses were flouting lockdown rules by continuing to trade. It was confirmed that Trading Standards and Licensing Officers were continuing to look into these issues but that their work did rely upon solid information and evidence being provided.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

That the actions taken to date be noted.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/027/16112020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

281. COVID-19 RECOVERY WORKING PARTY - KEY OUTCOMES FROM CABINET

The Chairman introduced this item outlining that the Covid-19 Recovery Working Party had met on three occasions. This report provided the Officer response to some of the ideas that emerged. Councillor Dr Walsh stated that it should be noted that in the Implications section of the report, the Chief Executive had highlighted the workload for Officers as the pandemic continued, and capacity clearly remained an issue.

The Chief Executive then worked through the Appendix to the report which set out the Officer response to some of the ideas that had emerged. It had to be accepted that the high workload for Officers as the pandemic continued could not be ignored nor could the spare capacity of Officers to undertake new projects.

A specific point raised related to Theme 2 [Labour Markets, Unemployment and Skills]. The Council had supported the emergency provision of IT equipment to disadvantaged pupils and students and in recognition of this, the Cabinet had supported seeking clarification from West Sussex County Council about any plans it had to continue the supply of IT equipment to disadvantaged pupils. It was confirmed that WSCC no longer supplied old IT equipment to students and so the Council was now looking at a more local approach. An update was also provided on the recruitment of the post of Climate Change and Sustainability Manager.

A debate took place on the provision of IT equipment to disadvantaged young people where it was hoped that some sort of local scheme could be progressed. Statements were also made with regard to the agreement to seek the approval of the Council to seek a commercial buyer of the Sussex by the Sea brand where it was confirmed that the results of the debates on this subject following meetings of the two Regeneration Sub-Committees would be fed into a future meeting of Cabinet.

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Further debate focused on the Council's green agenda [Theme 5] which had been confirmed as a strategic aim of the Council and concern was expressed in terms of the remit of the new Climate Change and Sustainability Manager post in terms of the target set on green insulation and heating for homes as it had been highlighted that the theme 5(ii) was a medium priority and was not within the current remit of this new post. It was explained that the new post's ultimate task would be to form a carbon reduction plan for all of the Council's operations. It was highlighted by one Councillor that anything to with the climate emergency should not be a medium or low priority.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

That the report be noted, and Officers instructed to proceed with each of the proposals listed in Appendix A to the report.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/028/16112020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

282. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support, Councillor Oppler, introduced this report confirming that it set out the Capital, Housing Revenue and General Fund Revenue budget performance to the end of September 2020. He confirmed that the report presented some slightly better news than originally expected as the Council had now received £480k from income compensation scheme and £499k from the fourth tranche of Covid-19 grant funding. The Council had also made internal budget savings which would be made available to resource re-allocation. However, it was important to note that the Council still needed to remain cautious as it moved forward with the Pandemic as loss of income remained its greatest risk, with car parking being the most significant issue as well as the financial support to the Leisure Contractor as a result of lockdown restrictions.

The Financial Services Manager confirmed that the audit of the Council's financial statements had been completed and was ready to report into the next meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee taking place on 19 November 2020. It was positive that no changes to the outturn report considered by that Committee had been required and so this put the Council's budget for next year on a sound footing.

Following some discussion,

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The report at Appendix 1 be noted; and
- (2) The actions taken to mitigate the Council's net expenditure due to the Covid-19 pandemic be noted.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/029/16112020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

283. FOOD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE TRIAL

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, the Chairman introduced this item stating that this Council had made a firm commitment to tackling climate change and therefore it was wholly appropriate for Cabinet to consider a report proposing a trial food waste and absorbent hygiene products collection service. Councillor Dr Walsh stated that everyone had a role to play in reducing their waste as far as possible by recycling as much as possible of what was left. It was fact that significant volumes of food were currently wasted in Arun and so this trial had been designed to test assumptions; to gauge the views of a sample of residents; and to provide valuable data which the Council could consider and use to inform future decision making.

Councillor Dr Walsh confirmed that he firmly believed that many residents would fully support the proposal for a trial as there was a growing number of environmentally conscientious residents who wanted to have the opportunity to do the right thing when it came to waste reduction and recycling. If ultimately, we can reduce the amount of food wasted and recycle as much of what is left as possible, then this would be a positive development for all concerned. This trial was a positive first step in exploring this possibility.

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Environment Services and Strategy Manager then provided further details on all aspects of the proposed trial. The key points have been summarised below:

- The Government was expected to mandate the separate collection of food waste as early as 2023
- The trial would address the fact that Arun's food waste equated to 46% of the content of total waste.
- From a 2018 modelling exercise, this collection system was the optimal collection model in terms of maximising recycling rates.
- If approved, all residents would be provided with a 240-litre residual bin as well as internal and external food waste caddies

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- Looking at operational delivery, the report set out how the trial would look and work on the ground. Collections would be made by the Council's existing cleansing contractor, Biffa.
- AHP collections would be undertaken by Medisort, the Council's existing clinical waste collection contractor.
- Throughout the trial Ward Members and the Cabinet Member including the Environment & Leisure Working Group and the appropriate new Committee will be kept fully apprised of the trial including details such as resident satisfaction and other data.
- The project timetable identified a proposed start date of March 2021
- Looking at outcomes and targets, customer satisfaction would be evaluated
- The trial would be funded by WSCC as the disposal authority who would set aside a performance improvement fund for Districts and Boroughs within the West Sussex Waste Partnership to bid for in respect of projects that would deliver improvements in recycling performance.
- The importance of compiling a well-considered communications plan was key to ensure resident engagement and understanding.

In discussing the proposed trial, Cabinet fully supported this scheme and as this was fully funded by WSCC and as the Government had an expectation for all Local authorities to meet a 50% recycling rate. It was also recognised that the collection of Food Waste could also likely become a mandatory requirement, although it was more likely that the Government would provide additional resources through "New Burdens Funding". Questions were asked about where in the District this trial would take place and as some Councillors had received representation from some of the conservation areas that might not be appropriate for such a trial. The process that would be followed once the trial area had been confirmed was explained in that there would be a period of engagement and communication with residents in the trial area. It was felt that this was an initiative that many people had been waiting for and it provided the Council with the opportunity to fully test a trial before such a scheme was enforced. This trial would be fully funded by WSCC and would address the 42% of food waste that was currently in the Council's residual waste.

A variety of questions were asked by non-Cabinet Councillors. These related to the location of the food trial and what areas should be targeted or avoided. It was outlined that it was important for the trial area chosen to have a mix of tenures to thoroughly test the scheme. Questions were asked over the cost of vehicles and whether these could be electric, or hydrogen fuelled and whether the Council had any control over the cost of bins, caddies and liners.

In response, although no assurance could be provided on the type of vehicle to be used, reassurance could be provided that the Council was actively exploring these types of options with Biffa, its current Contractor, and would seek to keep all costs for the project down to a minimum through procurement and negotiation.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) Approval be given to proceed with a Food Waste and Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) collections trial using a '123' service at outlined in the report for a period of twelve months, commencing in March 2021;
- (2) It be noted and support given to the governance arrangements which are designed to allow the respective project teams to take all necessary decisions to successfully deliver the trial within the framework outlined in the report; and
- (3) The necessary drawing down of funding from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and expenditure associated with Arun's delivery of the trial as outlined in the report, be approved.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/030/16112020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

284. BEACH ACCESS, BOGNOR REGIS

The Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley, introduced this item confirming that this administration had, for a long time, held ambition to improve access to the beach in Bognor Regis for people with mobility issues. It was explained that such a scheme could have significant benefits for the experience of disabled residents and visitors to the area and so Councillor Stanley was pleased that the Council was now able to report on the first phase of investigatory work into the options available to take this ambition forward.

The Group Head of Technical Services followed by the Engineering Services Manager provided further information. It was explained that the report identified a range of options to fulfil this aim and these were briefly outlined in terms of the different approaches considered and what the Council could and could not pursue.

Prior to inviting debate, the Chairman confirmed that he had been provided with a statement from Councillor Brooks, who had had to leave the meeting and so this was read out. This outlined that Option 7 [the Timber Piled Ramp] would be very expensive and only addressed part of the problem. The beach west of the pier in front of the old Esplanade site and Rock Gardens flats was where the shingle was regularly washed away due to the shape of the shoreline. This area already had half-buried under the shingle a lower promenade, steps and a ramp suitable for pushchairs and pneumatic tyred wheelchairs. Pneumatic wheelchairs could be provided to gauge response, this could be part of a café concession. Further consideration on using tested techniques, the area might be developed to form a protected sandy bay, permitting access for all disabilities using a lift direct to the sand. As the Council owned the adjacent land and

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car park, there was also the opportunity to add disabled toilets, cafe, and family entertainment with concessions to help with costs. The addition of showers and changing rooms alone would also attract wind surfers, scuba divers and other water sports enthusiasts. Support was therefore given to Recommendation 3) but with the addition of Option 1.

In debating the report, many comments, ideas and concerns were expressed which have been summarised below:

- There was a lot to consider and many risks, but the Council was duty bound to consider these
- Getting down to the beach was more straight forward than getting back up
- Support was given to exploring further Options 4, 5 and 7
- It would be vital to ensure that appropriate consultation would be undertaken but with the right groups of people, those that would need to use it
- There was concern over the cost and size of the ramp proposal
- What groups had been identified for the consultation
- There was concern that the Council might also have to provide a service in operating any scheme, not just the means of accessing the beach
- How would the size of the proposed ramp fit in with the local area?
- Some of the suggestion put forward were outside of the remit set for this exercise and were a matter for the wider Seafront Strategy for Bognor Regis.
- Beach friendly wheelchairs would be required
- It was essential to get people involved who experienced access difficulties so that they could contribute first hand
- Should other areas in the District be considered, why Bognor Regis?
- There were concerns expressed over the logistics and functionality, this was a difficult matter to resolve unless the Council could pursue some sort of sea water Lido.
- Should a cross-party Working Party be established to take this forward and to undertake the required consultation
- How many other locations had been considered and rejected? Other locations could be easier and more cost effective.
- The risks associated with this project were of concern – it was agreed that all options would have to be fully assessed
- Could the Council look at other areas and look at partnership opportunities?

In responding to the debate and matters raised, the Chairman reminded Councillors that at this early stage, Cabinet was being requested to endorse further investigation and the potential viability of Options 4, 5 and 7 as a means of improving access to the lower beach at Bognor Regis, the findings of which would be brought back to Cabinet or the relevant Committee to consider further with the final solution being informed by those that would use such a facility.

Following further discussion and responses from Officers,

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The report be noted;
- (2) It be agreed not pursue Options 1, 2, 3, 6 or 8; and
- (3) Endorsement be given for further investigation and potential viability of Options 4, 5 and 7 as a means of improving access to the lower beach at Bognor Regis, with findings and further recommendations to be reported back to the relevant Committee.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/031/16112020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

285. PLACE ST MAUR - BOGNOR REGIS

(Prior to the commencement of this item, Councillor Coster redeclared his Personal Interest made at the start of the meeting).

The Chairman confirmed that he wished to announce that the Council had been successful with its bid for £1.2m of Coast to Capital funding with the caveat that the funding is provisional subject to final checks and due diligence. This was an exciting good news item to share.

The Cabinet Member for Technical Services then introduced this report confirming that it provided an update on the Place St Maur project in Bognor Regis which aimed to deliver much needed improvements to the public realm. This was an important seafront site which had a very run-down appearance but once the enhancements would be delivered, the site would provide much wider benefits for Bognor Regis. The report also sought to make recommendations to Full Council regarding funding for the project.

Points of Order were raised in terms of whether this item contradicted a Motion approved by Full Council and whether this item should be considered by the Bognor Regis Sub-Committee rather than at Cabinet. The Chief Executive confirmed that it was necessary for the Council to continue to push the next stages of the project and in light of the successful bid received from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, there was a tight timescale in place to spend the funding awarded.

The Principal Landscape and Project Officer then presented the report reminding Councillors that back in March 2020, Cabinet had recommended to Full Council the approval of the draft design brief for public realm improvements at the Place St Maur; the procurement of consultants to enable the delivery of the project and the

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virement of up to £235k for this purpose and other associated project costs. It had also recommended that the enhancement proposals be prepared for public consultation. These recommendations were approved by Full Council on 22 July 2020. The funding application in the sum of £1.2 m had then been prepared with £370k of Council partnership funding and had included the delivery of public realm works at the Place St Maur as well as design concepts for a section of the Esplanade. The procurement of consultants to produce proposals had commenced via a tender on the Council's portal. The consultant would prepare concept designs for both sites and then develop final designs before preparing technical information for the construction tender process. Now that confirmation had been received that the Coast to Capital bid had been successful, it would be necessary to comply with a range of terms and conditions and enter into a funding agreement with Coast to Capital. It was proposed that approval be given for this, subject to scrutiny of the terms and conditions by Legal Services in consultation with the Monitoring Officer. It was also proposed that authority be given to draw down the external funding. The project proposal had been set out in Appendix 1 to the report defining the scope of the project; setting out objectives and deliverables. It also defined the current risks and outlined the Service Delivery Programme with key milestones, which would be used to monitor progress. It was proposed that the Project Proposal be approved to provide clear direction to the project team.

Before inviting debate, the Chairman confirmed that the confirmation received on the successful funding was very positive news. The Place St Maur site had, for a long time, looked dishevelled and unkept. This project would provide enhanced public realm to bring the enhancement of this important site forward.

The remainder of Cabinet agreed that this was stunningly good news for Bognor Regis and the wider Arun District, this was because the current state of the Place St Maur had looked appalling for many years, whilst the Council had been discussing regeneration issues. This project was greatly supported by Butlins and would ensure that what was a vital link between the seafront and the Town Centre would be enhanced. The Bognor Regis Business Improvement District (BID) had confirmed its support and it was acknowledged that the residents of Bognor Regis would be delighted to now see action being taken to refurbish this wonderful seafront location.

In considering the report, questions were asked about what plans the Council had in place to achieve good engagement with the public and in terms of the final designs. The engagement proposals planned with local stakeholders and groups were explained and in terms of how these would be taken forward considering the current Covid-19 restrictions.

Having formally thanked the Principal Landscape and Project Officer and her team for their sterling work to get this project through the investment board of Coast to Capital, the Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The project proposal as set out at Appendix 1 be approved; and
- (2) Approval be given to the designs being presented to future Cabinet meetings.

The Cabinet also

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL – That

- (1) Approval be given to a supplementary estimate of £370k for the Place St Maur project, funded from the unallocated capital project earmarked reserve; and
- (2) Authority be given for the Council to enter into a funding agreement with Coast to Capital and approve the drawdown and expenditure of external funding, with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement to be reviewed and agreed by Legal Services in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/032/161120, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

286. SUNKEN GARDENS , BOGNOR REGIS

(Prior to the commencement of this item, Councillor Coster redeclared his Personal Interest made at the start of the meeting).

The Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley, introduced this report which sets out the scope and detail of a project to refurbish the Sunken Gardens in Bognor Regis. It was outlined that this project would provide an important opportunity to improve this well-loved greenspace and would further contribute to the wider improvements in the Town.

The Principal Landscape and Project Officer was then invited to present the item. The plans in place for this project were explained to include how the Council would address anti-social behaviour issues to reverse this trend and create a destination for both locals and visitors. The proposals for the site had been set out in the appendix attached to the report. To allow the project to be delivered, Full Council would be asked to approve a supplementary estimate of £500k funded from the £316k balance of the earmarked reserve identified for unallocated project funding and essential capital maintenance.

Cabinet - 16.11.20

The points made in debating this item, focused on the fact that the Sunken Gardens were a community asset that needed to be protected as they were greatly valued by the local community and needed to be retained and enhanced. By opening the southern entrance, this would encourage more people to use the gardens and would enhance links to the seafront. Thanks, were extended to the Bognor Regis Community Gardeners who had played a vital part helping to maintain the gardens and being involved in stakeholder activities.

A Point of Order was raised and concern expressed that by considering this item the Council was contradicting a motion already approved by the Council and that this item fell under the remit of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee and so should not be considered by Cabinet. The Chief Executive confirmed that he had liaised with the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer and the matter could be discussed and agreed by the Cabinet, if they so wished.

Following some discussion, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

That the scope of the Sunken Gardens project be approved and that the project team progresses its delivery, subject to Full Council approval of Recommendation 2 below.

Cabinet also

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL

That approval be given to a supplementary estimate of £500k for the Sunken Garden project funded from the £316k balance of the earmarked reserve identified for unallocated project funding and essential capital maintenance and the balance of £184k which equates to a Band D equivalent Council Tax of £2.97.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/033/161120, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

287. KINGLEY GATE DEVELOPMENT, LITTLEHAMPTON - COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SECTION 106 FUNDING

(Prior to the commencement of this item, Councillor Dr Walsh declared a Personal Interest as a Member of Littlehampton Town Council).

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, the Chairman introduced this report stating that it sought authority to draw down Section 106 contributions from the Kingley Gate development to allow for the management and maintenance of the community facilities. These facilities, which were virtually complete,

were being transferred to the Council for everyone to use including changing facilities, sports pitches, a play area and public open space.

In addition, the report sought authority to transfer a financial contribution from this development towards a community building due to be delivered by Littlehampton Town Council at Eldon Way, Wick, Littlehampton.

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services then explained the recommendations set out in the report.

Having thanked the Officer team for their work in this project which was an excellent example of joint working with developers and Parishes,

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

Subject to the various Section 106 sums being received, approval be given to:

- (1) The drawing down of the following sums to fund the Council's ongoing maintenance commitments on receipt of the sums on transfer of the facilities:
 - Public open space sum £334,798, plus indexation
 - Play areas sums £24,000, plus indexation
 - Playing fields sum £24,144.00 – plus indexation
 - Changing facilities sum £16,324 – plus indexation
 - Total: £399,266 plus indexation
- (2) Additional annual revenue expenditure of up to £30,000 plus indexation in respect of the Council's maintenance commitments for the public open space areas, play area and changing facilities as outlined in Recommendation 1 above be approved. This to include the extension of an existing temporary post in the Greenspace service to use the 5% management sum; and
- (3) Approval be given to the transfer of the Community Facilities commuted sum of £263,464.37 (held by Arun District Council) to Littlehampton Town Council by way of a Deed of Agreement towards construction of the replacement community facility building known as the Keystone building at Eldon Way, Littlehampton.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/034/161120, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

Cabinet - 16.11.20

288. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PLANNING REVIEW WORKING PARTY

The Chairman, Councillor Dr Walsh, presented this report highlighting that it would be in the Council's best interest to respond to the Planning Review undertaken quickly when presented. Dates were being finalised and a presentation for Members would hopefully be held on 24 November 2020.

Councillor Dr Walsh outlined that as soon as the presentation had been received by Mr Hannaby, Members would need to consider his recommendations. It was felt that it would not be appropriate for the Development Control Committee to lead on this, although they would have an input. The proposal within the report was to create a small Working Party of Members in advance, so that Officers could prepare dates for these meetings and provide Members with notice. This Working Party would then report to Cabinet and Full Council.

The establishment of a cross party Working Party made up of 7 Members, in political proportionality was proposed by the Chief Executive. However, Councillor Dr Walsh believed that the Working Party would need to be slightly larger in size and so he proposed a size of 8 by putting forward an amendment to the Officer Recommendation 1 (b) to read "politically balanced and 8 in size to consist of 3 Liberal Democrats; 3 Conservative; 1 Independent and 1 Arun Independent or 1 Green...".

In debating this item, the Cabinet confirmed that it was looking forward to receiving the presentation from Hannaby Associates and agreed that this was the most sensible way forward to look at whatever may be presented. Cabinet completely understood the rationale behind the cross party Working Party as opposed to the Development Control Committee acting as lead and was interested to learn if measures would be put into place to restrict Development Control Members sitting on the Working Party, which would go against the purpose of it. Councillor Dr Wash agreed that it would not work if Members from Development Control were to be the judge and jury in their own case and that it was important for other Councillors to have the opportunity to be involved in the overview and scrutiny of the report. He confirmed that Member would be appointed to the Working Party by their respective Group Leader to ensure that Development Control duplication would not happen, although a mix of Development Control Member and other non-Development Control Members would probably be ideal, providing some planning experience to the Working Party.

Comments made by non-Cabinet Councillors were that the establishment of the Working Party was welcomed but that it had been hoped that the size of the Working Party would have been similar to that for the Covid-19 Recovery Working Party which had a much fairer balance of support. There were some Councillors who did not agree that it would be inappropriate for Development Control Members to sit on this Working Party as to exclude Councillors with extensive planning knowledge was a short-sighted move.

Following some discussion,

Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) support be given to the establishment of a Planning Review Working Party based on the following terms:
 - (a) Terms of Reference – to consider the findings and examine the recommendations from the Planning Review (when presented) so that the Council can agree which recommendations it wants to accept and establish a monitoring process to ensure that recommendations are followed through. The Working Party will report to Cabinet, who will report to Full Council;
 - (b) Size of the Working Party – the seats on this Working Party will be politically balanced and 8 in size (3/LD, 3/Cons, 1/Ind, 1/AI or 1/G).
 - (c) Nominations to the seats – to be confirmed by the relevant Group Leaders immediately if the proposal is accepted by Cabinet;
 - (d) Proposals for the allocation of seats if vacancies occur – to be for the relevant Group Leader to fill the vacant seat and report this information to the next Full Council meeting;
 - (e) Timescale for the work to be undertaken – over the next few months following receipt of the forthcoming presentation and publication of the report (establishing the Working Party now means that the Council will be ready to conduct this work speedily); and
 - (f) To report back to Cabinet as soon as possible to enable the Council to progress with any recommendations it supports.

- (2) If established, the Working Party can then:
 - (a) Review its terms of reference at its first meeting and recommend any change back to Cabinet;
 - (b) Make any recommendations to Cabinet based on the terms of reference – it will have no decision-making authority; and
 - (c) Meet in private unless it agrees that it will work to the Meeting Procedure Rules at Part 5 of the Council’s Constitution.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/035/161120, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

Cabinet - 16.11.20

289. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

290. RECRUITMENT OF THE ROLE OF GROUP HEAD OF COUNCIL ADVICE AND MONITORING OFFICER [EXEMPT - PARAGRAPH 1 - INFORMATION RELATING TO ANY INDIVIDUAL]

The Chief Executive presented this urgent report advising Cabinet of the latest position regarding the appointment of the vacant position of Group Head of Council Advice and Monitoring Officer.

In accordance with the Constitution at Part 6 – Procedure Rules (Other) – section 7 – Officer Employment at Section 2.6 – Consultation Procedure for Appointment, it was confirmed that the Chief Executive had delegated authority to make this appointment but this report was asking Cabinet to note the latest position that the Council was in. This was to confirm that no appointment had been made and Cabinet was asked to note the Chief Executive’s approach going forward which was to seek the temporary employment of an interim Monitoring Officer from 2 December 2020, when the existing arrangement with Chichester District Council sharing their Monitoring Officer would cease and to see a permanent replacement through a recruitment agency process in the New Year.

Following discussion and debate,

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

That the outcome of the recruitment process for the vacant role of Group Head of Council Advice and Monitoring Officer be noted.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/026/161120, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

(The meeting concluded at 9.06 pm)

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF CABINET ON 14 DECEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO LEISURE OPERATING CONTRACT

REPORT AUTHOR: Robin Wickham, Group Head of Community Wellbeing

DATE: November 2020

EXTN: 37835

PORTFOLIO AREA: Community Wellbeing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Freedom Leisure is in receipt of a support package to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's leisure operating contract. This report sets out the current situation with recommendations for the period January 2020 to March 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet approve the following measures:

- a) to make a bid to the National Leisure Relief Fund towards the operating support costs paid to Freedom Leisure; and
- b) recommend to Full Council a supplementary estimate for a sum up to £177,740 (Band D equivalent of £2.86) to support the Council's leisure operating contract from January to March 2021 (Quarter 4) be approved.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Since 21 March 2020 Arun's leisure operating contract has been significantly affected by restrictions imposed by HM Government to contain the spread of COVID-19. In the first instance a national lockdown required a three-month closure of the facilities followed by restricted operating conditions between 25 July and 4 November to comply with Covid-secure facility guidelines and most recently a second national lockdown on 5 November necessitated a further temporary closure.
- 1.2 Throughout this period Arun District Council has supported the leisure operating contract in recognition of the consequential and significant impact the restrictions have had on the operation of the leisure centres and in appreciation of the valuable role the facilities play in improving the physical and mental wellbeing of the community.
- 1.3 Detailed background information is available in the reports submitted to Full Council on 15 July 2020 and Cabinet on 21 September 2020.
- 1.4 A noteworthy change since the last report is the announcement on 22 October 2020 that a 'National Leisure Relief Fund' totalling £100M is to be made available to support local authorities with the challenges of keeping leisure centres open. The Department

for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Sport England to establish the criteria and guidance for claims. The level of funding that Council will be able to attract is therefore unclear and the funding is unlikely to be retrospective.

- 1.5 The announcement to support local authorities with the cost of keeping leisure centres open complements the MHCLG's income compensation scheme that was announced in the summer. This scheme permits the Council to claim back approximately 70% of the lost income from the leisure operating contract (£572,000); for information the contract sum due this financial year is approximately £800,000.
- 1.6 The purpose of the financial support is to enable the leisure facilities to open to the community and for Freedom Leisure to rebuild the service as the restrictions imposed by the pandemic are lifted. It is evident from the attendances at the centres how welcome the decision to open was and how quickly the numbers have grown as detailed in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 Attendance Over 4 Week Period
(25 July to 24 August)

		Capacity	Customers	%
Arun Leisure Centre	Swimming	8,735	2,649	30%
	Studio	1,536	1,344	88%
	Gym	7,980	2,824	35%
Littlehampton Wave	Swimming	8,848	4,500	51%
	Studio	2,161	1,746	81%
	Gym	10,829	7,258	67%
Total		40,089	20,321	51%

Table 2 Attendance Over 4 Week Period
(25 August to 24 September)

		Capacity	Customers	%
Arun Leisure Centre	Swimming	7,741	3,610	47%
	Studio	1,752	1,494	85%
	Gym	7,704	3,131	41%
	Additional	1,224	492	40%
Littlehampton Wave	Swimming	9,222	6,057	66%
	Studio	2,904	2,437	84%
	Gym	12,740	8,211	64%
	Additional	1,436	695	48%
Total		44,723	26,127	58%

- 1.7 Tables 1 and 2 provide a direct comparison between the first two months of the leisure centres opening in respect of attendances to specific areas of the buildings. Table 2 includes the additional activities that Freedom Leisure made available in the period. The session capacity also evolved particularly at the Arun Leisure Centre which was able to provide a more flexible offer for gym users at off peak times allowing customers to access the facilities for longer and without booking, whilst still maintaining a Covid Secure environment.
- 1.8 The financial support for the leisure operating contract and the relief payments made to Freedom Leisure are summarised in Table 3. The first quarter has been finalised resulting in £131,120 support; a reduction of £5,180 from the approved sum.

Table 3. Relief Payments

Period		Freedom Forecast	Approved Sum*	Reconciled Sum	Balance
Q1	April to June	136,308	136,300	131,120	5,180
Q2	July to September	266,958	270,000	130,212	139,788
Q3	October to December	191,442	191,500		

*Subject to open book accounting

- 1.9 The approved sum of £270,00 for Q2 assumed that the facilities would open in early July. As the facilities opened later than anticipated (25 July) the relief payments required in Q2 were significantly (£130,000) lower than the sum forecast, boosted by a positive balance (£14,225) in September.
- 1.10 Unfortunately, Q3 was affected by a second national lockdown that was not factored into the approved relief payments. The interruption to the delivery of the service between 5 November and 2 December will affect both the forecast income and expenditure in Q3 and will be taken into consideration when reconciling the actual costs against the approved sum at the end of the period. This is likely to result in more support being required for Q3 (currently around £30k) which will be met from the favourable variation in Q2 (noted in 1.9 above).
- 1.11 As previously stated, the reduction in income caused by COVID-19 has a temporary, but significant impact on the leisure operating contract. Freedom Leisure will require ongoing support to run the Council's facilities until restrictions are fully lifted and income builds to its pre-pandemic level.
- 1.12 The impact of the pandemic on Freedom Leisure should not be underestimated. At a local contract level, in addition to utilising the Job Retention Scheme (furloughing of employees) the workforce has been reduced by approximately a third through the termination of 'casual' employees and redundancy. A pay award of 2% advised in February 2020 has not been implemented. Mitigation has also included reviewing and when possible reducing supply contracts, applying for locally available Covid-19 grants and reducing central overhead costs by 35%.
- 1.13 In respect of central overhead costs, Freedom Leisure has reduced its Head Office workforce by 25% through redundancies. Corporate and Senior Management Team pay has been reduced by up to 30%, employees have, and continue to be furloughed. Central contracts have been negotiated down (e.g. insurance) and successful grants

applications have also helped keep down central overheads (e.g. Welsh Resilience fund, Arts Council). Since April 2020 the impact on the Freedom Leisure reserve is a loss of £1.2M.

- 1.14 Throughout the period, the Freedom Leisure Corporate Management team has been an advocate for the sector, working with partners to lobby MP's and HM Government in support of both the National Leisure Relief Fund and the income compensation scheme, but also to highlight the health related benefits of activity and the need to keep leisure facilities open to the public.
- 1.15 Freedom Leisure has projected its position in respect of the loss of income and corresponding reduction in expenditure for Q4. The challenge of income generation whilst operating at reduced capacity is significant as leisure centres have substantial operating costs. The net cost of operating the leisure facilities in Q4 with reduced capacity and the potential impact on customers following the lockdown in Q3 is an estimated sum of £177,740 (see Table 4).

Table 4. Estimated Net Operating Costs January to March (Q4)

January	58,199
February	58,496
March	61,045
Total	177,740

- 1.16 As previous relief payments, the proposed sum of £177,740 for the final quarter is a maximum sum and if approved will be settled in accordance with the terms of the Covid contract variations previously agreed.
- 1.17 In supporting the opening of the facilities, the Council has provided a lifeline for the leisure operating contract to maintain its customer base and protect a crucial revenue stream for Arun. If the fourth quarter payment is agreed, the total value of the contract support costs approved in 2020/21 will be £775,540. To mitigate this financial burden, it is proposed that Officers seek reimbursement from the 'National Leisure Relief Fund' even though the extent of this support is currently unknown.
- 1.18 Members will be aware of the significance of the revenue generated by the leisure operating contract. Between 2016 and 2020 the contract generated payments to the Council of £1,693,800 and the remaining five years of the original term (2021 to 2026) the sums due to the Council exceed £4,461,700.
- 1.19 The health benefits of exercise and movement have been widely reported. The NHS and HM Government have stated the higher risk factors associated with obesity, diabetes and heart disease following a diagnosis of COVID-19. Leisure centres also play a role in ameliorating the negative effects that lack of exercise and social isolation play on mental health. Clearly leisure centres play an important role in providing the opportunity for people to remain fit and active, particularly during the winter months.
- 1.20 In conclusion, the opening of our leisure centres has demonstrated the Council's commitment to supporting and improving the health and wellbeing of the community. The leisure centres have proved popular and patronage has grown. Freedom Leisure has extended its offer and increased capacity in step with demand. The introduction of a 'National Leisure Relief Fund' will provide the opportunity to reduce the Council's

financial burden in supporting the leisure operating contract and continued support will ensure that it has the best prospect of recovering quickly as restrictions are lifted. Keeping the leisure centres open throughout the winter months will provide the Arun community the opportunity to maintain healthy and active lifestyles in high quality safe facilities.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

It is proposed that Cabinet approves the following measures:

- a) to make a bid for operating support costs from the National Leisure Relief Fund;
- b) to reflect the delayed opening the facilities in July in the operating support payments for Q2 and Q3; and
- c) recommend to Full Council a supplementary estimate for a sum up to £177,740 to support the Council's leisure operating contract from January to March 2021 (Quarter 4).

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 To support the recommendations as set out in the report; or

3.2 Not to support the recommendations.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal	✓	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓

6. IMPLICATIONS:

6.2 **Financial:** When support for the Leisure provider was initially considered in March 2020 there was considerable uncertainty over the length and impact of any restrictions

related to Covid-19. The continued support of the Leisure provider has to be viewed in the context of the financial situation we find ourselves in and the effect on the Council's overall financial strategy. The business model for delivery of the contract is dependant on a high volumes of usage, which is not possible due to the C-19 restrictions, and the closure of the centres for the second time has added increased uncertainty and risk in relation to the timescale for usage numbers to increase to the level to make the contract viable again without financial support. Whilst the Council's financial outlook for 2020/21 has improved slightly since the approval for the third quarter's support package (management fee and direct support) there are significant issues around sustainability. However, any decision inevitably involves an element of risk and the report shows how the risk is shared between the contractors and the Council. The report also sets out the steps that the Leisure provider has taken and will continue to take to mitigate financial losses. It is also increasingly likely that support will be required in 2021/22. The support given for 2020/21 would be mitigated by any successful claim to the National Leisure Relief Fund but this is unlikely to be retrospective and will therefore be limited. It also should be noted that the level of support agreed in this report is the maximum amount, the actual level of support will depend on the outturn for 2020/21, which will be verified through open book accounting.

6.3 **Legal:** The leisure operating contract is subject to two Letters of Variation reflecting the Supplier Relief due to COVID-19.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To safeguard the Councils leisure operating contract

To serve the health and wellbeing needs of the community

8. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 13 January 2021

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Decision Taken under Officer Scheme of Delegation – Financial Support to Freedom Leisure (16 April 2020)
- Full Council Decision (15 July 2020)
- Cabinet Decision C/009/21092020 (21 September 2020)
- Letter of Variation - Supplier Relief due to COVID-19

[Contract Variation – May 2020](#)

[Contract Variation – August 2020](#)

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET ON 14 DECEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SITUATION

REPORT AUTHOR: Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive
DATE: 17 November 2020
EXTN: 37600
PORTFOLIO AREA: Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This report updates Cabinet on the Council's response to the pandemic situation and possible proposals for economic recovery.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is requested to resolve to:

- (1) note the actions taken to date.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress since the last Cabinet report of 19 October 2020 in relation to the Covid-19 response by the Council. Members are asked to note that due to the report being written in advance of the Cabinet meeting, the actual date range that this update is for, is from 3 November 2020 (the date of writing the report to Cabinet on 16 November 2020) to 17 November 2020 (the date of writing this report).
- 1.2 Following the new National Restrictions which have been in place since Thursday 5 November, the impact on the Council is (at the time of writing this report):
 - Staff/Contractors must only work from the office (on their allocated day) *if* there is an operational reason why they can't work from home. Those staff whose circumstances have been assessed by HR can continue to work from the office. Otherwise staff must work from home. Field working continues to take place in accordance with the Council's Safety Management Programme. HR and Group Heads are working with staff who are in a category that need extra support, either due to their medical situation, age or personal circumstances.

- Our leisure centres and leisure facilities such as adventure golf have been closed as required by government and the Council will work with Freedom Leisure to address the significant financial implications of this.
- Play areas remain open.
- We are providing the necessary support to the most vulnerable in conjunction with WSCC via the community hub.
- We are working with partners such as Stonepillow and Turning tides over rough sleepers.
- Local Restrictions Support Grants (LRSG) and Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) – see more information about the Council’s grant allocation below under the heading ‘Grants. The Council will work to implement the schemes as we did previously.

Communications

- 1.3 Contact via social media continues to be a popular means of gathering information. Weekly reminders of our news bulletins and social media posts are issued including regular reminders about social distancing, avoiding busy places and considerate use of our beaches and town centres. The public are being kept well informed of all key messages.
- 1.4 Councillors, Partners of Arun and the Town and Parish Councils have been updated with new information from partners, other authorities and Government bodies via emailed briefing notes from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. These are issued every week.

Welfare of Staff, Members and the Public

- 1.5 Following the announcement of the new National Lockdown, Staff/Contractors must only work from the office (on their allocated day) *if* there is an operational reason why they can’t work from home. Those staff whose circumstances have been assessed by HR can continue to work from the office. Otherwise staff must work from home.
- 1.6 Guidance has been received from MHCLG concerning advice and support for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) individuals during the period of National Restrictions. On week commencing 02 November 2020, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) issued updated guidance to CEV individuals with important additional advice on how they can protect themselves during this 4-week period. Arun District Council will work with WSCC to ensure that CEV’s are supported.
- 1.7 The Council has not opened its reception areas (apart from providing a service to homeless presentations), meeting rooms or communal areas in line with Government guidance and officers are working hard to ensure that the public can access all services either online or via our contact centre.
- 1.8 With the potential for an increase in residents seeking support or advice due to the new National Lockdown, Arun is continuing to liaise with the County Council so that assistance is coordinated via the West Sussex Community Hub. Directing enquiries to the Community Hub as a single point of contact will ensure that

residents are properly identified, and their issues logged so that their enquiry can be directed to the most appropriate service to meet their individual needs. The number of referrals into the WS Hub are relatively low and none have been referred to the Arun Hub for a local response.

Covid-19 Prevalence

- 1.9 Councillors, Partners of Arun and the Town and Parish Councils have been updated on the prevalence of Covid-19 in West Sussex by way of the regular briefing notes.
- 1.10 The West Sussex Covid-19 Health Protection Board continues to monitor prevalence of Covid-19 cases against the previous tier thresholds. The Corporate Management Team, relevant Group Heads and our Communications Team are being informed of the numbers of Covid-19 cases in both Arun and the whole of West Sussex and will be advised should any local action be necessary. Nationally Arun and West Sussex remain amongst the areas with lower numbers of cases.
- 1.11 Two part time temporary Environmental Health Information Officers started work on Monday 16 November. These posts are funded from a £75K government “Marshall fund” announced last month. These EHIOs are field-based and will proactively monitor compliance with the ever changing covid-19 rules, advise businesses of the latest rules and any gaps in their compliance, as well as investigate requests for service. This will usefully enhance the Environmental Health Service’s capacity to provide a visible presence, to help and support businesses to implement compliant Covid-safe practices. Ensuring the Covid-19 regulations are adhered to is not only an important measure in controlling the rate of transmission, but also in order to maintain a level playing field between businesses. Experience so far has been that the vast majority of businesses have been implementing the restrictions effectively, and those that haven’t have responded favourably to advice. The EHIOs can also however gather evidence of breaches for formal enforcement action to be pursued if appropriate in accordance with our Enforcement Policy.
- 1.12 Part of the national test and trace system involves the tracing of contacts of a positive case. The national service attempts to trace/contact all individuals who have been in contact with a positive case, to determine the level of contact and, if necessary, ask them to self-isolate. Due to rising cases nationally, Upper tier/unitary local authorities are being asked, via their Public Health teams, to consider providing additional capacity to the national service by becoming a Local Tracing Partnership (LTP). Starting predominantly in the north of the country where cases have been higher, LTPs have proved an effective addition to the measures being used to control the Covid rate of reproduction (the R rate) and reducing the spread of infection. Preparations are underway to establish a Local Tracing Partnership in West Sussex, working with East Sussex County Council, and with support and guidance from Public Health England (PHE). The LTP will provide additional capacity to the national test and trace service by contacting non-complex positive cases that the national service has been unable to contact within a window of time. It will ensure that those people will be given advice and support as soon as possible, and that details of their contacts are collected and inputted into the national system for the national team to contact themselves. The local service will be managed by the WSCC Customer Experience Service, with dedicated WSCC

Community Hub staff undertaking the contacting. The phone number will be local, which will increase the success of people responding and, unlike the current national system, there will be the facility for people to text email and leave a voicemail by way of a response if they miss the call. District and borough councils can play an important role in supporting the effectiveness of the LTP due to their having contact details for local residents (e.g. council tax, housing, revenue and benefits), to enable contacting when contact information for those who have tested positive for Covid-19 is incorrect or incomplete. A data sharing agreement is currently being considered by Arun. WSCC anticipate going live towards the end of November.

- 1.13 In the current month-long national restrictions period, the Government has introduced specific guidance for those people deemed to be Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV), meaning that they face the highest risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19. Week commencing 02 November 2020, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) issued updated guidance to CEV individuals with important additional advice on how they can protect themselves. We will be receiving some Government funding to provide bespoke support and advice to people in this group who need it.
- 1.14 West Sussex County Council has worked in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Care and our District and Borough Councils to implement a wide range of COVID-19 testing sites across the County to control the Covid-19 rate of reproduction (R), reduce the spread of infection and save lives. These include two Regional Test Sites, two Local Test Sites and seven Mobile Test Sites used on a rotational basis, with further Local Test Sites being currently identified. All sites currently have adequate capacity and availability for testing. For the 7 day period from 28 October to 3 November, over 6,000 tests were carried out across the county. Further sites for LTS's are currently being identified. Part of the St. Martins car park site in Littlehampton is being surveyed for suitability on 30 November with a view to build being completed on 07/08 December for another local walk-through test site. A site has been agreed for Worthing with a planned build date of 18/11/2020. There are no further plans at present for further testing stations locally.

Financial Impact of Covid-19

- 1.15 The financial effects of Covid-19 have been severe for the Council, in common with other local authorities across the country. The new lockdown will have further financial implications for the Council.
- 1.16 Government announced the funding allocations for the 4th tranche of Covid funding to local government to address wider cost pressures. Arun's allocation is £498,760.00.

First Tranche of Covid-19 Funding	Second Tranche of Covid-19 Funding	Third Tranche of Covid-19 Funding ²	Fourth Tranche of Covid-19 Funding	Total Covid-19 Additional Funding
£64,612	£1,609,640	£264,767	£498,760.00	£2,437,779

- 1.17 Following the announcement of the National Lockdown from 5 November 2020 and the need to close the leisure services in the District, the Council will be working with Freedom Leisure to address the further financial implications this Lockdown will have and a report on the current position is going to Cabinet on 14 December 2020.
- 1.18 Business premises forced to close in England are to receive grants under the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) and Discretionary Grants via the Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG). These two grants to be allocated by 31 March 2022. The Local Restrictions Support Grants (LRSG - rateable value based mandatory grants) will be dealt with by the Revenues Team. The Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG - Discretionary Grants) will be dealt with by the Economic Development Team. Officers will implement the scheme and make payments on the receipt of applications in line with guidance and once the necessary legal contracts and systems have been finalised
- 1.19 People will be required by law to self-isolate from 28 September, supported by payment of £500 for those on lower incomes who cannot work from home and have lost income as a result. New fines for those breaching self-isolation rules will start at £1,000. Arun District Council, along with other local authorities, worked hard to ensure that the required self-isolation support schemes were in place by 12 October and payments are being made on receipt of a valid application. As of 13 November, the Council has received 54 self-isolation applications and 15 awards have been made.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

Cabinet is requested to note the actions taken to date.

3. OPTIONS:

To note this update report or
To request further information

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify) - Cabinet	✓	

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal		X
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X

Sustainability		X
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		

6. IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 It must be recognised that the Council also has limited funds to be able to make direct interventions. Instead, it is likely that the Council will need to focus on providing local leadership and policy changes to provide an economic stimulus and facilitate any necessary structural change. This may require seeking out external funding wherever possible. In the main, therefore, this Council will be facilitating the recovery process and helping to provide community leadership.
- 6.2 The Council's financial position has been highlighted and it should be noted that the shortfall in funding against total costs to the Council will affect the Council's finances significantly going forward.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

For Cabinet to note the Council's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 14 December 2020 – as this is a noting report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: THE GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD DRAFT COVID-19 SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY PLAN

REPORT AUTHOR: Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive
DATE: 4 November 2020
EXTN: 37600
PORTFOLIO AREA: Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This report updates Cabinet on the Greater Brighton Economic Board draft Covid-19 Sustainable Recovery Plan and the Council's support for the 10 Pledges to the Environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is requested to:

- (1) Note the Greater Brighton Economic Board Sustainable Recovery Plan and Arun District Council's commitment to this.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Arun District Council is a member of the Greater Brighton Economic Board and both the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council attend regular Board meetings and individual Chief Executive and Leader meetings. At a Board meeting on 19 October 2020, a presentation was made of the GBEB Draft Covid-19 Sustainable Recovery Plan.
- 1.2 Attached in **Appendix A** is the report from the GBEB to the 19 October 2020 meeting.
- 1.3 As mentioned in the GBEB report, Covid-19 has, and will continue to, impact the region's economy significantly
- 1.4 It is crucial to understand the short-medium term impacts of the pandemic, but also consider how longer-term structural changes in the economy will impact on the City Region. The Board and its recovery plan must be agile and be able to adapt to sudden changes in government response and /or the possibility of local lockdown scenarios.

- 1.5 In May 2020, the Greater Brighton Economic Board commissioned Hatch to undertake an impact assessment to understand the challenges based on the intelligence available and the composition of the local economy. This report uses these findings to recommend a series of strategic interventions for the region to tackle the issues and optimise opportunities. This is done against the backdrop of the Board's Five-Year Strategic Priorities, which were agreed in January 2019.
- 1.6 The impact assessment for the region highlighted six main impacts. These findings are; a rise in unemployment, closure of local businesses and significant challenges in four main sectors; Creative, Arts and Culture, Education, the Visitor Economy and Transport. The following sections of the recovery plan will look at these in more detail and are aligned to the Board's Strategic Priority Themes; International, Creative, Connected, Talented and Resilient.
- 1.7 The Greater Brighton Economic Board will continue to make the strongest possible case for Government investment into the City Region. The Board will also look to influence the development of the Government's policy to ensure that Government adopts mechanisms for boosting economic recovery that will benefit the Greater Brighton economy. The Board approved its Five Year Strategic Priorities in January 2019, with the vision for the region to have a growing, modern economy that is international, creative, connected, talented and resilient. The GBEB report highlights the priorities and actions under each priority and confirms the support that the Board (which includes Arun District Council) have given to each of these areas.
- 1.8 The Board will consider the opportunities provided by new Government programmes and new funding streams; recognise national calls for a 'greener, fairer and more resilient' recovery and use this to frame recovery actions making reference to Government narrative on 'levelling-up'.
- 1.9 The GBEB received a presentation at its meeting on 19 October 2020 which confirms the support of the Board for the 10 Pledges to the Environment. This presentation will be shown to Cabinet today. The 10 pledges, supported by the Leader of the Council at the recent Board meeting, are:
 1. **Kelp:** backing a scheme to introduce a carbon capturing kelp forest off the Sussex coast.
 2. **Water Recycling:** partnering projects to introduce recycled water into new homes.
 3. **Zero Emission Fleets:** committing to phasing out diesel cars, refuse trucks and vans
 4. **EV Charging Points:** supporting a huge increase in electric vehicle charging points.
 5. **Rewilding:** supporting an increase in natural landscapes and rain garden projects
 6. **Home Visits:** supporting Southern Water's 50,000 water and energy efficiency home visits

<p>7. Low Carbon Heating: rolling out schemes to replace oil home heating with electric and other low carbon fuels</p> <p>8. Public Buildings: reducing energy use by 50 per cent by 2030</p> <p>9. Innovation: establishing an Innovation Forum to share latest research and best practice</p> <p>10. Lobby: using Greater Brighton’s powerful voice to lobby government for investment</p> <p>1.10 The GBEB and its partners work fully support the need to work collaboratively on the recommendations and actions outlined in the Sustainable Recovery Plan.</p> <p>1.11 The Covid-19 pandemic and the need for recovery means Greater Brighton can no longer operate on a business as usual footing in terms of communications activity. There is great instability and government uncertainty. It is likely that there will be large-scale unemployment and many previously thriving sectors will continue to struggle. In addition, looking forward, Brexit and the Devolution White Paper will also impact on residents and businesses, as well as the identity of the region moving forward. Whilst work will continue on site visits and case studies, social media channels including the website, press releases and publications in trade press, utilising GBEB ‘experts’, the Greater Brighton communications function is advocating a shift in emphasis for the coming year with 12 months of work focussed on four broad themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Recovery (including green recovery) • Resources for our growing economy • Infrastructure for our growing economy • Skills for our growing economy. <p>1.12 The GBEB Comms team have developed an enhanced communications plan for 2020/21.</p>		
<p>2. PROPOSAL(S):</p> <p>(1) Cabinet is requested to note the Greater Brighton Economic Board Sustainable Recovery Plan and Arun District Council’s commitment to this.</p>		
<p>3. OPTIONS:</p> <p>i) To note this report and the Council’s commitment to the Greater Brighton Economic Board Sustainable Recovery Plan; or</p> <p>ii) To request further information and defer this report.</p>		
<p>4. CONSULTATION:</p>		
<p>Has consultation been undertaken with:</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Relevant Town/Parish Council</p>		<p>X</p>
<p>Relevant District Ward Councillors</p>		<p>X</p>

Other groups/persons (please specify) - Cabinet	✓	
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal		X
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X
Sustainability		X
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		
6. IMPLICATIONS:		
6.1 Arun District Council and the District as a whole is facing significant financial and economic challenges due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. By supporting the work of such a significant partner as the Greater Brighton Economic Board, we can ensure that the whole area has a prosperous and sustainable future with strong commitment from many influencers.		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:
For Cabinet to note the Greater Brighton Economic Board Sustainable Recovery Plan and Arun District Council's commitment to this.
8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 14 December 2020 – as this is a noting exercise

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:
GBEB presentation - 10 Pledges to the Environment: https://greaterbrighton.com/gb10/ .



<p style="text-align: center;">Greater Brighton Economic Board</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DRAFT COVID 19 Sustainable Recovery Plan</p>
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1.0 Introduction

The Greater Brighton region is a prosperous and attractive place to live underpinned by high value sectors. The area covers a geography from Seaford in the East, to Bognor Regis in the West and north to Crawley and Gatwick Airport. It is home to 988,000 people, 619,000 of whom are of working age and it provides 400,000 jobs across 42,000 active businesses.

However, like other parts of the UK, COVID-19 has, and will continue to, impact the region's economy significantly: GVA (output) is estimated to shrink by 11% in 2020; youth employment will be high as many young people work in the most impacted sectors such as retail and tourism; performing and creative arts sectors have been forced into hibernation; and transport and logistics has seen a mixture of challenges with belly cargo through Gatwick Airport collapsing and export-related transport and logistics companies seeing revenues decline¹.

Two thirds of businesses have made use of the Government's job retention scheme which will move to a job support scheme at the start of November, and there is concern about further unemployment, particularly within the 18-24 and 60-64 age ranges. The number of insolvencies has also risen. There were 74 insolvencies across the Coast to Capital LEP region in June, which is up from 39 in May.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also occurred in the lead up to the UK withdrawal from the EU for which there will be economic impacts on the region, as well as implications of new trade deals. Nationally and internationally, we are addressing the climate change emergency and highlighting green recovery. It will be important to take account of this within any recovery plan.

Much has already been delivered. Local authority partners have awarded over £200 million in business grants to over 15,000 eligible businesses, and over £180k in discretionary grants to support other businesses most in need at this critical time. In addition, some sectors are returning to a pre-COVID -19 position much quicker than anticipated. Manufacturing industries including building production, automotive and, construction are doing well. Domestic tourism is experiencing a brief recovery and consumers are thinking and spending locally.

2.0 Greater Brighton Impact Analysis

It is crucial to understand the short-medium term impacts of the pandemic but also consider how longer-term structural changes in the economy will impact on the City Region. The Board and it's recovery plan must be agile and be able to adapt to sudden changes in government response and /or the possibility of local lockdown scenarios. It is also important to fully understand and respond to the impacts on City Region residents and workers. At a

¹ GBEB COVID 19 Impact Assessment [Hatch Associates]

national level, analysis of those that have either lost their jobs as a result of the crisis, or have been furloughed, indicate that young people, women, and older members of the workforce have been disproportionately affected - possibly because these groups are more likely to work in sectors such as retail, hospitality and tourism, which are amongst those most acutely impacted. Among those in younger age groups will be many who are leaving full time education and seeking their first job.

In May 2020, the Greater Brighton Economic Board commissioned Hatch to undertake an impact assessment to understand the challenges based on the intelligence available and the composition of the local economy. This report uses these findings to recommend a series of strategic interventions for the region to tackle the issues and optimise opportunities. This is done against the backdrop of the Board's Five-Year Strategic Priorities, which were agreed in January 2019.

2.1 Summary of findings

The impact assessment for the region highlighted six main impacts. These findings are; a rise in unemployment, closure of local businesses and significant challenges in four main sectors; Creative, Arts and Culture, Education, the Visitor Economy and Transport. The following sections of the recovery plan will look at these in more detail, and aligned to the Board's Strategic Priority Themes; International, Creative, Connected, Talented and Resilient.

However, first it is important to consider the wider regional landscape and recovery activity already identified.

3.0 Wider regional picture

Coast to Capital LEP (C2C) have just published their COVID-19 Economic Impact Assessment which recognises that GVA output across the LEP area is likely to fall by up to 17% in 2020. To recover that lost output and return to pre-COVID-19 GVA levels by 2029, regional GVA growth would need to at least double to 6% by 2026². This assessment highlights similar business, employment and sectoral impacts to the City Region, reflecting the similar geographies.

In response, C2C are developing a draft recovery plan to enable the economy of the region to build back stronger, smarter, greener. The Greater Brighton Recovery Plan supports the objectives laid out by C2C.

To build back stronger; support Crawley with a plan to grow, adapt and broaden the UK's most COVID-19 impacted town into a more diverse and dynamic place. Development of new housing, commercial space and an enhanced skills and innovation offer will match the ambition of Global Britain and of a model for sustainable living.

To build back smarter; build upon the knowledge and innovation community which already exists in Brighton and has been developing in other areas such as Worthing. Expedite investments in knowledge for all, building on areas of competitive advantage, including support for the development of an internationally significant hub for Quantum Technologies,

² Coast to Capital – Coronavirus (COVID 19) Economic Impact Assessment Aug 2020, Hatch

alongside the ongoing evolution of our mature sectors, with continuing advances in digital and clean growth sectors.

To build back greener; draw on our talented workforce and local business specialisms, to lead a green recovery across the whole region. Work toward UK 'net-zero' targets on climate change by 2050 with a twin-track approach, decarbonising the energy supply across homes, transport and industry while securing and coordinating investment in natural capital to offset emissions, through new development.³

4.0 Greater Brighton Economic Board Vision and Priorities

The Greater Brighton Economic Board will continue to make the strongest possible case for Government investment into the City Region. The Board will also look to influence the development of the Government's policy to ensure that Government adopts mechanisms for boosting economic recovery that will benefit the Greater Brighton economy.

The Board approved its Five Year Strategic Priorities in January 2019, with the vision for the region to have a growing, modern economy that is international, creative, connected, talented and resilient.

Across all these themes, the we aim to create an innovate and entrepreneurial ecosystem that reflects the needs of the City Region's complex economy. We aim to address the skills agenda, using the ambition-driven ecosystem concept to facilitate connections between universities and businesses to address skills shortages together with realising innovation potential.

4.1 INTERNATIONAL

The Board has agreed that an international profile will not only increase the region's chances of securing foreign direct investment, but a growing international reputation will also enhance the City Region's standing at a national, regional and local level. Never is that more important than now as businesses in the region close and certain sectors struggle. It is now important for the region to capitalise on the anticipated movement of businesses out of London and pitch for the region as a smarter, greener, cheaper alternative equidistant from Gatwick. The Board and its partners must also work with the City-Region's global companies, their networks and supply chains to rebuild the economy.

For both universities in the City Region, international students are an important source of income (20%). The COVID-19 crisis has meant a reduction in international students taking up places in UK HE institutions for the 2020/21 academic year. Private language schools and those that target international students have been hit, with GVA related spending also reduced. This could also be compounded by a decline in university take up by domestic students who choose to defer their first year, a situation made more challenging as a result of the A-Level and BTEC grade awards confusion in August.

Building an international reputation is crucial for the region's universities. More positively, there is scope to better leverage the global R&D links of both universities to expand access to markets for local businesses and play an important role in ensuring they still attract and

³ C2C – Build back stronger, smarter and greener

retained skilled talent in the region. The region also has significant potential in a strong emerging position in Quantum computing, with a new university-based company recently launched to build the first large-scale quantum computer using microwave technology rather than lasers. This is backed by household name investors with the ambition for Brighton and Hove to become a Quantum city. Brighton and Hove and the University of Sussex and Greater Brighton partners should champion the ground-breaking technologies developed in labs on campus to utilise existing technical expertise to create a new industry sector in Quantum, and complementary ecosystems of high-tech companies surrounded by a relevant supply chain, enabling a skilled workforce and creating jobs.

Furthermore, with the UK withdrawal from the European Union, many BREXIT challenges remain unknown at this point in time. The Board has a part to play in minimising risk for the economy, maximising opportunities and working together to lobby government for international trade deals that support the region's businesses.

ACTIONS

- Inward investment in the region is low. Greater Brighton's Inward Investment Desk currently being developed by the GBEB Business Support Team should continue to develop at pace, utilising the recently agreed place narrative for the region and an improved website and supporting businesses to relocate to the region. Funding should be identified to support this crucial work.
- The Board should also support R&D innovation led recovery and growth, through the global R&D networks of the universities and global companies across Greater Brighton, increasing the number of businesses benefiting from national schemes such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships including by:
 - Highlighting recovery-relevant academic expertise at the University Brighton, notably in Clean Growth and Innovation Management
 - Highlighting skills growth programmes within the Universities.
- The Board must support establishing positioning Brighton as a 'quantum city' supported by leading edge technological skills training at the heart of any such a plan. The ambition is to make Brighton an incubator for knowledge-economy based entrepreneurial activity, as well as a hub to create a highly skilled, creative workforce which can generate young scale-up businesses.

4.2 CREATIVE

4.2.1 Business Support

Brighton and Hove is in the top 20 towns and cities in the UK for insolvencies since the start of the lockdown. There were 74 insolvencies across the Coast to Capital LEP region in June, which is up from 39 in May. Results from the latest British Chamber of Commerce Coronavirus Business Tracker reveal that business conditions improved only moderately in the weeks since the UK economy suffered an historic contraction in Q2 2020, with firms still reporting high levels of reliance on government support schemes to help stem cashflow issues. More than 1 in 3 of businesses say they have three months or less worth of cash in reserve.

ACTIONS

- The Board will ensure that Businesses will continue to be supported to grow by the Business Hot House programme being run by the University of Chichester and C2C's Growth Hub, in addition to innovation, growth and recovery programmes being run by the University of Sussex and the University of Brighton.
- As demand for flexible workspaces continues to rise, the region should build on the successful workspaces within the region such as Platt9rm, Plus X and the Sussex Innovation Centre (Brighton & Hove) and the Track (Bognor) and promote these more widely. Further public sector investment may become available to support this and the Board should bid for this to expand the offer in the region.
- The Board officers will act as a centralised point to help identify gaps in our Business Support activity (e.g. self-employed and sole traders) and bring together key actors to ensure there is effective sign posting between the different programmes. The Board will actively seek to invest and sponsor such initiatives.

4.2.2 Creative Industries and the Visitor Economy

The UK's creative industries have been an international powerhouse and, prior to the coronavirus pandemic were the fastest growing sector of our economy. In Greater Brighton creative industries generate over £1.5 billion annual GVA for the local economy⁴. Much of the creative, cultural and visitor economy ground to an immediate halt as the lockdown took effect. The situation was exacerbated with the lockdown starting at the end of March, meaning businesses were closed during traditional key peak demand times such as the Easter weekend and the two May Bank Holidays. The sector has gradually reopened from the 4 July, but the continued ban on large gatherings and resulting cancellation of all festivals, sporting events and other large events through the summer has hit the region hard, and the ripple effect on the many small businesses that supply these events has been acutely felt. The parts of the sector that depend on attracting audiences or visitors will be the last to resume operations and they may not be able to operate 'as normal' for years.

Many creative small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and freelancers have had their work dry up and seen their projects disappear almost immediately. Although the furlough scheme has provided a lifeline for many, much of the initial support package put forward by the Government was inaccessible to the sector. The majority of culture and leisure organisations are relatively small, have narrow profit margins (where they generate any form of profit at all) and do not have significant reserves to rely upon. Some elements of the sector, including theatres and leisure centres have expensive venues which have substantial fixed costs associated with them irrespective of whether they are open to the public. For the most part these organisations are very reliant on income generation to support their business model and are often equally reliant on a volunteer workforce. On 17 June, the Creative Industries

⁴ Josh Siepel University of Sussex research on Creative Industries in Greater Brighton

Federation cited research claiming that over 400,000 creative jobs could be lost this year, with the UK creative industries projected to lose £1.4 billion a week in revenue in 2020.

The Government's announcement of £1.57 billion rescue package for cultural organisations was welcomed on 5 June. However, some parts of the sector (leisure in particular) have yet to benefit from a specific package of support and still face many of the same problems they did in May.

Many staff in the hotel, food and accommodation and arts entertainment and recreation industries have been furloughed and may not be retained. As social distancing measures remain, capacity and volume of visitors is impacted especially where venues and locations cannot utilise outdoor space and the weather changes.

On the positive side, lockdown has prompted a huge interest in culture and creativity, including e-books, digital exhibitions and streamed theatre shows to crafts activities and community singing. The crisis has demonstrated how important culture can be in supporting mental wellbeing. Furthermore, work patterns that will become the 'new normal' are nothing new to creative enterprises and freelancers. They are used to working digitally and remotely, and have a wealth of experience in remote collaboration that will be useful to other sectors who are having to adapt.

The creative industries have been the fastest growing part of the UK economy in recent years. With appropriate support, they have the potential to lead the way in the 'bounce back' from COVID-19⁵. Through the DRIVA programme, the University of Brighton has developed a range of short-courses to support creative industries to respond to these challenges with 364 regional/local companies participating in recent events.

ACTIONS

- The Board welcomed the £1.57 billion Government support package for cultural organisations and will lobby Government for other support packages for cultural and heritage organisations currently deemed ineligible.
- The Board will work with partners such as Visit England, Experience West Sussex and Visit Brighton to support the visitor sector promote the region for staycation breaks and holidays.
- The Board should work with local trade bodies and Visit Brighton and Experience West Sussex to lobby national government for a Tourism Sector Deal for the region
- The Board will seek out new opportunities for business growth projects in tourism and creative industries to transform the pace of growth in these sectors, attracting new investment and moving into new markets to build back stronger.

⁵ LGA Creative Places – Supporting your local creative economy

4.3 CONNECTED

4.3.1 Digital

Digital has become the most critical part of the UK's infrastructure during the COVID-19 crisis. The expansion of home working and the shift towards e-commerce have accelerated the move towards digital. Digital companies can capitalise on these opportunities. Greater Brighton is home to a prosperous digital, media and tech sector, with one of the few 5G testbeds outside of a university. It's one of the most successful in the UK, with a turnover significantly exceeding £1 billion annually⁶ The region is also home to a significant cluster of online gaming companies. Most of these companies grew online presence, products and revenues during lockdown and are continuing to do so. Some have found it difficult to recruit staff with the right skills and computational power to programme. Data visualisation companies have also experienced the same restraints as demand for their services has grown, particularly in the Health sector.

The region also has a strong emerging position in Quantum Computing with the ambition for Brighton and Hove to become a Quantum city. Brighton and Hove and the University of Sussex and partners need to utilise existing technical expertise to create a new industry sector in Quantum, an ecosystem of high-tech companies surrounded by a relevant supply chain, enabling a skilled workforce and creating jobs.

However, digital exclusion exists within the region and whilst the offer of online training is good, not all unemployed can access this training.

ACTIONS

- The Board supports the West Sussex Gigabit programme and will push for a speedy roll out of ultrafast digital infrastructure in a collaborative way, particularly within the region's rural communities to avoid digital exclusion
- The Board should develop a report on digital inclusion provision at each local authority, specifying funding levels, providers, numbers reached and future plans
- The Board should continue with the development of the Greater Brighton Digital Action Plan and stimulate the adoption of digital technologies and skills among non-digital businesses and residents, including the potential to focus on specific sectors or settings.
- The Board and its partners should work with the business sector to support local training providers to provide digital skills training required for vacant positions.
- The Board should support C2C's plan for two urban innovation districts within Brighton and Hove to provide much needed lab and commercial space, to facilitate collaboration, innovation and commercialization.
- The Board should support establishing Brighton as a 'quantum city' with quantum skills training at the heart of any such a plan to make Brighton an incubator for future entrepreneurial activity as well as a hub to create a skilled workforce.

⁶ Wired Sussex 2020

4.3.2 Transport

Gatwick airport accounts for an economic footprint of 85,000 jobs, many based within the City Region and £5.3 billion towards GDP (2016 Oxford Economics). Aviation is one of the sectors most affected by COVID-19, with an unprecedented impact on Gatwick Airport and its associated workforce, businesses, supply chain and passengers. The reduction of international long-haul flights at Gatwick Airport, the temporary pausing of take-off and landing slots for BA and Virgin Atlantic and the knock-on effect to supply chains and the wider aviation sector means the impact is significant. The area's economy is particularly exposed with a lack of resilience in the wider economy, particularly within Crawley and Mid Sussex, when the airport is adversely affected by international events impacting on air travel. Economic recovery is likely to take time and considerable support⁷. Gatwick Airport Limited has developed its own 'ask of Government' including a sector specific extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme until April 2021 to protect the workforce; and for an approach to quarantine for inbound travellers based on county-by-country risk.

Lockdown has seen an increase in active travel modes such as walking and cycling and a decrease in public transport use. The Government is keen to see infrastructure in place to support sustainable travel modes and reduce congestion. Many local authorities in the region are increasing the number of cycle lanes and improving the public realm to facilitate walking whilst maintaining social distancing.

ACTIONS

- The Board should support Gatwick Airport's ask of Government in regard to the job Retention Scheme.
- The Board will support the local authority partner delivery of the Emergency Active Travel Fund schemes across the region such as the Bike Share scheme and improved cycling and walking infrastructure.
- The Board will support public transport providers to encourage users back onto the networks in a safe and socially distanced way
- The Board will lobby Network Rail to continue with the improvement plans to the Brighton Mainline.
- The Board will continue to lobby for improvements to the main transport corridors; A27, A259, A23 and A29.

⁷ WSCC Draft Economy Reset Plan

4.4 TALENTED

There were 25,870 claimants aged 16+ in West Sussex for June, over 2.5 times the number in March, though there has been some reduction in the last month. Crawley has seen the highest increase in the number of claimants from March – June 2020 (3,220) and Mid Sussex the highest percentage increase over March-June.

Young people (16-34 years) account for the majority of those claiming benefits and this is reflective of the UK as a whole. However, it is also believed that there is some under-reporting of job losses in this age range due to a reluctance to claim Job Seekers Allowance and/or Universal Credit if still living at home with parents.

In addition, many of those finding themselves out of work or facing significant job insecurity are experienced, high skilled individuals across a wide age profile.

The education, skills and employment landscape are being severely impacted, including opportunities for school leavers, apprenticeship provision, the impact on further and higher education settings, and graduate employment.

Crawley has the highest employment vulnerability of any town or city in the UK; 80% of the town's jobs have been identified as being impacted or vulnerable.

ACTIONS

- The Board will support the new 'Plan for Jobs announced by the Government in July including investment in apprenticeships, traineeships, the National Careers Service, and a new 'Kickstart Scheme' to fund the direct creation of high-quality jobs for young people at the highest risk of long-term unemployment. The Board will promote the scheme to employers and signpost to local providers'
- With a rise in unemployment, particularly in the 18-24 age range, and some sectors struggling to need the same number of employees as pre-COVID, the Board should promote schemes to support those who wish to retain and gain new skills for sectors that are growing such as Digital and Sustainability and Clean Growth.
- The Board and its partners should work closely with the region's colleges and employers to provide face to face and on-line professional development short courses, training and upskilling for unemployed so they can be matched to vacancies.
- The Board should support C2C's efforts with partners in the public and private sector to create a world-class innovation centre within Crawley, in the heart of Manor Royal, so Crawley can diversify to support other industries in addition to aviation.
- The Board supports WSCC, ESCC and Brighton and Hove to work together with the Sussex Learning Network to develop a collaborative 'pan Sussex' approach to ensuring education and training at all key stages is available locally; that learners of all ages are aware of them, including mature learners and employers; and progression pathways are highly visible.
- The Board should actively support the development of skills and employment opportunities that reflect a modern, low carbon economy. These include the huge opportunity around a large-scale retrofit programme, in which Greater Brighton could become a national exemplar.

- The Board should support the Coast to Capital LEP and the Energy Catapult with their bid to establish a Decarbonisation Skills Academy in the Greater Brighton City Region, with the support of BHCC, Crawley BC, Greater Brighton Metropolitan College, Chichester Colleges, and the University of Brighton. The Decarbonisation Skills Academy will aim to provide the skills training programmes required to deliver the skilled labour for large scale housing retrofit programmes.

4.5 RESILIENCE

Individuals, businesses and other institutions need to be agile and react decisively and positively to external forces, such as economic shocks or Government policy announcements. Resilience needs to be built in a proactive way, and technology will have an important role to play in embedding new solutions. For the Greater Brighton economy to continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and grow into the future, there is a need to build resilience and security into our blue, brown and green infrastructure. There is also a need to build resilience in our communities and residents.

ACTIONS

- The Hatch report identified the Greater Brighton region as a focus for sustainable growth. In fact, both the recently completed Greater Brighton Energy and Water plans are testament to this and provide a number of projects to help the region become more resilient. There is an opportunity to use the region's strengths in green technology and innovation to support this type of recovery. This also offers potential for reskilling within a green economy. With the government and LEP focus on building back greener there is an opportunity to support the retrofitting of existing housing and public sector stock identified within the Greater Brighton Energy Plan. Government incentives for this include the Green Homes Grant and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Grants. The Board (and composite local authorities) should bid for this funding.
- The Board should support the University of Brighton's leading role in the national Clean Growth UK Programme that has 1343 local business as members undertaking green growth activity within the region.
- The Board should create a Greater Brighton hydrogen hub to accelerate private sector production of green hydrogen drawing on the expertise of the University of Brighton's Advanced Engineering Centre and Clean Growth UK business network, as part of a wider focus on sustainable transport which reflects academic/industry partnerships in Advanced Engineering notably University of Brighton & Ricardo.
- The Board should support partners to deliver retrofit programmes for homes and buildings at a regional scale, working with leading private and community sector providers across the Greater Brighton area.
- Taking into account the Planning White Paper, the Board must support all new housing with green energy and support working from home (space and connectivity). Proximity to community social space must also be considered.

- The Board should deliver the region's digital and energy infrastructure pipeline of projects, aligning skills provision with industry specialisms to create new jobs and deliver a clean recovery.
- The Board must support the Crawley Recovery Taskforce and Recovery Board led by the Borough Council, including the Government's Towns Fund activities linked to the Crawley Growth Deal.
- The Board must support C2C's efforts with partners in the public and private sector to create a world-class innovation centre within Crawley, in the heart of Manor Royal, so Crawley can evolve to support other industries in addition to aviation.
- The Board must continue to develop the region's project pipeline, potentially leverage Local Growth Funding/Shared Prosperity Funding and highlight the potential of channelling future Government funding to the wider region and further profile and stimulate the local economy and attract growth companies.
- The Board will support positioning Brighton as a 'quantum city' with quantum skills supported by leading edge technological skills training at the heart of any such a plan to make Brighton an incubator for future knowledge economy entrepreneurial activity as well as a hub to create a highly skilled, creative workforce.

5.0 Communications

The COVID-19 pandemic and the need for recovery means Greater Brighton can no longer operate on a business as usual footing in terms of communications activity. There is great instability and government uncertainty. It is likely that there will be large-scale unemployment and many previously thriving sectors will continue to struggle. In addition, looking forward, Brexit and the Devolution White Paper will also impact on residents and businesses, as well as the identity of the region moving forward.

Whilst work will continue on site visits and case studies, social media channels including the website, press releases and publications in trade press, utilising GBEB 'experts', the Greater Brighton communications function is advocating a shift in emphasis for the coming year with 12 months of work focussed on four broad themes.

- Economic Recovery (including green recovery)
- Resources for our growing economy
- Infrastructure for our growing economy
- Skills for our growing economy.

The GB Comms team are developing an enhanced communications plan for 2020/21, in conjunction with the Chair, which will be presented to the Greater Brighton Economic Board in October.

6.0 Conclusion

The Greater Brighton region has been impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, notably in the creative, arts, visitor economy, transport and education sectors. The Greater Brighton Economic Board must continue to lobby government for support in these hard-hit sectors. The Board should consider the opportunities provided by new Government programmes and new funding streams; recognise national calls for a 'greener, fairer and more resilient' recovery and use this to frame recovery actions making reference to Government narrative on 'levelling-up'.

Building back a more resilient economy, environment and society is a key focus of this recovery strategy. The region has strong emerging positions in the digital and green sector. There is great potential to maximise the knowledge economy technologies and promote the accompanying skills that could have a transformative impact on the city region's offer and fortunes. Brighton and Hove and the Universities of Sussex and Brighton will build on the early example set by the quantum computing spin out to create a wider eco-system in quantum technologies and other high-tech companies surrounded by a relevant supply chain, attracting and growing a highly skilled workforce.

Parts of the region are home to digital and tech clusters and have seen demand and productivity grow but need a support for an increased digital workforce. Increased connectivity is key. Digital infrastructure in rural parts of Greater Brighton are set to be boosted after Mid Sussex District Council and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership secured £3.2 million from the Government. The new additional funding secured for the Digital Sussex Rural Connectivity Programme will accelerate the delivery of gigabit capable connections in the surrounding towns and villages.

The Board's energy and water plans demonstrate that the region is seizing the initiative to initiate, support and coordinate projects which will both help the environment and lead a sustainable economic recovery. The Board should focus on supporting delivery of the energy and water projects including retrofitting homes to improve energy efficiency, using solar power to supply energy to public buildings and the rail network and achieving water use neutrality in the region despite the influx of 97,000 more people by 2030. Supporting the skills capacity in these fields will be crucial.

It is important to consider recovery against the backdrop of Brexit. There will be opportunities and challenges to the economy presented by the UK's withdrawal from the EU. There may be job creation/availability at a time when unemployment has risen but matching skills to vacancies may be difficult.

Most important will be that the Board and its partners work collaboratively on the recommendations outlined in this plan. This will increase the potential added value and leverage the Board could gain by working with neighbouring organisations in achieving these objectives through partnership working.

GB communications strategy and plan September 2020 to July 2021

OVERVIEW

Greater Brighton - the fully-functioning economic area centered around the city of Brighton & Hove - has made great strides in recent years.

The City Region, which stretches from Brighton north to Gatwick and along much of the Sussex coast, continues to expand. With the addition of Arun District Council last year, it is now home to more than one million residents and 40,000 businesses with the economy growing steadily year-on-year for the past decade.

But growth is not the only focus. Greater Brighton continues to move beyond its remit of bringing government investment into the area; taking a leadership role on key strategic issues which have a crucial role to play in the lives of current and future residents. An inward investment strategy, which could create thousands of new jobs, and an ambitious infrastructure programme focussed on developing resilience around natural resources are being driven forward at a strategic level through a partnership approach.

Crucially, the stories emanating from Greater Brighton and its members are also being told in an accessible and more engaging way. This means more and more people - from CEOs through to active citizens - are becoming aware of the Greater Brighton project too. Crucial to this has been the recruitment of an expanded team of experienced business managers and enhanced communications function, provided by Adur & Worthing Councils.

But the COVID-19 pandemic means Greater Brighton can no longer operate on a business as usual footing. There is great instability, government uncertainty, a likely recession bringing large-scale unemployment and many thriving sectors - such as aviation and creative arts - left reeling due to the impact of social distancing.

Brexit and devolution also continue to loom, with both potentially having major impacts on residents and businesses, as well as the identity of the region moving forward.

With this in mind, the Greater Brighton communications function is advocating a shift in emphasis for the coming year with 12 months of work focussed on four broad themes.

At the heart is the work the Greater Brighton is doing around Economic Recovery. This will be supported by three key broad and interconnected themes: Resources for our growing economy; Infrastructure for our growing economy and Skills for our growing economy.

To reflect the board's increasing role as a regional leader in the locality and support the proposed inward investment strategy, increased emphasis will be placed on messaging to decision makers - be that in government, business or within the Greater Brighton network.

This will complement the work being done by local authorities (recovery in individual areas), business representatives and Coast to Capital LEP (funding, business support) and educational establishments (R&D, skills) - all of whom are represented on the Greater Brighton board.

COMMUNICATIONS SO FAR

The communications function of Greater Brighton is delivered by the team at Adur & Worthing Councils. Since 2018 there has been an increased emphasis on building the narrative of the City Region which has raised the profile of Greater Brighton's work at a regional and national level.

This includes:

- **Front foot external communications**, with content and analysis produced quickly and to a high-standard ...
- ... this includes **high-quality photographs and videos**...
- ... which generates **regular coverage in regional and trade publications**
- **Creation of a 12 month media plan** with the GB chairman
- **Strategic support and commissioning of quality materials** for strategic projects, such as the GB10 water and energy plans
- **Developing a team of experts** to provide analysis and collective commentary on strategic subjects, such as Adam Tickell's article on social enterprise in The MJ
- **Organising site visits** for GBEB leaders to major investment projects
- **Quick insightful analysis** on major policy issues
- **Support and coverage of major events**, such as GB workshops and conferences
- **Regular client contact** with councillors, GB business manager and other officer support staff, which includes face-to-face meetings
- **Produce regular content for the Greater Brighton website**
- **Attendance and promotion of GBEB meetings**
- **Established and run dedicated Greater Brighton social media channels**

The communications plan for 2020/21 will continue much of this work as it gives a strong foundation to develop a strategic outreach programme with economic recovery and green growth at its heart.

IMPACT OF COVID

An enhanced approach is suggested for one simple reason: the COVID-19 pandemic.

The introduction of a UK lockdown in March meant that in a matter of weeks the Greater Brighton economy suffered a jolt that it has not experienced for a century. The ONS predicts an 11 percent loss of productivity in the next 12 months, a figure replicated elsewhere in the UK.

A Hatch report commissioned by Greater Brighton noted that since March an estimated 7,700 businesses have had to temporarily close while, like elsewhere in the UK, around a third of workers aged 18-24 have been furloughed or lost their jobs.

Among the hardest hit sectors are manufacturing (estimated £770 million losses in 2020 – 23% total value), education (£638 million – 38%), arts & entertainment (£148 million – 42%) and wholesale and retail trade (£431 million – 21%).

With no support, the region's estimated year of recovery to achieve pre-COVID Gross Value Added (GVA) levels, the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, is 2028.

But, the report suggested that if GVA growth was doubled, then Greater Brighton could get back on track within three to five years – but this would require a number of sectors to continue to develop.

Communications will be crucial to driving the development and encouraging collaboration between senior leaders, particularly in advocating positive ways forward, promoting a strong vision for the area and developing strategic networking opportunities for those who have the power to lever in investment and present a strong united case for investment.

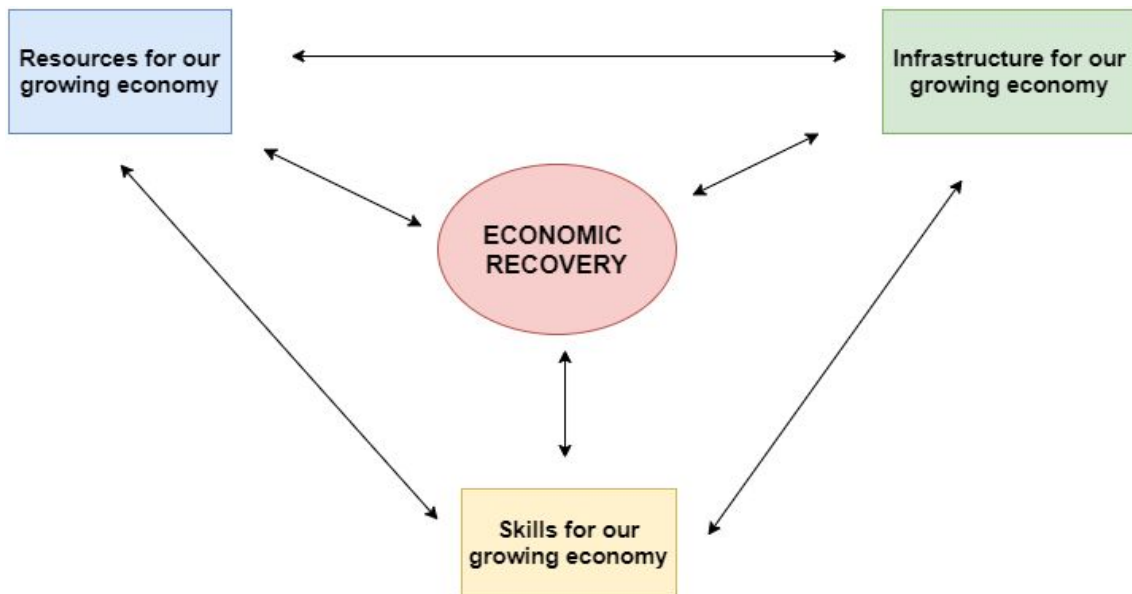
THEMES AND FOCUS

The devastating impact of COVID-19 and lockdown has meant that the pandemic has been the continuous strand of much of the board's work programme since April and will continue to be the focus for the next 12 months. This means there is a strong requirement for the communications strategy to be built around Greater Brighton's COVID response and subsequent recovery.

Around the core theme of economic recovery (which includes promoting green growth), it is proposed that three interconnected areas of focus are developed, namely:

- Resources for our growing economy
- Infrastructure for our growing economy
- Skills for our growing economy.

These have been developed after discussion with the Greater Brighton Chairman and business managers and reflect the priorities and work programme planned for the year ahead.



Each will have a period of focus on throughout the year, as outlined in the activity section of this report.

Other key themes are likely to emerge in the coming year including Brexit and the government's devolution agenda. While it is important that Greater Brighton has a stance and view on both of these topics, these will be developed on an ad hoc basis after liaison with the chairman and Greater Brighton business managers.

AUDIENCE

Primary

- Greater Brighton members
- Greater Brighton stakeholders
- Future investors

Secondary

- Greater Brighton businesses
- Partner communications teams
- Regional and trade media
- Government - regional and national

Tertiary

- Greater Brighton residents

PLATFORMS

Greater Brighton has a series of channels on which it can promote its own content (website, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) as well as an extremely successful approach to pitching and placing content into regional and trade publications. This focus on earned and owned content will remain for the coming year.

This year will see specific focus on LinkedIn, as this will enable Greater Brighton to reach senior stakeholders directly, participate in strategic conversations and promote a collective voice to its partnership approach.

Work will include revamping the company page and making use of the groups / showcase pages option, so that the four key themes mentioned above have an online presence. This will also allow the experts developed last year greater opportunity to advocate, lobby and generate discussion on their chosen topics. The pages will be actively promoted by the GB business managers (training can be provided by GB comms).

This approach will also encourage Greater Brighton content to be shared beyond the owned channels. Renewed focus will also be turned to revamping the dedicated internal channel to communications colleagues in an effort to encourage their organisations to share Greater Brighton content and aims.

Due to a lack of a marketing budget, there is little scope (and little to be gained) in developing paid for content, unless for specific large-scale campaigns.

ACTIVITY

To draw out the themes, it is proposed that the communications strategy places focus on each of the four key themes throughout the next year

During the period of focus, each theme will have a key activity at the board, lobbying issue, topic for partner promotion and a site visit or profile to a business which is either growing or recovering well from COVID.

Due to the pandemic, an agile approach to communications activities will be required. For this reason, some activities may be brought forward, delayed or cancelled. But the table below gives an indication of activities planned for the next 12 months.

This is in addition to the ongoing activities, such as promotion and attendance of board meetings, social media management and website curation.

Weekly client meetings with the Greater Brighton business managers will ensure the comms function is kept abreast of any emerging issues or priorities. There will also be ongoing regular discussions with Greater Brighton chairman, members and advocates at a range of formal and informal settings, such as GB officer programme board and networking events.

This plan will be fluid and change according to ongoing priorities. It will be reviewed formally every three months, along with regular client contact with chairman, leading board members and business managers.

<p>QUARTER ONE - Sept to Nov Theme - Economic recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chairman kick off video and interview ● Key activity at board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COVID recovery plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New website section ● Lobbying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BML mainline ● Partner promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green Infrastructure New Deal ● Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staycation business ● Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creation of new LinkedIn groups ○ LinkedIn training with GB business managers 	<p>QUARTER TWO - Nov to Jan Theme - Resources for our growing economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key activity at board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GB10 launch - Oct 20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Launch video ■ Video segments for social ■ New website section ● Partner promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GB10 pledges ● Lobbying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kelp forest ● Site visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Southern Water / South Downs National Park ● Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Independent food growers
<p>QUARTER THREE - Feb to Apr Theme - Infrastructure for our growing economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key activity at board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GB10 launch - Oct 20 ● Partner promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manor Royal - beyond aviation ● Lobbying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green transport schemes ● Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Digital gaming business ● Site visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hydrogen fuel facility at Ricardo 	<p>QUARTER FOUR - Apr to July Theme - Skills in our growing economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key activity at board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Skills / jobs - link to recovery plan ● Partner promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creative arts ● Lobbying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding for the arts / festivals ● Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medtech / pharmaceuticals ● Site visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ University of Brighton innovation hub

FURTHER INFORMATION

For discussion and any queries please contact:

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 12

Subject to approval at the next Housing & Customer Services Working Group meeting

5

HOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP

5 November 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Bennett (Chairman), Mrs Pendleton (Vice-Chair), Bicknell, Mrs Cooper, Mrs Haywood, Hughes and Ms Thurston

Apologies: None

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

11. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were approved as a correct record by the Working Group and will be signed by the Chairman as soon as practicably possible.

12. ADDITIONAL AND SELECTIVE LICENSING SCHEMES FOR HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

The Group Head of Technical Services advised Members of the Working Group that the report presented to them was as a result of a motion that was approved at the Full Council Meeting on 25 February 2020 that requested Officers to explore what options existed to introduce further controls on the number and quality of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). He advised that the report set out options to introduce an additional licensing scheme for houses in multiple occupation or a selective licensing scheme for the private rented sector as a means of addressing the quality of houses in multiple occupation. A separate report is being taken to Development Control Committee in relation to the potential controls for managing the quantity of HMOs. The Principal Environmental Officer then drew members attention to the following points contained within the report:

- Currently operate a mandatory Licensing scheme that is shared nationally across England that currently works with the criteria of:
 - 5 or more people sharing facilities
 - ensuring the licence holder is a fit and proper person
 - property inspected to ensure it meets minimum standards
 - the licence is up to maximum of 5 years at a time
- Additional Licensing schemes could be brought in where a local authority is aware that there are significant problems. The authority would need to expand the description of HMO's to be broader. The regime would be similar, and the advantages are outlined within the report it would enable us to inspect properties ensuring that they are brought up to standard and puts the onus on the landlord.

Housing & Customer Services Working Group - 5.11.20

- If we were to take this route there would be a 10-week consultation period
- Selective licensing scheme would apply to the entire private rented sector not just HMOs and applies to areas with significant issues such as migration, high levels of deprivation or an increase in crime rates, these issues would need to be evidenced in these areas in order to introduce this option. If such a scheme was to apply to the entire district, then it would require approval from the secretary of state. The Selective licensing scheme does have a larger scope.

The Group head then reminded Members that funding was required to research, if there was sufficient evidence of the criteria being met for either an Additional Licensing or Selective Licensing.

The Chairman then invited questions from Members of the Working Group a summary of the points raised is detailed below:

- Why had there not been more frequent inspections since 2012? It was explained that since 2012 proactive inspections of the private rented sector had only taken place in licensed HMOs, though other inspections had been undertaken where problems had been brought to the attention of the Council.
- Are there other seaside towns we could share best practices with? It was confirmed that Arun had been in contact with Brighton and Hove Council and could link up with them to learn more about their best practice process, however it was also highlighted that every district was different and while lessons could definitely be learnt the difference between districts would mean a bespoke approach.
- Were Officers confident that £20,000 would make a difference to the residents of Arun district? It was explained that there was no certainty that the research would conclude that the criteria to introduce either licensing regime had been met. However, if the criteria was met and the Council decided to introduce one of the licensing regimes, there would be significant benefit. The main benefit is that the licensing regime would allow the resourcing of an expanded inspection programme that would identify deficiencies in the quality/standard of housing, enabling the Council to require landlords to rectify.
- Could the extra cost of overseeing HMO's be recouped from landlords as they would be making a financial advantage from renting out their properties in this way? It was confirmed that, that would be the intention by bringing in the licensing regime.
- It was confirmed that there were a several different channels in which complaints regarding anti-social behaviour are received inclusive of work with the Community Team at Arun. It was hoped that from the research carried out it would be able to pinpoint much more clearly the root cause of these issues and the ability to evidence and track these would ultimately help the residents of Arun District.
- It was confirmed that the modelling would inform whether either regime criteria would be met and that the Council was not preferencing one over the other at this time.

The Working Group RECOMMEND THAT CABINET:

- 1) Agree officers continue to research and gather further evidence to help support whether additional HMO licensing (Housing Act 2004, s.56-60) or selective licensing of the private rented sector (Housing Act 2004, s.80-84) is justified. And;
- 2) Ask Full Council approves a supplementary estimate of up to £20,000 (which equates to a band D equivalent of £0.32) to commission the services and expertise to undertake the appropriate research and collation of data in order to support whether additional HMO Licensing or selective licensing of the private rented sector is justified.

13. CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services provided Members of the Working Party with an overview of his report. It was explained that the strategy also included the addition of a customer charter. He then highlighted that a reoccurring theme throughout the strategy was the importance of obtaining and acting on feedback to drive the strategy forward. An action plan had been included to help embed the strategy. He then explained that the pandemic had really highlighted the importance and significance of the role that a digital service provides for customers. In Summing up he advised Members that consultation had been sought with both senior management and staff and that the next step was to take the strategy to Cabinet once the draft had been finalised.

The Working Group noted the contents of the report.

14. WATER HYGIENE POLICY & MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Group Head of Residential Services provided Members with an overview of her report. She explained that the Water Hygiene Policy had been compiled to ensure that the Council could comply with regulations and manage any risks for all its properties as well as clearly setting out the Councils responsibilities and its Contractors responsibilities.

The Chairman then invited comments from Members and a summary of key points raised is below:

- It was advised that an electrical safety policy would be brought to the Working Group in February 2021 and it was confirmed that a specialist contractor was used to identify any risks and undertake work. Some further questions were asked in relation to the removal of lead piping being removed and replaced with plastic. Advice was given that this level of detail is covered within the terms and conditions during the procurement of the contractor and would be documented within their risk assessments which would be separate from the policy.

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- It was asked if anyone had contracted any of the illnesses detailed within the policy and could it be proven that it was from the water. It was confirmed that there had certainly not been any cases during the Group Head of Residential Services time with the Council, she further explained that weekly and monthly testing was completed by contractors and so the Council would be aware very quickly should there be an outbreak, that would require action to be taken.

The Working Group RECOMMEND TO CABINET that:

- 2) the Water Safety Policy 2020 be adopted
- 3) delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Residential Services to make minor changes to the policy and plan

15. GAS SAFETY POLICY & MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Group Head of Residential Services provided Members of the Working Group with an overview of her report. It was explained that the policy had been compiled to ensure that the Council could comply with the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England and that the request of the Working Group was for them to recommend to Cabinet this policy for approval to allow managers to implement with Council contractors and staff.

The Chairman then invited comments from Members where it was discussed that under section 2.5 of the policy it referred to monitors to be fitted by 2021 and could that be extended to also dictate that batteries would be changed on an annual basis. Also, at section 2.6 it states that the Council would remove and isolate gas fires by December 2021, the question was asked if this meant all gas fires would be removed? It was confirmed that the Group Head of Residential Services would need to check but it was her understanding that all gas fires would be removed and in reference to the request to document an annual change for batteries that it was already included in the safety checks.

The Chairman then put forward a proposal which was seconded for the wording for part 2 of the recommendation to be amended to read as:

- 2) delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Residential Services and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the H&CS Working Group to make minor changes to the policy

After a short discussion this proposal was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

The Working Group then returned to the substantive recommendation and RECOMMEND TO CABINET that:

- 1) The Gas Safety Policy October 2020 be approved
- 2) delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Residential Services and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the H&CS Working Group to make minor changes to the policy

16. REPORT BACK FROM CABINET/FULL COUNCIL

The Chairman confirmed that the recommendations made at the Working Groups last meeting on 21 July 2020, were approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 21 September 2020.

The working Group noted this update.

17. WORK PROGRAMME 2020/2021

The Group Head of Residential Services presented the work programme to Members advising that the electrical safety policy and the repairs policy would be brought to the Working Group in February 2021. Further to this she advised that the Income Recovery Policy was subject to a corporate review due to the breathing space policy that has been recently introduced.

The Working Group noted the update.

(The meeting concluded at 6.58 pm)

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