



Public Document Pack

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29 May 2020

LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Littlehampton Regeneration Subcommittee will be held on **Wednesday 10 June 2020 at 6.00 p.m.** and you are requested to attend.

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 viewed here [click here](#)

Members: Councillors Miss Seex (Chairman), B Blanchard-Cooper (Vice-Chair), Bicknell, Buckland, Cooper, Goodheart, Gunner, Miss Rhodes and Dr Walsh

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declarations of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this 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
- c) the nature of the interest

3. **MINUTES**

(Pages 1 - 8)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2019 (attached).

4. **ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA WHICH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

5. **LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS**

The Subcommittee will receive a presentation from Mr Tim South, Principal Consultant, LDA Design.

6. **ST MARTINS CAR PARK**

(Pages 9 - 12)

This report is asking members to support the proposal that officers investigate development options for the St Martins car park site.

7. **BUSINESS SUPPORT ENTERPRISE UPDATE**

(Pages 13 - 18)

This report is to bring Members up to date with the services provided to local businesses and the progress being made with those services.

8. **SUMMARY OF TOURISM SUPPORT CURRENTLY PROVIDED BY ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

(Pages 19 - 28)

Arun District Council supports tourism in many ways, with several departments working hard to keep the district attractive, clean and safe.

Specific Tourism Support sits within the Economy Group and provides a range of initiatives managed by the Tourism Business Development Officer, covering many different areas of activity.

This report sets out the key activities that are either led by the Council or that we play a significant role in delivering and includes an update on the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

9. **LITTLEHAMPTON POSITION STATEMENT FOR JUNE 2020** (Pages 29 - 34)

To receive and note the Position Statement.

Note : Report is attached for all Members of the Council only and the press (excluding exempt items). Copies of reports can be obtained on request from the Committee Manager.

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.

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<<https://www.arun.gov.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n12353.pdf&ver=12365>>

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LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

18 November 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Miss Seex (Chairman), B Blanchard-Cooper (Vice-Chair), Mrs Baker, Mrs Caffyn, Cooper, Gunner, Mrs Haywood, Miss Rhodes and Dr Walsh.

Councillor Bicknell was also present during the meeting.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of Personal Interest were made:-

- Councillor Miss Seex as a Member of Littlehampton Town Council and also as a Member of the Chichester Business Improvement District [BID]
- Councillor Dr Walsh as a member of Littlehampton Town Council and West Sussex County Council.
- Councillors Mrs Baker, Miss Rhodes and B Blanchard-Cooper as Members of Littlehampton Town Council.

13. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2019 were approved as a correct record by the Sub-Committee and signed by the Chairman.

14. ARUN PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Chairman outlined that in view of the concerns raised at Full Council on 13 November 2019 relating to the role of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee in considering this item, she was putting forward her suggestions as to how this matter be handled by the Sub-Committee.

As confirmed at Full Council, Cabinet has been listed in the Forward Plan as the decision taker on a new Order and the date for the decision to be taken would be the meeting of Cabinet on 13 January 2020. As a result of the debate at Full Council, the Community Manager was now reviewing the legislation and what happened when the last Order was made to confirm whether this should remain a Cabinet decision or should form a recommendation going forward to a future meeting of Full Council.

Discussions were ongoing with the Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing, Councillor Mrs Yeates, in terms of whether there should be any change to the current timelines for a decision as the Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley, who was also the Chairman of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee, had agreed to look at this when this had been debated at Full Council.

The Chairman suggested that as a Sub-Committee, Members views be listed and compiled to make a formal response to the consultation exercise but that this would not form a recommendation to Full Council. Instead, any special observations would be reflected in the Minutes forming the Sub-Committee's response for feeding into the consultation exercise.

Having received the Sub-Committee's approval to this way forward, the Chairman then invited the Community Manager to present her report.

The Community Manager firstly reminded Members that the current Order did not expire until the end of March 2020. It had been introduced by the Council in April 2017 and this was why there had been the need for it to be reviewed. Legislation required the Council to undertake a period of public consultation to determine whether the Order should be extended, amended or discharged. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 granted local authorities the opportunity to introduce PSPOs as a way of tackling persistent or on-going nuisance identified in specific locations where it was having a detrimental effect on the quality of life. Public consultation had commenced on 24 September and ended on 24 October 2019. This Sub-Committee was being invited to submit its views which could be added to the feedback received from local businesses and residents in respect of two sections. Section 1 which was tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour (Bognor Regis and Littlehampton) and Section 2 tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour for parks, opens spaces and foreshores.

Members were advised that the new proposed PSPO areas had been significantly reduced compared to the current Order. This change was a result of the difficulty in enforcing the dispersal powers. The new areas specifically related to the Town Centres of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton where there was evidence of constant anti-social and nuisance behaviour. Members were asked to remember that the resources required to enforce all PSPO prohibitions needed to be considered when deciding on the restrictions to be included.

A lengthy debate took place in which various views and concerns were raised. These have been summarised below with the Community Manager ensuring that they would form part of the response to the PSPO consultation when considered by Cabinet early next year.

- It was clear that wide reaching consultation had been undertaken identifying that businesses and residents in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis were of the view that both of these Town Centres had the same concerns in terms of anti-social and nuisance behaviour. In view of these problems, which were not experienced in the wider District, this was why it was proposed that the new areas covered by the PSPO would specifically relate to these Town Centres. This change was also as a result of the difficulty in enforcing the dispersal powers. By reducing the designated area, it was hoped that people could be moved from the Town Centre if they were caught causing anti-social behaviour.

- It was recognised that there was a drinking and public disorder problem in Littlehampton's Town Centre. This problem needed to be addressed and so there was support for the smaller restricted areas to make the Order effective.
- Concern was expressed by a couple of Members that reducing the proposed PSPO areas would result in anti-social and nuisance behaviour being migrated out to surrounding villages. Rustington was cited as a prime example.
- This was disputed by some Members as it had to be acknowledged that nuisance was caused by people who were on foot, they did not use transport, they were local trouble makers and so needed to be dealt with locally.
- Had Town and Parish Councils been consulted? The Community Manager confirmed that all Members of the Council and all Town and Parish Councils had been invited to take part in the consultation exercise. To date only Bognor Regis and Littlehampton Town Council had responded. No individual Members of the Council had submitted a response.
- Reducing the PSPO areas would allow for more targeted enforcement to take place.
- If the PSPO was approved with reduced areas, could it be reviewed in the future if there was evidence to prove that the significantly reduced areas within the Order were not working. The Community Manager responded stating that there was always the opportunity to review the PSPO and that if there was evidence to back up change, then this could be reviewed.
- The two Town Centres had many areas where anti-social behaviour had an impact for residents and so this was why the restrictions to focus on these areas had to be very carefully considered.
- With Appendix B, what area of Rustington did the restrictions run into? It was explained that this illustrated the proposed alcohol restriction to be applied in Littlehampton in relation to foreshore areas.
- It was felt that this restriction should apply to cycling and the Community Manager undertook to take this on board.
- The Sub-Committee agreed that a Cycling Strategy needed to be compiled and agreed by the Council sometime in the future.

15. VISITOR INFORMATION PROVISION IN LITTLEHAMPTON

The Sub-Committee received a report updating Members on the sources of Visitor Information provision within the Town since the closure of the Look and Sea Centre on 31 August 2018.

Since the Council made the decision to not provide a staffed VIC in the Look & Sea, the Council had been charged to explore alternative ways to provide a physical VIC presence in the Town, in addition to the existing information sources such as the Sussex by the Sea website; social media; the printed visitor guide; and a destination marketing and promotion facility.

Members were updated on work that had been undertaken to date. It had been decided to work with a variety of existing local businesses and organisations in various locations such as the Town Centre; riverside, seafront and West Beach. The Tourism Officer confirmed that nine businesses/organisations had agreed to host information in the form of tourist information leaflets and event posters and that volunteers/staff could also assist with visitor enquiries. These new partner businesses were known as Littlehampton Local Visitor Information Points (LLVIPs) and their locations had been set out within the report. They had already reported the benefit of LLVIPS in terms of experiencing an increased footfall from visitors entering their premises. To date this had been reported as being a positive experience.

Varying questions were raised by the Sub-Committee. Offices were asked to explore providing additional LLVIPS in new locations. Littlehampton Railway Station was seen to be an obvious choice. It was explained that work was ongoing and that there was a space capacity issue to overcome first in terms of where to display leaflets in obvious places like the waiting room area or ticket office and/or refreshment area which were all open at different times. Members asked whether, as part of the ongoing negotiations, if it would be possible to explore providing an electronic screen in the station as this had been successfully trialled last year at Bognor Regis and seemed to be the most efficient and effective way of advertising Town events and Town issues. The Littlehampton Harbour Board, which had plenty of downstairs space was also highlighted as a possible and appropriate LLVIP venue for Officers to explore taking into consideration its prime location on the Riverside Walkway. The Tourism Officer explained that the Harbour Board Office was already included in the nine LLVIP locations. The new Littlehampton Wave was also identified as a 'must have' location.

Discussion then turned to the Sussex by the Sea website and the issues that had been raised at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee in June 2019. There were concerns that visitors might not easily associate this link to finding events and attractions in the District. The Group Head of Economy responded stating that this fact had been recognised and that a review would be taking place as the web site was dated and needed a refresh. Officers were looking at a range of tools as part of this review which would revamp the website completely. In view of the interest from Members on what would form the review, it was agreed that an update would be provided to the Sub-Committee's next meeting.

The Sub-Committee then noted the content of the report and the updates provided at the meeting.

16. LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION POSITION STATEMENT

In receiving and noting the Position Statement, particular discussion took place on the following main topical projects:-

- **Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Scheme** – Further information was provided by the Town Centre Regeneration Officer confirming that over the Summer a funding bid had been submitted to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund in the sum of £1.38m to fund delivery of the next phase of public realm improvements. With the agreement of the Leader of the Council, a further bid had been submitted bringing the final total up to £2.3m to deliver Phase 3 of the programme. A grant of £564k had been awarded for Phase 3, however, this fell short of the full amount needed to deliver the scheme [£900k]. In liaison and conjunction with Littlehampton Town Council, Arun and LTC were topping up the outstanding money so the full scheme could be delivered to include the Beach Road element. The next step was for Officers to meet with the scheme's designers, LDA Designs, who would be working up more detailed design specifications by February 2020. The Group Head of Economy outlined that it would benefit Members if she could organise a "walk through" of the scheme to highlight how it would work using maps and drawings so that the Sub-Committee could see and understand exactly what was being proposed. Over the Summer months Officers had liaised with traders to gain their understanding and views on some of the issues that would need to be taken into consideration for the next phase. The issue of vehicles using the High Street for deliveries had been the main concern and so Officers were gathering more data on this. In response, Members commented that it was vital to sort out the mixed paving for this aspect of the scheme as it was felt that a flat plaza could lead to dangerous confusion between pedestrians and vehicles. It was Members' wish that this viewpoint be forwarded onto the designers. It was felt vital that the Arcade needed to be included as part of this phase to show that it was an integral and welcoming part of the High Street. It was hoped that lighting would be fully updated in line with the rest of the High Street. Further points made were:
 - Would the 'walk through' be for information purposes or would Members have an opportunity to make comments that would be taken into consideration?
 - Concern was expressed over accessibility and paving surfaces. It was outlined that there was the need to ensure that those with disabilities would be able to access all new paving areas and that these would be appropriate.
 - The placement of trees was important
 - Precise timeframes for the project were requested.
 - How were traders' views being formulated and incorporated?
 - Members asked to see the survey results so that they had the opportunity to comment
 - The Group Head of Economy outlined that it had taken a huge Officer resource to get the project to this point. The views of

Members would form part of the next stage of work. The intention was to ensure that Members were fully consulted on each stage of the project and not excluded from the decision making process. Communication with traders and stakeholders would also continue to take place. Now that the bids had been submitted the Officer team could focus on the next stages of work.

- A request was made to see the measures of success.
- Information was requested on traffic flows around the railway station seen as key information.
- The Chairman thanked Officers for their work undertaken in securing the money and she reassured Members that this work had taken place in consultation with Members. The next steps were cost evaluation looking at every part of the scheme and affordability. Engineering, construction and work on traffic regulation orders then needed to take place. This was a huge piece of work and Members needed to appreciate the lead in time for this and as this involved a lot of background work first before any physical advantage would be seen.
- It was outlined that it was hoped to be able to put on a display in one of the empty shops, if possible, to set out the next stages. The key stages of the next part of the project were then outlined by the Group Head of Economy. It was hoped that some work would commence during Summer 2020. Traders would be given notice of any works starting.
- **Town Centre Safety** – Detailed discussion took place on a number of issues: -
 - An update was provided following the launch of the Littlehampton Traders' Partnership DISC scheme, which was supported by the Police and was working well, this was being led by the traders themselves who had been issuing banning orders for their own shops.
 - Littlehampton Shopwatch – this had merged with the DISC scheme.
- **Town Traders Partnership** – during the Summer WSCC had introduced a new charging regime whereby tables and chairs situated on the highway would incur a cost. The Partnership was strongly against this proposal and conducted a 'sit-in'. The Highways Manager had since confirmed that this decision was being reviewed and that options would be presented to the Cabinet Member for Highways at WSCC soon.

A Traders Breakfast meeting would be taking place on 3 December 2019 and the new PSCO would be in attendance.
- **Markets & Events** – the festive lights switch-on had been moved to this Friday, 22 November 2019. A request was made that the footfall for this event be recorded as this would provide useful information. It was explained that WSCC had terminated funding for this mechanism. Questions were asked about how the Council used Twitter to promote its own and other events as the light switch on could not be found on social media. It was agreed that this would be looked at. The Friday market date had also been changed as a result of the switch-on and concern was expressed that there was no mention of this on social media. Discussion then focused on the

market and its range and quality of stalls. It was explained that this was under review and that a full update would be provided to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee. The Chairman asked if a survey of the business could be undertaken to assess if there were footfall increases on market days. She wanted to know if the market was beneficial and if there were historical records that could be used as additional information gathering tool. This led to discussion that there was the need to look at using the Greens on the seafront more to promote bigger events that would bring visitors to the Town. Mention was made of organising a Sussex Food Festival as an example.

- **New Café and Watersports Venue** – The Group Head of Economy confirmed that having spoken to the operator, this project was now moving forward and that foundation work would be starting soon.
- **Shopfront Grants** – The Business Development Manager explained in more detail the shopfront grant scheme and the latest round of awards that had been made. She outlined that there was still an opportunity for businesses to apply which was important for those wanting to upgrade their shopfronts. A further bid for retail training and shopfront enhancement was imminent - this was being put together by Chichester District Council. More details would be provided to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee. As there was concern expressed about the poor quality of many shopfront facias in the Town, the question was asked if bidding could include making improvements to floors above a shop premises. This was confirmed as being possible, as long as an application had been submitted to include the shopfront area. Members asked if this could be publicised and made clear in the guidance document. Further discussion saw Members asking if Section 215 letters could be issued to landlords to motivate further applications to this scheme. Officers were also asked to design and distribute to the Town a one-off leaflet to circulate ahead of the next round of bids which would take place in the Spring. It was outlined that this was all possible, but funding was quite limited and so it was not ideal to raise hopes until it was known if the further funding bid was successful
- **Littlehampton Town Centre Management** – An update was provided on the Littlehampton railway where it was explained that a decision was still awaited on the outcome of the £50k allocation to the station from the GTR Passenger Fund for priority improvements to waiting room and toilet. Nothing had been confirmed about how this money would be allocated. One Member expressed concern as questions about this had been raised at the last meeting in June and still no progress had been made. It was agreed that further pressure would be put onto the Southcoast Line Group to push for a conclusion.
- **North of Littlehampton Public Art Project** – There was nothing further to add.
- **Gigabit West Sussex** – progress was moving forward in a positive way and the next phase which was the second roll-out of connections with City Fibre was explained.
- **Fitzalan Link** – there were nothing further to add.

- **Look & Sea** – there was nothing further to add as this had been discussed as part of an earlier agenda item.
- **Visitor Information Points** - again, this had been discussed in full as part of an earlier agenda item.
- **Media Coverage/Marketing** - work was continuing with the Communications Team in pulling together a series of short videos promoting independent businesses in the Town. A video had been made about one business in the Arcade and one on Beach Road, future videos were planned for a business in East Street and Manor Parade. Feedback received to date was positive and it was outlined that a survey would be undertaken with all those who had taken part to assess the worth of this exercise. Some Members stated that they were not aware of these videos and that these could not be found on Twitter or Sussex by the Sea.
 - The Chairman raised the issue of the Littlehampton Health Centre as the NHS had confirmed that it no longer wished to own property. She stated that she wished to progress this matter and had met with the Council's Chief Executive to look at possible solutions.

(The meeting concluded at 7.47 pm)

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUBCOMMITTEE ON 10TH JUNE 2020

PART A : REPORT

SUBJECT: ST MARTINS CAR PARK

REPORT AUTHOR: Denise Vine

DATE: 6th May 2020

EXTN: 37846

PORTFOLIO AREA: Economy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report is asking members to support the proposal that officers investigate development options for the St Martins car park site.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Members support the proposal that officers investigate development options for the St Martins car park site.**

1. BACKGROUND:

The St Martins car park is located to the north of the main high street in Littlehampton. The car park is owned by the council and was identified as a key development opportunity in the 2004 'The Littlehampton Vision' report. Development options for the site and their viability have been considered on several occasions.

A feasibility study was undertaken in 2008 which identified several development options for the site and demonstrated the opportunity to improve the retail offer and diversity of the town through redevelopment but concluded this would not be viable without public sector funding.

A further report in 2010 concluded that to create a viable mixed scheme and provide a public car park would require a significant public sector capital contribution.

The most recent feasibility study by Turner Townsend consultants in 2013 considered a combination of mixed uses including leisure, retail and car parking.

The report concluded that taking into consideration all the site constraints none of the proposed options would be financially viable and therefore would not attract a developer to bring them forward without some form of public sector subsidy. It was decided, at that

time, not to progress the development options any further.

Since then the local plan has been adopted and the site has been identified as part of the Littlehampton Growth Area. This encourages development which supports the towns retail, leisure and tourism functions and maintains appropriate levels of car parking. This could include residential development for both generating footfall and also to help cross subsidise the provision of other uses-

Officers believe it is now timely to open discussions with potential development partners for some of the St Martins Car Park which could facilitate the provision of community uses as part of a mixed-use development. Considering the previous extensive feasibility work that has been completed and the conclusions from that that certain mixed uses are not viable; officers would like to explore what proposals could provide the returns that a developer would require and also bring the greatest benefit to the local community.

Since the last feasibility study was prepared in 2013 the nearby building, formally occupied by Waitrose, has become vacant. A planning application for residential development was recently refused on appeal due to design and development density concerns. Officers would take this potential development opportunity site into consideration as the options for the St. Martins site are explored.

Any options that came forward would be considered in a full report in the future. At this stage, and considering the viability issues previously identified, officers would wish to be less prescriptive in these discussions about what the council would wish to see included in the development to enable a viable scheme to be developed and engender commercial interest. If this can be achieved, then more detailed discussions can take place to explore what additionality can be brought to the scheme and that would meet the council's requirements.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

Officers investigate potential development options for the St Martins car park, Littlehampton and bring a further report to members with conclusions and recommendations for options for a way forward for the development of the site.

3. OPTIONS:

- a. Not to investigate potential development options – this will hinder any progress of bringing forward viable development on this site.
- b. To investigate potential development options – this will provide the council with some understanding of the commercial interest and viability of this site and can inform future recommendations.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:

YES

NO

Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
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		X
Legal		X
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		X
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X
Sustainability		X
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		
6. IMPLICATIONS: There are no implications		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: This will help to determine the commercial potential of development of this key development site and help inform future development decisions going forward.
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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: Remember to list background papers and insert required links Equality Impact Assessment [please delete if not required]
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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUBCOMMITTEE ON 10 JUNE 2020

PART A : REPORT

SUBJECT: Business Support and Enterprise in Arun

REPORT AUTHOR: Miriam Nicholls, Business Development Manager

DATE: 21st May 2020

EXTN: 37845

PORTFOLIO AREA: Economy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This report is to bring Members up to date with the services provided to local businesses and the progress being made with those services.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Members are requested to recommend to Full Council that:

- a. The contents of the report are noted

1. **BACKGROUND:** A wide range of business support and enterprise services are delivered across the district. Some are delivered in partnership whilst others are direct delivery. Many are ongoing services which have been running for some time, others are new and there are some that are being developed.

A huge knowledge base of our local business community has been amassed and this is used to shape the services that are provided.

This report provides a summary of each of the initiatives that are currently running and will be updated on a regular basis.

2. **CURRENT PROJECTS AND SERVICES**

The Arun Business Partnership – this started as the Littlehampton Business Partnership, established to bring local businesses together and to encourage them to be aware of the range, depth and quality of their local business colleagues which, in turn, would mean that they could do business together. After four years of productive networking and learning, the Partnership expanded to include Bognor Regis. Each side of the Partnership met separately twice a year, with joint meetings being held every six months. In December 2006, Arundel officially joined the Partnership and the full Arun Business Partnership was born.

Through the Partnership, strategic links have been made with local education providers, companies and private/public sector organisations. From training events to information dissemination, contact building to contract signing, the Business Partnership helps companies grow by encouraging them to get to know each other and to work together.

In 2016 the decision was taken to establish The Arun Business Partnership as a Community Interest Company. This was to allow the Partnership to take advantage of opportunities that were not available to an unincorporated body such as the Partnership then was.

Networking Meetings - four meetings are held each year. They are deliberately informal as businesses tell us they prefer it that way. Venues are generally provided free of charge by local companies and frequently the hosting venue takes the opportunity to showcase their offer in some way. We currently have a list of venues wishing to host meetings. On average 60 businesses attend each meeting and feedback is excellent.

Businesses enjoy the relaxed style and new business people particularly enjoy the way in which the networking takes place as it provides them with an easy way to talk with others. We have, occasionally, attempted to introduce a different format but have been very clearly told by those attending that they prefer the way things are presently done.

Business of the Year Awards - the Business of the Year event is held each November. Companies are nominated for 19 Awards, each of which is sponsored by a local business or organisation. The Awards are presented at an evening event when around 250 local business people gather to celebrate the achievements of their colleagues.

The 2019 event was held at The Hilton Avisford Park Hotel, a new venue having held the Awards event at Butlins for many years. 250 local business people gathered together to celebrate just a fraction of the success of our local business community. The 2020 event is already booked, and sponsors will shortly be contacted to ascertain their support for this year. We already have a waiting list of businesses wishing to be involved as sponsors so may introduce extra opportunities to involve as many as possible.

Monthly E-Newsletter - the e-newsletter goes out to around 3,000 businesses at the beginning of each month. Information is gathered from a range of sources including businesses themselves. Items include everything from reports on visits to local companies to opportunities for grants and awards, special offers and business events being held locally. The aim of the newsletter is to keep companies up to date with what is happening and for them to publicise their news in order that everyone is aware of the range and quality of local companies and the opportunities that are available.

Web Site – www.arunbusinesspartnership.co.uk & Social Media - the Arun Business Partnership web site was refreshed in 2018 by a local company at a very small cost and works well, allowing us to promote our offer and point visitors to the site in the right direction. The Partnership also has a LinkedIn Group and a Facebook page which are regularly used to pass around information and for discussions.

Worklessness - the Council were the winning bidders in 2013 for a contract to work alongside the Department of Work & Employment in gaining work experience placements for 18-24 year olds. This work was carried out by the company that works alongside Arun to look after the Business Partnership, Connects Media. The DWP were delighted with our approach to the work and all our targets were exceeded.

Unfortunately, towards the end of our contract period, the DWP changed the way in which work was contracted and moved to a Framework system. Providers were required to upload details of their services and the DWP would contact them if a need was found for their 'offer'. Whilst The Council, due to the delivery method it employed, were able to be flexible with that delivery, this method of contracting could not be accommodated and no further contracts were undertaken.

Other West Sussex District and Borough Councils were subject to the same situation and, via this Council and Horsham District Council, a bid was submitted to the Strategic Infrastructure Fund to continue the work that had been started. This bid was successful and a new project, Journey to Work, was started. A West Sussex Co-Ordinator was recruited and it is part of his role to find funding to allow the project to continue long term.

This Council has, once again, employed the same delivery team and targets are being exceeded. Most work is on a one to one basis and currently over 100 clients are being assisted. Many clients, the majority of whom have been out of work for an extended period have been found paid work, voluntary work or training.

Learning Events – In 2018 a bid was submitted, to the Strategic Infrastructure Fund, from all West Sussex District and Borough Councils to provide a fund for training retailers. This bid was successful, and during 2019 a programme of training took place. Topics included

- HR Essentials
- Resilience to run your business
- Marketing
- Networking
- Smartphone photography
- GDPR
- Selling on the phone
- Pricing your product or service
- Business Planning
- First Aid

Whilst the training is aimed primarily at retailers to improve both their knowledge, their business and the customer experience, other businesses are encouraged to join the training events where it is appropriate, and space is available. There is still a small amount of funding remaining and more events are being arranged for this coming year.

Grants – two types of grant have been offered over the past year. The first, the LEAP Grant (Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform) followed the successful round of grant funding that was available for the same purpose in the previous two years. £72,000 was granted with match funding in excess of £150,000. The successful Bid that was made last year was for 2 years and a new round of grant funding commenced in April. Grants totalling just under £40,000 with match funding of £159,000 have been recommended. Another round of applications will be considered at the end of June.

The second grant pot of £50,000 has been available for Shop Front Improvements. That has now been exhausted with 37 retail units Arun-wide being upgraded with grant support. A further bid, again in conjunction with all other West Sussex Economic Development Teams, has been submitted and the outcome is awaited.

Business Visits – the Business Development Manager undertakes a programme of visits to companies of all sizes across the district. This allows businesses to identify a link within the Council to whom they can take any issues and for the Council to gather information about our local businesses and to know what the issues are within that community. Businesses tell us that they greatly appreciate this service and it certainly helps them to know who to approach within the Council.

Weekly Networking – at the request of businesses a weekly networking group was established some 3 years ago. Business Networking Bognor Regis (BNBR) meets each Thursday morning. It is a group of invited businesses and only one of each type of business is allowed. In the time it has been established BNBR has generated over £1.8M worth of business amongst its 26 members.

Following the success of this group 2 more have been established. The Littlehampton Business Circle meets each Wednesday morning. The Group has 20 regular members and has established a pattern of regular referrals and support for each other amongst those members.

Again, at the request of businesses a group was also established in Chichester. The Group started well and it has now been decided that it will run aside from the Arun Business Partnership.

Partnership Working – the Business Development Manager attends a range of regular meetings with partners and colleagues to make sure that the Council is aware of all opportunities for funding and support for our local business community and these are maximised. A large amount of work is carried out in Partnership with colleagues across West Sussex.

The University of Chichester is due to launch a new ‘Hot House’ support package for businesses across the LEP area and Arun’s Business Support Manager will be the local authority officer representative on the Project Steering Board.

General Help and Support – over the past 12 months almost 300 businesses have benefitted from a range of support provided by the Business Development Manager.

During the Covid Crisis – the Business Development Manager has been a key point of contact for businesses about a range of issues but primarily grants. During the first 6 weeks of lockdown over 800 enquires were taken and advice given. During this same time the newsletter was also very well employed in passing out critical information to businesses. 7 newsletters were sent, and many more

<p>businesses signed up for this service. This method is still being used but at a slower rate.</p> <p>Discretionary Grant Scheme – the Economic Development Team are leading on the delivery of the Discretionary Grant Scheme announced by Government on 6th May. At time of writing a scheme to cover all West Sussex Local Authorities is being written and beneath that a local scheme, to take account of local economic conditions, is also being produced. Members will be updated at the meeting.</p>		
<p>3. PROPOSAL(S):</p> <p>None, this report is for information only</p>		
<p>4. OPTIONS:</p> <p>None, this report is for information only</p>		
<p>5. CONSULTATION:</p> <p>None, this report is for information only</p>		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		x
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify)		x
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		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Other (please explain)		
<p>6. IMPLICATIONS:</p>		
<p>7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>		

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUB COMMITTEE ON 10 JUNE 2020

SUBJECT: Summary of tourism support currently provided by Arun District Council

REPORT AUTHOR: Margaret Murphy, Tourism Business Development Officer

DATE: 10th January and 27 May 2020

EXTN: 37859

PORTFOLIO AREA: Economy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Arun District Council supports tourism in many ways, with several departments working hard to keep the district attractive, clean and safe.

Specific Tourism Support sits within the Economy Group and provides a range of initiatives managed by the Tourism Business Development Officer, covering many different areas of activity.

This report sets out the key activities that are either led by the Council or that we play a significant role in delivering.

ADDENDUM – See 2.10

TOURISM SUPPORT PROVIDED TO LOCAL TOURISM & HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES
DURING THE 2020 COVID-19 LOCKDOWN PERIOD AND BEYOND

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

1. BACKGROUND:

The Arun district attracts approximately 4.04 million visitors per year generating a total spend of approximately £298.1 million (Source: Tourism South East, Economic Impact of Tourism Report 2018) indicating that the Arun District continues to be an attractive, thriving place in which to visit, as well as to live and work in. See Item 2 and link to full Economic Impact report as a Background Paper.

Arun District Council supports tourism in many ways. There is currently one full time equivalent post, the Tourism Business Development Officer, who works with a wide range of delivery partners, both within the Council and external partners on the following initiatives.

2. TOURISM INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

2.1 THE VALUE OF THE VISITOR ECONOMY TO THE DISTRICT

The Council currently commissions an annual report by the regional tourist board and industry experts Tourism South East. These reports are delivered each August / September for the previous full calendar year. The most recent edition we have is for 2018 which reports the following:

Key results for 2018:

- 4.04 million trips were undertaken
- 3.43 million day trips
- 0.61 million overnight visits
- 1.74 million nights in the area as a result of overnight trips
- £120.7 million spent by tourists during their visit to the area
- £10.06 million spent on average in the local economy every month
- £116.1 million generated by overnight visits
- £104.6 million generated from day trips
- £298.1 million spent in the local area as a result of tourism (taking into account multiplier effects)
- 5,972 jobs supported, both for residents and from those living nearby
- 4,560 tourism jobs directly supported
- 1,412 non-tourism related jobs supported (linked to multiplier spend from tourism)
- 13.0% of population employed as a result of tourism in Arun District

Attention is also drawn to page 3 of the report which provides further explanation of these figures plus pages 1 and 2 which provides the regional and national figures for comparison. The report is provided as a Background Paper and also available to view online at www.sussexbythesea.com/tourism-business-centre. The 2019 figures are expected in the late summer of 2020

Since the last 'Summary of Tourism Support' report (June 2017), the Council's Economy Group team have been working closely alongside neighbouring District Councils, in partnership with Coastal West Sussex and Experience West Sussex

This has led to many benefits including economies of scale, resources and skills for tourism marketing and projects across West Sussex.

2.2 PROMOTING THE ARUN DISTRICT TO VISITORS AND RESIDENTS

‘Sussex by the Sea’ is the tourism ‘brand’ of Arun District Council, widely recognised in printed publications, social media, lamp post banners and on search engines - it is used to promote the whole district to visitors and residents as the official source of tourist information.

Originally adopted in 1994 the brand is promoted using a suite of marketing tools to reach as wide an audience as possible and includes:

- Website and Social Media
- Visitor Guide and Visitor Information Points
- Destination Marketing

The Tourism Business Development Officer also supports a range of other tourism related activities including:

- Servicing the Visitor Information Points
- Visitor Enquiry handling: received via website, email, phone and post
- Working with the Council’s Event Officer and other Council departments
- Participating creatively via partners in projects, marketing networking, skills and training
- Sourcing and promoting local tourism business developments and news

2.3 WWW.SUSSEXBYTHESEA.COM

The tourism website and database is currently managed by the Tourism Development Officer and hosted by Verseone Technologies who also provide the Council’s corporate website www.arun.gov.uk and database - managed by the Communications Team.

Commissioned in 2013, we are very aware that the Sussex by the Sea requires updating. We are in the process of reviewing how the online tourism presence will look and be delivered in the future.

As a Local Authority, Arun District Council’s Visitor Information still seems to be a ‘trusted’ source of information, but with the development of so much ‘FREE’ online technology the varied ways to deliver that information are more ‘fragmented’ and can in some cases be more resource and time consuming to utilise.

WEBSITE CONTENT

Visitors to the website www.sussexbythesea.com are currently able to find a wealth of information and managing this data is an ongoing and almost daily task to keep up to date.

As the core digital source of tourist information for many different aspects of Tourism Support and reference, it is estimated that on average at least 25 - 30% of any working week of the officer will be spent on the website and CMS database in one way or another.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS AND SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION

Google Analytics reports that for the full year to February 2020 there were 144,298 page views on the site, compared to 195,410 in the same period last year.

The Top pages viewed are: What's On, Bognor Regis, Littlehampton Attractions, Things to Do, Home, Where to Stay, Arundel Attractions, Arundel, Littlehampton

The most popular landing page continues to be "What's On", with 14,115 views in the current year to February 2020, compared to 18,431 in the previous year.

These figures are down in comparison to previous years, one reason maybe the continued rise in the use of Social Media and other online media as prime sources of shared information for many people. Facebook is being used increasingly by many organisations to publicise their events and for many people it is the first and often only place they search.

There is also growing competition from other local websites promoting the individual towns of the area, and their events. Some of these sites are new and growing; for example, Experience West Sussex and Love Bognor Regis, plus other commercial tourism sites.

2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA

The popularity and use of Social Media continues to grow and is still proving to be an effective free to use and powerful communications tool. The council uses the different platforms to promote our tourism offer in several ways.

'Sussex by the Sea' is very active on both Facebook and Twitter and these media have developed into a major and (crucially) a relatively quick way of transmitting 'live' tourist information to a wide and ever-growing audience.

The Facebook account currently has nearly 2012 followers (compared to 1200 as noted on the previous report in June 2017) and the Twitter page nearly 8000 followers compared to 6500 in June 2017.

2.5 THE SUSSEX BY THE SEA VISITOR GUIDE

The Sussex by the Sea visitor guide provides “Inspiration & Information” for Arundel, Bognor Regis, Littlehampton and The South Downs and continues to be the principle printed tourism marketing tool for the whole district, designed in house by the Council’s Design Team.

The decision was made in early 2019 to change the style of the guide, make each edition valid for two years instead of an annual production and to not include advertising. 100,000 copies of the new A5 size guide were printed in early 2019 and are distributed in several different ways

The guide is popular with visitors, residents and local tourism businesses and is available from: Leaflet Exchanges and networking events, local tourism businesses and local Visitor Information Points (approximately 7,000 copies so far this year)

As we move into the second year of this guide, the costs and efficacy of this approach will be reviewed in 2020 before starting on the next two-year edition for 2021/2022

2.6 VISITOR INFORMATION POINTS (VIPs)

The Council continues to work closely with partners to deliver a Visitor Information facility in all three district towns, each providing ‘call in and collect’ tourism leaflet facilities. This means that we can continue to offer a local customer facility alongside the online and print media.

There is currently one VIP each in Arundel & Bognor Regis and, since the closure of the Look & Sea Centre in 2018, several smaller VIPs within existing businesses and organisations in Littlehampton

ARUNDEL VISITOR INFORMATION POINT (VIP)

The Arundel Museum Society continues to host a tourism leaflet display for the town’s attractions and immediate Arun District, South Downs and Chichester area, inside the foyer of the town’s museum

There is no annual cost to the Council, apart from officer time and occasional small projects paid for from the tourism development budget.

BOGNOR REGIS VISITOR INFORMATION POINT (VIP)

As part of the Council’s Accommodation Review, the Visitor Information facility moved from the council owned building, previously occupied by the Observer Newspaper in January 2018.

Now located within the foyer of the Regis Centre this has developed into a good partnership with management and staff of Arun Arts Ltd, bringing tourist information to a lot more people who use the Regis Centre facilities and attend the wide range of shows and entertainment.

There is no direct cost to the Council for supplying the Visitor Information Facility, apart from officer time and small projects paid for from the tourism development budget as and when required, for example the Digital Screen and its annual licence.

LITTLEHAMPTON LOCAL VISITOR INFORMATION POINTS

With the closure of the Look & Sea VIC in August 2018 the decision was made to find other sites that could accommodate visitor information displays. A range of local businesses and retailers in Littlehampton now provide a Visitor Information Point (VIP) within their premises in the town centre, river side and seafront.

Each VIP is branded with signage and location maps to signpost to alternative information points if the businesses are closed.

2.7 TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Tourism Business Development Officer continues to work with the district's wide range of tourism businesses, encouraging and advising new contacts and helping existing businesses develop skills and quality, when time allows.

2.8 CUSTOMER SERVICE

Despite all the activity online, customer enquiries and visitor guide requests continue to arrive, can be around 10 - 20 per week at peak times, via the website, email, phone and occasional letter.

2.9 WORKING WITH TOURISM PARTNERS

A good relationship has been cultivated and continues with the tourism officers at all three town councils and 'Visit Arundel', collaborating and sharing information and marketing ideas and also working with the Tourism Lead Officer at The South Downs National Park Authority and other Sussex Destination Managers at destinations across West and East Sussex and regional and national sector partners.

COASTAL WEST SUSSEX AND 'EXPERIENCE WEST SUSSEX' TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

The Council continue to work closely with Coastal West Sussex, neighbouring District Councils and West Sussex County Council in a partnership to encourage more visitors across the county.

Arun's Chief Executive Officer Nigel Lynn, is the project sponsor of the Experience West Sussex Partnership on behalf of the Chief Executives Working Group.

The Experience West Sussex Partnership was established in 2018. All the local authorities across West Sussex work together with West Sussex County Council and the Coastal West Sussex Partnership to support the visitor economy. The Strategic Investment Fund (Business Rate Pool) is funding a four-year programme of work.

Arun District Council provide officer time to attend meetings, networking events, plus local knowledge of the district's tourism attractions, local images and copy, events information etc. The public face of this project and campaign is www.experiencewestsussex.com.

2.10 ADDENDUM - TOURISM SUPPORT PROVIDED TO LOCAL TOURISM & HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES DURING THE 2020 COVID-19 LOCKDOWN PERIOD AND BEYOND

Since the Prime Minister announced the lockdown advice for businesses on the 23rd March 2020 the Business and Regeneration Team have been exceptionally busy researching, collating and disseminating a vast range of relevant information and advice from Central Government, County & District Council departments and Business organisations; in order to assist, support and signpost local businesses to the most useful information, advice and grants available. The team are currently working on delivering the Discretionary Small Business Grant to those businesses who have not been eligible for other grants for whatever reason.

In support of the Hospitality and Tourism sector, the Tourism Business Development Officer has been working closely with sector partners at local, regional and national level on this task and has been using several media and other tools to gather and disseminate the information. Activities have included:

- Regular online and telephone meetings with colleagues at Visit Britain/England; Tourism South East Regional Tourism Organisation (formerly the Regional Tourist Board) and a South East England Destination Group of Tourism Officers, formed by Visit Britain to discuss issues, ideas and progress towards a recovery plan.
- Daily and weekly email updates from partners at: Visit Britain/England; Tourism South East, Experience West Sussex Partnership and UK Hospitality, who all pull together elements of the Government's daily updates, in very helpful and accessible reports.
- Providing regular and current information at the online Tourism Business Centre: <https://www.sussexbythesea.com/tourism-business-centre>
Hospitality businesses are encouraged to bookmark this site and to keep checking the page for helpful links to advice and support. Signposted links include the Arun District Council Business Support website, the Arun Business Partnership Newsletter plus specialist information from the industry and sector experts at county, regional and national level. Covid-19 messages to visitors are also regularly updated on a dedicated page on the website and via our social media channels.
- Regular email updates to our local hospitality database of approximately 500, including guidance on how to access support, opportunities to participate in information gathering surveys, and advice; e.g. how to keep engaged with customers and colleagues and providing 'good news' stories online and on social media to keep the interest in the destination going.

- Attending a series of three webinars “Survive, Revive and Thrive” with panellists of industry representatives and business experts, facilitated by Experience West Sussex. These webinars give the opportunity to hear first-hand from multiple local hospitality businesses on how the pandemic has affected them and early views on how a recovery could be planned. Recordings and minutes of those webinars are available at: <https://www.experiencewestsussex.com/survive-revive-and-thrive/>

All the above work has enabled the gathering of information on how the pandemic has affected our local tourism attractions, accommodation providers and other hospitality businesses. For example:

Arundel Castle

The Castle Manager has been keeping in contact with staff at home to keep morale up and with visitors via newsletters, social media, quizzes. Along with regular social media updates, they have also launched a new website where visitors can view the very popular annual Tulip and Allium Festivals which by the 5th May had nearly a million views online.

Butlin's, Bognor Regis

A priority has been staying connected with staff, to keep motivated, engaged and to access new training around social distancing on site and, with guests; advising on cancellation or deferment options on bookings and news from the team

Brookside Caravan Park, Lyminster.

Social isolation planning is well underway for when holiday parks are permitted to open to visitors, with a waiting list of potential bookings but, having to balance that demand with the requirements and concerns of the site's caravan owners and those key workers and temporarily 'homeless' people who have been housed on site during recent weeks.

Events

This sector has been affected considerably. All the local events, large and small that had been planned for the main season so far have been cancelled. This will affect the income of the charities and organisations who, with their many volunteers, organise and deliver a wide range of events throughout the district, all year round. Many are turning their thoughts to 2021 or even beyond for new dates of postponed events. Corporate events including weddings and conferences will have been hit hard too, with a knock on effect to employees, contractors, suppliers, entertainers and caterers, not to mention the customers who had booked venues for their special events.

Attractions:

All attractions have been closed on Government advice, but many have resorted to some very creative use of online content including, video tours, activities, and news including gardening tips from Head Gardener at Arundel Castle and Educational Tools for youngsters from the Arundel Wetlands Centre. A series of blogs highlighting these 'good news' stories has been created on the Sussex by the Sea

website and shared on social media, along with regular sharing of news direct from the attractions on our social channels.

Food & Drink and local retailers

Many have revised their business models creatively and are offering online ordering and delivery services for food, drink and art and craft supplies, Examples include: Pier Road Coffee and Art, Unique Knit & Sew, West Beach Café, Slindon Forge, and The Gravy Boat, Littlehampton, plus many others. There is a view that this may benefit those proactive smaller businesses by building loyalty from new and regular or returning customers, to the benefit of local economies and with a move away from the larger national brands.

Recovery

We are in ongoing discussions with all our tourism partners previously mentioned about potential recovery plans, with an emphasis on sensitive marketing as the situation continues to evolve, being mindful of the views and concerns of residents as well as the desires and requirements of visitors. We will be guided by the Experience West Sussex Partnership on the strategy and delivery of this.

Visit England/Britain is currently developing a nationwide 'self-assessed' Kite Mark for hospitality businesses, which will be free for businesses to access – in order to provide some assurance to potential visitors that as much as possible has been done by the owners to ensure their properties are safe to visit. Once this is complete this scheme will be promoted to all our local businesses.

Marketing and Press

The Experience West Sussex marketing team have been assisting us in responding to press enquiries with appropriate sector messages and are leading on a "West Sussex Wishlist" campaign, encouraging potential visitors to identify what they would most like to do and visit, when the time is right.

The annual 'English Tourism Week' has been re scheduled and re- focussed by Visit England around the late May Bank Holiday, with a marketing campaign during the 25th – 31st May. We are participating in this via social media. In the current climate, the campaign's broader focus is on engagement with Government, MPs and other stakeholders, to support the recovery of English tourism and raise awareness of the importance, quality and value of the sector to the UK economy. VisitEngland are working to support English destinations with political engagement nationally, regionally and locally and local tourism businesses are being encouraged to participate in the campaign.

The Business & Regeneration team are also planning a local business focussed recovery marketing campaign, which could include many hospitality businesses.

2. PROPOSAL(S): None, this report is for information only

3. OPTIONS: None, this report is for information only

4. CONSULTATION: None, this report is for information only

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		x
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify)		x
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		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Other (please explain)		x
6. IMPLICATIONS: Not applicable		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: Not applicable

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

The Economic Impact of Tourism in the Arun District 2018 can be found at:
www.sussexbythesea.com/tourism-business-centre

A fuller version of this report was presented at the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee on the 4th February 2020 and can be found at:
<https://democracy.arun.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=164&MId=961&Ver=4>

The previous Tourism Support Report on the 26 June 2017 Item 7 Page 180.
<https://democracy.arun.gov.uk/Data/Bognor%20Regis%20Regeneration%20Subcommittee/20170626/Agenda/Agenda.pdf>

Littlehampton Regeneration Position Statement – June 2020	
COVID 19	Update
Business Support Grants	The government has made a series of announcements with a package of measures to support businesses through the pandemic lockdown. One of these being the Business Support Grant administered by Arun District Council's Revenues Team and supported by the Economic Regeneration Team. As of 25 May 2020, the Council has paid £27,615,000 to 2254 eligible businesses. There are some outstanding claims to be processed, but most eligible businesses have received their grants.
Discretionary Business Grants	The government has also announced a Discretionary Business Grant for those not eligible in the previous rounds. This is a much smaller pot of money and the criteria for application is being agreed by West Sussex authorities. Applications will be sought from June 1 with details on Arun District Council website.
Reopening the town centre	<p>The government has announced that open air markets can reopen as from the 1 June. At time of writing, it would not be possible to meet current safety guidelines whilst operating markets in the town centre. Discussions are to take place with market operators in regard to potential temporary relocation, e.g. the section of St Martin's car park that had previously been used to site the market.</p> <p>From 15 June, all non-essential businesses are allowed to reopen. Arun District Council has been allocated £143,718 from the government's Reopening High Streets Safely Fund. The funding will support practical measures to help the town centre meet any current and future social distancing and safety criteria. As well as new signage encouraging distancing, the funds will be used for road markings, temporary barriers and other projects to help workers and shoppers alike feel safe.</p> <p>There will also be an increased community wardens' presence in Littlehampton town centre. This will be more of a reassuring ambassadorial role to gently advise people to keep safe whilst in the town centre.</p>
Project	Update Information
Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Scheme	ADC was successful in its bid to the Coastal Communities Fund for public realm improvements to Littlehampton Town Centre. Announced in March 2019, the full award of just under £2.5m was one of the largest awards from the national fund. The public realm improvements will include the area from Littlehampton Station through the High Street to the end of the pedestrian precinct junction with East Street.

	<p>Over the summer a funding bid was submitted to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Local Growth Fund for £1.38m to fund delivery of the next Phase (3) of public realm improvement works from the junction at the bottom of the precinct along Beach Road.</p> <p>In October 2019 we learnt that a grant of £564k had been awarded for Phase 3 of the Littlehampton public realm. The Town Council and District Council are working in partnership to fund the remainder of the scheme.</p> <p>The professional team from Faithful+Gould has put together a schedule of delivery for the project and indicative timetable by which work had intended to commence in late summer 2020, with final completion in June 2021. Due to the impact of Covid 19, the work is now scheduled to start in early 2021. The date may change subject to the variability of circumstances.</p> <p>Visits to traders with frontages onto the scheme have taken place and contact details and delivery information ahead of construction work collated.</p> <p>Subject to their full Council ratification, Littlehampton Town Council has decided to keep the Clocktower as is. A members meeting had considered whether to remove it entirely, keep as is, or have a new design entirely. In discussion at the Littlehampton Policy and Finance Committee on 12 May, it was decided to keep the original clock tower in its immediate vicinity.</p>
Town Centre Safety	<p>Due to the impact of Covid 19, many of the shops closed as part of the government's lockdown. The focus on police advice to businesses was regarding securing their premises during the lockdown period. During the period of lockdown, essential shops were open and operating. There were still incidents of shoplifting requiring the attention of the police and Business Wardens, with incidents also being reported via the DISC app.</p> <p>Arun District Council has made the decision to extend the current Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to cover additional areas where anti-social behaviour has been an issue. The Traders Partnership proposal to have a town centre alcohol ban was not accepted as the police considered the proposal to be unenforceable and that they have enough existing powers to deal with alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour.</p>

	<p>The Littlehampton DISC information sharing app is attracting more members to the Littlehampton Business Crime Reduction Partnership, incorporating Littlehampton Shopwatch and Littlehampton DISC. The DISC app has been used to collect information supporting banning orders being issued to prolific offenders.</p> <p>The Littlehampton Traders Partnership has submitted a funding application to update the Littlehampton Shopwatch Radio system. The current radios are on an analogue system and the traders want to update to digital (as analogue is increasingly redundant). Littlehampton Shopwatch has joined up with DISC under the umbrella of a Littlehampton Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) and supported by the Traders Partnership. A digital system will potentially give the Shopwatch radio coverage an extended reach, e.g. to Wick.</p>
Town Traders Partnership	<p>Simon Vickers has decided to stand down as Co-Chair of the Littlehampton Traders Partnership. Simon has acted as Chair and subsequently Co-Chair for 7 years. The Traders Partnership were due to hold their AGM late March, but this has been postponed due to the pandemic.</p> <p>The Traders Partnership has been asked to participate in two consultation events.</p> <p>From ADC, there is a review of street trading provision. This will be pertinent to any considerations regarding street market operations and events. Formal consultation on this will be announced soon.</p> <p>From WSCC, consultation is underway on a revised charging regime for tables and chairs on the Highway. This follows strong opposition to the blanket charge first introduced early 2019. WSCC proposed a sliding scale calculated on a standard charge plus additional charge for every 'cover' (chair) that is placed on the highway, i.e. pavement, pedestrian precinct. Early response from the Traders Partnership is that they are still opposed to any charge in the current retail climate as they see no merit to the scheme. Awaiting the results of the WSCC consultation that closed on 24 February.</p>
Markets & Events	<p>The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic resulted in the suspension, cancellation or postponement of all markets and events.</p> <p>Open air markets are now permissible from 1 June, but the High Street would not meet safety criteria regarding Covid 19 guidelines.</p>

	<p>Other venues are being scoped, subject to discussions with market operators, risk assessments and new market plans.</p> <p>There are currently no plans to hold events in the town centre. This will be revised as and when government guidance allows.</p>
New Café and Watersports venue	<p>We are advised that building contractors are appointed and works are expected to start soon.</p>
Shopfronts	<p>There is no funding available at present for shopfront improvements.</p> <p>There is a continuous dialogue with traders regarding state of shop frontages. The Littlehampton Town Council Deputy Mayor has written to traders requesting them to keep their frontages and above shop frontages to an acceptable standard. The Town Centre Regeneration Officer will liaise with the Deputy Mayor on follow up action.</p>
Littlehampton Town Centre Management	<p>See Covid 19 section above.</p>
North of Littlehampton Public Art Project	<p>Persimmon Homes have appointed a Designer who will work with the council to devise an art scheme.</p>
Gigabit West Sussex	<p>The Gigabit West Sussex project (funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) is an exciting step forward in future proofing our public services. It is led by WSCC and the work to install superfast gigabit fibre broadband across the county is progressing well. Specific public buildings in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton have been identified for the installations.</p> <p>This technology will deliver internet speeds in both directions in excess of 1Gbps (1,000Mbps) to libraries, children's centres and other public buildings. It will help to ensure public services are able to be more resilient, reliable and at less risk of delay or disruption caused by poor or limited connectivity.</p> <p>Arun is currently working with WSCC and their delivery partners to ensure all relevant information is provide to enable the installations.</p> <p>District and Borough Council's in West Sussex are also working on progressing further the delivery of the digital infrastructure for the area. Funding from the West Sussex Investment Fund has been allocated to support the delivery of digital infrastructure in the</p>

	County. Arun attends the Everything Connects project group that is progressing this work.
Fitzalan Link	<p>Construction work is programmed to start on the northern section of the Fitzalan Link Road from Littlehampton Academy to the A259 (Worthing Road) in October 2019. The highway construction works are programmed to last for 16 months.</p> <p>Persimmon Homes is currently preparing a planning application for acoustic fencing to be installed along part of the southern section of the Fitzalan Link Road to mitigate the noise impact on the Academy and the houses in close proximity to the highway.</p>
Former Look & Sea Centre	The former Look & Sea Centre has been let to a local café / restaurant operator. It has retained its Harbour Lights Café name. After some initial internal alterations and refitting the café opened during the summer 2019.
Visitor Information Points	<p>Following the closure of the Look & Sea Centre new mini Visitor Information Points in several 'partner businesses' around the town have been set up, with displays of LOCAL attraction leaflets.</p> <p>A local tourism leaflet distribution scheme is also being set up, using two local companies to create and provide sustainable, locally made branded leaflet stands</p> <p>In time, some of these 'mini VIPs' may also have iPad facilities with access to www.sussexbythesea.com . Alongside this there are plans to include one or more digital screens with latest dedicated tourist information messages and images on events.</p>
Media Coverage / Marketing	ADC has contracted Anne-Marie Maguire from Brandable to lead on marketing initiatives during the public realm improvement works. Anne-Marie will develop a communications strategy to keep traders and other stakeholders up to date on the development of the public realm work. As well as getting the message out of 'Business as Usual', Anne-Marie will lead on unique campaigns promoting the town centre, including on events.

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