

BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

24 June 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Stanley (Chairman), Brooks (Vice-Chair), Charles, Dixon, English, Mrs Madeley, Oppler and Mrs Stainton

Councillor Coster was also in attendance for part of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Mrs Staniforth.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dixon declared a personal interest as a member of Bognor Regis Civic Society.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2019 were approved by the Subcommittee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. START TIMES

The Subcommittee

RESOLVED

That the start times of meetings for the remainder of 2019/20 be 6.00 p.m.

5. BOGNOR REGIS TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM SCHEME - FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The Subcommittee received a comprehensive report from the Senior Regeneration Officer which provided a detailed evaluation of the overall public realm scheme and the impact that it had had on town centre improvement in Bognor Regis. She was pleased to advise that the three tiers of local government, i.e. Town Council, District Council and County Council had all worked together on the scheme to ensure that an intuitive pedestrian route through the town to the sea had been achieved.

Members were advised that the key objective of the enhanced public realm was to attract visitors into the town to visit more often, stay longer and spend more and, as evidenced in the report, that had been successful. In addition, the £2.5m investment had attracted match funding of £5m from the private sector and had also led to significant improvement at the train station, with British Rail working with its partners to

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refurbish the elegant but neglected Grade II listed building and creating a creative shared workspace which would provide jobs and greatly improve the visitor experience.

The BID (Business Improvement District) was in place to continue the Town Centre management initiative and it was hoped that Bognor Regis would remain economically stable with modest growth and improvement. To this end an Expression of Interest had been submitted to the Future High Streets Fund and the decision whether Bognor Regis would be selected to progress to the Business Case/full bid stage (c£5-7m) was expected in the summer.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Regeneration Officer for her informative and detailed report and paid tribute to her enthusiasm and commitment to the town.

The Subcommittee participated in a detailed discussion on a number of issues, which included:-

- Control over the use of premises to ensure the right type of business was encouraged – officer advice was given that change of use could be controlled through the planning system but that a change between different retail uses was within the control of the landlord. The BID could work with owners to advocate for better businesses.
- Rough sleepers in the town was of particular concern to Members and advice was given that a lot of work was being done in the background to alleviate the problem.
- A comment was made that, whilst the improvements to the station were very much welcomed, it was felt that the problem of street drinkers would just be moved somewhere else in the town.
- The problem of cars driving illegally along the High Street must be addressed and a suggestion was made that the same system of cameras and instant fines being used in Brighton could be introduced – the Senior Regeneration Officer stated that she would pass that on to the County Council. Pedestrianisation would also be raised with the County Council.
- A request was made that the banner arms for advertising on lamp posts should be reinstated. Officer advice was given that they were still in place on one side of the road but had been taken down on the other side due to being damaged by lorries.
- A question was asked as to how footfall was measured and an officer response given at the meeting. The Business Development Manager also advised on a method that was used to share sales figures confidentially that she would pass on to the BID.

In the course of discussion, comment was made that a lump of granite had fallen off a shop front near the Royal Mail office building and was still on the ground – the landlord must be contacted to ensure the premises was safe and to have the granite removed.

The Senior Regeneration Officer was thanked for a fascinating report, which the Subcommittee then noted.

6. BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION POSITION STATEMENT

The Subcommittee received the Position Statement and made particular comment on the following:-

- **Enterprise Bognor Regis** – the planning application for the Salt Box site had been deferred by the Development Control Committee at its meeting on 5 June 2019 for further assessment of surface water drainage issues. As the issue of low wage levels was brought up at this item, the Group Head of Economy encouraged Members to attend a workshop on Wednesday 26 June 2019 that was being held to inform Members of the review of the Economic Strategy that was due to be undertaken.
- **Gardens by the Sea** – to be discussed at Cabinet on 8 July 2019.
- **Town Centre Initiatives** – Member comment was made that it would be good to have affordable office space in the upper storeys of the Arcade as there was a need for smaller units.
- **Seafront Regeneration** – The toilets next to The Regis Pub had been closed due to issues around ASB and were due to reopen on Monday 8 July 2019.
- **University of Chichester** – the preferred bidder was in the process of being considered for the student accommodation at the London Road lorry and coach park.
- **Old Town & Pier** – The Senior Regeneration Officer gave a verbal update. The Pier Trust had launched its series of Heritage Trails on Sunday 23 June 2019 and Members were recommended to participate as it as well worth doing..
- **Transport and Car Parking** - negotiations had commenced on a 2 hour free car parking agreement for 2020. With regard to the Station Junction, all three levels of local government had been working to make it more pedestrian friendly.

The Subcommittee noted the remainder of the report.

(The meeting concluded at 8.25 pm)