

## 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)