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Subject to approval at the next Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party meeting

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BOGNOR REGIS BEACH ACCESS WORKING PARTY

9 May 2022 at 9.30 am

Present: Councillors Brooks, Edwards, English, Needs, Staniforth and Worne

Phillip King and Marion Wells (nominated representatives from the Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group) were also in attendance.

[NOTE: Councillor English was absent from the meeting during Items 4 – 9, having given his apologies and left the meeting during Item 3]

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Group Head of Technical Services opened the meeting and asked Members to elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Working Party. Councillors Worne, English and Edwards all offered to assume the role of Chair. Councillor Staniforth offered to assume the role of Vice-Chair.

Upon voting, the Working Party

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Worne be appointed as Chair
- 2) Councillor Staniforth be appointed as Vice-Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Needs declared a Personal Interest in all items of the meeting as a Member of Bognor Regis Town Council and a potential future user of any beach access provisions.

Councillor Worne declared a Personal Interest in all items of the meeting as a potential future user of any beach access provisions.

Councillor Staniforth declared a Personal Interest in all items of the meeting as a potential future user of any beach access provisions.

Phillip King declared a Personal Interest in all items of the meeting as a potential future user of any beach access provisions.

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Councillor Brooks declared a Personal Interest in all items of the meeting as a Member of Bognor Regis Town Council and a resident of Bognor Regis.

Councillor English declared a Personal Interest in all items of the meeting due to unseen disabilities.

3. START TIMES

The Chair invited suggestions for Start Times of future meetings of the Working Party. Some Members expressed the view that morning meetings would be the most convenient. One Member asked for meetings to be fixed for the evenings due to work commitments in the daytime. It was noted that the next meeting may be a Call for Evidence, with members of the public giving evidence to the Working Party, and consideration should be given to this when setting the start time. Upon a vote the Working Party agreed to set its Start Times for the morning.

Councillor English gave his apologies to the Working Party and left the meeting as he would not be able to attend future daytime meetings.

A brief discussion was had around whether future meetings should be virtual or in person. Members felt the next meeting, with public attendance should be in person, however virtual meetings would be considered for the remainder of the meetings.

It was agreed that The Regis Centre met the requirements of the Working Party, and future in person meetings should be held there, where possible.

It was noted that Membership of the Working Party for the new municipal year was subject to confirmation at Annual Council.

Members agreed that a start time of 9.30am for future meetings would be an acceptable time for attendees. It was thought this would be especially beneficial for the next meeting which was expected to have involvement from the public, and the Working Party hoped to hear views from many people.

The Working Party

RESOLVED

That its Start Times be 9.30am.

4. WORKING PARTY TERMS OF REFERENCE, SCOPE, MEETING DATES AND WORK PROGRAMME

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Technical Services explained the purpose of the Report was to set the administrative arrangements by which the Working Party would conduct its business.

Members then took part in a discussion and the following points were raised:

- Had timescales for actioning anything that would be recommended been considered? This would be for the Environment Committee to consider alongside other priorities.
- The Working Party would consider all options when looking at how to make the beach more accessible to all.
- Expectations of the public should be managed and it was important not to give false hope of what could be achieved until this was fully explored.

The Terms of Reference of the Working Party were discussed and it was suggested 1a) should be changed to 'to consider the issues surrounding the provision of an access to the beach for ~~the disabled and elderly persons~~ **all** in Bognor Regis and to examine the options available for such an access'. It was agreed that this would be recommended to the Environment Committee.

Another change was suggested to the Terms of Reference at 1b) which was 'To determine what part of the beach to ~~improve~~ **achieve** access to (waterline or shingle etc) and to consider options for geographic location'. This change was not agreed by Members.

The Working Party

RESOLVED that

1. The Terms of Reference as Resolved by the Environment Committee at its meeting of 17 November 2021 be adopted
 - a) ~~to consider the issues surrounding the provision of an access to the beach for the disabled and elderly persons in Bognor Regis and to examine the options available for such an access~~
 - (b) To determine what part of the beach to improve access to (waterline or shingle etc) and to consider options for geographic location
 - (c) The Working Party will report to Environment Committee,
 - (d) Size of the Working Party – 6 Arun District Councillor seats with two further seats (without voting rights) to be offered to the Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group.

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- (e) Nominations to the seats – Councillors Worne, Needs, Brooks, Staniforth, Edwards and English (as confirmed by the relevant Group Leaders, but subject to confirmation at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18 May 2022).
- (f) The Chair of the Working Party would be elected at its first meeting
- (g) Proposals for the allocation of seats if vacancies occur – to be for the relevant Group Leader / Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group to fill the vacant seat as appropriate and this information to be reported this to the next Environment Committee meeting
- (h) The Working Party will take the form of a Task & Finish exercise and conclude in not more than 12 months from the date of the first meeting.
- (i) Timescale for the work to be undertaken – the first meeting of the Working Party will be in Spring 2022 with the site visit timed appropriately for sufficient daylight at around the time of Low Water.
- (j) Presentation(s) will be made by officers as soon as possible to enable the Council to progress with any recommendations it supports.

2. The Scope of the Working Party's business to be:

- a) to receive reports, invite representations and consider options for the provision of improved access the beach at Bognor Regis
- b) Consider costings and funding sources for any improved beach access
- c) Consider a draft report and make final recommendations, in the form of a Report, back to the Environment Committee

3. Hold three further meetings, 6 July, 13 September and 8 November 2022

4. The Work Plan of the Working Party to be:

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| Prior to Meeting 2 | Evidence gathering from relevant organisations and Members of the Public (on-line or in writing) |
| Meeting 2 | Receive 'in person' evidence |
| | Post-meeting analysis of evidence (officer task) |

Meeting 3	Review evidence and give direction for the final report Preparation and circulation of draft report to Working Party Members (Officer task)
Meeting 4	Presentation of Final Report for approval by the Working Party to be recommended to Environment Committee.

5. The format of the evidence gathering be agreed as per the report.

The Working Party also

RECOMMEND to the Environment Committee

Its Terms of Reference at 1a) be changed to 'to consider the issues surrounding the provision of an access to the beach for all in Bognor Regis and to examine the options available for such an access'

5. CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Engineering Services Manager presented the Call for Evidence draft to the Working Party. It was envisaged there would be a timed slot for people to come and give their evidence/views by appointment. This was supported by Members.

Members did not feel that the respondents' age should be included, as it was felt unnecessary.

A discussion was had regarding the location of any potential provision, and whether this should be included in the Call for Evidence, or whether there would be no choice regarding location because it would be restricted by necessity. The Engineering Services Manager explained that at this point, the exercise was to find out what people actually wanted.

Members asked questions regarding what the form would look like, how it could be completed, and whether it would be published across the whole of Arun. The Engineering Services Manager explained that he would liaise with the Public Relations department within the council, to seek advise on how best this could be done, but he expected this to be published on the Arun District Council Website, Facebook pages and cover the whole of Arun.

It was asked whether a version of the form could be tailored to people with a visual impairment. It was suggested an audio version could be recorded. The Engineering Services Manager would look into this.

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6. PRESENTATION FROM THE ENGINEERING SERVICES MANAGER

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Engineering Services Manager gave his presentation to the Working Party. A copy of this presentation would be sent to Members after the meeting.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair explained to the Working Party that Matthew Hall, Project Officer for Bognor Regis Town Council, was interested in the Working Party due to his role, and wished to be given Observer Status to the remainder of the meetings for the Working Party. Members agreed to Matthew Hall being granted Observer Status for the remainder of the meetings.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party would take place at 9.30am on 06 July 2022.

9. SITE VISIT

The Working Party undertook a Site Visit along Bognor Regis Seafront, looking at various points along the way.

(The meeting concluded at 12.55 pm)