

FULL COUNCIL – 11 MAY 2022

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE
CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN
WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING**

1. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner
2. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner
3. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner
4. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner
5. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Housing & Wellbeing Committee, Councillor Pendleton
6. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Andy Cooper

FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW

Note, the Chair will:

- invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution.
- explain that the questions received will be answered by the Chair of the Council
- confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time and that a maximum of one minute is allowed for each question;
- state that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

QUESTION ONE

**From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee,
Councillor Gunner**

Question

In your reply to me at a recent Council meeting, you confirmed that the Levelling-Up funded project for the Bognor Regis Centre is NOT Regeneration. Yet that site has been zoned for Regeneration since the adoption of the Bognor Regis Masterplan under a previous Conservative Leader of the Council since 2004.

What justifies deviation from that rating, which was a Council policy decision which has not been rescinded or amended?

Response

Thank you for your question, Mr Cosgrove. My response is similar to the answer that I gave to your similar question at the last meeting of the Council on 9 March 2022.

Supplementary Question

You have not answered the question and so I ask it again, what has just moved from regeneration to non regeneration for that site and please answer as this is important to the future of the town

Supplementary Answer

I have nothing further to add.

QUESTION TWO

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner

Question

The Council in March 2021 decided that a working party would be set up to look at the various ideas the Council itself invited on Bognor's Regeneration, yet there has been no such working party set up. This was a Council DECISION, the Council is in breach of that decision which it made, there were many good ideas there. This is not only an insult to the people who bothered to respond, but also missed opportunity. Please do NOT tell me things have moved on, that decision stands, regardless of the LUF award. Will you not only apologise on behalf of the Council for ignoring those people who bothered, but also outline why the Council intends to progress those ideas, in concert with the LUF award?

Response

This question is a repeat of questions asked at previous meetings and so to avoid confusion, I refer to my response provided on 9 March 2022.

Supplementary Question

Is the Councillor not aware that breaching a council decision is a serious matter and this has not been resolved? When will that Working Party meet?

Supplementary Answer

This was not a supplementary question from the answer that I provided and so I have nothing further to add.

QUESTION THREE

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner

Question

According to an FoI response I had from Arun, the Bognor element of the LUF scheme will add precious little additional Visitor Spend per Visit (now £30 odd increased by under £2), and the scheme offers no additional major revenue nor NDR nor Council tax revenue year-on-year to your cash-strapped Council. Will you undertake to look at whether or not the LUF award can be used together with other funding (some perhaps available from sources in my previous question tonight) not only to achieve the aims of the LUF award but also to provide more amenities on that site plus the potential to create a Regeneration Fund from surplus?

Response

Thank you for your question, Mr Cosgrove. As this question is substantially the same to what was asked at the previous meeting, to avoid any confusion my answer is the same to that provided on 9 March 2022.

Supplementary Question

May I remind the Councillor that he and I and his colleagues worked hard on that presentation process behind the scenes to come to that September 2020 Full Council resolution. How can he sit there not supporting what he committed to in 2020?

Supplementary Answer

This is not a supplementary from the response given and so I have nothing further to add.

QUESTION FOUR

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Councillor Gunner

Question

When will Arun consult the people of Bognor about the LUF scheme for the Regis Centre?

Response

Let us clear up this confusion publicly. In terms of LUF money this is not a free to use pot of money it must be spent on this specific scheme and there will be consultation as part of the planning application process.

Supplementary Question

Will Councillor Gunner consider going to The Minister Mr Gove asking whether we can have some of that flexibility which you say is not there?

Supplementary Answer

I do not see any reason to do so at this present time.

QUESTION FIVE

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Housing & Wellbeing Committee, Councillor Pendleton

Question

The Bognor Regis Youth and Community Centre, Westloats Lane, has been saved from loss, with a strong new team of local trustees and volunteers, so that existing activities will continue but also so that new activities can be added to benefit the community (2 Arun Wards with deprivation issues are closely affected, Orchard and Pevensey). For example a 4 week summer playscheme, and the long-needed return of a youth facility, possibly a youth drop-in cafe etc I know the Chair and Cllrs will welcome this, and I note housing is intended for an adjacent site. Will Arun look carefully at how there can be best use of land resources re both housing and community benefit, noting the excellent involvement at Eldon Way, another area of known deprivation?

Response

Dear Mr Cosgrove, thank you for your question.

I can confirm that Arun will look at the best use of land resources at this site.

Supplementary Question

Debate on this matter is welcome and I ask the Chair to take careful note of what is being proposed this evening and ask her to note that WSCC is not fulfilling its legal duties.

Supplementary Answer

I will take note of what is said.

QUESTION SIX

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Cooper

Question

I hope the Chairman may have viewed the excellent, new You Tube video "Bognor Fishing Back from the Brink" in which local fisherman Clive Mills is featured. There is a revival occurring regarding this activity which goes not only back to 680 AD (the ubiquitous Buche from whom the name Bognor derives) but also tens of thousands of years before that. I would urge the Council to take a close view of this, which includes rekelping, and apprenticeships and also increasing fresh-fish sales. And in the longer term, Visitor potential, will the Chairman undertake to ensure this issue is given agenda space and that the various people and bodies involved are brought into the discussion?

Response

Dear Mr Cosgrove, thank you for your question.

I understand officers of the Council have been trying to engage with the Bognor Regis Fisherman Association for some time but communication with us has been patchy at best. However, officers continue to try. Perhaps I could ask through your good self that if you have contacts with the BFA that you encourage them to respond to the Council. I can add that rekelping is being progressed and we are hopeful to see benefits in the near future.

Supplementary Question

Have you considered talking to Councillor Goodheart as in his role as Mayor of Bognor Regis he has had some considerable contact and has been leading part of this?

Supplementary Answer

I have spoken to Councillor Goodheart and I endeavor to speak with him again to push things forward.