

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Economy Committee – 5 October 2023
SUBJECT:	Littlehampton Town Centre Action Group and Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	Miriam Nicholls, Business Development Manager
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Roger Nash, Chair of Economy Committee
WARDS:	All Littlehampton Wards
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION: This recommendation supports: Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential - working closely with our towns and other organisations on strategies which support vibrant and attractive town centres. Positive and focused promotion of Arun’s tourist destinations as more than a ‘day trip’.	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT: Improving the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the district, along with those who live, work and play within it.	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY: There are no costs arising directly and immediately from this report. Any projects will be undertaken within existing budgets and with existing officer resource. Should the need for additional funds become apparent this will be put forward for consideration as part of the Financial Planning process.	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Littlehampton Town Council has proposed the formation of a strategic group to oversee regeneration actions in Littlehampton Town Centre and the surrounding area - Littlehampton Town Centre Action Group.
- 1.2 All three tiers of local authority will be represented at both Member and Officer level along with Sussex Police and local retailer representatives. Councillors Roger Nash and Christine Wiltshire have already been agreed as the Member representatives for this Council.
- 1.3 This report provides Members with the first draft of the Action Plan and Strategy that it is proposed the Action Group adopts.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. It is recommended that the Economy Committee agree to this Councils involvement in the Littlehampton Town Centre Action Group and note the Action Plan and Strategy that has been drawn up for consideration at the Group’s first meeting on 4 September 2023.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 Littlehampton Town Council has proposed the formation of a strategic group to oversee regeneration actions in Littlehampton Town Centre and the surrounding area - Littlehampton Town Centre Action Group.
- 3.2 All three tiers of local authority will be represented at both Member and Officer level along with Sussex Police and local retailer representatives. Councillors Roger Nash and Christine Wiltshire have already been agreed as the Member representatives for this Council. The Action Group will be treated as an 'Outside Body' and reports will come back via Full Council.
- 3.3 This report provides Members with the first draft of the Action Plan and Strategy that it is proposed the Action Group adopt.

4. THE ACTION PLAN AND STRATEGY

- 4.1 There is little doubt that Town Centres nationally are changing and evolving. Many towns and cities have seen the loss of major High Street names as online shopping means lower footfall and reduced need for retailers to maintain a High Street presence. Littlehampton has seen the loss of some High Street names such as New Look, M&Co and W H Smith in recent months. These closures are not specifically due to trading conditions in Littlehampton but national decisions.
- 4.2 Littlehampton is fortunate to still have major High Street retailers such as Superdrug, Iceland and Sainsburys but equally to have a range of small independent retailers. It is these retailers that create added interest to small towns such as Littlehampton.
- 4.3 Investment by both small independent retailers and national names in the Town Centre needs to be encouraged and nurtured.
- 4.4 The Action Plan and Strategy set out clear aspirations as to what can make a positive difference, whilst also retaining a sense of what is realistic and achievable. All partners who sign up to the Strategy will need to work to deliver the aspirations and the actions within the Action Plan and focus their budget and priorities accordingly. Paramount to the delivery of their objectives will be the leadership provided by elected representatives.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 No consultation has yet taken place as the Strategy and Action Plan has been produced by Littlehampton Town Council for consideration by the newly formed Action Group. This will be done at their first meeting on 4 September. A verbal report on any changes made by the Group will be provided.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1 No other options have been considered.

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1 There is no financial impact recognised at this point and if there are any future cost which are not funded by the current budget it's stated in the committee report that the CMT and Council members will be advised on this and approval will sought.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 A Risk Register will be created for individual projects within the Action Plan should this be necessary.

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1 The Action Group is an Advisory Group set up by the Town Council. It is important to remember that it has no decision-making powers, that are binding on ADC. Accordingly, paragraph 4.4 above should be read with this in mind so that there is no confusion about decision making powers. ADC can only "focus their budget and priorities accordingly" by reference to its own economic development strategy.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1 There is no Human Resources impact.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1 There is no Health and Safety impact arising from this report.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 There is no Property & Estates impact arising from this report.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1 The recommendations in this report do not affect disproportionately one or more of the nine characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 The support and promotion of good local businesses and local destinations encourages less travel contributing towards less carbon emissions on a local level.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 There are no relevant implications arising from this proposal that will affect or potentially affect any individual.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 There are no specific FOI or data protection issues arising from the proposals in the report.

CONTACT OFFICER:

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Littlehampton Town Centre Action Plan and Strategy attached.