

SPECIAL CABINET

11 April 2019 at 5.00 pm

Present : Councillors Mrs Brown (Chairman), Bence, Charles, Clayden, Haymes and Wotherspoon.

Councillors Edwards, Mrs Madeley, Mrs Oakley, Mrs Pendleton, Dr Walsh and Wheal were also in attendance at the meeting.

500. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers and members of the press and public to the meeting.

501. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An Apology for Absence had been received from Councillor Wensley [Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance].

502. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

503. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman confirmed that no public questions had been received.

504. URGENT ITEM – AMENDMENT TO PREVIOUSLY AGREED APPROACH TO LEASING THE LOOK & SEA CENTRE BUILDING, LITTLEHAMPTON

The Chairman confirmed that there was an urgent item to consider and she invited the Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Haymes, to present this report. He stated that prior to closure, the Look & Sea Centre had been an important and popular destination in its own right. Following decisions made by Cabinet at its meeting held on 15 October 2018, a lease had been advertised for A3 (café/restaurant/bar) use for the whole of the building.

Councillor Haymes confirmed that the Council had received offers that included A3 use of the ground floor but these indicated that there was not a market for A3 use of the upper floors at the present time. It was therefore proposed that Cabinet be asked to agree to amend the delegations to Officers to negotiate heads of terms and enter into a lease on the revised basis that the ground floor remained in A3 use providing a Lessee flexibility to find

appropriate commercial uses of the upper floors, subject to planning and other approvals.

Councillor Haymes announced that this report was being presented as a matter of urgency as it was only a decision by Cabinet today that would allow flexibility relating to the upper floors that would enable any realistic chance of securing a Lessee that would operate the café/restaurant at the Look & Sea during the 2019 summer season. Councillor Haymes stated that this was something that he would like to see happen.

As this item was being dealt with as an urgent matter, the usual arrangements requiring it to be published with five clear days' notice and the call-in arrangements did not apply as set out in the Council's Constitution at Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions, Rule 2.3 and Part 5 – Cabinet Meeting Procedure Rules, Rule 3.2. The Chairman of the Overview Select Committee, Councillor Dingemans, had been consulted on the proposals and had given his agreement.

The Group Head of Technical Services was then invited to provide his input to the report. He confirmed that it was good news in that the site had been marketed by the Council's appointed Agents since February 2019 and that offers had been submitted for A3 use of the ground floor, with one of the offers including access for customers to the viewing platforms. The delegations approved by Cabinet back in October 2018, envisaged an A3 use of the whole building. The bids received fell outside of this requirement. It was therefore necessary to seek Cabinet's approval that the lease arrangements for the Look & Sea could be revised on the basis that the ground floor remained in A3 use allowing a Lessee flexibility to find appropriate commercial uses for the upper floors, subject to planning and other approvals. Without Cabinet's approval to adjust its decision made in October 2018, there would be no realistic chance of securing a Lessee that could operate the café/restaurant for the 2019 summer season. Obtaining Cabinet approval would allow negotiations to commence to obtain the best consideration for the Council.

In considering the report, the Chairman asked the Group Head of Technical Services if he could provide a potential date when the Look & Sea Centre might re-open? It was confirmed that it was hoped that the café/restaurant would be operational by early summer.

Other comments made were that it was clear from the market testing undertaken that there was no interest in leasing the whole of the building. Looking at the options available, further marketing could take place but with the real threat that the building would remain empty for a long period of time. By agreeing this small adjustment to the previous decision to the building, it would hopefully mean that the café/restaurant could be occupied for the summer, re-establishing a much needed tourist attraction for Littlehampton.

Questions were asked as to whether any Lessee would be allowed to lease the remaining floors of the building. It was important for the Council to still obtain income in this respect. The Group Head of Technical Services responded stating that it was proposed that the lease would be for the whole building with the Lessee to then find uses for the upper floors.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) It be agreed that the Look & Sea Centre building can be leased on the revised basis that the ground floor remains in A3 use but providing the Lessee flexibility to find appropriate commercial uses of the upper floors, subject to planning and other approvals; and
- (2) Other than the above, the original decisions, including Officer delegations within Cabinet Decision C/020/151018 made on 15 October 2018 to remain operative.

The Cabinet then confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/052/110419), a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

505. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019 were approved by the Cabinet as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

506. BUDGET VARIATION REPORT

There was no item for this meeting.

507. AUTHORITY TO ACT ON BEHALF OF WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL – SECTION 42, LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1982

The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, Councillor Clayden, introduced this item stating this report was seeking the Cabinet's approval to formalise delegation of powers from West Sussex County Council allowing Arun Officers to respond to matters relating to rough sleeping in Bognor Regis Town Centre.

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The Chairman then invited the Group Head of Community Wellbeing to provide further input. He confirmed that this authority provided Arun Officers with the tools that were missing to deal with such matters as they related to highway matters and would be used to deal with those individuals who refused to engage with Officers in various locations surrounding the centre of Bognor Regis.

The Cabinet Member for Residential Services, Councillor Bence, supported the recommendations stating that the authority granted from WSCC would massively assist the anti-social behaviour problems that were increasing in certain parts of Bognor Regis relating to rough sleeping and homelessness. He thanked the Council's anti-social behaviour team for their hard work and engagement with numerous groups and charities in dealing with rough sleepers camping down on pavements and on roads. Thanks were also extended to WSCC's Legal Department for acting so quickly to get these terms of agreement in place to deal with the matter and for street cleansing to then be able to take place.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Councillor Charles, asked if there were plans to roll this agreement out to other areas in the District as there were also rough sleeping hot spots elsewhere in Arun.

The Cabinet then

RESOLVED - That

(1) The authority to act on behalf of West Sussex County Council, as defined in the Order dated 19 March 2019, to serve notices under Section 41 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 until 31 March 2020 or until revoked earlier by the County Council in relation to land designated as highway land and located in the Town Centre of Bognor Regis be accepted; and

(2) The Group Head of Community Wellbeing, the Community Manager and the Senior Anti-Social Behaviour Caseworker be given authority to exercise the powers granted by West Sussex County Council by Order made on 19 March 2019 to serve notices under Section 41 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) ACT 1982 in relation to land designated as highways land and located in the town centre of Bognor Regis and shall be limited to those areas of highway land in Bognor Regis Town Centre in London road precinct, Bedford Street, London Road and the High Street as confirmed within the Order until 31 March 2020 or until revoked earlier by the County Council.

The Cabinet then confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/053/110419), a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

(The meeting concluded at 5.14 pm)