

# Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Economy Committee 23 January 2025</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Bognor Regis Creative Vision</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Nat Slade, Group Head of Technical Services</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Nash, Chair of Economy Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

## **CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:**

### **Fulfilling Arun's economic potential**

- Increase opportunities for more high-quality, well-paid employment, encouraging more people to live, work, study and visit Arun.
- Use regeneration opportunities to attract new and relocating businesses to the district.
- Encourage the development of the district as a key tourist destination, supporting and enabling improvements and activities to increase visitor spend.
- Make best use of our natural assets to help drive the economy.

### **Furthering corporate objectives**

- Creating the conditions that will support high tech businesses including the creative digital sector and green businesses, reducing the need for the workforce to commute out of the district.

## **DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:**

The Council's Economic Development Strategy includes the following 'Building Blocks' and priorities:

- Shaping our places for people to live, work and visit.
- Attracting investment and success giving businesses the space and support to grow and prosper.
- Putting people centre stage: healthy, happy, prosperous lives.
- Growing business population.

## **FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

This project has been funded by a grant of £10,000 from Arts Council, England.

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the draft Creative Vision for Bognor Regis document for approval.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That committee approve the final draft of the Creative Vision for Bognor Regis document, attached as appendix A.

## **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 This report seeks the approval from the committee of the final draft of the Creative Vision for Bognor Regis. This is an Arts Council, England funded project.
- 3.2 Consultation with local partners and public exhibitions were held to seek the views of residents.
- 3.3 The aim of this project is not only to set a new vision for Bognor Regis but to facilitate partners in working together to boost the creative industries.

## **4. DETAIL**

- 4.1 Arun has been identified as one of the 106 levelling up for culture places by Arts Council, England.
- 4.2 Arun District Council has pursued other grant funding opportunities through the Arts Council, England but has not been successful. Following advice and guidance through our local Arts Council, England Relationship Manager, the council applied for a smaller discretionary grant, and this time was successful. The Economy Committee on 5 October 2023 approved the commissioning of a Creative Vision for Bognor Regis.
- 4.3 Bognor Regis will see significant Levelling Up Funding delivering the only cultural capital project in West Sussex, with the new Alexandra Theatre. There is also the new 116-bedroom hotel, capital works on the Bognor Regis campuses of the University of Chichester and Butlins. The town has the potential to be a nationally significant cultural destination with a strong emerging creative cluster. For this reason, it was felt the town would be a good starting point for this type of project, with a view to look at the other main towns of Littlehampton and Arundel for potential other visioning projects.

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4.4 The Creative Vision was funded by a successful discretionary grant of £10,000 from Arts Council, England. Festivals and Events International (FEI) consultants were appointed from a procurement process in March 2024 and led on the project. Local partners were consulted, and public meetings were arranged and promoted to canvass local views.

4.5 Within the creative vision document it outlines the vision, principles and priorities to focus on, as well as next steps. The priorities include:

- A beacon for a bold future
- Blue sky thinking
- Ready for fun
- Sector development
- Audience development
- Partnership working

4.6 The Vision reads:

*Our vision is for Bognor Regis to realise its potential as both an alternative and traditional 21st century creative coastal town, buzzing with independent spirit and built on a rich heritage, as a place of creative enterprise, innovation and wellbeing. Bognor Regis will be a welcoming, colourful and iconic seaside cultural destination and a vibrant, inclusive and future-focused place to live, work and study, where creative people can find their tribe and follow their dreams. We will achieve this by working together to support and inspire home-grown talent, build local capacity and develop new audiences. This will require us to think strategically: to develop big ambitious ideas for the future, make the most of current opportunities, improve communication and make a plan to attract more resources. We will do this by coordinating local effort more effectively and by working with partners across the town, district, county and along the coast.*

4.7 The vision acts as a tool to bring local partners together, to seize opportunities. An example of this would be initial discussions regarding the Coastal Catalyst project. This coordinated approach facilitated pro-active discussions to implement this project. It is viewed that future meetings will be planned in relation to cross-programming with the new theatre, which could add cultural value and supports the local economy.

## 5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 There were forty local stakeholders that were consulted in terms of building the vision. These were a mix of commercial, retail, cultural, educational and community focused organisations. A stakeholder group was convened to test the assumptions and findings, these included local strategic partners:

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- Arun District Council
- Arun Arts
- Artswork
- Bognor Regis BID
- Bognor Regis Regeneration Board
- Bognor Regis Town Council
- West Sussex County Council
- University of Chichester

5.2 The stakeholder group has been used as a focus group to discuss the Place Partnership bid to Arts Council, England by Brighton Dome Festivals Limited for their Coastal Catalyst project. This focuses on young people across East and West Sussex (Arun is also included in terms of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton). Future meetings are planned by the Economic Development Projects Officer to discuss opportunities within the scope of the new hotel and theatre. This includes cross-programming and supporting growth of the creative sector.

5.3 Two public consultation workshops were organised at The Track, Bognor Regis on 19 April 2024 for a morning and afternoon session with twelve people attending in total.

5.4 Local district, town and county councillors within Bognor Regis were all informed of the vision workshops and approached for their views and feedback, with a consultation workshop organised at Bognor Regis Town Hall for local town councillors to attend on 22 April 2024.

## **6.0 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

6.1 To not adopt the Creative Vision

## **7.0 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 The project is being funded by a grant of £10,000 from the Arts Council, £9,000 has already been received and the remaining £1,000 will be received once the project is completed.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 None

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## **9.0 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 The Council used the £10,000 grant funding that was awarded from the Arts Council to create the Vision in accordance with the terms and conditions imposed and will do so for any further funding received.

## **10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1 None

## **11.0 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 None

## **12.0 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 None

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 None

## **14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 None

## **15.0 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 None

## **16.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 None

## **17.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 None

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# Arun District Council

## **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Name: Matt Gover

Job Title: Economic Development Projects Officer

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## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Appendix A – FEI \_Bognor Regis Creative Statement of Intent

[Economy Committee 5 October 2023 - Minutes and Agenda Papers](#)