

# Public Document Pack

Subject to approval at the next Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee meeting

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## BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

4 February 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Stanley (Chairman), Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Charles, Mrs Daniells, Mrs Stainton, Edwards (Substitute for Mrs Madeley), Coster (Substitute for Dixon) and Oppler (Substitute for Mrs Staniforth)

Councillor Goodheart was also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

### 13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Dixon, Mrs Madeley and Mrs Staniforth.

### 14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

### 15. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019 were approved by the Sub-Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 16. PRESENTATION BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Professor Jane Longmore, Vice-Chancellor, who was in attendance to give a brief presentation to Members on the role the University of Chichester was taking to promote regeneration in Bognor Regis.

Professor Longmore was proud to advise that the University was one of the most successful in obtaining a high participation rate of their students and had received a number of endorsements to support its ranking at No. 14 of the best in the UK for caring for its students. She highlighted how the presence of the students made a significant contribution to the economy of the town and also in cultural terms.

The University was committed to contributing to the development of a strong economic eco system through supporting businesses; producing graduates; and encouraging them to remain in the District. The new Tech Park would be enormously valuable in helping to achieve the higher skill levels that were needed to attract businesses in as it provided leading edge technology and had attracted inward investment for research.

The Sub-Committee heard that 1,000 businesses had been helped to improve their performance and Professor Longmore also provided information relating to the hothouse programme; the multi-academy trust which now dealt with 14 schools compared to just 3 in 2013; and a number of other projects.

The Sub-Committee thanked Professor Longmore for her extremely informative presentation and was fascinated to hear about the different and varied approaches that were being taken to support the local community. The Tech Park itself provided a statement of confidence in the District and which would be of great benefit in the future.

Following a short question and answer session, the Chairman again thanked Professor Longmore for her attendance at the meeting and for providing a tour of the Tech Park to Members and Officers immediately prior to the meeting.

#### 17. BOGNOR REGIS PLACEBRANDING PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Victoria Hilditch, Vinco Marketing, to the meeting who was in attendance to appraise Members of the work that was in progress to develop a placebranding toolkit to attract residents and visitors to Bognor Regis.

The Group Head of Economy gave a brief summary of the work that Hemingway Design, the Council's consultants, had undertaken around the perceptions that people had with regard to Bognor Regis, together with the results of a survey that had been undertaken to ascertain what the key aspects were that people wanted to see taken forward to make the town a welcoming destination.

Vinco Marketing was now taking that forward and Mrs Hilditch provided Members with an insight of the work that was being undertaken to change the narrative of present perceptions. She envisaged that the two steps that were of paramount importance were to (i) create pride in the town; and (ii) promote the town on a much wider scale. She cared passionately about Bognor Regis and wanted others to realise what an amazing place it was – it was different to other coastal towns and that fact should be promoted.

Members were shown a number of slides which provided an illustration of the concept and ideas that were being looked at, with the next step being the identification of relevant participants to form a focus group to take those forward. A strategy would have to be formulated and a budget confirmed prior to any roll out.

Members then participated in a question and answer session with Mrs Hilditch. Issues raised included:-

- The use of social media
- How to increase the footfall into the town, e.g. providing flattened development, and encouraging the night time economy
- How partners for the focus group would be identified and encouragement given for everyone to work together

- The “Love Bognor Regis” brand would be for the town and would not be owned by the Council – all businesses and organisations would be encouraged to use it and a number of conversations had already been had with the County Council, town Council, BID (Business Improvement District) and the University
- A question was asked about the footfall coming out from Butlins to spend in the town and it was agreed that an approach would be made to the company to see if they could provide that information

Mrs Hilditch was commended for her passionate and enthusiastic interest in Bognor Regis and was thanked for her interesting presentation. The Chairman commented that there were exciting things to take away and it was pleasing to note that Bognor Regis was performing well in the current economic climate with shop vacancy rates improving.

#### 18. BOGNOR REGIS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

For the third and final presentation, the Chairman welcomed Jason Passingham, Board Chairman, to the meeting who was in attendance to provide an update on the work and progress of BID (Business Improvement District).

Mr Passingham emphasised that there must be some different ideas for the town to attract people in and that some form of lighting installation was presently being explored for the Christmas season 2020. There was a lot of competition and Bognor Regis had to find something that would provide enjoyment for all the family. He also ran through improvements that were being undertaken to part of the “old town” and the Queensway and stated that successful partnership working with all relevant bodies was essential.

Following a brief discussion, the Chairman thanked Mr Passingham for an informative and interesting presentation.

#### 19. TOURISM - SUMMARY OF SUPPORT CURRENTLY PROVIDED BY ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Tourism Business Development Officer presented a report which set out the key tourism activities that were either led by the Council or which the Council played a significant role in delivering.

In the course of the presentation, it was highlighted that “hits” on the Sussex by the Sea website were down due, in part, to the increase in the use of social media, and it was intended to review how the online tourism presence would look and be delivered in the future.

The Sub-Committee participated in a brief discussion regarding improvements to the website and the way forwarded and then noted the report. The Tourism Business Development Officer was commended for her work.

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20. BUSINESS SUPPORT AND ENTERPRISE IN ARUN

The Sub-Committee received a report from the Business Development Manager which provided an update on the services provided to local businesses and the progress being made with those services.

The Business Development Manager was congratulated and thanked for the fantastic job she was doing with the local business community. The Sub-Committee then noted the report.

21. BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION POSITION STATEMENT

The Sub-Committee received the Position Statement and made particular comment on the following:-

- **Gardens by the Sea** – a question was asked with regard to what was happening with Pavilion Park. The Chief Executive responded by saying that there was a lot of work to do to bring things forward and that consultants needed to be procured but it was hoped that Members would be provided with more detailed information in the near future.
- **University of Chichester** – on a question being asked, it was confirmed that the provision of toilets at the London Road Coach & Lorry Park had been a Council decision in the past but the matter would be cascaded across various Committees in due course. It was also confirmed that the University had not yet made a firm decision with regard to the provision of student accommodation in that area.

The Sub-Committee noted the remainder of the report.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Members and officers for their positive contribution and engagement in the meeting.

(The meeting concluded at 8.15 pm)