

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO AND DECISION OF LITTLEHAMPTON REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE ON 11 MARCH 2021

### PART A : REPORT

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF LITTLEHAMPTON SEAFRONT PROJECTS**

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**DATE:** 26 February 2021

**EXTN:** x37760

**PORTFOLIO AREA:** Economy Group

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Report provides a progress update on proposed projects in respect of the regeneration of Littlehampton seafront.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are requested to indicate if there are any particular projects of those listed that should be the subject of more detail in a comprehensive report for economic and regeneration projects to be presented to the Economy Committee in June 2021.

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND:

##### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

[Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020](#) in response to the Covid Recovery Members Working Party authorised “To note the report and instruct Officers to proceed with each proposal listed in [Appendix A](#)” which requested officers “Re-examine the 2014 Nine Big Ideas for Littlehampton, Concept Investment Plan and the 2016 Seafront Greens and Promenade project ideas and identify ways to progress the recommendations into deliverable projects”. The report provides:

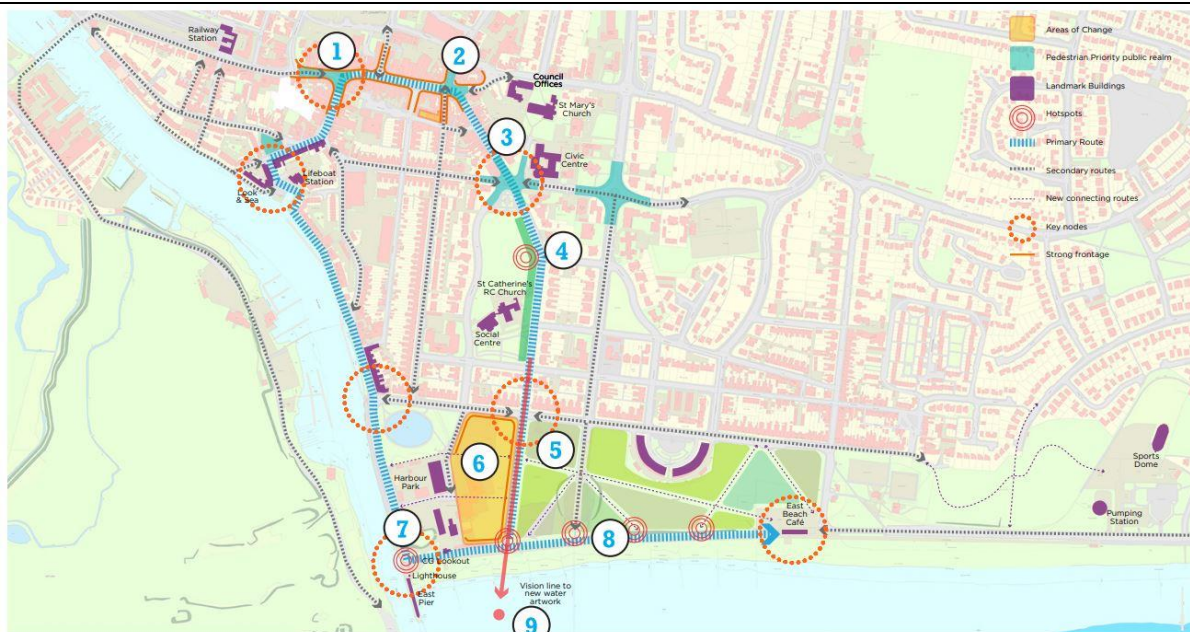
- an update on regeneration strategy plans initially outlined in the [Nine Big Ideas for Littlehampton](#) document (2014) in respect of Littlehampton town centre and seafront;
- delivery to date in line with these plans; and
- proposes future deliverable projects.

##### 1.2 STRATEGY, POLICY, PLANS, DECISIONS

1.2.1 In 2004, [The Littlehampton Vision](#) was published setting out a masterplan and implementation strategy for Littlehampton in the context of a 15-20 year timeframe. It identified areas of opportunity and a series of proposals for the regeneration of the town. Central to its theme was the belief that the success of Littlehampton is in the encouragement of pedestrian movement between the retail core and civic area,

riverside (East and West Banks) and the seafront.

- 1.2.2 The [Waterfront Strategy](#) produced in 2009 echoed many of the recommendations in The Littlehampton Vision. It also highlighted the three distinct areas (town centre, seafront and riverside) that require better linking to improve the pedestrian experience. This resulted in the [Littlehampton Sign Location Report](#) (2014) and the subsequent installation of new wayfinding signage to help improve connectivity.
- 1.2.3 The [Leisure and Cultural Strategy \(2013-2028\)](#) proposed a number of concepts aiming to enhance current attractions with investment in key landmarks and facilities.
- 1.2.4 To consolidate the findings of all aforementioned strategies the Council commissioned Placemarque to produce a concept investment plan which was titled Nine Big Ideas for Littlehampton (2014) The document proposed a framework for high level investment to improve the quality and navigational tools to aid visitors' sense of place and facilitate better wayfinding. The strategy segmented parts of the town centre and seafront into nine targeted projects that would achieve this goal. The proposed projects vary in size, form, and complexity covering improved public realm (street furniture and surface paving) and links, highway remodelling, additional visitor attractions and development opportunities.
- 1.2.5 Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee in March 2015 and Full Council in [July 2015](#) resolved that:
  - (1) the proposed prioritising of projects for progressing the next steps be supported;
  - (2) the proposed next steps be supported and the prioritised projects be progressed to feasibility stage as resources become available; and
  - (3) the social media strategy be extended with a Facebook page to gauge early public opinion and to start public debate on the Nine Big Ideas.
- 1.2.6 As part of the committee report, a deliverability scoring matrix was prepared (overleaf) to determine which projects should be prioritised based on measurable factors of impact, funding, cost, constraints, timing and scalability. The table set out the scoring for each project. The higher score indicates greater deliverability. This table intended to give a guide to the deliverability of these projects. There is naturally an element of subjectivity with some of the scoring but it was based on reasonable knowledge of the sites/proposals and professional experience of delivering similar schemes.



### Priority / deliverability scoring

Project	Impact 1= low 5= high	Funding 1 = not available 5 = available	Cost 1 = high 5=low	Constraints 1= high 5 = low	Timing 1 =long term 5 = short term	Scalable (done in phases?) 1= no 3 = yes	Higher score = greater deliverability
P1 – High St, St Martins and Beach Rd links	4	3	2	3	3	1	16
P2 – Extension of Public realm	2	2	4	3	4	1	16
P3 – Beach road War memorial	5	2	2	3	3	1	16
P4 – Beach Road	3	2	3	3	3	3	17
P5 – New green and beach link	5	2	3	2	3	3	18
P6 – West development / Windmill site	5	2	1	1	1	3	13
P7 – Pier Lookout	5	2	2	3	3	3	18
P8 – Improve Promenade	3	2	3	4	4	3	<b>19</b>
P9 – Waterfront Maker	5	2	2	3	2	3	17

### 1.2.7 Town Centre Public Realm Improvements

Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee on [21<sup>st</sup> July 2015](#) and Full Council on [9<sup>th</sup> September 2015](#) resolved that:

- (1) officers, in consultation with key stakeholders, develop a design improvement brief for Littlehampton town centre;
- (2) design experts be commissioned to produce the design template for Littlehampton town centre public realm; and
- (3) officers develop a costed proposal for improvements to the public realm area in the High Street outside Casino (the bench area).

### 1.2.8 Subsequently, LDA Design was commissioned to produce public realm designs. Public consultation was strongly supportive of the designs, which were later finalised and approved for delivery by Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee on [6<sup>th</sup> July 2016](#). Full Council resolved on [20<sup>th</sup> July 2016](#) that:

- (1) a supplementary estimate of £75,000 be approved to cover the collective costs of commissioning the various technical studies and professional fees required to progress the proposed Littlehampton Town Centre public realm improvements to RIBA Work Stage 4. This supplementary estimate is only to be used if the Council is invited to submit a Stage 2 Coastal Communities Fund application;
- (2) the proposed pedestrian priority public realm design plans for Littlehampton Town Centre (as set out in Appendix 1. Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Design Proposals) are approved, subject to agreement of the future of the Clock Tower, and delivered in partnership, as phased projects over a period of time, with Littlehampton Town Council (LTC), West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and other stakeholders, subject to the necessary funding being available;
- (3) WSCC and LTC to be asked to consider contributing towards the costs of the Town Centre public realm projects;
- (4) the Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration be authorised to apply for external funding sources including that of the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF). This includes sponsorship for elements of the scheme to help finance parts of the project;
- (5) the Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration be authorised to make minor amendments to the design plans as necessary and appropriate to enable efficient and effective delivery of the project;
- (6) the use of £15,000 of Morrison's Section 106 contributions allocated for 'Town Team' projects to part fund the public realm technical studies be approved;
- (8) the Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration be authorised to draw down the supplementary estimate of £75,000, if approved;
- (9) if the Council is not invited to submit a Stage 2 CCF bid, the sum of £75,000 should be considered as a possible allocation in the Capital Programme to facilitate a detailed bid next year;
- (10) a formal agreement is put in place with WSCC Highways as land owners to develop the relevant Highway land and a Section 278 agreement is arranged at a later date by the Council in partnership with WSCC Highways; and
- (11) a formal agreement is put in place with Network Rail as land owners to facilitate the improvements of a small section of public realm outside the train station.
- (12) a formal agreement is put in place with Network Rail as land owners to facilitate the improvements of a small section of public realm outside the train



station.

#### Seafront Public Realm improvements

- 1.2.9 In 2017 the next stage was implemented. This involved LDA Design being commissioned to produce the [Littlehampton Regeneration – Seafront Report](#) to create concept public realm designs for the seafront and greens area. The report proposed many designs to transform the landscape of the seafront, and suggested concepts to utilise the spaces better and improve fluidity of pedestrian movement. The study area included the Greens, promenade, East Bank River Walkway and Oyster Pond and the adjacent areas south of the town centre and along Beach Road to the beach. Consequently, three projects were envisaged as forming the basis for public realm improvements, focussing on Beach Road, the Green, and promenade.
- 1.2.10 In response to the public consultation on the design proposals for Littlehampton seafront, the Economic Development Officer set out an Action Plan (Item 6) to Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee on [14th June 2017](#) detailing how it is proposed to deliver the Littlehampton Seafront Public Realm Design Plan. The Sub-Committee had encouraged Officers to take the concepts away to look at them in their entirety and so that an order of project prioritisation could be developed. In discussing the recommendations, these were supported. It was acknowledged that the various projects listed might take several years to be delivered and were just a concept at this stage with the detailed designs coming forward later. A thorough consultation would be undertaken at the appropriate time. The importance of liaising with key stakeholders such as the Windmill and Harbour Park were again confirmed as they all had different covenants on that site.



- 1.2.11 Full Council resolved on [12th July 2017](#) that:
- (1) the proposed conceptual design principles for Littlehampton seafront are approved but that a further review of parking for coaches, mini buses and cars be undertaken;
  - (2) the proposed conceptual design principles are delivered, as phased projects over the longer-term in partnership with Littlehampton Town Council, West Sussex County Council and other key stakeholders subject to the necessary funding becoming available;
  - (3) the proposed Action Plan for enhancing Littlehampton seafront and connecting roads from the Town Centre is supported with Actions 2 and 4 being merged;
  - (4) authorisation is given to the Director of Place to apply for external funding sources to support any of the seafront project proposals. This includes sponsorship for elements of the scheme to help finance parts of the project;

- (5) the proposed Action Plan for enhancing the Littlehampton seafront be produced to prioritise individual concepts; and
- (6) a progress report be presented to the Sub-Committee annually or at shorter intervals if appropriate.

### 1.3 PROGRESS UPDATES

#### **WAYFINDING**

##### Monolith signs

- 1.3.1 The [Sign Location Report](#) was produced in 2014 resulting in the installation of new monolith signs in the town centre, seafront and riverside in 2015. This forms part of the Wayfinding Strategy: aiding navigation for visitors and ratified in the objectives set out by the Nine Big Ideas.

#### **SEAFRONT**

##### Stage by the Sea

- 1.3.2 'Stage by the Sea' was completed in 2015 by LTC: offering a venue on the Green for open-air entertainment. This fulfilled the Council's recommendation for street entertainment set out in its document [Concessions, Market, Street Traders and Street Entertainers Strategy](#) (Project 4.3) by creating a new performance area south of Banjo Road.

##### Littlehampton Wave

- 1.3.3 Littlehampton Wave, the new leisure centre opened by ADC in spring 2019. This satisfied the Council's Strategic Priority (1b) of providing a new or improved Leisure Centre for Littlehampton as described in Leisure and Cultural Strategy.

##### Skate Park

- 1.3.4 The new Skate Park on Sea Road was completed by ADC in autumn 2019, bringing new and exciting facilities for BMX cyclists, skateboarders and in-line skaters to enjoy. It is a very popular 'go to' location for young people.

- 1.3.5 Review of coach parking provision (Banjo Road)

The review was conducted and outlined in the report for [Proposed new commercial pitches on Littlehampton seafront](#) taken to Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee on [7<sup>th</sup> October 2020](#). The reviews had several purposes:

- (1) to document actual demand for coach parking via analysis of parking tickets sold
- (2) to evaluate the feasibility for the potential accommodation of seasonal commercial pitches within part of the Banjo Road coach parking area
- (3) to be able to plan alternative off-site coach parking arrangements for coaches as the Banjo Road parking site is removed in the approved Seafront Design Schemes and instead coach pick up and drop off sites are included. Both concepts exploit the land on and adjacent to Banjo Road so the relocation of coach parking elsewhere has been identified as a necessity to deliver either design.

The report summarised:

*It is recognised that some coach parking is required at Banjo Road until appropriate off-site coach parking provision is identified. The proposal is to use the 10 parallel parking coach parking spaces nearest the seafront for temporary businesses leaving the 10 herringbone spaces plus turning circle available for coaches to use. A drawing of these arrangements is attached as Appendix C. This is the site that the Big Wheel is currently occupying in exactly this configuration.*

*The 2019-20 coach parking data for Banjo Road by month is attached below and includes all ticket sales whether Pay & Display or RingGo. The tickets could be for a coach or minibus – the tariff is the same.*

<b>Ticket sales</b>	<b>Ap 19</b>	<b>Ma 19</b>	<b>Ju 19</b>	<b>Jul 19</b>	<b>Au 19</b>	<b>Sp 19</b>	<b>Oc 19</b>	<b>No 19</b>	<b>De 19</b>	<b>Ja 20</b>	<b>Fe 20</b>	<b>Ma 20</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Up to one hour</b>	23	16	27	41	34	14	7	6	2	0	0	0	131
<b>Over one hour</b>	2	7	57	157	105	12	0	2	0	0	0	0	333
<b>Overnight</b>	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	25	26	84	198	141	26	7	8	2	0	0	0	466

*This data makes it abundantly clear that even using the highest monthly total of 198 in July 2019, with 20 coach spaces available in Banjo Road this facility is underused.*

*Looking at the daily ticket sales data for the three busiest months of June, July and August 2019, only on one single day are 20 tickets purchased (20<sup>th</sup> July) so the coach park was only potentially full to capacity on one day per year assuming that they were all there at the same time. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 19 tickets were purchased, and between 15 and 11 tickets were purchased on 4 other days in July. This means that the proposal to use the 10 parallel parking coach parking spaces nearest the seafront for temporary businesses leaving the 10 herringbone spaces plus turning circle would mean that the coach park would have possibly reached capacity on a maximum of 6 days in a year. Two of these days were weekend days where the two coach parking spaces at The Wave leisure centre could have been used if signage was in place to direct coaches there.*

*The Covid-19 pandemic has radically reduced the use of mass transport such as coaches, and until the pandemic is under control this is likely to continue.*

The Council has not yet identified a viable alternative location to provide appropriate off-site coach parking provision. It did, however, conclude that there is enough parking provision to both accommodate the commercial pitches and coaches. On [7<sup>th</sup> October 2020](#), the Subcommittee supported the planning application with restrictions to the Operating Licence.

#### Commercial Pitches near the seafront

- 1.3.6 Consultation for temporary seasonal concessions responded in favour of expanding provision. In October 2020, the Development Control Committee considered an application for new commercial pitches for Littlehampton seafront (Banjo Road). It is thought that the area would be more attractive to visitors if there was a wider

choice of commercial and entertainment options available on the seafront, and boost the local economy by drawing in new visitors and footfall – satisfying the objectives of the [Strategic Tourism Review](#) – and also generate income (lease revenue) for The Council. On [7th October 2020](#), the Subcommittee supported the planning application ([LU/91/19](#)) with restrictions to the Operating Licence. This also achieves part of the [Council's Concessions Strategy Recommendation](#) (1.8).

#### Coastguard Tower conversion

- 1.3.7 Planning permission was approved for the conversion of the former Coastguard Tower into holiday accommodation back in 2017 ([LU/98/17/PL](#)) with construction currently ongoing.

#### Watersports Venue & Café

- 1.3.8 The Council marketed an under-used promenade shelter on Sea Road in 2016 as a [New Commercial Business Opportunity](#). Consequently, planning permission was granted for a new café and watersports venue opposite the Skate Park in December 2017 ([LU/345/19/DOC](#)). Building contractors have been appointed and works are currently underway with the main structure up. The build programme was initially expected to take around six months, but progress has been slowed by the pandemic. The facility is expected to open by summer 2021.

#### Seafront public realm improvements

- 1.3.9 Public realm improvements around the entrance to the pier have transformed the junction between pier and Riverside Walkway into a modern space to enjoy views of the river and sea. It features pebble shaped seats, complemented with new railings on the pier.
- 1.3.10 The area in the immediate vicinity of Windmill Theatre is earmarked as a desirable zone to encourage new enterprise and establish better links. However, opportunities are currently constrained by the conditions of lease of harbour Park: as such is constrained by physical boundaries and legal barriers making any scheme here unviable without co-operation of leaseholders.
- 1.3.11 Although initial concept proposals have been developed as part of the Seafront Design Scheme, significant investment is required and resolution to land ownership issues (Harbour Park lease) need to be addressed. Officers have delayed seeking external funding for these elements until a time there is clarity on the outcome of negotiations of the Harbour Park lease. Notwithstanding, the intention would be to deliver a cohesive design scheme implemented as part of series of phased projects.
- 1.3.12 A schedule of smaller scale phased projects was produced as outlined in the Action Plan for Seafront Public Realm interventions **Item 6** put to the Sub-Committee on [14<sup>th</sup> June 2017](#).

### **TOWN CENTRE**

- 1.3.13 Littlehampton town centre is the primary thoroughfare visitors take en route to the beach. For many day-trippers arriving by train the railway station is the start of the journey on foot to the seafront. The Wayfinding Strategy suggested concepts



intended to create stronger links between town centre, seafront and river as a pedestrian circuit. This was supported by the installation of monolith signs in 2015 which established clear navigational routes. By reinforcing better links thus encouraging pedestrian movement through the town centre it is hoped a boost to businesses will naturally occur alongside increased footfall. As a result, concepts for public realm improvements were first dreamt up as part of the Nine Big Ideas in 2014 and developed further by LDA Design in 2016.

#### Public Realm improvements

- 1.3.14 Officers commissioned [LDA Design](#) to produce concept designs for consultation in April and May 2016. [Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Improvements Survey Report](#) (2016) detailed the feedback from the survey. LDA's Final Report considered the projects proposed in the Nine Big Ideas and showcased designs for new public realm installations. The report proposed five separate phases (a variation of the original components) aimed at minimising disruption to traders and traffic and make the delivery more achievable (by segmenting smaller amounts of funding is needed at any one time). The intention to deliver the entire project progressively remains – as and when funding demands can be met.
- 1.3.15 In 2017, a funding bid to Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) for all five phases was unsuccessful. Following a revised bid, in April 2019 the Coastal Communities Fund awarded £2,452,295 to deliver Phases 1 & 2 of the public realm scheme.
- 1.3.16 Local Growth Fund (LGF) gave a partial award for £564k for Phase 3 of the scheme. Littlehampton Town Council and ADC approved contribution of £200k each to enable Phase 3 to go ahead. The project went out to tender in June 2020; but those submitted were significantly over budget.
- 1.3.17 With the agreement of Members, the project was rescoped to exclude the construction of Phase 1, from the Railway Station to High Street, to bring the project within budget. A second round of tendering was advertised in October 2020 inviting bids for the pre-contract design and construction management for all three phases, plus the key construction elements for Phases 1 & 2. This will ensure that Phase 1 (Railway Station) is fully ready if another funding opportunity arises in the future.
- 1.3.18 The Council has given approval for the winning contractor to proceed with preconstruction services. The Council is finalising the terms of contract with the contractors; a press release announcing the winning contractor will be released upon signing the contract, expected in March 2021. The Council will require further approval of the contract sum for construction to commence.

#### **RIVER ARUN**

- 1.3.19 East Bank Tidal Defences & Riverside Walkway project  
In 2015 the East Bank Tidal Defences & Riverside Walkway project was completed by the Environment Agency in partnership with ADC; securing flood protection for around 1,000 homeowners. It has since become a popular destination for walkers and forms part of a primary pedestrian route that links beach with town.

### River Arun Cycle Path

- 1.3.20 The river forms a vital component in existing link between town centre and seafront. This connection is hoped to be strengthened and enhanced with the creation of a new cycle path along the west bank of the River Arun.
- 1.3.21 The [Arun Cycleway Feasibility Study \(see link on report elsewhere on Agenda\)](#) report outlines the feasibility of installing a new cycle path along the bank of the River Arun, connecting Littlehampton and Arundel. The conclusion of the feasibility studies has confirmed the proposal to be viable. The next stages include ecology surveys, public engagement and the commissioning of a report to demonstrate the economic benefits of the cycleway. This will preclude seeking external funding to secure the delivery of cycleway and any planning application. The estimated cost range is between £9.8m and £15.8m for the main route and a further £1.4m for various connecting elements.
- 1.3.22 There are also a number of exclusions to these costs including any land acquisition costs (if required) and the removal or remediation of any contaminated material than might be found, which must be taken into account. So far, funding of £62k has been secured from the Business Rate Pool to facilitate the next stage of work.

## **2 PROPOSAL(S):**

- 2.1 The Cabinet Report in November 2020 that requested this paper be collated included the paragraph below in respect of delivery of these projects:

“The Coronavirus pandemic has created a tremendous amount of work for Officers over recent months and there does not appear to be any sight of a reduction in this, particularly now that we enter a second Lockdown. Because day to day service to the community (and support work behind the scenes) continues during the pandemic, the workload and time that Officers are already working is excessive. Whilst the proposals within the Appendix to the report are indeed worthy of following through (if agreed), the lack of capacity of Officers to deliver this work should not be underestimated. This lack of capacity will have an effect on the timescales for delivery.”

This lack of available officer resource remains true at the time of writing and is potentially likely to be exacerbated by savings that the Council is seeking to make to maintain a balanced budget.

- 2.2 Members are requested to indicate if there are any particular projects of those listed that should be the subject of more detail in a comprehensive report for economic and regeneration projects to be presented to the Economy Committee in June 2021.

## **3 OPTIONS:**

Members are asked to give Officers an indication of their preferred way forward for regeneration and development opportunities on the seafront.

## **4 CONSULTATION:**

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council	x	

Relevant District Ward Councillors		<b>x</b>
Other groups/persons (please specify) Some Ward Cllrs have changed since decisions were made		
<b>5 ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial	<b>x</b>	
Legal	<b>x</b>	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		<b>x</b>
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		<b>x</b>
Sustainability		<b>x</b>
Asset Management/Property/Land	<b>x</b>	
Technology		<b>x</b>
Other (please explain) Officer resources	<b>x</b>	

#### **6 IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial: Some of the proposed projects either require capital funding, and/or will bring income to the Council

Legal: Legal agreements such as leases and licenses will be required for some proposed projects

Land: Some of the proposed projects are located on Council-owned land

Officer resources: No officer resource is currently allocated to the proposed projects, and with savings being made there may not be available capacity within relevant departments

#### **7 REASON FOR THE DECISION:**

To improve the economic fortunes of Littlehampton through attracting more, and more affluent visitors to come more often, stay longer and spend more.

#### **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

[Cabinet Report: Covid-19 Recovery Working Party: Key Outcomes from Cabinet: Appendix A: November 2020](#)

Sub-Committee Meeting Papers

[21<sup>st</sup> July 2015](#)

[9<sup>th</sup> September 2015](#)

[6<sup>th</sup> July 2016](#)

[20<sup>th</sup> July 2016](#)

[14<sup>th</sup> June 2017](#)

[12<sup>th</sup> July 2017](#)

[7<sup>th</sup> October 2020](#)

## Strategic Reports

[Nine Big Ideas for Littlehampton](#)

[The Littlehampton Vision](#)

[Waterfront Strategy](#)

[Littlehampton Sign Location Report](#)

[Leisure and Cultural Strategy \(2013-2028\)](#)

[LDA's Final Report \(2017\)](#)

[Concessions, Market, Street Traders and Street Entertainers Strategy](#)

[Proposed new commercial pitches on Littlehampton seafront](#)

[Strategic Tourism Review](#)

[Council's Concessions Strategy Recommendation](#)

[Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Improvements Survey Report \(2016\)](#)

[Arun Cycleway Feasibility Study \(see link on report elsewhere on Agenda\)](#)