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27 June 2019

To: **MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP, BURGESS HILL TOWN COUNCIL**

A **MEETING** of the **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP** will be held in the Council Chamber on **2 JULY 2019** at **19.00 hours**, when your attendance is required.

Steve Cridland
Chief Executive Officer

****PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THE MEETING****

Filming, recording of Council meetings and use of social media:

During this meeting members of the public may film or record the Committee and officers from the public area only providing it does not disrupt the meeting. The Confidential section of the meeting may not be filmed or recorded.

If a member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) filming must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking.

The use of social media is permitted but members of the public are requested to switch their mobile devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

A G E N D A

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**
3. **SUBSTITUTES**

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In respect of any matter on the agenda.

5. **BACKGROUND PAPER**

A paper at Annex 1 gives a brief overview of Strategic Planning in Burgess Hill, and the issues that this Committee faces.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) Council look to have a greater representation of Burgess Hill Councillors in the governance of the Regeneration Programme.
- b) Council aim to get a realistic share of the development money to fund the infrastructure needs of the town given its rapid current and planned expansion.
- c) Council agree the recommendations of the Cultural Quarter Committee and canvass support for its recommendations within the governance of the Regeneration Programme.
- d) Council look to a way of updating the Neighbourhood Plan which is incremental only and does not involve another major exercise at great cost of time and expenditure.

6. **STRATEGY & OBJECTIVES**

The KAG is asked to consider the Town Strategy as articulated in the key documents at Annex 1 ie the Town-wide Strategy, The District Plan, and the Neighbourhood Plan. Any disagreement with the stated strategy should be highlighted and discussed at the next meeting. A set of objectives then needs to be documented, with deadlines that the Town Council will ensure are delivered by the responsible parties during the course of the year.

This document will then form part of an overall Town Plan for 2019-20.

RECOMMENDED:

That members of the Strategic Development KAG consider the Town Wide Strategy, The District Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan for discussion at the next meeting with a view to developing objectives.

7. **UPDATES TO THE BH REGENERATION PLAN**

a) **NEW RIVER RETAIL**

A group Councillors met with NRR recently ahead of their presentation to the public of their latest plans. Following this meeting the attached letter (Annexure 2) was sent to NRR setting out the Council's aspirations. It is necessary to take this further by working out a plan which can be presented to NRR,

MSDC and to use as a basis for discussion with independent traders.

RECOMMENDED:

That the group consider the report

b) **KINGS WEALD**

Croudace has submitted a request for changes to their contract which is now lodged with MSDC planning.

RECOMMENDED:

That the ward members consider the request and report back to the KAG.

8. **THE CULTURAL QUARTER WORKING GROUP**

A working group has been conducting a feasibility study for the Town Council to design, build and operate an Arts Centre in the cultural quarter of Burgess Hill. The Committee is currently chaired by Robert Eggleston. It is proposed that this working group reports in to the Strategic KAG for the purposed of scrutiny.

RECOMMENDED:

That the working party chair updates the KAG on progress to date and the decisions that need to be taken to enable implementation.

9. **TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP**

9.1 The Town Centre Partnership is made up of representatives from New River Retail, Market Place and the Town Council. In the past each partner contributed towards the cost of the partnership and the Council coordinated efforts to promote business in the town centre. Market Place and NRR withdrew their funding and it was decided to put the partnership on ice until the development of the town centre had been completed. Some £17,000 remains ring-fenced in the budget for use by the partnership. One suggestion was that a Business Improvement District be set up once the town centre development has been completed.

9.2 The Town Council is the only partner which still promotes the town in any significant way. It is clear that with the disruption to the town centre over the next three years, businesses will be affected. It is suggested that this funding be used to assist businesses in some meaningful way

RECOMMENDED:

That the group consider the report

10. **RELATIONSHIP WITH INDEPENDENT TRADERS**

A meeting was held with traders prior to the election which was well attended. It is suggested that this relationship be continued and that the Council consider what it might be able to do in this regard.

RECOMMENDED:

That the group consider the report

BHTC Strategic Development KAG - Our Objectives 2nd July 2019

Background

Burgess Hill developed a town-wide strategy, which was initiated around 2006 by a Lib Dem regime and subsequently was taken forward by the Conservatives, the final document being published in 2011. It was in response to a central Government target given to Mid Sussex to build some 17,000 homes by John Prescott – we as a town looked at what was feasible to be built in the Burgess Hill. The report concluded that BH could take around 4,000 and recommended that we should take the hit, on the assumption that we could raise on Section 106 contributions around £10,000 to £20,000 per house. It contained a list of infrastructure needed if the development went ahead, totalling £40m. This included money for an Arts Centre to replace the Martlets at a cost of £4m.

In the development of this plan, the contractors who had been approached with the task of building the housing agreed that they would contribute a further £40m to the BH Town Council to build the additional infrastructure to support the town expansion.

This approach was rejected by MSDC as the planning authority, but much of the content of the strategy was incorporated into the District Plan. However, because of disagreements within MSDC this plan was only submitted for agreement in 2018, and in consequence a much lower level of section 106 money was raised, not all of which was spent on BH infrastructure. The deal between the developers and BHTC was scrapped. No Community Infrastructure Levy has been raised either, 25% of which would have been payable to BHTC.

In fact around 2,000 houses have been given planning permission since the rejection of the strategy, and a further 3,500 to 4,000 will be built on the Northern Arc.

The Key Documents

The BH Town-wide Strategy 2011

<https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/strategicvision>

The BH Neighbourhood Plan 2015

<https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan/>

The District Plan 2014

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/>

Supplementary:

The Sustainability Report

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/>

The BH Transport Strategy

Not on website – several documents

The BH Cultural Quarter

<https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/culturalquarter>

The BH Regeneration Programme

The Regeneration Programme has several components, each a separate project:

- Burgess Hill Town Centre transformation (£65m)
- The Northern Arc plus other sites already under construction (5,000 new homes)
- A Technology Business Park (25 hectares - 15,000 new jobs)
- A sports complex
- Full Fibre Digital Infrastructure
- Upgrading the A2300 to dual carriageway
- Improved Transport Connectivity

The total cost of all these developments nears £1bn.

The BH Regeneration Programme has an overarching political board, supported by an executive board. The four who sit on the political board, having overall control of the programme, are Louise Goldsmith (Leader WSCC), Lee Harris (Chief Exec WSCC), Jonathan Ash-Edwards (Leader MSDC), Kathryn Hall (Chief Exec MSDC). They tend to meet quarterly.

Reporting to them (to do the work) is an Officer Group, who meet monthly. This is chaired by Judy Holmes, supported by Sally Blomfield (both MSDC planning). Also on this sits Duncan Barrett, senior programme manager for WSCC, who is responsible for this and four other major change programmes (he is about to leave). Paul Jackson-Cole, who reports to him, is responsible for managing the BH Regeneration Programme.

Supporting and critiquing these boards is a group of Councillors. This is chaired by Jonathan Ash-Edwards (who is responsible for oversight of the economics of the BH Growth), Andrew Barrett-Miles as County Councillor (the only one who lives in Burgess Hill), Joy Dennis, Andrew McNaughton (MSDC cabinet member for planning), plus an array of officers including Judy Holmes, Duncan Barrett, and the transport Manager for West Sussex.

In the whole set up there is only one person who represents Burgess Hill, and there are no Lib Dems.

Cllrs Roger Cartwright (Chairman), Graham Allen, Joseph Foster, Kathleen Willis, Andrew Barrett-Miles, Robert Duggan

In addition there is/was a Sustainability Project that has some 10 members whose task is to check that all the component parts of the Programme are supported by the correct infrastructure, including road, railway, parking facilities etc.

Judy Holmes chairs, in addition, a user group on which sit representatives from the towns and villages who are likely to be affected by the BH Regeneration, including the likes of Twineham and Bolney. Some BH Councillors are likely to be invited to attend the future meetings.

BHTC ran a Transport Group which took a specific interest in the transport aspects of the programme - it has reported and has faded. It should be regenerated itself since there are big transport issues to consider. All the grants for transport improvements eg A2300 widening have to be spent by 2021 so these schemes are being pushed through quickly. WSCC is responsible for the delivery.

There is a SHEILA working group which is responsible for ensuring a land supply strategic planning, in particular house building. Sue Hatton is our representative on this body.

The BHTC Strategic Development KAG has a prime responsibility to represent the interests of BH, and to ensure that the Regeneration Programme is delivered in line with the 2011 Town-wide Strategy and indeed in the current interests of the residents of BH.

BH Town Centre

The planning and delivery of the transformed BH Town Centre was outsourced to New River Teil, who were given a termed lease from MSDC the Freeholders to redevelop an area that broadly equates to the Martlets centre. The Martlets Centre was included within this deal, and the proposal was that the Centre itself would be closed and not replaced.

The Culture Quarter

Following strong public protests about the closure of the centre, an advisory committee was set up by the Town Council including representatives of the Centre users to look at options for the design, development and running of what became terms as an Arts Centre, including a purpose-built theatre for the performing arts. Currently this is chaired by Robert Eggleston and supported by the BHTC chief executive.

The Role of the Strategic Devt. KAG

The role of the Strategic Development KAG is to ensure that the needs of Burgess Hill are met within the current planning framework, which includes the BH Regeneration Programme.

Our Immediate Objectives

- a) We look to have a greater representation of Burgess Hill Councillors in the governance of the Regeneration Programme.
- b) We aim to get a realistic share of the development money to fund the infrastructure needs of the town given its rapid current and planned expansion.
- c) We need to agree the recommendations of the Cultural Quarter Committee and canvass support for its recommendations within the governance of the Regeneration Programme.
- d) We will look to a way of updating the Neighbourhood Plans which is incremental only and does not involve another major exercise at great cost of time and expenditure.

Annex 2

Thank you for meeting with us last week and sharing your presentation ahead of the public display last Saturday. We found the meeting most helpful and I am sure you will have realised from the response you had on Saturday just how passionate our public is about the town and in particular the new development. I hope that you will be in a position to provide us with regular updates to allay rumours and any fears that the public may have. To this end it would be useful to have a contact (unless you would like us to contact you) with issues which may arise. The Help Point has in the past felt inadequate in their ability to provide information. Their concern is that the public find them lacking as many questions cannot be answered. Believe me, the public can become vicious if they feel that the Council should be better informed.

Cllr Eggleston has asked that I list a few important points which have been identified:

1. Delivery of the plan - this is the 4th attempt and it has to be delivered this time. The public is losing confidence and the recent elections show their displeasure with the progress to date as well as the lack of communication.
2. There will need to be private and public sector support to "Bridge the Gap" whilst development takes place. Small traders in particular are finding the trading climate very difficult and I am aware of some that are facing closure due to amongst other things, heavy overheads. I am aware that NRR has made some concessions already but more may be needed to ensure that they survive the ever lessening footfall especially when Lidl moves. From our side we would be happy to provide events in town including the sand pit which is a great attraction

during the summer holidays. If you have any other suggestions about how we might help, please let me know.

3. There is a considerable amount of support, indeed demand, for a Changing Places Toilet facility. We need to set out our aspirations for a town that supports all needs - the able bodied through to serious disabilities plus being a welcoming place for people with 'hidden' illnesses (building on the dementia friendly town concept). We believe that a facility such as this would set the centre apart from the competitors. I should highlight that Burgess Hill probably has more than the average number of needy people due largely to Woodlands Meed school and the nearness of Chailey Heritage which is a large centre caring for all disabilities. NRR would derive considerable support if it were to make this a key point of the development.
4. Another strong theme is the return of a market and in particular an indoor market. Again a potential commercial plus and something that the town would welcome. Locating it near the new town square - say the former Argos building and possibly in the meantime along Church Walk. Now that Ian is leaving, has NRR any ideas on how to progress this idea? The Town Council would be very supportive and there are sufficient funds in the Town Centre Partnership pot to set it all up.
5. Could you provide confirmation that there will be disabled access to the serviced office space? There is also the potential for some of the space to be available for hourly lets to provide additional meeting room space in the town.
6. Could you give some thought to the potential use for the unit next to the Library to be used for some sort of public service/third sector service use? Perhaps we could discuss this next time we meet.
7. We mentioned in our meeting the cost to the Council (£70k per annum) to service a £3million loan over 50 years to pay for the community performance centre to replace the Martlets. Despite the report commissioned by MSDC which tried to show that the users of the Martlets could be accommodated elsewhere and that the facility was only 43% used, we believe the report to have been flawed and that there is sufficient support in town for a smaller centre. This can be substantiated by the Clark report commissioned by the Town Council which showed that there was a need for a flexible community space incorporating a performance space in the town centre. In addition to the £3 million loan a further £2.5 million is needed. Approximately £400k can be covered by council reserves and section 106 funding but we will be reliant on a fundraiser to raise the balance. This could well form part of the section 106 negotiations when your next planning application is submitted. We will be following this with keen interest.
8. The Town Council is an important influencer/stakeholder and want to be supportive of this scheme, however we need to be guardians of our residents' interests – something which the ballot box showed was not previously the case.

9. The Council is delighted by the new approach to communication and fact that there is planned further presentation to come following feedback from Saturday. We look forward to future meetings and in particular ahead of any future public presentation.