



MINUTES of the EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2012 at 5.00pm

PRESENT: Cllrs Gammon (Mayor), Ayres, Bowyer, Britton, Caffyn, Emberson, Hulmes, Scrivener, Squires and Dr Walsh

2011/2012

58. EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The Chair and Clerk outlined the evacuation procedures.

59. MOBILE PHONES

Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

60. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Belchamber MBE, Long, Neno, Northeast and Weston.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declaration of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. Councillor Dr Walsh declared a personal interest as a Member of the District Council, County Council and Littlehampton Harbour Board. Councillor Squires declared a personal interest as a Member of the District Council and Littlehampton Harbour Board. Councillor Emberson declared a personal interest as a Member of the District Council and its Regeneration Sub-Committee. Councillors Bowyer, Caffyn and Gammon declared personal interests as Members of the District Council.

62. URGENT ITEMS

The Town Clerk asked Members of the Council to remain following the meeting so that he could informally canvass their views on two items, relating to the Church Street offices offer and controlled parking zones.

63. PUBLIC FORUM

Mr Andy Cooper related to the proposed enhancement of the East Bank flood defences and the much talked about pedestrianisation of Pier Road and Arun Parade. He stated that the traders and businesses of this area recognised the need for flood defences and an enhancement scheme for the river. However, at the last Pier Road Traders' Meeting it was agreed to vote against any pedestrianisation of this area. Also, he pointed out that so far no recent

engagement had been made to consult with stakeholders on the matter of the pedestrianisation of this area. His question to the Town Council was, therefore, would they support the traders of Pier Road and Arun Parade and engage in consultation with the stakeholders when required to do so?

Councillor Dr Walsh, as Chairman of the Joint Eastern Arun Area Committee Highways Working Group, explained that the County Council had commissioned a study to look at Pier Road which included a wide range of options. These ranged from pedestrianisation, including both all year and seasonally and also one-way traffic in either direction. There was no preferred option at this stage and the piece of work had only just been commenced. He confirmed there would be public consultation once this study had been completed and that an important area to be looked at would be access for the Pier Road traders. (Councillor Dr Walsh also declared a personal interest in view of his role with the Joint Eastern Arun Area Committee Highways Working Group.)

The Town Clerk also confirmed that the Town Council would be very keen to ensure that appropriate consultation was undertaken on this scheme and that it would also wish to be consulted itself. He also referred to the significant feedback there had been on this matter as part of the Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

Mr Wes Smart of Harbour Park then stated that Harbour Park supported the flood defence scheme and also, in principle, Arun's enhancement plan. However, there were some major detailing issues which would require in-depth consultation in order to maximise this most important area for local traders, residents and casual tourists. He explained that the organisation did not feel involved and that although there might have been appropriate public consultation, this did not extend to key stakeholders. There were potentially significant impacts on businesses and discussions in the public foyer at the Civic Centre he believed were inappropriate. He went on to express some concerns that the funding might be spread too thin if it was also to encompass areas such as the Oyster Pond. Lastly, he asked how much the Town Council were contributing to the scheme.

On the latter point, the Town Clerk explained that although initially a financial commitment had been made by the Town Council, this had now been confirmed by the District Council as not required and that therefore the Town Council was not contributing financially. However, the Council continued to be active members of the Project Board.

64. EAST BANK TIDAL WALL ENHANCEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported verbally that the Extraordinary meeting had been called so as to allow the Town Council to formally comment on the proposals for the East Bank Tidal Wall Enhancements which were to be considered by the District Council at their meeting on 21st February 2012. It had been thought that this would be considered in early March or that the project board would meet before the District Council made a decision, but this was now not the case. He also explained that the discussions were not about either the Pier Road pedestrianisation, which was a very important but separate discussion or about the need for a tidal wall, which it was generally accepted was vital. Members' comments were sought on the proposed enhancements

so that these were before the District Council when they made their decision on how to proceed.

The Major Projects Manager then went on to summarise some of the feedback that she had from Members before the meeting and some of the key points that officers had identified. A wide ranging debate followed, where the following points emerged:-

- It was noted that the inclusion of the work on the Oyster Pond and the shelter by the pier were outside of this brief. Whilst the visualisations identified ideas for public art, it was felt that any proposal should be widely consulted on again before implementation. Members were not in favour of the fishing floats!
- Members were pleased that the fish stall had been retained.
- It was thought that the barriers should be of a high quality with a specific design incorporated, as exemplified at Shoreham Harbour. It was felt that if barriers were used that were similar to those on the current walkway there was a danger of creating an extremely unattractive corridor. This was particularly applicable along Arun Parade where they were identified on both sides. It was commented that the visualisations gave the impression that the barriers were transparent.
- It was essential that all of the street furniture should be of a high standard. It was not clear whether there was any seating proposed to face the river rather than the road, although presumably the raised steps as opposed to the flushed steps would accommodate some of this requirement. It was thought that how the walkway connected to the town centre was crucial. It was hoped that there was a way, either through road markings or signage that this could be improved.
- It was not clear from the visualisations whether lighting ducts along the top of the walkway were included in the scheme. There were light columns visible, but earlier plans appeared to include soft lighting along the walkway itself which might require additional ducting laid at an early stage in construction. This was considered to be crucial to ensure the walkway could be enjoyed safely during the evening and on darker days.
- In Arun Parade the revised option appeared to provide parking on both sides of the road. Members still felt that parking on one side was a safer alternative, particularly as there was reduced turning space at the west entrance of Harbour Park.
- The shelter was considered to be integral to the scheme and although Members understood that this was outside the current scope, they were not convinced that this was generally understood by the public. It was also felt that if funding should be identified for the shelter, then it should most definitely be a shelter, in so much that it had sides that protected the public from the elements.
- Members supported the need for tree planting, but did comment that it was important to choose species that could survive the difficult location. It was also important that the vistas and aspects from Harbour Park should not be eliminated and that therefore any trees needed to be carefully sited.

- With regard to the proposed concessions, these needed to be sympathetically considered. They should not create an unnecessary duplication for existing traders or breach any existing covenants. They should also be of a high quality.
- Members also commented that it would be hugely beneficial if some of the frontages of the businesses along Pier Road could be improved as there was a danger that they would not compliment the new scheme.

More generally, Members emphasised the importance of any proposals for the pedestrianisation of Pier Road to be extensively consulted upon. However of more immediacy, Members were concerned about the perceived lack of consultation with key stakeholders and hoped that the District Council would be able to undertake further work on this.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The comments set out above be forwarded to the District Council as a matter of urgency so that they could be considered by the District Council at its Special Council meeting on 21st February 2012.

The meeting closed at 5.50pm

TOWN MAYOR