

CABINET MEETING – 10 APRIL 2017

AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE CHAIRMAN OF CABINET WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

1. From Mr Chester to the Leader of the Council - Councillor Mrs Brown
2. From Mr Ellis to the Leader of the Council - Councillor Mrs Brown
3. From Mr Ellis to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Mrs Brown
4. From Mr Ellis to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Mrs Brown

THE FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW

NOTE: The Chairman will:

- invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution;
- explain that the questions received will be answered by the appropriate Members of the Cabinet
- confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time
- state that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

QUESTION ONE

From Mr Chester to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown

Question

In light of the decision of the Coastal Communities Fund not to award Littlehampton any money for the first phase of its bid for the Town Centre, can the Leader of the Council tell me (1) how much money has been spent on the bid so far both in house, on consultants and the Arun conference (2) what feedback has been received from CCF on the reasons for rejection? (3) What lessons will be learnt in terms of how the bid was put together, in particular on linking it to jobs and economic growth, the amount asked for, linking it to drawing in funding

from elsewhere and linking it to the regeneration of key sites such as St Martins and ex Waitrose? (4) Does this have any implications on continuing the design work on the seafront proposals as envisaged? (6) Does she think the Littlehampton Regeneration Committee has enough local input and listens to the representations made to it? (7) What happens next?

Response

Thank you for your questions regarding our bid for funding for new Public Realm in Littlehampton.

Regarding the costs I can advise that we do not keep records of the officer time spent on this stage of the bidding process. Regarding external costs I can advise that to date we have spent a total of £73k with the majority of funding coming from Section 106 contributions and the Coastal Revival Grant. This was spent on detailed designs and contractors to assist with preparatory material to meet CCF funding. A further £2.5k was spent on the Arun Coastal Conference, although this also involved arts, design and the provision of events.

Secondly, we are awaiting feedback from DCLG on our bid, although I note that it was heavily oversubscribed with in excess of £80 million pounds worth of bids and only £40 million pounds available. It is worth noting that nearly all the successful bids were in the west and north.

Thirdly, I believe our bid was a very attractive and well-crafted bid, but ultimately it is a competitive process and we need to recognise that sometimes we will be successful as we have been in the past, and other times we will not, as in this case. Making it a more complex proposal as you suggest by referencing other sites where there are not yet clear regeneration plans would not in my opinion have assisted our bid.

Fourthly, as far as the seafront design work is concerned, (a Coastal Revival Funded project) at this stage we are currently analysing the many responses we have received. The results will be presented to the Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee in June 2017. The Sub-Committee will have the opportunity to consider the many and varied responses received and consider recommendations on the way forward. I am satisfied that they will do that in a positive and constructive manner.

Finally, returning to the Public Realm bid it remains deliverable, and officers are exploring other opportunities to secure funding. If I may, I would welcome confirmation from yourself as a Littlehampton Town Councillor that you support our on-going efforts to deliver this worthwhile scheme.

QUESTION TWO

From Mr Ellis to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown

Question

The amendments being made to the new Littlehampton Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool were made due to financial restraints, and ADC was trying to pass the amendments as a planning matter and that the plans just needed to be adjusted because of pipework that has recently been found to be in the way. Just because the building was moved 16 degrees doesn't mean that the original size could not be kept by adding a bit somewhere else, if you look at the new plans is there a chance that the space at the rear could be extended, it does not appear to foul anything.

Response

It is such good news that the Council has committed to investing millions in a brand new, modern leisure Centre at a time of austerity.

The Centre is being built at the local community's preferred location and will sit well within the setting of Mewsbrook Park and close to the seafront.

The project is supporting the Arun Youth Aqua Centre which will benefit from enhanced facilities including new fencing and improved changing units.

During any project it is standard procedure to continually review the design against estimated costs. These have been considered against the project objectives to ensure the agreed core facility mix is retained. This review was being undertaken at a similar time as the precise location of the sewer was confirmed. All the changes in the application were planning matters and would have had to have been submitted as a Non-Material Amendment (NMA) application at some point prior to construction. Although a NMA application does not need to be advertised, for transparency, key stakeholders were informed and the website updated with details of the application, detailing the change to the design. Also, as this is an application on Arun District Council land we elected to take the NMA to Development Control which is outside the normal procedure. Extending the building would impact on the project cost.

QUESTION THREE

From Mr Ellis to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown

Question

I fully understand that there are many modern energy saving being incorporated into the new Centre, however there are to be no solar energy panels and no foul water saving, just because it might cost a bit more. What we are supposed to be doing is saving the planet, not perpetuating old ways of gaining energy, surely there some grants for these types of items that could be applied for.

Response

The design of the building follows a fabric-first approach to ensure the building is as energy efficient as possible. It has been designed in such a way that photovoltaic panels can be retrofitted. Combined heat and power (CHP) would offer the best reduction in carbon emissions and the inclusion of this will be considered by Cabinet following the receipt of final tenders. The cost of installing a grey water system was found to exceed the economic life of the building. As the design of the building allows for some green technology to be retrofitted there may be opportunities to look for grant funding to support this.

QUESTION FOUR

From Mr Ellis to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown

Question

If you look off shore now the Rampion Wind Farm is showing the way, it would appear we are looking the other way. As we are in an area that has a lot of light and sunshine, surely, we should be leading the way with new buildings. I would welcome the thinking in this matter.

Response

The cost benefits of all elements of the building need to be assessed against the facility mix the Council has committed to deliver, however the inclusion of low carbon technologies will be reviewed following the receipt of final tenders.