

## Rother District Council

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 29 March 2021

**Title:** Bexhill Town Centre Section 106 Funds

**Report of:** Ben Hook, Head of Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Bayliss

**Ward(s):** Central Ward

**Purpose of Report:** To enable the Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group to develop and recommend projects for funding using the Bexhill Town Centre Section 106 monies.

**Decision Type:** Non-Key

### Officer

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) £10,000 of the Bexhill Town Centre Section 106 monies previously earmarked for strategy development work no longer be ringfenced;
- 2) the Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group be directed to promote and recommend projects for funding; and
- 3) the Head of Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration be granted delegated authority to allocate all of the remaining Section 106 monies in liaison with the Chair of the Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group.

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### Introduction

1. Members will recall that the adopted Terms of Reference for the Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group (BTCSSG) stipulate that all expenditure against the remaining town centre Section 106 funds and any future funding received require a report to Cabinet for approval.
2. Out of the original £100k there is a balance of £22,618 remaining. £10k of this had been ringfenced for town centre strategy work (CB19/60 refers) however the BTCSSG feel that in light the COVID-19 pandemic this is no longer the best use of this funding.
3. Spend to date (£77,382):
  - £35,786 Refurbishment of Devonshire Square Toilets, CCTV contribution.
  - £6,868 Cycle racks, Monolith sign and artwork for Marina Court Gardens.
  - £926 Tree planting in Western Road.
  - £3,719 2016 railway poster campaign.
  - £6,830 2017 railway poster and postcard campaign.
  - £3,253 2019 railway poster campaign.

- £20,000 ringfenced for public realm work spent on seafront shelters.

## **Analysis / Details of the proposals**

4. This report asks that authority to allocate the remaining £22,618 be devolved down to Head of Acquisitions Transformation and Regeneration. The Head of Acquisitions, Transformation, and Regeneration will work with the BTCSG to allocate this funding to projects that support the groups' ambitions.
5. Numerous projects are being considered by the BTCSG's sub-groups looking at the three areas of: live, work and relax. Many of these projects will need rapid responses and resources as the town centre starts to reopen after COVID-19 and the ability of the BTCSG to be able to award funding quickly will be important in the development and delivery of projects.
6. All projects to be considered will be assessed by the BTCSG through a simple application form to allow Members and relevant officers to have full project details and cost breakdown prior to meetings. This will be light touch but allow enough information to make an informed decision.
7. Consideration will also be given to supporting a town centre manager post in some form with the Section 106 money possibly to be used as match-funding for a bid to the Police & Crime Commissioner funding pot.
8. The Head of Acquisition, Transformation and Regeneration will give the final agreement to all proposed grant allocations.

## **Options**

9. The Section 106 money could continue to be held by Rother District Council (RDC) until such time as the new Bexhill Town Council has a structure in place to allocate the funds itself. At his point RDC could issue a power of competency to devolve the remaining Section 106 funding to the Town Council.

## **Conclusion**

10. The BTCSG are best placed to allocate the remaining funds to high impact projects and activity, especially as the town centre seeks to recover from the COVID pandemic. Giving the Head of Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration the flexibility to award money based on these recommendations will ensure that projects are able to come forward far quicker than the current system of seeking Cabinet approval.

## **Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

11. Remaining Section 106 monies allocated from the Glynde Gap development to Bexhill Town Centre will be allocated and spent.

## Environmental

12. Environmental Benefits should be considered as part of the application process in line with the Council's Climate Emergency agenda.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

Chief Executive:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Melanie Powell
e-mail address:	<a href="mailto:Melanie.Powell@rother.gov.uk">Melanie.Powell@rother.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	N/A
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CB19/60
Background Papers:	N/A
Reference Documents:	-