

Councillor Barnett's written responses to oral questions at Full Council

In answer to Cllr Hilton:

The new consultation tool, Citizens Lab, has been used for the first time to ask residents for their views about the regeneration options for the Priory Street car park and surrounding area, a key Town Deal project.

As you said, there were a series of simple tick box questions but also an opportunity to submit detailed responses, which many have done. Over 1000 responses have been received, which are now being analysed, and will influence the proposals that will come to Cabinet this summer.

We have this tool funded for a year, so I look forward to us trying various models of consultation as we seek new methods of informing residents about regeneration proposals and hearing their detailed responses.

In answer to Cllr Beaver:

The decision to offer £6.9m funding to help establish the suitability of the Bulverhythe site for housing was made by Homes England, a Government agency. All parties involved, including Homes England, HBC and the Environment Agency went into this detailed study aware of the challenges and risks. So yes, the study costing around £1.9m has been funded by the tax payer, but nationally, not locally.

No funding has been lost to Hastings, as the unused balance of around £5m was only available for use on this site, so has not been drawn down and will be reallocated by Homes England to other projects.

In answer to Cllr Edwards:

I resigned from the Sea Change Board recently after six months as did the Rother council representative. I was able to get Sea Change to publish details of the proposed design solution to completing the Queensway gateway road, but I am immensely frustrated that there is still no clarity about the final delivery and completion of this scheme.

Detailed investigations are currently being done into all aspects of this project, and this is one of the reasons that I decided that it was not sensible to remain as a Director of the company.

When HBC, along with East Sussex County Council and Rother, receives the details of this, we will be able to consider what steps we think should then be taken. Until then I won't be saying anymore.