



# BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK Glenna Frost, The Town Hall, Clarence Road,  
Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 1LD  
Telephone: 01243 867744 Fax: 01243 865744  
E-mail: [bognortc@bognorregis.gov.uk](mailto:bognortc@bognorregis.gov.uk)

## MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE TOWN MEETING OF THE ELECTORS OF BOGNOR REGIS HELD ON MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2012

### PRESENT (BRTC)

Cllr J Brooks - Town Mayor (in the chair)  
Cllr Mrs E Anderson  
Cllr A Cunard  
Cllr Mrs S Daniells (Part of meeting)  
Cllr Ms K Davis (Part of meeting)  
Cllr P Dillon  
Cllr D Edwards  
Cllr T Gardiner  
Cllr R Nash  
Cllr W Toovey  
Cllr Mrs J Warr  
Cllr P Wells

(Note: Cllrs Brooks, Mrs Daniells, Edwards, Nash, Mrs Warr are also Arun District Councillors and Cllr Wells is a West Sussex County Councillor)

### IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs G Frost (Town Clerk)  
Mrs S Holmes (Minutes Secretary)  
Mrs R Hambleton (Minutes Secretary)  
One representative of the press  
(Approximately) Forty members of the public

### COPIES OF DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR THE PUBLIC

Notice and Agenda for the Meeting  
Minutes of the Town Meeting of Electors held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011  
Audited Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011  
Proposed Expenditure for the year 2012/2013  
Schedule of Councillors' Attendance at Meetings

*The Meeting opened at 7.05 pm*

### 1. WELCOME BY THE TOWN MAYOR AND INTRODUCTION OF COUNCILLORS PRESENT

The Town Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that this was an opportunity for electors to hear what the Council had been doing over the past 12 months. It was a chance for the electors to have a say and also for Councillors to hear the views of the electors. There were apologies received from Bersted County Councillor S McDougall, Cllr Mrs Daniells who was unavoidably delayed and belated apologies had been received from Cllr S Kerrigan.

The Town Councillors in attendance introduced themselves.

**2. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS HELD ON MONDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2011 AND ANY MATTERS ARISING**

Mr S Jonas requested the following alteration to be made to the Minutes:

- Amend Min. 4 from '**Seconded** by S Jones' to read '**Seconded** by S Jonas'

Mr Jonas also requested an update on matters raised at the previous Electors Meeting including:

- How the Town Council was working closer with Neighbouring Parishes, Arun District Council and West Sussex County Council
- Whether the seating in the Council Chamber had been turned around

The Mayor reported that these matters would be covered in his Annual Report.

The amended Minutes of the Town Meeting of Electors held on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 were considered and agreed as a true record, and signed by the Town Mayor as presiding Chairman. There were no Matters Arising.

**3. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL**

The Town Mayor gave his report - copy attached to Minutes.

**4. TO RECEIVE THE ACCOUNTS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2011**

The Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee, Cllr A Cunard, reported on the Accounts of the Town Council to year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, which had been circulated. Although last year it was nil, there was an increase in the precept this year to cover the budget for the Neighbourhood Plan, increases in staffing and contractual arrangements the Town Council have, as well as the free parking scheme.

There were no questions.

The Accounts were duly noted and accepted.

**5. TO CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN BY FRIDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2012**

As there had been no written Resolutions received, the Mayor asked if anyone would like to put forward any at this time.

**5.1** The following Resolution was proposed:

'To protect Tax Payers investment, the Town Council, as Landlord, should put in a Planning Application to add two further screens to the Picturedrome Cinema. This to be done in such a way that should the building at some future date cease to be a Cinema then the additional rooms can be used for other purposes. The new construction to be carried out by the Town Council, as the building owner, and to be fitted out as a Cinema by the Tenant.'

**Proposed** by L Barnes and **Seconded** by D Trotman.

This Resolution was debated at some length by the Meeting. Comments included: extending this resolution to include issues with the new market outside the Railway Station (it was noted that a separate resolution would be needed for this which could be discussed at another point in the meeting); that another Cinema Operator would be less interested in coming to Bognor Regis if the Picturedrome had 4 screens; concerns over the cost already to the tax payers of the 4 wards for something which benefits the greater Bognor Regis; the 4 wards contain some of the poorest families in the country; the Picturedrome serves the poorest wards by offering one of the cheapest prices in the UK: that the previous Town Council administration saved the

Picturedrome after the public expressed their concerns over the possible loss of this building; The Civic Society's petition to protect the Picturedrome from a new cinema had exceeded 7,500 names, which showed how much people thought of it; resolution would protect the Town Council's/Tax Payers investment; it is unclear exactly whether St Modwen's cinema proposal is for a Multiplex or Miniplex; Picturedrome should be considered for an alternative use including Council Offices and community rooms; the financial feasibility of an extension would need to be considered; .

A question was asked relating to what the maintenance costs would be over the next 3 -5 years and what the rental income was for the Picturedrome. The Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee talked about the 3 year refurbishment programme which the building much needed. The building budget for this project was £200,000 of which £96,030 had been spent in the first year and there was more work to do.

A vote was taken and the result was 27 For, 1 Against and 2 Abstentions. Accordingly the Resolution was passed.

**5.2** A request was made for an increase in refuse collection points for recycling particularly in the area near the beach. The resident was asked to speak to the Environment and Leisure Committee Chairman who could raise this issue at one of their meetings.

**5.3** Following the point raised earlier in the meeting about the area outside the Railway Station, the following Resolution was put forward:

'The Town Council to look into how the area around the Railway Station could be better regenerated, by looking to improve and find the best use for this area.'

**Proposed** by R Searle

A vote was taken and the result was 27 For and 0 Abstentions. Accordingly the Resolution was passed.

**5.4** The following Resolution was also proposed:

'That the Town Council examine with other Parish Councils the public appetite for a single Town Council, to cover the urban area of Bognor Regis.'

**Proposed** by J Cosgrove and **Seconded** by S Goodheart

This Resolution was debated by the Meeting. Comments included: that this would require six councils to merge with a precept of about £2 million; a single Town Council would have a bigger voice and make planning decisions; all Councillors would be elected and will not be appointed as happens in some areas now; there was concern over the possible reaction of some Parish Councils who have worked hard over several years to create their own identities and deliver services to their communities; a single Council would spread the cost of services and would be fairer; the Electors of all the Parishes should decide whether they want this and not the individual Town and Parish Councils; there was a general feeling that this would work in theory but would be difficult to get off the ground.

A vote was taken and the result was 22 For and 3 Abstentions. Accordingly the Resolution was passed. A Straw Poll Non-Electors vote was taken, for which the result was 19 For, 2 Against and 2 Abstentions.

## **6. UPDATE ON CURRENT REGENERATION PROPOSALS**

The Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr Nash gave those present a brief update on the regeneration proposals.

St Modwen has recently come forward with their proposals, some elements of which were more popular than others. Initially they said that they could only develop on the Hothampton site but A.D.C. said that they wanted both sites developed. St Modwen and A.D.C. have come to an

agreement that there can be cross subsidisation across the two sites. The Hothamton site proposals include a new food store and around 200 student flats, which will accommodate the extra students from the University expansion. There are three food operators interested in the site which is great news for the Town. The Regis Centre site will see the theatre refurbished and expanded, a hotel is planned and there is a potential tenant interested in a 6 screen cinema. There are no plans for parking provision on this site.

A decision is also due in shortly over the proposed Watersports Centre off Gloucester Road. Work is also due to start on the new Sainsbury's store which may be open just before Christmas. Section 106 Monies will see improvements made soon to the Town centre and to improve the shopping experience and £300,000 will be available, through various projects which bids have been submitted for.

The free parking scheme has been a success so ways of keeping it going now need to be looked at and expanding it to other car parks in the Town. The biggest impediment to Bognor Regis is the Woodgate Crossing about which there has been a lot of discussion at A.D.C. A bridge over the railway line would cost around £25 - £30 million. Cllr. Nash also talked about the Coast to Capital Bid that A.D.C. was working on, to create new business and employment opportunities.

With Butlins building their third hotel in the Town and the expansions at the University, Bognor Regis is really being put on the map.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Nash for his report and asked the public for their comments and views. The following comments arose:

A multiplex Cinema is not what is needed in the Town; that there are enough Tesco stores in Bognor Regis and the Hothamton site should be offered to a different retailer; the recent reduction in planning guidance could mean that the development at Ford of 5,000 - 7,000 homes could be back on the cards; that it is difficult to get out of the Town and a better transport system is needed; a number of concerns were expressed over the lack of parking that will be provided on the Regis site development and the impact it will have on the seafront, theatre and town centre as a whole; St Modwen and A.D.C. should ask residents of the Town what they would like to see on the Regis Centre site; that all the petitions, letters in newspaper, responses to the Town Council newsletter proposals and the online survey are all taken into account by A.D.C.; St Modwen's proposals should be in the public domain sooner than is planned.

## **7. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Cllr Dillon, as the Neighbourhood Plan Committee Chairman, explained that the Town Council was in the early stages of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Bognor Regis. A Neighbourhood Plan would give the Town Council more influence in Planning matters and A.D.C. would have to take it into consideration when looking at a planning application. A fundamental part of producing the Plan is community involvement and he encouraged those present to pick up a leaflet and complete the questionnaire. This questionnaire will assist with the production of the main one which will be going out to every household in due course. Anyone wishing to get involved was asked to leave their details and they would be contacted in due course.

A brief discussion about the Neighbourhood Plan was held. Comments included: if all Town and Parish Councils have their own Plan, it won't be coherent; a plan will stop the Town losing shops to residential premises; it will cover local issues; reference was made to previous plans such as the Masterplan, which is now out of date; the Plan wouldn't help with the St Modwen development; car parking may be difficult to protect but would have to be considered if it was in the Plan; concerns over the cost; the Plan would require a 51% vote in a referendum before being adopted and A.D.C. would also have to approve it.

**8. TO DEAL WITH ANY OTHER QUESTIONS**

The following issues were raised:

- The Railway station office's opening hours (referred to Environment and Leisure Committee)
- Thanks to Town Council for their support with Adult education centre (Futures) which shut its doors recently (to be discussed at the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012)
- The three former Trustees (who were BRTC Councillors) of the Arun Arts Co. answered questions about why they had recently resigned from the organisation
- Disappointment was expressed at the loss of benches and bins near the skatepark, at Rock Gardens (referred to Environment and Leisure Committee)
- The empty shops in and around the Town to be filled with big name stores
- Suggestion for a year round traditional funfair on the seafront
- Discussion was had over the proposed Hotham Park eatery
- Opening of the Marine Park Gardens Toilets

Before closing the Mayor asked for some indication as to how people knew about the meeting.

Noticeboards/A Boards - 11 BR Observer - 2

Several had also heard about the meeting through Facebook

***The Town Mayor thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting***

***The Meeting closed at 9.55 pm***