



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE ONLINE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 29th MARCH 2021

PRESENT ONLINE:

Cllr. M. Stanley (Chairman); Cllrs: J. Barrett, A. Cunard (during Min. 223), J. Erskine, S. Goodheart, H. Jones, Ms. A. Sharples, Mrs. J. Warr and P. Woodall

IN ATTENDANCE ONLINE:

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs. S. Norman (Deputy Clerk/Meeting Host)
Mrs. J. Davis (Civic & Office Manager)
1 member of the public attended via Zoom (at start of meeting)
13 members of the public viewing via Facebook (at start of meeting)

The Meeting opened at 6.32pm

220. WELCOME BY CHAIRMAN AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Online Meeting being held in accordance with The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 and reminded Members that the Meeting was being recorded by Bognor Regis Town Council, live streamed via Facebook and may also be recorded or filmed by any member of the public.

The Chairman advised that in the event of any loss of internet coverage or power cuts, steps would be taken to recover the connection. However, if connection could not be re-established the Meeting would stand adjourned at the point of loss of connection, to be reconvened and continued at a publicised time in the future.

Finally, Members were reminded of the protocol for the Online Meeting, details of which had been circulated to all previously.

No apologies had been received from Cllr. Cunard.

221. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman addressed each participating Member in alphabetical order to ask if they wished to confirm any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary

and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

If a Member were required to temporarily leave the Meeting for any Interest, they would be put on hold by the Meeting Host who would also facilitate their re-joining the Meeting at the appropriate time.

As noted on the Agenda, Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the Interest in
- b) whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary or Ordinary Interest
- c) the nature of the Interest
- d) if it is an Ordinary Interest whether they intend to temporarily leave the meeting for the discussion and vote
- e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and therefore must temporarily leave the meeting for the discussion and vote, whether they will be exercising their right to speak on this matter under Public Question Time.

They then need to re-declare their Interest and the nature of the Interest at the commencement of the item or when the Interest becomes apparent. They should request that it be recorded in the Minutes that they will leave the meeting and will neither take part in discussion, nor vote on the item.

As per the Agenda, it is each Member's own responsibility to notify the Monitoring Officer of all Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Ordinary Interests notifiable under the Council's Code of Conduct, not already recorded on their Register of Interests Form, within 28 days.

The Chairman reminded Members to declare their Interests as any arise or again at the relative point in the meeting if they have already.

There were no declarations of Interests

222. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING HELD ON 19th JANUARY 2021

Members were asked if there were any objections to the Minutes of the last Online Committee Meeting, held on the 19th January 2021. It was noted that the Minutes had been forwarded to the Chairman and once agreed and duly signed, would be returned to the Town Clerk.

There being no objections, the Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Online Meeting held on 19th January 2021 as an accurate record of the proceedings and the Chairman duly signed them.

223. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION AND STATEMENTS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS

The Chairman informed Members that there had been no correspondence received from members of the public regarding items on the Agenda.

However, Cllr. Brooks had submitted a statement and question which was read out by the Chairman as follows: -

My question concerns the recent decision by P&R to recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Place Branding report, prepared by Hemingway Design, and to which we are now 'signed up'. Consultation with stakeholders and residents included in the Place Branding report, goes back nearly 3 years. Arun Council's Bognor Regis Regeneration Committee, of which you are the Chairman, had previously recommended that the Place Branding report was not adopted.

Last week Arun Full Council rejected the Place Branding report as 'old hat' and 'restrictive', despite an amendment brought by you to try to reverse its decision.

Our Council is now at odds with Arun Council in our efforts to work in partnership on the regeneration of Bognor Regis.

By adopting the Place Branding report, this Council has also agreed the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board, an important but unelected group of businesses, will lead this Council on Place Branding. You are also Arun's representative on the Bognor Regeneration Board.

Question

Will you now propose that the decision to sign up to Place Branding be reversed, so that this Council can play a full part in the regeneration of Bognor Regis, working in harmony with Arun District Council on new and innovative ways forward? Further that you, as Arun's representative, and Cllr John Erskine, as this Council's representative on the Bognor Regeneration Board, raise the matter at its next meeting, and report back how the Board now sees its way forward, given Arun's decision to reject the Place Branding report.

The Chairman responded to Cllr. Brooks by firstly raising a couple of points with regard to the statement.

The Chairman stated that the Policy and Resources Committee did not recommend to Full Council that the Place Branding principles be adopted but rather opted to defer the matter to Full Council and therefore as a Committee, Policy and Resources did not take a decision on the Place Branding principles.

Furthermore, with respect to the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee and the Chairman's amendment, it was stated that there was not an amendment brought to reverse the decision because the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee aren't able to take decisions, they merely recommended to Full Council not to adopt the principles.

The Chairman stated his opinion that from a Place Branding perspective it would be far more accurate to say Arun District Council are now at odds with the majority of Stakeholders who include the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board, Bognor Regis BID, Butlins, The University of Chichester, WSCC and the Town Council who are supportive of Place Branding.

From the debate at ADC, it was the Chairman's belief that numerous Councillors did not fully understand the concept of Place Branding, and his personal opinion was that it was a mistake to reject the Place Branding principles. However, whilst he may disagree with ADC's decision the Chairman stated that he did respect it and encouraged all Town Council Members to respect the decision taken by the Town Council to adopt the principles.

Cllr. Cunard joined the Meeting

In reference to the Statement by Cllr. Brooks, the Chairman also stated that Bognor Regis Regeneration Board does not lead on Place Branding but rather co-ordinates it.

In terms of the Question from Cllr. Brooks, the Chairman reminded Members that no one Member of this Council has the authority or right to reverse a Full Council decision. Furthermore, as BRTC are fortunate enough to have representation at the Regeneration Board, Cllr. Erskine is free to raise any issues he wishes.

224. CLERK'S REPORT FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

224.1 19th January 2021 - Min. 197.2 - Clerk's Report regarding Grant to West End Traders

Following the grant of £5,000 to the West End Traders for Christmas Trees, the Association was contacted in January to request the copy invoices etc and the return of any unused funds. To date no response has been received but the matter is being followed up and a further report will be made at the next meeting.

224.2 19th January 2021 - Min. 197.3 - Clerk's Report regarding COVID Seminar

The Seminar was held on 1st March at which it was agreed that the matter would be deferred until further guidance from central Government was received. Notes from the Seminar had previously been circulated to all Members.

224.3 19th January 2021 - Min. 203 - Code of Conduct

The LGA Model Code of Conduct, with amendments to the Appendix regarding Interests, was adopted by ADC at their Full Council Meeting held on 24th March. It is ADC's desire that all Town and Parish Council's will adopt their amended version of the LGA Code of Conduct. A Briefing was organized by ADC on 25th March to which both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended. As the details of ADC's adopted code are now known, as agreed at the previous meeting the documents will be referred to the Consultants previously used to advise on the Town Council's Code of Conduct with a report back to this Committee at the next meeting.

224.4 19th January 2021 - Min. 204.2 - Elector's Meeting

As Members have previously been notified, the online Elector's Meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday 8th April with a start time of 6.45pm.

224.5 19th January 2021 - Min. 210 - 2021 Newsletter

Distribution of the 2021 edition has now taken place and it will shortly be uploaded to the Town Council's website.

224.6 19th January 2021 - Min. 213.2 - Grant Aid Earmarking

Following the Committees decision at the previous meeting regarding any requests received from event organisers that Grant Aid for their 2021 event be earmarked again until 2022, the organisers or Bognor Pride, Bognor Birdman and Armed Forces Day have all had such requests approved.

224.7 26th October 2020 - Min. 161.1 - Car Parking Disc Scheme

As noted at this Meeting, ADC reversed their initial decision not to extend the parking period to 3 hours to the end of December and the invoice for the additional contribution of £3,250 has now been received and was paid on 22nd January 2021.

225. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF THE HIDDEN DISABILITIES SCHEME (MIN. 209 REFERS) INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF AN OFFER OF A PRESENTATION BY CLLR. DAVID EDWARDS

The Civic & Office Manager's report was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Woodall left the Meeting briefly during the vote on this item

Members **AGREED** that Cllr. David Edwards, who had championed the Sunflower Scheme at both ADC and WSCC, be invited to address the next Committee Meeting and as a result, **AGREED** to defer any decision regarding the purchase of the Sunflower Scheme Business Starter Pack until after the presentation.

226. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN FORCE REPORT

The Town Force Manager's report was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Woodall rejoined the Meeting during the following discussion

- 226.1** A Member raised queries regarding the licence/lease for installations on the seafront, the current situation regarding the seafront showers water connection, the ownership of the Fisherman's Huts and finally an update on the signage for the roundabouts.

The Deputy Clerk advised Members that the issue of how to proceed in relation to the licence/leases was for debate and an update regarding the showers was given in the Town Force Manager's report. Whilst it was stated that the Town Council did not own the Fisherman's Hut the Chairman advised Members that the matter was not on the Agenda for the Meeting and suggested that an update be given offline or included as a future Agenda item. Finally, it was reported that as agreed previously, five signs would be purchased - one for each roundabout that the Town Council maintains - with the exact location of each sign still to be determined by the Town Force Manager in liaison with WSCC Highways.

Cllr. Stanley declared an Ordinary Interest as an ADC Councillor, as his portfolio included licensing

- 226.2** With regard to any potential Lease or Licence for Town Council owned assets located on the Promenade, following discussion it was unanimously **AGREED** that further investigations should be undertaken for a potential licence in this matter and that in regard to costs, any decision should be delegated to the Town Clerk in liaison with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee.

227. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING HELD ON 9th MARCH 2021

The Deputy Clerk's report, including the Appendix of the Notes of the online meeting of the Heritage Partnership Board Meeting held on 9th March 2021, was **NOTED**.

228. REPORT FROM THE PROJECTS OFFICER ON TOWN CENTRE ISSUES INCLUDING ANY REPORTS ON MEETINGS WITH THE BID MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Projects Officer's report was **NOTED**.

A Member again raised the matter of Place Branding and the Chairman restated that the Town Council's decision had been to adopt and implement the Place Branding principles and elaborated further on the process this will follow.

The Member also raised the matter of ADC's plans for the Place St Maur but the Chairman stated that this was not a matter for this Committee.

229. TO NOTE THAT A JOINT ACTION GROUP (JAG) MEETING IS TO BE HELD ON 26th MARCH 2021

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

Members were reminded that should they wish to see the notes from this meeting that may be circulated, they should email the Projects Officer, Sheila Hodgson to request this. The Chairman reminded Members that these notes should be treated in the strictest confidence and should not be discussed or shared with anyone.

230. TO RATIFY RELEASE OF 2021-2022 PARTNERSHIP FUNDING FOR CCTV, BOGNOR REGIS SEAFRONT LIGHTS (YEAR 1 OF 3) AND BUSINESS WARDENS

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

230.1 Release of the partnership funding for 2021/22 of £2,000 for CCTV was **RATIFIED**.

230.2 Release of the partnership funding for 2021/22 of £9,000 for Bognor Regis Seafront Lights was **RATIFIED**.

230.3 Release of the partnership funding for 2021/22 of £10,000 for Business Wardens was **RATIFIED**.

231. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PROMOTIONS TRAINING - MIN. 211.4 REFERS

The Civic & Office Manager's report was **NOTED**.

Following discussion, it was unanimously **AGREED** that, as per the suggestion from the Councillor who had originally proposed this training (as detailed in the report), Officers should investigate arranging a Zoom meeting with tourism officers of similar sized seaside resorts, hopefully at no cost and no budget required.

232. TO CONSIDER FURTHER CHANGES TO THE STANDING ORDERS TO ENABLE THE REINTRODUCTION OF LIVE PUBLIC QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS - MIN. 215.2 REFERS

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

The Chairman referred Members to the letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to Council Leaders in England, a copy of which was circulated to all Councillors by email the previous week and stated that it was disappointing that there was to be no extension to the ability to hold remote Meetings after the original deadline of 7th May.

As Members had been advised by the Town Clerk, an update from ADC as to how and when they wish to reopen the Town Hall in light of this decision was awaited, as was guidance from NALC about how Council's should progress.

It was therefore proposed, and Members **AGREED**, that this item be deferred until the guidance is received and further information is provided by ADC as clearly, if the Town Council is to imminently return to face-to-face meetings, this matter becomes redundant, and the Standing Orders will automatically revert to the previous provisions.

233. TO CONSIDER PRODUCTION OF A POLICY TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS ARE NOT ACCESSIBLE TO UNAUTHORISED INDIVIDUALS - MIN. 218.2 REFERS

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

As with the previous item, Members noted that this policy would not be required if a return to face-to-face meetings was imminent and therefore, Members **AGREED**, that this item be deferred until the guidance is received.

234. TO REVIEW THE USE OF VARIABLE DIRECT DEBITS, STANDING ORDER MANDATES, BACS PAYMENTS AND OTHER RECURRING PAYMENTS AS REQUIRED UNDER 6.6, 6.7 AND 6.8 OF THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**, and Members unanimously **APPROVED** the continued use of the listed Direct Debits, Standing Order Mandates and other recurring payments.

235. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ELECTIONS FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF CLLR. MRS. ERSKINE

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**, including the update that as a by-election has been validly requested, there will be a cost to the Town Council, even if the election is uncontested.

Following a query from a Member, the Chairman confirmed as detailed in the report, the by-election would take place on the same day as the Ordinary Election of Councillors due to be held on Thursday 6th May 2021.

236. TO RATIFY RELEASE OF THE 2020-2021 GRANT PAYMENT OF £2.5K TO SUSSEX CLUBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Deputy Clerk's report was **NOTED**, and Members subsequently **AGREED** to **RATIFY** the release of a third payment of £2,500 funding for SCYP, as part of the Town Council's budget provision for the 2020-2021 financial year.

237. FINANCIAL REPORTS INCLUDING: -

237.1 To note Committee I&E Reports for the month of February 2021 - previously copied to Councillors

The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

Members **NOTED** receipt of the financial reports for the month of February 2021.

237.2 To note verification of bank reconciliations with the Town Council's Current account and Mayor's Charity account for the months of January and February 2021, undertaken by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee in line with the Council's Financial Regulations

The verification of bank reconciliations as detailed was **NOTED**.

238. CORRESPONDENCE

The Committee **NOTED** receipt of correspondence as detailed in the list.

239. TO RESOLVE TO MOVE TO CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS (S.O. 3d) - (CONTRACTUAL)

The Committee **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw with broadcasting live to Zoom and social media streaming also terminated (S.O. 3d) - Agenda items 21 and 22 (contractual and staffing).

240. TOWN FORCE: NOTE OF OUTSTANDING DEBTORS

The Committee **NOTED** the list (confidential).

241. REPORT FROM THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE (STAFFING)

The Chairman updated Members on the recent Meetings of the Joint Consultative Sub Committee (Staffing) and subsequent actions that had been taken.

The Meeting closed at 7.26pm