



# BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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## **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY 31<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2022**

### **PRESENT:**

Cllr. J. Barrett, A. Cunard, S. Goodheart, S. Reynolds,  
and B. Waterhouse

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)  
Mrs. J. Davis (Assistant Clerk)  
Cllr. Mrs. J Warr in the public gallery

### ***The Meeting opened at 6.34pm***

- 111.** The Clerk advised that following Cllr. Stanley's recent decision to step down from this Committee, and in view of the apologies received from the Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Erskine, it would be necessary for the Committee to appoint a Chairman for this meeting.

Cllr. Cunard and Cllr. Waterhouse were both proposed and seconded and following some debate, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Waterhouse be appointed Chairman for this meeting, and he took the Chair.

### **112. WELCOME BY CHAIRMAN AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and read the Council's opening statement.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Erskine, who was on annual leave, Cllr. Woodall who was working and belated apologies were subsequently received from Cllr. Jones due to working late.

### **113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman addressed those Members present to ask if they wished to confirm any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

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, Other Registrable 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 or Other Registrable 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, Other Registrable 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 Interest***

**114. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 as an accurate record of the proceedings and these were signed by the Chairman.

**115. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

There were no questions from those seated in the public gallery, therefore, the meeting was not adjourned.

**116. CLERK'S REPORT FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**116.1 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Min. 69 - Update regarding the Bathing Machine**

Members had been advised at the meeting that the Museum were hopeful that, subject to Museum Committee approval, works to the building to allow the machine to be accommodated could now be progressed within the next 12 months. Furthermore, it was noted that a Museum Committee meeting was due to be held in the next couple of months, after which a final decision may be reported.

An update on the Museum's position had been received, advising that planning permission to convert a disused storage area to the rear of the West Street premises was gained some years ago, and gradually amassed funding will create a new exhibition area to house an original Bognor Bathing Machine and other beach-holiday related artefacts.

The cost of the work is £50,000 and the Society is appealing for a further £5,000 in donations to help meet the final fit out before it can open to visitors. There will be some space in the new area to allow for a modest catering facility with tables and chairs in due course.

Work is due to start in early February and in case works overrun, the decision has been taken not to announce a re-opening date for the 2022 season at the present time. If anyone would like to donate to the Museum's fit out appeal e-mail [bognormuseum@outlook.com](mailto:bognormuseum@outlook.com) or via the Museum's Facebook page.

A full copy of the Press Release will be circulated to Members for their information.

Members were also advised that, some years ago, £2,500 funding was held in the earmarked reserves for the Museum towards the rehousing of the Bathing Machine project. Half of this funding was released to the Museum to progress part of the project, with a balance of £1,250 remaining in reserves. Release of this remaining funding to the Museum towards the project will be placed on the next agenda for ratification now the project is to proceed.

#### **116.2 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 - Min. 86.8 refers - Request for ongoing funding support for the provision of a uniformed presence in the Town Centre**

Historically the Town Council has financially supported the Bognor Regis BID in the provision of a 40 hour per week, uniformed presence in the Town Centre area since it began in 2018. This role is significant in creating a Welcoming Town, directly supporting Bognor Regis's Town Centre businesses.

They also provide an invaluable service to the community, through their actions to prevent and disrupt anti-social behaviour, providing a reassuring presence, and giving advice and support to visitors to our high street.

Funding to the value of £10,000 is allocated within the annual budget for this provision supported by the BID's annual request for continued support. The BID Co-ordinator would like to make a presentation to Members on this role prior to the Committee's approval to ratify release of this funding at their next meeting in March 2022, so this will be placed on the next agenda.

#### **116.3 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 91.1 - Fishermen's Huts**

Members were advised at the last meeting that ADC's Director of Place had confirmed that it had taken a while to get dialogue going with the fishermen's representative but that this had recently commenced. Their intention was to provide them with a draft lease to consider so that matters can be put on a sound legal footing.

An update had been sought from ADC to establish whether the legal documentation was now in place so that clarification on responsibility for the water supply to the area could be established. This would then allow for negotiation to commence with a written agreement being drawn up to enable the seafront showers to be reconnected to the supply in this area prior to the summer season.

A holding response from ADC has been received as follows: -

*"My colleague, who has been dealing with this, has been away for the last couple of weeks. However, the last update I had before then was we were trying to obtain some information from the BFA to move matters forward. Whether this has now been received or not, I am unable to advise.*

*I will ask my colleague to update me on their return later in the week and will then give you an updated position."*

#### **116.4 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 91.2 - NALC campaign for remote meetings**

The campaign for councils in England, to have the choice to meet remotely continues. A link was shared with Members on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 asking Members to consider signing the petition calling on the UK Government and Parliament to allow councils in England to have this choice. The Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) and Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) have set up the petition which is also being supported by The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

In the latest NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin, a further update was received as follows: -

*In a House of Commons debate on 24 January, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove MP, declared himself to be "strongly in sympathy with the view that hybrid meetings should continue in order to ensure the maximum amount of efficiency". I very much hope this is a positive step forward and we are continuing to urge the government to make permanent the provision for councils at all levels to be allowed to hold remote meetings. This week our chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, was a signatory to a joint letter from several national local government bodies to the opposition parties calling for their support. And if you haven't done so already, please sign the petition calling on the government and Parliament to allow councils to have the choice to meet remotely.*

#### **116.5 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 91.3 - Promotions Training**

Unfortunately, it has still not been possible currently to progress this further owing to staff resources. However, contact will be made once again with seaside resorts of similar size, this week and a report will be made back to the Committee at the next meeting.

### **116.6 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 91.5 - Town Force Report - Licences vs. leases for BRTC Assets on the Promenade**

Despite being advised previously that the position was being reviewed and that ADC's Legal Team hoped to revert to the Town Council in the near future, a follow-up email had again been sent recently for an update on the position with a response received last week to advise that the lease review is still underway, and ADC would let us know if there are any further updates.

### **116.7 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 101 - Creation of Corporate Identity**

It is hoped that an update on this project will be available for the next meeting of the Committee at the end of March.

### **116.8 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 102 - Making Theatre Gaining Skills**

Following the decision made at the last meeting to support the Making Theatre Gaining Skills request for the Town Council to once again act as the "Lead Accountable Body" for their DWP funding bid, contact was made with the organisation to advise of the Committee's decision.

The response from Making Theatre Gaining Skills explained that, even though the year-long programme of courses was most successful and achieved a very high level of progression, the DWP are not in a position at the moment to offer a grant through the Flexible Support Fund. This is because the new Restart programme (a version of the Work Programme) is taking the majority of long-term unemployed, and the job centres are not allowed to commission any additional programmes. This may well change in the next six months and the DWP have also encouraged Making Theatre Gaining Skills to apply for tenders when they come up.

However, Making Theatre Gaining Skills have successfully applied for a European Social Fund grant and are running 4 courses in cookery in the Makerspace kitchen. They are also waiting on a large Arts Council grant to be approved, which will enable them to develop the company and provide more creative opportunities for local people. It should be noted that these grants do not require an independent Lead Accountable Body.

### **116.9 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Min. 107.1 - ADC's Council Vision**

It was highlighted at the previous meeting, under correspondence, that an email had been previously circulated to Councillors on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021, in relation to ADC's Council Vision 2022-2026 seeking any comments in response to the Vision, to be emailed to the Civic & Office Manager by no later than 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to enable a corporate response to be submitted. Unfortunately, Cllr. Miss Needs was the only Councillor who responded to the consultation within the timeframe, so an individual response was submitted on her behalf by the office.

### **117. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN FORCE REPORT**

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

**118. BOGNOR REGIS HERITAGE & ARTS PARTNERSHIP BOARD (BRHAPB) INCLUDING: TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021 PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS**

The Town Clerk's report, including the Notes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021, was **NOTED**.

**119. TO REVIEW THE MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE SCHEME AND RECOMMEND ITS ADOPTION TO COUNCIL AND FURTHERMORE CONSIDER AND, IF ACCEPTABLE, RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THE ADOPTION OF A MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE POLICY**

The Town Clerk's report including the Appendices was **NOTED**.

**119.1** Members considered the updated version with minor amendments of the Mayor's Allowance Scheme and **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council the adoption of the revised document.

**119.2** Members considered the new Members' Allowance Policy and **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council the adoption of the new Policy.

**120. INTERNAL AUDIT INCLUDING: TO CONSIDER INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2021-2022 (FIRST INTERIM); TO REVIEW THE 2022/23 ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN AND TO CONSIDER ANY ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR INCLUSION**

**120.1 To consider Internal Audit Report 2021-2022 (First Interim)**

The Town Clerk's report including the Internal Audit Report 2021-2022 (First Interim), was **NOTED**.

Members welcomed the report that, once again, no significant issues had been identified by the Internal Auditor.

**120.2 To review the 2022/23 Annual Audit Plan and to consider any additional items for inclusion**

Members reviewed the key control tests detailed in the report, with no additional items for inclusion identified and unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of the Audit Plan for 2022/23 to the Town Council.

**121. TO CONSIDER THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING LOCATION, FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS SCHEDULED FOR 14<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2022**

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

Although it was not anticipated that the Annual Town Meeting of Electors would be well attended, it was acknowledged that, with final numbers not known until the night of the meeting, it would be prudent to consider a venue larger than the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. Locations such as

the Jeneses Centre, Picturedrome Cinema, and The Regis School were discussed as potential options.

***Cllr. Cunard declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, as the Tenant, and Cllr. Reynolds declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, as an Employee, of the Picturedrome Cinema***

A Member suggested that the topic of regeneration be included on the Agenda for the meeting, and that the new Chief Executive of Arun District Council (ADC), James Hassett, be invited to speak.

***Cllr. Cunard left the Meeting***

As an alternative speaker if Mr. Hassett was not available, it was suggested that Independent Local Traders could be invited to come and talk for 5 minutes about what their businesses offer. As an alternative to this, it was suggested that a representative from the Bognor Regis BID, and Bognor Regis Regeneration Board be invited.

***Cllr. Cunard returned to the Meeting***

Members **AGREED** to invite the Chief Executive of Arun District Council, to speak at the Annual Town Meeting of Electors, in the first instance with delegated authority given to the Town Clerk to finalise the arrangements such as the location, start time between 6.30pm and 7.30pm and alternative speakers if the Chief Executive was not available.

**122. TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL ASESMENT /REVIEW OF RISKS**

The Assistant Clerk's report including the Appendices, was **NOTED**.

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Overall Summary and Action Plan of the Annual Assessment/Review of Risks for 2021/2022 be referred to the Town Council for approval. Once approved by Council, the Action Plan is to be signed by the Town Mayor, as Chairman of the Council, and the Town Clerk.

**123. TO RECEIVE QUOTATIONS FOR A NEW PHOTOCOPIER CONTRACT AND DETERMINE PREFERRED PROVIDER**

The Assistant Clerk's report and relating Appendix was **NOTED**.

Members asked for Officer's input, as users of the equipment, and the Town Clerk advised that there had been no issues with the present supplier.

Having considered the quotations received for a new photocopier contract, Members unanimously **AGREED** to instruct Company C for the provision of the 4-year photocopier contract.

**124. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN APPOINTMENTS TO CONSIDER THE WAY FORWARD - MIN. 60.7 REFERS**

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

Members discussed the suggestion that consideration be given to Committees, rather than Council, appointing the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for those Committees. A Member recalled that, many years ago, it had been for Committees to choose their Chairman and Vice-Chairman. However, this practice allowed for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to serve as Members on all Committees in an ex-office capacity which raised concerns about their ability to attend so many meetings alongside mayoral engagements.

Members unanimously **AGREED** to continue with the practice of Council appointing the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for Committees with no changes being made to the Standing Orders.

**125. TO RECEIVE THE DRAFT NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARUN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022**

The Town Clerk's report including the draft Notes of the Arun District Association of Local Councils meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 was **NOTED**.

**126. ROLLING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE – TO RATIFY EXPENDITURE OF £36,000.00 PLUS VAT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A NEWER CHERRY PICKER**

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

Comment was made as to how the increased working height, that could be achieved with the newer cherry picker, would allow for Town Force to carry out more work around Town, raising the profile of the Town Council.

Members subsequently unanimously **RATIFIED** expenditure of £36,000.00 plus VAT for a 2014 reg, CTE Zed 20.2H cherry picker that sits on a Nissan Cabstar, as detailed in the Town Force Manager's report (Agenda item 6 refers).

**127. TO CONSIDER REQUIREMENT FOR CLLR. GOODHEART TO REFUND COSTS OF MISSED TRAINING EVENT - MIN. 206 REFERS**

The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED**, and the Chairman invited Cllr. Goodheart to speak.

Cllr. Goodheart explained that, following changes with his service provider, his internet connectivity at home had been delayed by 24-hours which resulted in him being unable to connect to the online training event. He



subsequently contacted the Council office, and the training provider, to alert them to the situation.

***Cllr. Goodheart declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and left the Meeting***

Owing to the technical difficulties experienced by Cllr. Goodheart, Members unanimously **AGREED** that he should not be asked to reimburse £64.39 to the Town Council for the cost of the missed training event.

***Cllr. Goodheart returned to the Meeting***

**128. FINANCIAL REPORTS INCLUDING: -**

**128.1 To note Committee, I&E Reports for the month of December 2021 - previously copied to Councillors**

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

**128.2 To note verification of bank reconciliations with the Town Council's Current account and Mayor's Charity account for the months of November and December 2021, undertaken by the Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee in line with the Council's Financial Regulations**

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

**129. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Committee noted receipt of correspondence as detailed in the lists previously circulated.

**129.1 The Town Clerk highlighted an email, that had been previously circulated to all Councillors, in relation to the ability of town and parish councils to hold remote meetings.**

**130. 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 (S.O. 3d) - Agenda items 20 and 21 (staffing and contractual).

**131. TO NOTE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE (STAFFING) MEETING HELD 21<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

The Town Clerk gave a verbal report from the Meeting which was **NOTED**.

Members subsequently unanimously **AGREED** to **RATIFY** the recommendations and agreed that further savings could not be made to the staffing budget. The advertising for a new Civic & Office Manager, following the internal promotion of this member of staff, was also approved.

Finally, Members supported the recommendation to explore remote working solutions, such as telephony systems and broadband etc, to offer more flexibility with staff working from home.

**132. TOWN FORCE: NOTE OF OUTSTANDING DEBTORS**

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

***The Meeting closed at 7.42pm***