



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2022

PRESENT:

Town Mayor: Cllr. J. Barrett; Cllrs: J. Brooks, A. Cunard (until Min. 84), S. Goodheart, Miss. C. Needs, W. Smith, M. Stanley, Mrs. J. Warr, B. Waterhouse and P. Woodall

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs. J. Davis (Assistant Clerk)
Mrs. R. Vervecken (Civic & Office Manager)
Major Matt Butler (Salvation Army) (part of meeting)
Able Cadet Amy Wales, Mayor's Cadet (part of meeting)
Ms. R. White (Bognor Regis Regeneration Board)
Cllr. F. Oppler (West Sussex County Councillor) (part of meeting)
1 member of the public

The Mayor's Chaplain, Major Matt Butler from the Salvation Army, led prayers prior to the Meeting

The Meeting opened at 6.32pm

62. WELCOME BY TOWN MAYOR AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Mayor welcomed all those present and the Town Clerk read the Council's opening statement with particular attention drawn to the evacuation procedure in the event of the fire alarm sounding and the Council's Standing Orders relating to public question time.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. K. Batley who was unwell, Mrs. S. Daniells and H. Jones who were on annual leave, S. Reynolds who had work commitments and Mrs. S. Staniforth who was attending another meeting.

No apologies had been received from Cllr. J. Erskine.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda and are reminded that they should redeclare their Interest before consideration of the item or as soon

as the Interest becomes apparent and if not previously included on their Register of Interests to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

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 leave the meeting for the discussion and vote
- e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Registrable Interest, and therefore must leave the room 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.

Cllr. Cunard declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 21, as tenant of the Picturedrome Cinema, and stated that he would leave the meeting during discussion on this item

Cllr. Miss. C. Needs declared an Ordinary Interest in any discussion relating to the Bognor Regis Carnival Committee, as the Town Council's appointed Representative

64. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AND WELCOME A REPRESENTATIVE FROM SUSSEX POLICE TO PROVIDE A REPORT ON LOCAL POLICING (IF AVAILABLE)

The Town Clerk reported that no representative was able to be present and unfortunately no written report had been received in time for the meeting. Therefore, the meeting was not adjourned.

65. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4th JULY 2022

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 4th July 2022 were **APPROVED** by the Council as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

66. REPORTS FROM WSCC COUNTY AND ADC DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (IF AVAILABLE)

WSCC and ADC Councillor, Cllr. Oppler, advised that as WSCC do not meet during the Summer, he had nothing to report. However, as an ADC Councillor he informed Members that a matter relating to the regeneration of Bognor Regis, in particular use of the Levelling Up fund awarded, was due for decision by Arun District Councillors, at an upcoming Committee meeting. Although he could not go into further details, Cllr. Oppler urged those present, who were also District Councillors, to consider the future regeneration of Bognor Regis, when this matter was up for discussion at the District Council.

Cllr. Stanley declared an Ordinary interest as a District Councillor, who is also a member of the ADC Committee to which Cllr. Oppler was referring

67. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no written questions from Councillors.

68. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

The Chairman adjourned the Meeting at 6.44pm

A member of the public, seated in the gallery, asked Councillors what the Town Council was doing to support its residents in reduction of the precept, with the current cost-of-living crisis predicted this Winter.

The same member of the public expressed disappointment that the seafront bandstand had not been lit throughout the Summer, especially given the attractive lighting which had been installed as part of the refurbishment by the District Council. Cllr. Barrett had previously raised this with the Town Clerk who reported that contact had been made with a Senior Surveyor at ADC who was not aware that the lights had not been working. The Surveyor reported that the lights failing could have been caused by the recently installed timer clock tripping, and that he would look into the matter. Several Councillors conveyed their frustration at this, having apparently reported the lighting problems to ADC months ago. Mention was made of the wonderful lighting across the prom, which made the darkness of the bandstand itself even more stark by comparison.

The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr. Waterhouse, confirmed he was in favour of including the question from the member of the public that the Town Council look at ways to reduce the precept for 2023/24, in light of the cost-of-living crisis, as an Agenda item at the next Policy and Resources Committee Meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the Meeting at 6.50pm

69. TO CONSIDER ANY WRITTEN DISPENSATION REQUESTS RECEIVED FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS

There were no written dispensation requests received from Town Councillors.

70. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER REPORTS, MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES (OTHER THAN ANY SPECIFIC ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA)

71. Policy and Resources Committee Extraordinary Meeting of 29th June and the Meeting of 1st August 2022

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Waterhouse, reported.

71.1 Min. 36 - 1st August 2022 - Adoption of Terms of Reference for the Community Engagement and Environment Committee, Bognor Regis in Bloom Working Group, Beach and Sea Access Topic Team, Youth Provision Steering Group and Climate Emergency Focus Group

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Community Engagement and Environment Committee, Bognor Regis in Bloom Working Group, Beach and Sea Access Topic Team, Youth Provision Steering Group and Climate Emergency Focus Group.

71.2 Min. 39 - 1st August 2022 – Adoption of revised Standing Orders, together with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts including the recommended amendments as a result of changes to procurement rules

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Standing Orders, together with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts including the recommended amendments as a result of changes to procurement rules.

71.3 Min. 30 - 29th June 2022 - To consider proposal for Community Warden Scheme in Bognor Regis, as a joint initiative between the Town and District Councillors

A Member asked Cllr. Waterhouse for an update in relation to the proposal for a Community Warden scheme. The Town Clerk confirmed that a meeting had been held between herself, the Assistant Clerk and Heather Allen (Bognor Regis BID Co-Ordinator), with a bespoke proposal for Bognor Regis having been drafted and sent to ADC officers for

consideration. Once a reply has been received from the District Council, the draft will form part of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting, at the end of September, for further consideration by Members.

72. Community Engagement and Environment Committee Meeting of 8th August 2022

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Smith, reported.

72.1 Min. 28 - To receive the notes of the Youth Provision Steering Group Meeting held on 18th July 2022 including; Update on West Sussex County Council's decision to close the Phoenix and Find It Out Centres (if available); Update on Bognor Regis Youth & Community Centre from Cllr. W. Smith; Appointing a Member of the Community Engagement and Environment Committee as a non-participating observer of the Bognor Regis Youth & Community Centre Board

A Member asked Cllr. Smith for clarification on a date for the next meeting of the Youth Provision Steering Group, which was due to be held in the evening, to allow Members of the Community Engagement and Environment Committee to be present and receive a presentation from Sussex Clubs for Young People and the Bognor Regis Youth & Community Centre. Cllr. Smith confirmed that dates are still being liaised, but that Members of the Committee would be invited to hear updates on the plans for both youth organisations.

The Councillor further asked the Chairman of the Committee whether the £10,000 funds discussed at the meeting, had yet been released to Sussex Clubs for Young People. Cllr. Smith advised this was being liaised between the Projects Officer (who also clerks the Community Engagement and Environment Committee) and the Sussex Clubs for Young People and he would seek an update on this to report back to Members.

73. Planning and Licensing Committee Meetings of 9th and 30th August 2022

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Mrs. Warr, reported. There were no recommendations to Council.

Cllr. Smith left the Meeting

74. Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee Meeting of 11th July 2022

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Mrs. Warr, who had chaired the meeting of 11th July 2022, reported. There were no recommendations to Council.

74.1 A Member asked it to be noted that he was disappointed at the low attendance at meetings, by those on the Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee, and the lack of Chairman.

74.2 Min. 26.3 - Proms in the Park - 3rd September 2022

There was much discussion on the success of the event, including how well attended it was, with praise given to the Events Officer. In particular, Members were impressed by what the Events Officer had delivered for the budget provided with the suggestion made that for 2023 perhaps a bigger budget for this event could be awarded, given its popularity with residents and visitors alike.

Cllr. Smith returned to the Meeting

Another suggestion was for the programmes to be handed out to the public, around the Park, asking for donations to help fund the continuation of this event, particularly given the high quality of the programmes paid for out of the event budget. The Town Clerk advised Members this would require several Councillor volunteers to help facilitate this, as the Events Officer, running the event on her own, would not have the time nor capacity to accommodate the suggestion. This will be discussed by the Committee, for the 2023 Proms in the Park event.

A Member suggested that additional lighting also be considered in future planning.

75. TO FORMALLY RECEIVE THE MINUTES, REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEES, AND REFER ANY SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS DECIDED UPON DURING THE MEETING BACK TO THE RELEVANT COMMITTEE, AND RATIFY ANY COMMITTEE ACTIONS AS MAY BE NECESSARY

The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to 'formally receive the reports, Minutes and recommendations of the Committee, and refer any suggested amendments decided upon at this meeting back to the relevant Committee'.

76. TO NOTE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS AND TRANSFERS MADE IN JUNE AND JULY 2022 AND TO NOTE THE BALANCES, BANK RECONCILIATIONS AND FINANCIAL REPORTS (AUGUST NOT YET AVAILABLE) AND OUTTURN AND APPROVAL OF THE CONTENTS AND THEIR PUBLICATION

The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** 'to note the payments and transfers made in June and July 2022 and to note the balances, bank reconciliations and financial reports (August not yet available) and outturn and approval of the contents and their publication'.

77. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT ANY CONTINUATION OF LIVE STREAMING OF MEETINGS AND AGREE ANY NEXT STEPS - MIN. 53 REFERS

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

Lengthy discussions were held, regarding whether or not the Town Council should be committing to spending money on this equipment, during the current climate.

Cllr. Brooks refuted the statement made in the report about expenses, as he felt that comments he had made in an email, about this matter, had been misinterpreted.

Some Councillors felt that, whilst livestreaming during lockdown, was beneficial due to members of the public not being able to attend meetings in person, the need for it now was limited. Other Parish Council's are not providing this option and a few Members argued that, with the cost-of-living crisis, this money could be spent more wisely for the benefit of residents. It was further suggested that providing live streaming allowed for negative comments, perhaps when the full background of an item had not been considered by whoever was commenting online. If anyone wanted to make their opinion on a subject known, some Councillors argued that, as long as access to the building (including a working lift) was viable, residents should be more minded to attend in person, where they would always be welcomed.

Cllr. Smith left the Meeting

The majority of Councillors present however felt that the option of being able to watch a meeting, virtually, was invaluable to those who for whatever reason, could not or would not like to attend a meeting in person. It was felt that ensuring that meetings of the Town Council were accessible for all, set the tone of a welcoming and inclusive Town Council, particularly in relation to potential new Councillors coming into post, following the 2023 elections, who may require or benefit from better audio equipment, to participate in meetings. Further comment was made in relation to the positive effect of a further reach to residents, who may feel better informed of the work of the Town Council, through watching the live meetings.

Cllr. Smith returned to the Meeting

Following a vote, Members opted for Option B, as detailed in the report, and it was proposed and seconded that the budget to be spent on the equipment be up to a maximum of £6,500. This was **RESOLVED**, although Cllrs. Cunard, Mrs. Warr and Woodall abstained from the vote.

In answer to a query, the Assistant Clerk confirmed that the proposed system did not include a hearing loop.

Members further **AGREED** that in the interim, Cllr. Brooks would continue supplying and setting up his own equipment for meetings, with Cllr. Brooks confirming that he was happy to do this and would not require a fee.

78. TO CONSIDER REQUESTS TO MAKE A PRESENTATION TO MEMBERS PRIOR TO A FUTURE MEETING FROM ONE OF THE TOWN MAYOR'S CHARITIES, BOGNOR REGIS FOODBANK AND LOCAL ORGANISATION, ARUN & CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

As the next Council Meeting was not due to be held until 7th November, the Town Clerk suggested arranging a Members Briefing, to facilitate this request from the organisations. This was unanimously **AGREED** by Members, and the Town Clerk shall circulate some suggested dates for the Briefing.

79. DELEGATED DECISIONS INCLUDING: PLANNING AND LICENSING

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

80. CONSIDERATION OF THE START TIME FOR PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETINGS REVERTING TO A 4PM START – MIN. 155 REFERS

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

The Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee, Cllr. Mrs. Warr explained that the starting time of the Committee had been changed from 4pm to 6.30pm following agreement of Members at the meeting of 4th January 2022, with the intention of obtaining a higher attendance rate from Members for these meetings. Unfortunately, this had not proved to be effective and as such, several Members had expressed a preference for reverting to a 4pm start for these meetings, for the rest of the municipal year, which would also save on staff time during the evenings.

A couple of Members made clear that changing to a 4pm start time may prove difficult, with Cllr. Stanley explaining that he would have to stand down as a Committee Member, due to work commitments at this earlier time. Cllr. Woodall stated he would not be able to attend all meetings, also due to work constraints. However, he would remain as a Member of this Committee.

Members **AGREED** that Planning and Licensing Committee meetings, scheduled for the rest of this municipal year, will start at 4pm.

81. REGENERATION INCLUDING: TO NOTE THE PUBLICATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION BOARD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 20th JULY 2022 (IF AVAILABLE); TO CONSIDER WRITTEN REQUEST FOR NEW TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION BOARD

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

81.1 Rebecca White (Bognor Regis Regeneration Board), reported that the Minutes from the AGM, held on 20th July 2022, had now been circulated to all Councillors. The AGM included a presentation by a Wayfinding consultant, and this will hopefully be brought before Members in October.

81.2 Following a request from the Executive Director of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board, for the Town Council to consider appointing a new Representative to the Board, Members discussed the significance of ensuring the Town Council had adequate representation on the Board and the continuation of the working relationship currently shared.

The Regeneration Board are increasingly concerned that the current Representative is rarely able to attend meetings, often giving late apologies or none at all, which makes it very difficult to get another Council Reserve present in time.

The Town Clerk confirmed the current Representative on the Board as Cllr. Erskine, with Cllr. Mrs. Warr as first Reserve and, following his request at the Annual Town Council Meeting on 9th May 2022, Cllr. Goodheart is second Reserve. She further explained that should one of the existing Reserves become the Representative, another Reserve would need to be appointed.

A Member stated that they did not feel comfortable voting to replace the existing Representative, without first asking their stance on staying in the role. It was suggested that Cllr. Erskine be contacted and if no response was given in an adequate time, it was proposed that Cllr. Mrs. Warr be asked to become the Representative, with Cllr. Goodheart then becoming first Reserve, with a vacancy then needing to be filled, for a second Reserve, which could be considered at the next Meeting. This was **AGREED** by Members.

82. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN

The report on the Mayor's activities was **NOTED**.

The Mayor was congratulated by Members on the number of engagements attended thus far.

83. TOWN CRIER'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN

The report on the Town Crier's activities was **NOTED**.

Cllrs. Cunard and Mrs. Warr left the Meeting

84. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

A Councillor commented on the low number of reports seen from some Councillors, for any meetings attended in relation to the Outside Bodies to which they are the appointed Representative.

Cllr. Mrs. Warr returned to the Meeting

The Town Clerk reminded Members that one of the stipulations of those organisations who receive Grant Aid of over £5,000, is to invite their designated Town Council Representative to meetings on a regular basis and confirmed that these organisations had recently been contacted to remind them of this. The Town Clerk pointed out that Members may wish to consider which organisations have honoured this requirement, when considering Grant Aid applications going forward.

85. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

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

86. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE INCLUDING: DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION; TO NOTE RECEIPT OF £9,000 MANAGEMENT FEE FROM THE BOGNOR PIER COMPANY LTD. (THIRD QUARTER PAYMENT 2022)

86.1 Director's report, any urgent actions taken for ratification

The previously circulated Director's report was **NOTED**, with the actions taken, and expenditure **RATIFIED**.

A Member commented on the joint press release that had been published which he felt was good, but he would have liked to see more pictures included.

The Town Clerk advised that another press release was hoped for at the end of September, at which point, Town Councillors would be afforded the opportunity to visit the building.

Members discussed at length the ongoing works at the Picturedrome Cinema, specifically regarding the appearance of the building exterior. Some Councillors shared the frustration expressed by residents, regarding the aesthetics of the building. A Member suggested that providing a completion date, in the near future, may go some way to reassuring residents that progress was being made. Whilst Members agreed regular users were largely supportive of the plans and felt confident the completed works would be of real benefit to the Town, it was felt that another update at the next Council Meeting in November, would be prudent. This was **AGREED** by Members.

86.2 To note receipt of £9,000 Management fee from The Bognor Pier Company Ltd. (third quarter payment for 2022)

Receipt of the £9,000 Management fee from The Bognor Pier Company Ltd. (third quarter payment for 2022) was **NOTED**.

The Meeting closed at 8.12pm