



# BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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

**HELD ON MONDAY 28<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021**

### **PRESENT:**

Cllr. M. Stanley (Chairman); Cllrs: J. Barrett, A. Cunard (exc. Mins. 26 to 28), S. Goodheart, Mrs. J. Warr and P. Woodall

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)  
Mrs. S. Norman (Deputy Clerk)  
Mrs. J. Davis (Civic & Office Manager)  
Mr. D. Kemp (DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd) (part of meeting)  
0 members of the public  
1 Councillor in the public gallery: Cllr. Brooks (part of meeting)

### ***The Meeting opened at 6.30pm***

#### **1. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN AS AGREED AT THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021**

It was **NOTED** that Cllr. M. Stanley was elected Chairman and Cllr. J. Erskine was elected Vice-Chairman of this Committee at the Annual Town Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

#### **2. 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 Cllrs. J. Erskine due to childcare issues, H. Jones due to another appointment and W. Smith due to a family emergency.

#### **3. 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.

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.

***Cllr. Cunard declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 26 as tenant of the Picturedrome Cinema, and stated that he would not take part in the discussion and would leave the Meeting when Agenda item 26 was discussed***

***Cllr. Goodheart declared an Ordinary Interest in any discussions relating to the Young Persons Award as referred to under Min. 236 of the previous Committee meeting Minutes as a Trustee of the 39 Club***

**4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2021**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Online Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and these were signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman reminded Members that should they have any queries on the previous Minutes these should be emailed to the Town Clerk.

**5. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS**

Whilst there were no public present, the Chairman invited a Councillor in the public gallery to state any questions.

***Meeting adjourned at 6.36pm***

Statements were made regarding the use of the emergency delegated authority to the Town Clerk, as had been agreed by Council for use during

the pandemic, and also the merits of holding the Council Meeting to approve decisions from this Committee Meeting, immediately after.

***Meeting reconvened at 6.38pm***

The Town Clerk reminded Members that the Special Council Meeting which would follow was only to approve the Annual Accounts and AGAR for the 2020/21 year. The Minutes of this evening's meeting, together with any other recommendations, will be referred to the next scheduled Council Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

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

**6.1 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Min. 224.1 - Clerk's Report regarding COVID Seminar**

As was noted at the last meeting, this matter is to be deferred until further guidance was available from central Government and following the recent extension to the restrictions, this has been delayed further.

**6.2 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Min. 224.2 - Clerk's Report regarding Grant to West End Traders**

As required as part of the grant conditions, the WEST Traders have now provided copy invoices advising that a total of 62 trees were installed along Aldwick Road at a total cost of £5,580.

**6.3 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Min. 231 - Promotions Training**

Emails were sent to five seaside towns, similar in size to Bognor Regis, asking if there was any interest in a Zoom meeting with tourism officers. Only two have so far responded with one saying they would not be interested, as it is the Tourism Office that promotes the area, and another saying that they may. The matter will therefore be on the next Agenda for this Committee when details of these and any further responses received will be circulated and Members may agree how to proceed.

**6.4 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 - Min. 161.4 - Treasury Management Report**

This policy has once again been considered by the Town Council's Accountant who has confirmed that no changes are necessary at the current time.

**6.5 Town Council Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020 - Min. 227 - Grant Aid 2020**

Following the decision to permit the Southdowns Folk Festival to earmark their 2020 Grant Award, the organisers have confirmed that they intend to proceed with the 2021 event and, having provided the Town Council with copies of the Event Management Plan, risk assessments and potential COVID protocol procedure, a cheque for £5,000 has been sent to them.

**6.6 Town Council Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Min. 367.1 - Policy for changes to scheduled meeting dates and the appointment of reserves to Committees**

Due to the length of tonight's Agenda, this will be considered at a future Meeting.

**6.7 Remembrance Sunday**

Members are advised that, as is usual at this time of year, a meeting has been arranged with local partners to discuss the arrangements for the Parade on Remembrance Sunday which ties into the Service and Wreath Laying as organised by the Town Council. Members may recall that in 2020, the arrangements were affected, and subsequently reduced dramatically at the last minute, due to the imposing of the second Lockdown in November and the Government’s stay at home order.

**7. APPOINTMENT OF ANY SUB-COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/ TASK & FINISH GROUPS ETC. INCLUDING: -**

**Joint Consultative Sub-Committee (Staffing)**

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the appointments of Cllrs: S. Goodheart, J. Barrett, J. Erskine, A. Cunard, Mrs. S. Staniforth, M. Stanley and the three senior Officers.

**8. TO REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MAKE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TOWN COUNCIL INCLUDING: -**

- **Policy and Resources Committee**
- **Joint Consultative Sub-Committee (Staffing)**

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

**8.1** A Member suggested that consideration be given to Committee’s rather than Council appointing the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. It was therefore **AGREED** that this should be a matter for a future Agenda.

**8.2** A Member suggested that the Policy and Resources Terms of Reference should be reviewed in depth as he felt that some items should fall into the remit of other Committees and proposed that a Working Group be formed to make recommendations in time for the Terms of Reference review in 2022. Following a tied vote, and the use of the Chairman’s Casting Vote (S.O. 3u) the proposal was rejected.

**8.3** The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Policy and Resources Committee and Joint Consultative Sub-Committee (Staffing) and it was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council that these be adopted with no amendments.

**9. TO NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020-2021 (FINAL UPDATE)**

**9.1** The Town Clerk’s report and Internal Audit Report 2020-2021 (Final) were **NOTED**, and Members acknowledged that once again, no significant issues had been raised. Members did note that the minor issues identified in relation to uncleared cheques had already been identified by Officers prior to this review and was being addressed with cheque recipients.

**9.2** A Member asked that consideration be given to the holding of a finance workshop for Councillors.

**9.3** A Member queried why there was a paragraph in the Overall Conclusion reminding the Clerk and Council of the website publication requirements in relation to the AGAR. Mr. Kemp informed Members that this would be a standard overall statement included for the avoidance of any doubt, as the incorrect publication was a common error that the External Auditors encountered. However, Members were advised that Bognor Regis Town Council has never made such a mistake, with all correct procedures regarding the AGAR followed each year.

**10. TO WELCOME THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ACCOUNTANTS, MR. D. KEMP, TO PRESENT THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2020/21**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. D. Kemp from DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd, Accountant to the Town Council, and invited him to present the Annual Accounts for the year 2020/21.

Mr. Kemp advised Members that he did not intend to go through the Accounts line by line but invited any questions that Members had, having reviewed the paperwork online.

It was noted that in, spite of the COVID pandemic, the projected budget for 2020/21 had been very accurate. The surplus projected for the year was £35,104 with the actual surplus being £34,941 - a difference of only £163.

A question was also raised about any rebate on rent for the Town Hall and the use of the Council Chamber as the building had not been used by the majority of Town Council staff since March 2020. The Town Clerk confirmed that this is an issue that she would be taking up at the next BRTC/ADC Liaison Meeting.

The Councillor in the public gallery stated that he felt the duplication of terminology on the budget heading names complicated the issue for Members.

Mr. Kemp stated that he would be willing to run a workshop for Members regarding the Accounts.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Kemp for his attendance and input to the meeting.

**11. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2021 INCLUDING:**

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

**11.1 To review the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control including to formally note the Annual Internal Audit Report for**

**2020/21 (Page 3 of the AGAR) and to recommend approval to Council**

Members **RESOLVED** to formally **NOTE** the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2020/21 (Page 3 of the AGAR) prepared by the Town Council's Internal Auditor, Mr. S. Pollard from Auditing Solutions Ltd. In addition, Members reviewed the system of internal control procedures as detailed in the Town Clerk's report and unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council that the systems that the Council has in place are effective.

**11.2 To consider and agree the Council's response to each Statement on the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 (Section 1 of the AGAR)**

Having considered the Town Clerk's report, Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** answering 'Yes' to statements 1-8, on the Annual Governance Statement, noting that statement 9 was not applicable to the Town Council.

**11.3 To Recommend Approval to Council of the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 (Section 1 of the AGAR) and that Section 1 be signed by the Chairman of the meeting approving the Annual Governance Statement and by the Town Clerk**

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council **APPROVAL** of the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 and that Section 1 is signed by the Chairman of the Full Council Meeting approving the Annual Governance Statement, which follows on immediately from this meeting, and by the Town Clerk.

**11.4 To consider and Recommend Approval to Council of the Financial Statements for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and agree that these be signed by the Chairman of the meeting approving the accounts and by the Town Clerk**

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council **APPROVAL** of the Financial Statements for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and **RESOLVED** that these be signed by the Chairman of the Full Council Meeting approving the Financial Statements, which follows on immediately from this meeting, and by the Town Clerk.

**11.5 To consider the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 (Section 2 of the AGAR)**

Members considered the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 as detailed in Section 2 of the AGAR.

**11.6 To Recommend Approval to Council of the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 (Section 2 of the AGAR) and that Section 2 be signed by the Chairman of the meeting approving the Accounting Statements and noting that these were previously signed by the RFO prior to presentation**

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council **APPROVAL** of the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 and unanimously **RESOLVED**

that Section 2 is signed by the Chairman of the Full Council Meeting approving the Accounting Statements, which follows on immediately from this meeting.

Members further unanimously **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** that the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 were previously signed by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) prior to their presentation to this meeting.

***Mr. Kemp left the Meeting***

**12. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN FORCE REPORT**

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

**12.1** Members **RATIFIED** expenditure of £1,007.32 for planning permissions for the Town Council owned boundary signs.

**12.2** Members discussed the increase in graffiti and that WSCC Highways now only funded removal of obscene and racist graffiti from their assets. It was therefore **AGREED** that this matter be placed on a future Agenda for further discussion with consideration given an increase in liaison with the principal authority.

**12.3** A Member queried the reason for the removal of the Sun Reader from the Butlin's roof. The Deputy Clerk explained that the readings had been lost during much of 2020 due to the pandemic and resulting closure of the resort. Furthermore, the extremely remote location posed Health & Safety considerations and therefore a new location was actively being sought.

Cllr. Cunard, as the tenant at the Picturedrome Cinema, suggested that there may be a suitable location on the roof the cinema building and it was **AGREED** that this would be investigated further, with any necessary permissions from the Met Office taken into consideration.

**13. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021**

The Deputy Clerk's report, including the notes of the Heritage Partnership Board Meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021, was **NOTED**.

**13.1** A Member asked for confirmation of the situation of the Bathing Machine, currently stored in the Town Force Lock-Up. The Deputy Clerk informed Members that this was not Town Council property and had been stored on behalf of the owner whilst discussions with Bognor Regis Museum took place about their displaying of the item. The owner was charged for the insurance costs for the storage of the item and had advised that, as arrangements with the local museum had not progressed, they were now actively looking for a permanent home elsewhere. It was noted that the structure is in need of maintenance and occupies a large space in the Town Force yard. Furthermore, Members were advised that the item is stored

without the wheels attached as with them attached, it would not fit through the roller doors.

**14. 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**.

**14.1** Members unanimously **AGREED** to support the proposal from the Bognor Regis BID for the creation of a dedicated "Town Centre Task Force", the remit of which was detailed in the BID's letter to the Town Council dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021, as appended to the Agenda and published on the website.

**14.2** Having agreed to support the Town Centre Task Force, Members subsequently **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council that one of Cllrs. Cunard, Goodheart or Stanley be appointed as the representative of this Committee to the Strategy Group and furthermore, **AGREED** with Officer attendance at the Delivery Group meetings.

**15. TO NOTE THE JOINT ACTION GROUP (JAG) MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021**

The Projects Officer's report, including confirmation that notes from the meetings could be made available to Members, was **NOTED**.

**16. GRANT AID 2022 INCLUDING:**

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

**16.1** A Member suggested that, to make things fairer and more accountable, the process be streamlined for smaller grants but for those larger applications more detail is requested with a business style breakdown of the expenditure to be funded by the grant and follow up enquiries to ascertain whether the expectations were met. It was noted that this would be too late to implement for the 2022 round, but that consideration be given in plenty of time to implement in 2023.

**16.2 To review current guidelines/criteria, application form and amend if required**

Members unanimously **APPROVED** the guidelines/criteria and application form with no amendments from the 2021 issue and furthermore **AGREED** that submission of applications should continue to be on an electronic basis.

Members further **REJECTED** the promotion of the Grant Aid Scheme on the Bognor Regis Observer website.



**16.3 Consideration of date for an Extraordinary Policy and Resources Committee Meeting at which the applications will be considered**

Members **AGREED** that an Extraordinary Committee Meeting should be held on the afternoon of the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at which the applications will be considered.

**16.4 Review of the guidelines for the Flexible Community Fund**

Members **APPROVED** the guidelines/criteria and application form with no amendments from the 2021 issue and furthermore **AGREED** that submission of applications should continue to be on an electronic basis.

It was **NOTED** that only those serving on the Community Engagement and Environment Committee received details of applications to the FCF as it is this Committee that determines the awards.

**17. TO NOTE THE REVISED HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY MANUAL WITH THE POLICY STATEMENT SIGNED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Deputy Clerk's report, including the circulated updated version of the Health & Safety Policy Manual, was **NOTED**.

Members also **NOTED** that the Policy Statement would be signed by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee.

**18. TO NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FOR THE NEXT POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING TO MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST 2021**

The Town Clerk's report, including confirmation that the next Meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021, was **NOTED**.

**19. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION REGARDING THE FISHERMEN'S HUTS ON THE SEAFRONT AND AGREE ANY ACTION - MIN. 226.1 REFERS**

The Town Clerk's report and Appendix, together with a verbal report of an email received from a member of the public already involved with this matter, was **NOTED**.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to ADC to query the legal standing regarding any agreement between ADC and the fishermen, and that further discussion be deferred until a response is received which it is hoped will clarify the position.

**20. TO NOTE EARMARKED RESERVES AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2021**

The Town Clerk's report, including the circulated summary of the Earmarked Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, was **NOTED**.

**21. TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF A BUSINESS STARTER PACK FOR THE HIDDEN DISABILITIES SUNFLOWER SCHEME FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL BY CLLR. D. EDWARDS - MIN. 225 REFERS**

The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED**, and Members were updated further that any expenditure for this would have to come from the Civic Fund. In addition, Members were advised that consideration should be given to the purchase of a Corporate Pack which included the white lanyards which could be worn by Town Council staff to show their awareness of the scheme, and this would be at a slightly higher cost of £115.

Members expressed their thanks to Cllr. David Edwards for taking the time to attend a briefing to present to Members details of the Sunflower Scheme and **AGREED** that a letter of thanks be sent to him. Following the discussion, Members unanimously **AGREED** to purchase a Corporate Pack at a cost of £115.

It was also noted that there are training videos that may be circulated for Members to view.

**22. TO RATIFY EXPENDITURE OF £44.25 FOR FLOWERS FOR THE TOWN CRIER ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HER AUTHORSHIP OF THE CRY FOR THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE BEACONS EVENT**

The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED**, and Members subsequently **RATIFIED** the expenditure of £44.25 for flowers for the Town Crier and **AGREED** that a letter of congratulations should be sent by the Town Mayor.

**23. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND TO NOTE THAT CONSIDERATION OF THE ADOPTION OF EITHER THE LGA MODEL OR ADC'S AGREED CODE WILL BE CONSIDERED AT THE NEXT MEETING - MIN. 203 REFERS**

The Town Clerk's report, including the circulated LGA model Code of Conduct, the ADC Adopted Code of Conduct (based on the LGA model but tailored to their own requirements) and the report from the Town Council's Consultants, EQH Ltd, was **NOTED**.

The Chairman referred to the circulated report which advised Members that discussion and consideration of a recommendation to Council as to whether a new Code of Conduct for the Town Council was required, would be referred to the next meeting of this Committee, thereby giving Member's time to consider and digest the various Appendices.

**24. FINANCIAL REPORTS INCLUDING:-**

**24.1 To note Committee I&E Reports for the months of April and May 2021 - previously copied to Councillors**

Members **NOTED** receipt of the financial reports for the months of April and May 2021.

**24.2 To note verification of bank reconciliations with the Town Council's Current account and Mayor's Charity account for the months of March, April and May 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**.

**25. CORRESPONDENCE**

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

*Cllr. Cunard, redeclared his Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 26 and left the Meeting*

**26. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE - DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION**

The Director's report as published was **NOTED** and actions taken, including any expenditure as detailed, were **RATIFIED**. Members were further advised that elements of this Agenda item would need to be considered further under confidential business.

**27. 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 26 and 28 (contractual).

*Cllr. Brooks, seated in the public gallery, left the Meeting*

**28. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE - DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION**

The verbal Director's confidential report was **NOTED**, and actions taken, including any expenditure as detailed, were **RATIFIED**.

*Cllr. Cunard rejoined the Meeting*

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

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

***The Meeting closed at 8.17pm***