



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 2024

PRESENT:

Mayor: Cllr. Miss. C. Needs; Cllrs: J. Barrett, J. Brooks, D. Dawes, S. Goodheart, R. Nash, P. Ralph, N. Smith, Mrs. J. Warr, B. Waterhouse and Mrs. G. Yeates

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. J. Davis (Assistant Clerk)
Mrs. R. Vervecken (Civic & Office Manager)
AC Ashley Wightwick-Hotston (Mayor's Cadet) (part of meeting)
2 members of the public

Prior to the Meeting, a one-minute silence was held in memory of former Town Councillor and Mayor, Mr. Pat Dillon

The Meeting opened at 6.33pm

59. WELCOME BY MAYOR

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

60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND THEIR APPROVAL, SUBJECT TO MEETING THE AGREED CRITERIA

The Assistant Clerk gave apologies for the Clerk, who was unwell.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Batley, Oppler, Wells and Woodall with the Assistant Clerk recommending that the reasons given were acceptable. These absences were therefore **APPROVED** by Members.

No apologies were received from Cllr. Stanley.

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

Cllr. Brooks declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 13, as a member of the Bognor Regis Chamber of Commerce and the Town Council's appointed representative

Cllr. Mrs. Warr left the Meeting

62. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8th JULY 2024

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8th July 2024 were unanimously **APPROVED** by the Council as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

Cllr. Mrs. Warr returned to the Meeting

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

The Assistant Clerk confirmed that no reports had been received from West Sussex County Councillors. Cllr. McDougall, an Arun District Councillor, had hoped to attend the meeting to give a report in person, but unfortunately, was no longer able to attend. No written report had been received from Cllr. McDougall prior to the meeting.

64. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions from Councillors.

65. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS

There were no questions or statements from those seated in the public gallery and the Chair did not, therefore, adjourn the meeting.

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

There were no written dispensation requests received from Town Councillors.

67. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER REPORTS, MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES (OTHER THAN ANY SPECIFIC ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA)**68. Policy and Resources Committee Meeting of 29th July 2024**

Whilst the Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Waterhouse was present, he had not been in attendance at the meeting held on 29th July and did not, therefore, report. In the absence of the Vice-Chair, Cllr. Wells, another Committee Member who had been in attendance on the 29th, Cllr. Mrs. Yeates, reported.

68.1 Min. 40 refers - 29th July 2024 - Recommendation that the updated Treasury Management Policy, to enable the Assistant Clerk to act in the absence of the Town Clerk, be adopted

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the adoption of the updated Treasury Management Policy, to enable the Assistant Clerk to act in the absence of the Town Clerk.

68.2 Min. 40 refers - 29th July 2024 – Recommendation that the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund mandate be amended to remove the Councillor who no longer sits on the Council and include the Assistant Clerk, Mrs. Davis with the existing authorised signatory, Mrs. Frost, Town Clerk as an additional signatory to the account. Thus, enabling the Assistant Clerk to transfer funds between the Public Sector Deposit Account and the Cooperative Bank Account in the event that this should be necessary in the absence of the Clerk. Transfers between these accounts to continue by way of email instruction by an authorised signatory

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund mandate be amended to remove the Councillor who no longer sits on the Council and include the Assistant Clerk, Mrs. Davis with the existing authorised signatory, Mrs. Frost, Town Clerk as an additional signatory to the account. Thus, enabling the Assistant Clerk to transfer funds between the Public Sector Deposit Account and the Cooperative Bank Account in the event that this should be necessary in the absence of the Clerk. Transfers between these accounts to continue by way of email instruction by an authorised signatory.

69. Planning and Licensing Committee Meetings of 16th July, 6th and 27th August 2024

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

70. Environmental and Leisure Committee Meeting of 15th July 2024

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Brooks reported.

70.1 Min. 25.1 refers - Recommendation that Mr. Paul Goodchild (Original Site) and Mr. Phil Fortin (Re-Established Site) be co-opted as non-voting additional Tenant Representatives for the remainder of the 2023-2024 allotments year

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that Mr. Paul Goodchild (Original Site) and Mr. Phil Fortin (Re-Established Site) be co-opted as non-voting additional Tenant Representatives for the remainder of the 2023-2024 allotments year.

71. 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'.

72. TO NOTE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS AND TRANSFERS MADE IN JUNE AND JULY 2024 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 2024 and to note the balances, bank reconciliations and financial reports (August not yet available) and outturn and approval of the contents and their publication'.

73. NOTICE OF MOTION (S.O. 9.0) PROPOSED BY CLLR. D. DAWES

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

"I hope that all are aware of the work that has been done to the front of the Town Hall and I personally would like to say that it is looking better than it has for a long time.

Particular thanks has to go to (ADC employee) Graham (Percy) I feel as he has made the front look like it hasn't in a long long time. The brass is now being brought back to life, the railings have been refurbished, the front doors have been rubbed down, filled and stained, new twinning signs and parking signs have been erected and this brings back some civic pride.

I am hoping that all, if not some of you can agree that more has to be done and this is what I would like to propose, to start:

The central flagpole on the balcony needs to be replaced (currently the ADC flag is flying on the west side of the building and the Union flag is on the east side whereas apparently it should be ADC west side, BRTC east side and the Union in the middle where there is a flagpole in an elevated position i.e. on the balcony). I wonder if this is mentioned on the Grade II listing?

Parking is still a huge problem and indeed recently an ambulance was unable to get to the front of the Town Hall for an emergency.

The main problems are the residents of No.3 Clarence Rd and the staff of Crawford Care Home. I have had 'words' with the residents at No.3 who recently parked an uninsured and untaxed wreck on the pavement directly in front of the Town Hall and that and a van should no longer be a problem, but I feel a polite letter to the residents of that house or notes on windscreen would be advisable.

The staff at Crawford have not only been openly hostile to officers from BRTC but also carry on using the front of the Town Hall as their own free parking thus stopping the elderly, disabled and other persons from parking for the allowed 20 minutes to attend to matters that they visit the Town Hall for.

May I suggest in this circumstance a polite but firm letter addressing the issue to the directors/owners of Crawford as the manager has a tendency to give BRTC the middle finger... literally.

Their details are:

Mr Mark Edward Wills, Director, Mr Richard Paul Jupp, Director, Mrs Jennifer Jane Jupp, Secretary at Crawfords Homes Ltd, 38 Salisbury Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1RD. I am happy to hand deliver if required on behalf of BRTC.

It seems that WSCC and ADC cannot, or just don't see it as important, to come together and sort this out whereas I and I hope you do. The front of the Civic Centre in Littlehampton is fine and managed as is County Hall in Chichester so perhaps we should push them to show us and our Community the same courtesy.

To stop this problem in the future I would suggest a metal pole at each side of the road on the east and west side and a chain across between certain times with notices showing those times.

The yellow hatching also needs repainting as does the disabled bay and the Town Clerks space.

There has apparently been a quote given for jet washing the Town Hall but as we all know they will not spend the kind of money quoted until they have decided what to do with the building so perhaps we ask if the front can be done only to at least wash her face and show some pride especially as the down pipes are utterly disgusting.

I hope I can rely on some support for this as I feel that we have been ignored and run roughshod over for too long when it comes to our home (yes it is their building but it is our home)"

With Cllr. Mrs. Warr seconding the Motion, the Mayor deemed the matter as urgent and invited Cllr. Dawes to speak to his Motion.

73.1 Reinstating of Balcony Flagpole

Cllr. Dawes highlighted to Members the great work undertaken by Graham (Percy) to the Town Hall, since his original Motion on this matter, which was discussed at the Council Meeting held on 4th March 2024 (Min. 180 refers) and took the opportunity to thank him for his efforts.

Regarding the issue of reinstating the flagpole on the balcony, Cllr. Dawes advised that as part of due diligence on this issue, he had been in contact with Historic England, who had confirmed that if the balcony flagpole was in place at the time the Town Hall was registered as a Listed Building, then it should still be in situ. Cllr. Dawes confirmed that he had obtained photographic evidence that this was the case.

Councillors concurred and spoke of their support of Cllr. Dawes' sentiments, particularly in that it should be reinstated in time for this year's Remembrance Sunday Service, on 10th November 2024, and hoped that early consideration would give this some chance of happening.

Cllr. Dawes advised that during discussions with ADC thus far, it had been suggested that were ADC not to replace the balcony flagpole then the Town Council could purchase and install this, but that upon fixing, it would become the property of ADC, as it would be attached to their building.

There were questions as to what the Motion was asking specifically, with one Councillor querying what the costs would be, should the Town Council choose to fund this themselves. Whilst Councillors felt that ADC should be funding the reinstatement of the flagpole, many were hesitant as to the feasibility of this, with the District Council continuing a review of their accommodation and making clear their intention not to spend large sums on the building, whilst these investigations were ongoing.

After discussion, it was unanimously **AGREED** to write to the Property, Estates and Facilities Team at ADC, copying in the new CEO of ADC, asking them to fund the cost of a balcony flagpole, including installation, to the Town Hall, as landowners. If a positive response is not forthcoming, then the Town Council

will consider funding the installation itself, up to a total cost of £3,000 from a budget to be identified, subject to permission in writing from ADC.

It was further **AGREED** that Cllr. Nash, a dual-hatted Councillor who was due to be meeting with the new CEO on Thursday 5th September, be given permission to speak on this matter, on behalf of the Town Council.

73.2 Parking issues outside Bognor Regis Town Hall

Cllr. Dawes explained that, despite new signage stating that parking at the front of the building is for a maximum of 20 minutes only, parking rules continue to be ignored, with vans and cars of those working across the road, at Crawford House, parking for days at a time. Cllr. Dawes expressed his contempt at those who had been verbally abusive to Town Council staff, when asked politely to move their vehicles, particularly prior to the 2023 Remembrance Day Service. Despite numerous letters and verbal requests, they continue to use these spaces, intended for users of the Town Hall, for a short period of time. Cllr. Dawes also raised the issue of the Town Clerk who has not been able to use her designated parking space for a long time, as well as the disabled spaces that cannot be accessed.

With Arun District Council confirmed as landowners of this area, they have advised that they are looking into the installation of barriers that will be up for the duration of the Town Hall opening hours, and be lowered when the Town Hall is closed, to try to discourage these persistent offenders.

Members again concurred with Cllr. Dawes' frustrations with this ongoing issue and discussed how this may be policed.

Members unanimously **AGREED** that a letter be written to the new CEO of Arun District Council, asking them to consider policing the parking outside the front of the Town Hall, as landowners, with ticketing hopefully acting as a deterrent. If ADC are not agreeable, then the Town Council will need to assess the cost implications of doing so themselves, which, if necessary, will be on a future agenda for discussion. Members **AGREED** that Cllr. Nash, a dual-hatted Councillor due to be meeting with the new CEO on Thursday 5th September, be given permission to speak on this matter also, on behalf of the Town Council.

Cllr. Waterhouse left the Meeting

It was further **AGREED** that, in the meantime, letters be sent to the directors and staff at Crawford House, reminding them firmly, that the front of the Town Hall is not to be used as their own personal car park.

Cllr. Waterhouse returned to the Meeting

74. NOTICE OF MOTION (S.O. 9.0) PROPOSED BY CLLR. D. DAWES

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

"I have attended many events provided for the town by BRTC and am often in awe of the services that are provided to the town and its residents often for no charge or expectation.

However, I am rather irked by the appearance at many events by the Bognor Regis Chamber of Commerce which, if it was an active body, I would have no argument with but they are not and at present provide zero, as far as I can see, to the town or its residents. Why?

Their Facebook page last had a post from them on the September 27th 2019, and their header picture is of the front of the train station pre-planters which have been there for many years now and the contact number puts you in touch with the President who says "The Chamber is on hold... You need to talk to the Chairman and good luck with that as even I can't get hold of him". This is a very poor representation of Bognor Regis.

We now have the Chichester Chamber recently stated in the press that "We are looking to grow a Bognor Chapter of businesses that will be part of the Chichester Chamber, but at the same time will provide a voice for Bognor businesses and highlight the positive contributions that Bognor can bring to a co-ordinated business strategy for the entire coastal plain of West Sussex. There is no need to go through the expense and time of growing a business forum in Bognor; we can utilise all the facilities, infrastructure and experience already available via the Chichester Chamber of Commerce."

It seems we will just have to be happy being a chapter that is run by Chichester. In which case we see the 102yr old Bognor Regis Chamber of Commerce disappear and we rescind all further invitations to the BRCoC as they will be defunct sadly and invite the Chichester Chamber of Commerce which is equally as sad.

I know some will say that the BRCoC is not under the auspices of BRTC and I agree but surely we should be looking at how the town is represented and contact the Chairman and President for some clarification as to where we stand as a Town or give in and ask the Chichester Chamber of Commerce how we can help them represent OUR town. Thoughts?"

Cllr. Barrett seconded the Motion.

With the matter not being deemed urgent by the Mayor, it was unanimously **AGREED** to **REFER** this Motion, without discussion, to the next Council Meeting to be held on 28th October 2024.

75. TO RATIFY DONATION OF £100 TO MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT IN MEMORY OF FORMER TOWN COUNCILLOR AND MAYOR, MR. PAT DILLON AND TO NOTE THE ADDITIONAL £1.50 PAYABLE TO JUSTGIVING TO ENABLE THE DONATION TO BE MADE

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

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the donation of £100 to Macmillan Cancer Support in memory of former Town Councillor and Mayor, Mr. Pat Dillon. Members further **NOTED** the additional £1.50 payable to JustGiving to enable the donation to be made.

76. REGENERATION INCLUDING: - TO NOTE THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION BOARD AGM FROM 10th JULY TO THE 17th OCTOBER 2024; TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MATT STANLEY AS ACTING CHAIR OF THE BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION BOARD; TO FURTHER NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MATT STANLEY AS A DIRECTOR OF THE BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION BOARD IN LINE WITH THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members **NOTED** the postponement of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board AGM from 10th July to the 17th October 2024, the appointment of Matt Stanley as acting Chair of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board, and the appointment of Matt Stanley as a Director of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board in line with the Management Committee's Terms of Reference.

77. TO RECEIVE ANY FEEDBACK FROM THE COUNCILLOR DROP-IN SURGERY HELD ON 31st JULY 2024

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

The Assistant Clerk apologised to Cllr. Brooks for omitting his name from the list of Town Councillor attendees included within the report.

Those Councillors who had been in attendance agreed that this latest Councillor Drop-In Surgery, which had been held to coincide with the Hampshire Avenue Fun Week, perhaps did not work alongside the event. Some commented that whilst the children's event was well attended, not many accompanying adults were interested in visiting the Town Council's gazebo to discuss any issues or raise any questions with their Town Councillors. The fact that it was a particularly hot day perhaps did not help with one Councillor citing that the location of the Drop-In Surgery may have been 'a distraction, rather than an attraction'.

The Assistant Clerk explained that the remit of community engagements had only recently fallen to Full Council, following the dissolution of the Community Engagement and Environment Committee, and that the proposed dates and locations for the Councillor Drop-In Surgeries and Online Community Forums had been approved by Members at the Council Meeting held on 4th March 2024 (Min. 188 refers). She emphasised that different locations, times and days were chosen for this year, to try to cater for as many local people as possible, giving everyone an opportunity to voice their opinions. It was generally agreed that this particular location, coinciding with the Hampshire Avenue Fun Week was not as successful as was hoped, but that this could be taken onboard by Members when deciding next year's dates and locations.

78. MAYOR'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN

The Mayor informed those present that she had attended 16 events in the role, thus far, stating that she continues to thoroughly enjoy her position. The report on the Mayor's activities was **NOTED**.

79. TOWN CRIER'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN

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

80. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Members **NOTED** that reports had been received from the following representatives to other organisations and had been emailed to all Councillors.

80.1 Cllr. Miss. Needs – Bognor Regis Concert Band (President); Stonepillow (Patron).

80.2 Cllr. Mrs. Yeates – Arun District Association of local Councils (ADALC); Bognor Regis Heritage and Arts Partnership Board.

The Assistant Clerk reported that Cllr. Wells, who was absent from the meeting, had sent apologies for not having sent his written report to date. Cllr. Wells will forward this to the office, as soon as possible.

81. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM OFFICERS FOLLOWING ANY ATTENDANCE AT THE MONTHLY ARUN PARISH MEETING WITH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

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

Several Councillors present raised concerns with the increasing problems with antisocial behavior, citing the railway station as a particularly problematic area. Comment was made in relation to the multi-agency meetings called to address the issue, which seemingly did not involve many of the local key groups who are 'in the thick' of dealing with this behaviour on a daily basis, including the significant increase in homelessness in the Town. It was felt that these matters would be less diluted with a more 'Bognor Regis centric' meeting, rather than Arun wide meetings, such as the monthly Arun Parish Meeting. Some Councillors commented that Arun District Council do a good job of helping the homeless, compared to other local authorities, but that a joined-up approach of tackling antisocial behaviour and homelessness needed to be a priority, with agencies such as Stonepillow and Turning Tides at the forefront.

The Assistant Clerk advised that she had been invited to attend a meeting on Thursday to discuss the issues at Station Square in particular with representatives from ADC's AntiSocial Behaviour Team, British Transport Police and Sussex Police. The Assistant Clerk was uncertain as to which other representatives might be attending but volunteered that if groups such as Stonepillow were not present, then she would feedback the suggestion that they be included in future multi-agency discussions on such matters.

82. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

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

83. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE INCLUDING: DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION

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

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

84. TO RESOLVE TO MOVE TO CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS (S.O. 3d) – (CONTRACTURAL)

The Committee unanimously **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 item 24 (contractual).

85. PICTUREDROME SITE INCLUDING: UPDATE ON PENDING RENT REVIEW FOR ELEMENTS OF THE BUILDING AND TO AGREE NEXT STEPS – MIN. 201 OF 26th MARCH 2024 REFERS - CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

As the Town Clerk, who is also the Director of the Bognor Pier Company Ltd, was not present at the meeting, Members unanimously **AGREED** to **DEFER** this item to the next Council Meeting, to be held on 28th October 2024, unless it became necessary to call an Extraordinary Council Meeting before then.

The Meeting closed at 7.38pm