



# BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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

**HELD ON MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. B. Waterhouse (Chair); Cllrs: S. Goodheart, F. Oppler,  
Mrs. J. Warr, P. Woodall and Mrs. G. Yeates

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)  
Mrs. J. Davis (Assistant Clerk)  
1 Member seated in the public gallery (part of meeting)

***The Meeting opened at 6.31pm***

### **50. WELCOME BY CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed everyone present and 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.

### **51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND THEIR APPROVAL, SUBJECT TO MEETING THE AGREED CRITERIA**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Brooks, Miss. Needs (owing to the lift at the Town Hall being broken), Smith and Wells with the Clerk recommending that the reasons given were acceptable. These absences were **APPROVED** by Members.

### **52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

***Cllr. Goodheart declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 7 in relation to items to be discussed***

***Cllr. Oppler declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 10 as he had been a substitute District Councillor at ADC's Environment Committee Meeting at which the ADC Free Parking Scheme Review was discussed***

***Cllr. Woodall declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 7 as the Town Council appointed Representative to the Bognor Regis Carnival***

### **53. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and these were signed by the Chair.

### **54. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS**

There were no questions or statements from the Member seated in the public gallery and the meeting was not, therefore, adjourned.

### **55. CLERK'S REPORT FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

#### **55.1 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 - Min. 10 Internal Audit Recommendation for Increase Fidelity Guarantee Cover**

In response to the minor point raised by the Internal Auditor in relation to a review of the insurance policy schedule, Members had agreed that the Clerk should implement increasing the level of Fidelity Guarantee cover to at least the value of the combined bank account balances as a minimum, at the next insurance renewal in August 2024, as had been suggested within

the report by the Internal Auditor. Members noted that this had now been done with cover increased to £1.2m as part of the overall annual policy renewal of £8,802.41 including Insurance Premium Tax and administration charges.

**55.2 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 - Min. 32.1 Bognor Regis Warden**

An email has been received from Bognor Regis BID Board of Directors requesting the Council's ongoing support for this service in the next financial year as the Council enter into their budget planning for 2025-26. The BID Board aspire to provide a seven day a week service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, which would only be possible if the Town Council were able to commit to continued funding at the 2024-25 level of £16,683. This will therefore form part of the Committee's budget considerations at their meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

**55.3 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 - Min. 32.6 Election costs**

Following the previous report to Members, detailing the costs charged to the Town Council for the elections held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at a total of £38,219.62, the Clerk was asked to contact Arun District Council to request a breakdown of the total 2023 costs for the Bognor Regis area, in addition to the election costs for 2019, as a comparison. Following a chaser email sent 23<sup>rd</sup> September to the Electoral Services Manager at ADC, a detailed breakdown of costs was received. Liaison will now be undertaken with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and, subject to their agreement, payment will be released.

**55.4 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 - Min. 38 Bognor Regis Seafront Lights' ILLUMINATE BOGNOR REGIS' event**

Having previously resolved a budget of £1,000 for the Town Council to participate in the Bognor Regis Carnival and ILLUMINATE Bognor events, to be split between the two and funded from Reserves (Min. 144 refers), the costs associated with the Carnival had been less than the £500 allocated and Members therefore resolved to fund a Gliding Fairy, at a total cost of £620, as a proxy entry into the ILLUMINATE Bognor event in August 2024.

Owing to logistical difficulties in arranging the Gliding Fairy's participation, an alternative but similar entry was sought and two LED illuminated stilt-walking acts took part in the parade, on behalf of the Town Council instead, at a cost of £560 excl. VAT.

**56. TO FURTHER CONSIDER AND AGREE THE APPLICATION PROCESS IN RELATION TO PARTNERSHIP FUNDING AND TO ALSO CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF PARTNERSHIP FUNDING GOING FORWARD - MIN. 17 REFERS**

The Assistant Clerk's report, including the appendices relating to the approved paperwork for Grant Aid applications, attached for illustrative purposes, was **NOTED**.

**56.1** Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders (S.O. 7a) to enable them to revisit their previous decision in relation to Partnership Funding for 2025/2026.

Members **RESOLVED** to further consider their previous decision, and Standing Orders were therefore reinstated.

**56.2** Comment was made around the merits of Partnership Funding which would give organisations some stability in the knowledge that they would be in receipt of ongoing funding. It was suggested that, rather than making a general call for Partnership Funding applications, of the applications received for Grant Aid funding, those with the most promise be identified and moved into the Partnership Funding 'arena' for longer-term support from the Town Council, having first determined whether this would be something of interest to them.

Although the budgets for 2025/2026 would not be approved by Council until January 2025, a Member felt that organisations should have an idea of the level of funding that would be possible, as without this prior knowledge their proposals might be stifled. To overcome this, it was proposed that applicants could submit proposals detailing what they could deliver for different levels of funding.

Members were reminded that, in the event of entering into any new Partnership Agreements, it was the general policy to not commit funding that impacts the next Administration, whilst current agreements would be honoured. Furthermore, attention was drawn to the policy agreed for Partnership Funding which focused on supporting local tourism and events, particularly new events, and promoted the importance of applicants looking to support themselves in the future without relying on funding from the Town Council.

Following comments about event organisers needing storage space, and the suggestion that this was something that the Town Council should offer, reference was made to empty property owned by Arun District Council and whether this could be a solution. It was **AGREED** that this proposal would be a future Agenda item, to allow for investigation.

When asked how they wished to proceed with Partnership Funding going forward, Members **AGREED** that eligible organisations would be identified by the Committee from the Grant Aid applications received. They would then be invited to submit details of varying proposals that they could deliver at different levels of funding, should the longer-term support of Partnership Funding be something of interest to them.

***Cllr. Oppler left the Meeting***

## **57. PROPOSALS FOR EVENTS PROGRAMME FOR 2025 INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETS**

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

### ***Cllr. Oppler returned to the Meeting***

The Clerk reminded those present that they were not approving the budgets for events at this stage but being asked whether they agreed with the Officer recommendations. These figures would then be fed into the overall budget proposals and be considered at the Committee Budget Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The Chair added that the Events Officer, who was credited as being very good at their job, had provided an outline programme of events in 2025 in their report.

**57.1** Members unanimously **AGREED** to light the beacon brazier on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025, to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day, and unanimously **FURTHER AGREED to RECOMMEND** a budget of £2,000 for the event.

**57.2** It was unanimously **AGREED** that the theme for the 2025 Book Day would be Alice in Wonderland, in memory of former Town Councillor and Mayor Pat Dillon, and unanimously **FURTHER AGREED to RECOMMEND** a budget of £5,000 for the event.

**57.3** A budget of £3,000 was unanimously **AGREED** to be **RECOMMENDED** for the Proms in the Park 2025 event.

**57.4** For the Drive Through Time event it was unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** a budget of £5,000 for 2025.

**57.5** Members unanimously **AGREED** to work with Clowns International on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Funday event in 2025, **AGREEING** to **RECOMMEND** a budget of £800 plus Events Officer time to assist with any administration.

**57.6** In general, it was agreed that Hampshire Avenue was the right location for the Fun Week. A Member mentioned the several youth facilities in the locality who, they believed, should be involved with the Fun Week, as well as involving the community, and that this was an opportunity to encourage links with youth groups. In relation to the proposal in the report that the Fun Week be extended to 5 days, there was concern that it would clash with other youth activities being hosted by Bersted Parish Council, for example, with it suggested that liaison take place to avoid doubling-up.

### ***Cllr. Woodall and Mrs. Yeates declared an Ordinary Interest as Bersted Parish Councillors***

It was unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** a budget of £5,000 for the 2025 Hampshire Avenue Fun Week.

**57.7** A budget of £5,000 was **AGREED** to be **RECOMMENDED** for the Funshine Day events for 2025.

**57.8** Members **NOTED** that there was no additional budget required for the Town Centre BMX Stunt Show and BMX sessions for children in 2025, as funds had been earmarked for this event from the 2024/25 Town Centre Events Budget.

**57.9** It was also **NOTED** that there was no expected cost to the Council in bringing a French Market to the Town Centre in 2025 and, therefore, no budget was required.

**57.10** When discussing the Sunday Afternoon Concerts, in partnership with the Rotary Club, there was a feeling that the Town Council received little recognition in financially supporting the events. It was suggested that Councillor attendance at these events could be better, and that the Town Council branded gazebo should be present on site to advertise the Council's involvement.

Members unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** a budget of £3,000 for the 2025 Sunday Afternoon Concert events.

**57.11** Whilst it was agreed that it would be good to hold an event in the October Half-Term, it was understood that this would depend on the weather.

Following a vote, with the Chair having the casting vote, it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that the £4,500 currently held in Earmarked Reserves be retained until such time that the Events Officer comes forward with an alternative event, not precluding a Halloween event.

**57.12** With comments about the high attendance at the Christmas Illuminations Switch-On in 2023, at what was described as a "stunning event put on by the Town Council", Members unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** a budget of £6,000 for the 2025 Switch-On event.

**57.13** It was unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** a budget provision of £2,500 to enable the Events Officer to work in collaboration with other organisations in bringing back the Carols in the Park event for 2025.

**58. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON EVENT - UPDATE ON ARRANGEMENTS FROM THE EVENTS OFFICER - MIN. 33 REFERS**

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

Cllr. Oppler reminded Cllr. Waterhouse that the two of them had volunteered to chaperone Billy Bulb during his attendance at the Christmas Lights Switch-On event in November 2024.

**59. TO NOTE THE NOTES OF THE ADC FREE PARKING SCHEME REVIEW WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024 - MIN. 34 REFERS**

The Town Clerk's report, including the appendix relating to the Notes of the Working Party Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024, was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Oppler summarised the outcomes of ADC's Environment Committee Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, at which he had been present, and spoke of his disappointment both at the lack of engagement from ADC Councillors with Representatives from the two Town Councils, and of the Bognor Regis BID's input.

Whilst there had been an agreement that the disc for the Free Parking Scheme should cost £6 for the year, and the app at a cost of £4, the proposal that this be fixed for 3 years was favored but referred to ADC's Policy and Finance Committee.

***Cllr. Mrs. Warr declared an Ordinary Interest as an ADC Councillor who had been sitting at the Environment Committee Meeting being referred to***

**60. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN FORCE REPORT INCLUDING ANY UPDATE ON "PROVIDED BY BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL" SIGNAGE - MIN. 35 REFERS**

The Town Force Manager's report, including the update relating to the "provided by Bognor Regis Town Council" signage that had been approved, was **NOTED**.

**61. TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE LEVEL OF ANY FUNDING TOWARDS THE RELOCATION OF A BENCH IN HIGH STREET AND REMOVAL OF TWO BENCHES IN YORK ROAD, SHOULD A FUNDING REQUEST FROM ANOTHER SOURCE NOT BE POSSIBLE - MIN. 45 REFERS**

The Assistant Clerk's report was **NOTED** and a verbal update was given to Members following the online meeting that had been arranged with all parties relevant in approving the bench's removal.

With all parties satisfied in relation to licences, consultations, and contractors, full permission was given for the Town Council to remove the bench in High Street and relocate it to York Road to replace two older benches.

At the previous meeting, it had been agreed that an application to the Safer Arun Partnership (SAP) for funding towards the relocation of the bench in High Street should be prioritised (Min. 45 refers).

Having made tentative enquiries with ADC, it had been suggested that SAP would require another public consultation to be carried out as the previous consultation was more than 12 months old, in addition to other information, such as evidence that the location was still subject to ASB.

However, during the course of conversations with ADC's Property, Estates and Facilities department, the Assistant Clerk had obtained a written agreement that they would pay half of the costs associated with moving the benches. Therefore, rather than elongating the process any further, it was the Officer recommendation that an application to SAP no longer be pursued but that Members consider the Town Council part-funding this themselves.

Acknowledging that Arun District Council had agreed to pay up to half of the costs involved with the project, Members **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** a budget of up to £300, by way of the Town Council's contribution to costs, to be funded from General Reserves.

**62. REPORT ON TOWN CENTRE ISSUES INCLUDING ANY REPORTS ON MEETINGS WITH THE BID MANAGEMENT BOARD**

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

**63. TO CONSIDER AND IF ACCEPTABLE RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL A CHANGE TO THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, AND ASSOCIATED CHANGES TO STANDING ORDERS AND STANDING ORDERS FOR CONTRACTS. ALSO, CONSIDERATION OF A RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND FURTHER RECOMMEND THIS TO COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION**

The Town Clerk's and Consultant's report, including the five appendices showing the changes proposed following changes to Financial Regulations, was **NOTED**.

Comment was made by Members about what an amazing amount of work it had taken to prepare the amended documents, with the Chair agreeing that they gave an insight into the incredible amount of work carried out by Officers and the Consultant for which thanks was given.

Members unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to **COUNCIL** the **ADOPTION** of the revised Financial Regulations, a new Risk Management Policy and amendments to the Standing Orders, Standing Orders for Contracts, and Council Terms of Reference as set out in the appended draft documents.



**64. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MONTHLY COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT FROM THE BOGNOR REGIS BID, INCLUDING BUSINESS CRIME REPORTING THROUGH DISC, FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2024 (IF AVAILABLE)**

The Assistant Clerk's report, including the appendices providing an overview and summary of Community Warden interactions for the months of July and August 2024, including business crime reporting through DISC, was **NOTED**.

**65. TO UNDERTAKE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN CRIER ROLE**

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

Having reviewed the Town Crier role, Members **AGREED** that there should be no changes made. The Town Crier, Jane Smith, was credited as being a brilliant asset to the Town and it was unanimously **AGREED** that a letter of thanks should be written on behalf of the Council.

**66. CONSIDERATION OF INPUT FROM THE COMMITTEE FOR THE CONTENT OF THE 2025 TOWN NEWSLETTER**

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

Members considered the Officer's suggested articles for the 2025 Town Newsletter and, by a show of hands for each of the suggestions, **AGREED** that the following articles be included in the publication, in addition to the usual content (i.e. Mayor's Message, Budget Report, Events Diary): -

- VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (May 2025)
- 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Twinning with Saint-Maur-des-Fosses
- Youth provision in Bognor Regis
- 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Town Force
- 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bognor Regis Town Council
- Bognor Regis Community Survey 2025

Subject to the word count available for each article, it was suggested that some of the other suggestions in the report could be incorporated into the six agreed articles where there was a similarity. For example, the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bognor Regis' coat of arms could be included in the article about the Town Council's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

It was further **AGREED** to produce a condensed A4, 4-page version, with QR code for the full edition, for the 2025 Town Newsletter.

**67. ROLLING CAPITAL PROGRAMME INCLUDING: -**

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

**67.1 To ratify expenditure of £746.45 excluding VAT for 50 Litre Trolley Mounted Waterer**

Members unanimously **RATIFIED** expenditure of £746.45 excluding VAT for a 50 Litre Trolley Mounted Waterer.

**68. FINANCIAL REPORTS INCLUDING: -**

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

**68.1 To note Committee I&E Reports for the month of August 2024 - previously copied to Councillors**

Members **NOTED** receipt of the financial reports for the month of August 2024.

**68.2 To note verification of bank reconciliations with the Town Council's Current account and Mayor's Charity account for the months of July and August 2024, undertaken by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee in line with the Council's Financial Regulations**

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

**69. CORRESPONDENCE**

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

A Member drew attention to the acknowledgement of an email sent by the Town Council, expressing well wishes to the new Mayor of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés (No. 34 on the list) and suggested that a letter should be written to the previous Mayor, thanking them for their service. This was **AGREED**.

**70. 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 item 23 (contractual).

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

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

The Clerk informed those present that an outstanding debt was being chased.

***The Meeting closed at 8.02pm***