



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 21st AUGUST 2023

PRESENT: Cllr. B. Waterhouse (Chairman); Cllrs: J. Barrett,
S. Goodheart (during Min. 47), Miss. C. Needs, F. Oppler,
P. Wells and P. Woodall

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs. J. Davis (Assistant Clerk)
Cllr. R. Nash (ADC Councillor)
1 member of the public

The Meeting opened at 5.45pm

45. WELCOME BY CHAIRMAN AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman 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.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. N. Smith with the Clerk recommending that the reason given was acceptable. This absence was **APPROVED** by Members.

Late apologies were received from Cllr. P. Ralph, who was unwell.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

As noted on the Agenda, Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the Interest in
- b) whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable or Ordinary Interest
- c) the nature of the Interest
- d) if it is an Ordinary Interest whether they intend to temporarily leave the meeting for the discussion and vote

- e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Registrable Interest, and therefore must temporarily leave the meeting for the discussion and vote, whether they will be exercising their right to speak on this matter under Public Question Time.

They then need to re-declare their Interest and the nature of the Interest at the commencement of the item or when the Interest becomes apparent. They should request that it be recorded in the Minutes that they will leave the meeting and will neither take part in discussion, nor vote on the item.

As per the Agenda, it is each Member's own responsibility to notify the Monitoring Officer of all Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable or Ordinary Interests notifiable under the Council's Code of Conduct, not already recorded on their Register of Interests Form, within 28 days.

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

Cllr. Wells declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 4 as he sells the discs for the 2 Hour Free Parking Scheme and would leave the Meeting when this item was discussed

47. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS

The Chairman adjourned the Meeting at 5.47pm

A member of the public, who had links to the Bognor Regis Civic Society, explained how they, along with the Town Council, had been instrumental in establishing the parking scheme in Bognor Regis. Attention was drawn to ADC using the term "Arun must get best value", when discussing money, but it was pointed out that the District Council chooses when to be flexible on this point with the Monitoring Officer only recently having justified that ADC were not getting "best value for money" but "best value for the community" in relation to the proposals for a Premier Inn in Bognor Regis. The member of the public felt that this principle should also apply to the 2 Hour Free Parking Scheme, which he believed was not only of value to the community but also to traders, and asked Town Councillors to bear this in mind when negotiating with ADC.

The Deputy Leader of Arun District Council, Cllr. R. Nash, was seated in the public gallery and informed those present that regular weekly meetings are held with the interim CEOs at ADC. He explained that this was an Officer-led report, in the context of the longer term, with Arun having to make savings to their budget. In his opinion, Cllr. Nash stated that it was not the right time to make changes to the scheme, with the proposal mis-guided and lacking in research. When the amended report is presented at ADC, Cllr. Nash will not be in support and will suggest that the scheme stays unchanged for 2024 with the Bognor Regis BID continuing to administer and money generated going back into the Town.

Cllr. Goodheart arrived at the Meeting

In closing, Cllr. Nash declared that a Working Party should be set up between all stakeholders, with the public widely consulted.

Cllr. Oppler left the Meeting

The Clerk read an email from a North Bersted resident who was in full support of the parking discs continuing.

The Chairman reconvened the Meeting at 6.01pm

48. TWO HOUR FREE PARKING DISC SCHEME - TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSALS RECEIVED FROM ADC TO AMEND THE CURRENT SCHEME PRIOR TO PUTTING IN PLACE A NEW AGREEMENT WITH THE CURRENT AGREEMENT DUE TO EXPIRE AT THE END OF 2023

Cllr. Wells redeclared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, as he sells the discs for the 2 Hour Free Parking Scheme, and left the Meeting

Cllr. Oppler returned to the Meeting

Following receipt from Arun District Council of the amended proposals for changes to be made to the two-hour free parking scheme in Bognor Regis, Members discussed the proposed changes in some detail.

The importance of a system that was amenable to all members of the community was discussed with the suggestion of a part app, part disc scheme to suit everyone's needs.

When the 2 Hour Free Parking Scheme was initiated, back in 2012, it was to encourage people back into the Town Centre, which Members felt was more relevant than ever with 3 high street banks recently announcing closures and Wilko entering administration. A Member stated that, nevertheless, Bognor Regis had fared well in relation to shop occupancy rates when compared to similar seaside towns, which he believed was in no small way because of the parking disc scheme.

Discussions included the need for Bognor Regis Town Council to reaffirm their commitment to the disc, and a commitment to working in partnership with both the Bognor Regis BID and ADC. A 4-year agreement would be preferable to 2-years, as this would give a degree of certainty to the BID in knowing what income might be generated from the scheme, for the Town.

Those present agreed that it was important for businesses to continue selling the discs and regarded the suggestion by ADC that cash transactions would not be allowed as absurd. In regard to ADC's proposal to sell the discs from Bognor Regis Town Hall, instead of via businesses in the Town, it was pointed out that ADC do not open the Town Hall until 11am on

Wednesdays, close it at 4pm during the week, and do not open the building during the weekend.

A perceived lack of directional signage to car parks, and the matter of electronic payment at on-street parking meters, was also raised and it was suggested that these could be topics for discussion if a partnership Working Party were set up.

Having considered the proposals currently being put forward, Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **DISAGREE** to enter into the new proposed two-year agreement, based on the proposals for changes to the two-hour free parking scheme in Bognor Regis received from Arun District Council, including continued Bognor Regis Town Council financial contributions at current levels of £21,000 per annum.

Following a proposal from the Chairman, it was further unanimously **RESOLVED** as follows: -

- that Bognor Regis Town Council reject the Officer's report received from Arun District Council and request that it is completely withdrawn
- to reaffirm the Town Council's support of the current disc system and working partnership together with the BID and Arun and discs to be distributed by the businesses in the Town
- to call upon Arun to extend the current scheme for four further years on precisely the same basis it is at present. However, to possibly include an app system being run in parallel
- to work with ADC and the BID to set up a Working Party to consider options for the future, with Officers to be present only as note-takers
- that Bognor Regis Town Council rejects any consideration of an app only system.

The Meeting closed at 6.17pm