



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 28th JULY 2025

PRESENT:

Cllr. B. Waterhouse (Chair); Cllrs: J. Barrett, D. Dawes (from Min. 49), S. Goodheart, F. Oppler, Mrs. J. Warr, P. Wells, M. White and Mrs. G. Yeates

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs. J. Davis (Deputy Clerk)
Mr. B. Handley (Events Duty Officer) (part of meeting)

The Meeting opened at 6.31pm

40. 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.

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

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

The Clerk had also received apologies from Cllr. Dawes who had advised that he would be late to the meeting.

42. 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. Wells declared a potential Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 16 as a supplier

43. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2nd JUNE 2025, AND THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 11th JUNE 2025

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd June 2025, and the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 11th June 2025, and these were signed by the Chair.

44. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS

There were no members of the public seated in the gallery, therefore, the meeting was not adjourned.

45. CLERK'S REPORT FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

45.1 2nd June 2025 – Min. 8.5 2025-2026 Partnership Funding Bognor Regis Seafront Lights (Year 2 of 3)

Further to the report made to the last meeting advising that an acknowledgement for the 2025-26 Partnership funding had been received from the Secretary and certified accounts for 24-25 would follow, these have now been received along with the Treasurer's Report for year ending 31st March 2025.

45.2 2nd June 2025 – Min. 26 Appointment of Town Council Representatives to the Arun Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) Management and Partnership Board

As previously noted by Members, the Deputy Clerk has been appointed as the Senior Officer Representative to the Arun BCRP Partnership Board and BCRP Management Board. Following an invitation to appoint a Councillor Representative to the BCRP Partnership Board, Cllr. Waterhouse was proposed and seconded, and this appointment was agreed. Both the Deputy Clerk and Cllr. Waterhouse attended the Board meetings, to which they were appointed, on the 1st of July 2025.

The nature of the meetings and the discussion about individuals means that they are largely confidential so it would not be appropriate to share with anyone not present. Going forward, everyone present at the Board Meetings will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. However, Arun have advised that, in future, summary notes containing KPIs and achievements etc., that can be shared in the public domain, will be made available.

45.3 18th November 2024 - Min. 83 NALC secures major victory as the government backs remote council meetings

At the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 18th November 2024, Members were asked to agree any representation to be submitted on behalf of the Town Council in response to the Government's Open Consultation in relation to remote meetings and proxy voting. Members of the Council were asked to provide their responses to the consultation to the Assistant Clerk in time for consideration at the meeting. Unfortunately, as no majority response either in support or against was received from those who responded, a response as a corporate body could not be submitted on behalf of the Town Council.

In a momentous decision, the government has announced plans to amend legislation, allowing local authorities (including parish and town councils) to hold remote and hybrid meetings. This move is a powerful victory for parish and town councils following their persistent advocacy. Since the expiration of temporary COVID-19 provisions in May 2021, which permitted virtual council meetings, NALC have been at the forefront of a national campaign to restore this flexibility. They argued that enabling remote attendance would modernise local democracy, enhance accessibility, and attract a more diverse range of individuals to public service.

The government's consultation, which received 5,844 responses (the vast majority coming from the 3,327 parish and town councils), revealed overwhelming support for remote meeting options. In response, the government acknowledged the need for councils to develop their own remote and hybrid attendance policies tailored to local circumstances. NALC welcome the government's announcement, emphasising that the flexibility to hold remote meetings would empower parish and town councils to respond more effectively to their communities' needs.

However, in response to the consultation last year, NALC expressed that the introduction of proxy voting would present significant challenges for parish and town councils, including undermining democratic accountability, weakening deliberative decision-making, and creating procedural and ethical difficulties. The development marks a significant step forward in modernising local governance and ensuring that parish and town councils can operate effectively and inclusively in the digital age.

46. FURTHER UPDATE FROM THE TOWN MARKETS OFFICER ON THE PLANNED PROGRAMME OF MARKET-STYLE EVENTS FOR 2025/2026 - MIN. 14 REFERS

The Town Markets Officer's report was **NOTED**.

Whilst it had been intended for the Town Markets Officer to provide the update in person at the meeting, owing to illness this had not been possible.

47. REPORT ON 2025 TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS HELD TO DATE FROM EVENTS DUTY OFFICER

The Chair welcomed the Events Duty Officer, Ben Handley, to the meeting and invited him to address the Committee.

Speaking to a slide presentation that had been prepared, the Events Duty Officer summarised the Town Council's free events that had taken place so far this year, sharing pictures and feedback from each.

The Events Duty Officer was praised for their promotional work on social media with it noted that there appeared to have been a demographic change at recent events whereby younger people had been in attendance, which could have a direct correlation. A Member asked whether the use of other social media platforms had been considered to which the Events Duty Officer explained that whilst this had been considered, he was mindful that his post was only a 6-month fixed term contract and, therefore, thought had to be given as to whether there was the resource to continue with this level of online engagement once his contract expired.

The Chair thanked the Events Duty Officer for their contribution to the meeting and to the work of the Town Council.

The Events Duty Officer left the Meeting

48. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN FORCE REPORT

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

In considering taking over the ownership of floral assets from Arun District Council, comment was made around the benefits of bringing such assets in-house to ensure continuity of service.

Members unanimously **AGREED IN PRINCIPLE** to accept responsibility for the maintenance of 24 hanging baskets situated along the London Road Precinct, subject to costs and level of grant funding available from ADC, on the understanding that to do so would require either the recruitment of a seasonal Town Force Member or for the Town Council to engage a contractor to carry out this work. Projected costs will be provided at a future date to allow for an informed decision.

49. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MONTHLY COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT, FROM THE BOGNOR REGIS BID, INCLUDING BUSINESS CRIME REPORTING THROUGH DISC, FOR MAY AND JUNE 2025

Cllr. Dawes arrived to the Meeting

The Town Clerk's report, including the Community Warden report from the Bognor Regis BID for May and June 2025, was **NOTED**.

50. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MONTHLY REPORT FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY WARDEN FOR JUNE 2025 (JULY NOT YET AVAILABLE) AND UPDATE ON THE SERVICE PROVISION

The Town Clerk's report, including the monthly report for the Town Council's Community Warden providing a summary of the Community Warden's daily interactions throughout June 2025, was **NOTED**.

Members further **NOTED** the update in personnel in relation to the service provision.

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

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

A Member asked if the lighting in York Road could be followed up with the BID, to establish whether they were working yet.

52. BOGNOR REGIS TOWN ACTION GROUP - CONSIDERATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS IN THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26th JUNE 2025 INCLUDING: -

The Town Clerk's report, along with the Notes of the meeting and the amended draft Terms of Reference for the Action Group attached, was **NOTED**.

52.1 Approval of any suggested amendments to draft Terms of Reference proposed by members of the Town Action Group and recommend to Council for adoption - Min. 21.2 refers

Members **AGREED** that the draft Terms of Reference for the Town Action Group should be amended to include the additional members suggested by the Group, and that these be **RECOMMENDED** to Council for adoption.

53. TO RATIFY THE ADDITIONAL COSTS OF RADIO HIRE FOR BRTC COMMUNITY WARDEN £318.80 AND £37.80 INCL. VAT FOR CORRESPONDING EARPIECE

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

Members unanimously **RATIFIED** the additional costs of radio hire for the BRTC Community Warden at a cost of £318.80 and £37.80 incl. VAT, for the corresponding earpiece to ensure GDPR compliance, to be funded from the Economic Development Fund in line with the current Warden services.

54. TO NOTE THE NOTES OF THE ADC/BRTC LIAISON MEETING HELD ON 3rd JUNE 2025 AND AGREE ANY NEXT STEPS

The Town Clerk's report, and the Notes of the ADC/BRTC Liaison Meeting held on 3rd June 2025, was **NOTED**.

55. FINANCIAL REPORTS INCLUDING: -

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

55.1 To note Committee I&E Reports for the month of June 2025 - previously copied to Councillors

Members **NOTED** receipt of the financial reports for the month of June 2025.

55.2 To note verification of bank reconciliations with the Town Council's Current account and Mayor's Charity account for the months of May and June 2025, whilst noting that this is now undertaken by any authorised bank signatory other than the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee in line with the Council's Financial Regulations (F.R. 2.6 refers)

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

56. ROLLING CAPITAL PROGRAMME INCLUDING: -

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

56.1 To ratify expenditure of £692.58 excluding VAT for the additional cost of new shower installations on the seafront

Members **RATIFIED** expenditure of £692.58 excluding VAT for the additional cost of new shower installations on the seafront.

56.2 To ratify expenditure of £765.83 excluding VAT for a new Canon Camera

Members **RATIFIED** expenditure of £765.83 excluding VAT for a new Canon Camera whilst noting that Part Exchange value received for the old Canon camera of £191.67 excluding VAT against the new purchase.

56.3 To consider expenditure of £1,925 excluding VAT for the installation of sockets to lamp post columns in Queensway and expenditure of £950 excluding VAT for structural inspection of the columns, to facilitate Christmas illuminations

Having considered the quotation for the installation of commando sockets on lamp columns in Queensway, as a solution to the long-term power supply problems at this location in relation to Christmas illuminations, Members **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** expenditure of £1,925 excluding VAT for installation and £950 excluding VAT for structural inspection of the columns.

57. CORRESPONDENCE

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

58. TO RESOLVE TO MOVE TO CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS (S.O. 3d) – (CONTRACTUAL AND STAFFING)

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 20 (contractual) and 21 (staffing).

59. TOWN FORCE: NOTE OF OUTSTANDING DEBTORS INCLUDING RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL OF ANY ACTION IN RELATION TO IRRECOVERABLE SUMS IN LINE WITH FINANCIAL REGULATION 13.3

The Committee **NOTED** the list (confidential). The Town Clerk confirmed that no action, in relation to irrecoverable sums, was necessary at this time.

60. TO RATIFY ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE (STAFFING) MEETING HELD ON 28th JULY 2025

60.1 Members unanimously **AGREED** the recommendation that a temporary 6-month Town Force Member be employed as soon as possible, to provide some much-needed additional resource.

60.2 It was unanimously **AGREED** that recruitment of a Deputy Clerk, advertised on a starting salary of £52,632, be undertaken as soon as possible to allow for a handover period before the new Town Clerk takes on the role. It was further **AGREED** that, on this occasion, Cllrs. Waterhouse, as Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee and Cllr. Mrs. Yeates, as Mayor, be included on the interview panel, alongside the incoming Town Clerk and with input from the current Town Clerk. Should Cllrs. Waterhouse or Mrs. Yeates be unavailable on the interview day set, then either Cllr. Nash or Wells will act as a reserve.

The Meeting closed at 7.33pm