BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 7th SEPTEMBER 2026

PRESENT:

Mayor: Cllr. P. Ralph; Cllrs: K. Batley, J. Barrett, P. Botterill, D. Dawes (from Min. 81), S. Goodheart, R. Nash, F. Oppler, N. Smith, Mrs. J. Warr, P. Wells, M. White, P. Woodall and Mrs. G. Yeates

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. J. Davis (Town Clerk)
Mr. M. Hirst (Deputy Clerk)
First Cadet Nevaeh Kane (Mayor's Cadet) (part of meeting)
Cllr. Elizabeth Meadows (WSCC Councillor for Bognor Regis East) (part of meeting)
3 members of the public

The Meeting opened at 6.30pm

79. 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.

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

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

No apologies were received by Cllr. M. Stanley and his absence could not, therefore, be approved.

81. 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.

Cllrs. K. Batley, S. Goodheart, R. Nash, F. Oppler, Mrs. J. Warr and Mrs. G. Yeates declared an Ordinary Interest as an Arun District Councillor in Agenda Item 13 and stated that they would withdraw from discussion, and any vote, to avoid prejudicing themselves from discussing the matter at Arun District Council

Cllr. P. Wells declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda Item 18 as his business takes part in the Parking Disc Scheme and indicated that he would take part in the discussion but would not vote

Cllr. Dawes arrived to the Meeting

82. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6th JULY AND THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 27th JULY 2026

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 6th July and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 27th July 2026 were unanimously **APPROVED** by the Council as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

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

Members welcomed Cllr. Elizabeth Meadows, West Sussex County Councillor for Bognor Regis East.

It was unanimously **AGREED** by Members that the written report by Cllr. Meadows would be circulated to Members via email following the meeting.

84. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions from Councillors.

85. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS

The Chair adjourned the Meeting at 6.34pm

A member of the public raised concerns regarding rough sleeping at the Seafront Bandstand, the cleanliness and appearance of the High Street, and the impact on residents and visitors. They asked what action was being taken to support vulnerable people while ensuring public spaces remained safe, clean and welcoming, and questioned the continued proliferation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Bognor Regis.

In response, Members explained Arun District Council's responsibilities for housing and the land occupied by tents. It was reported that ADC was pursuing a court order and had purchased properties for temporary accommodation. Concerns were expressed about antisocial behaviour, delays in addressing the encampment on the land next to Premier Inn and difficulties supporting individuals who declined assistance.

Further discussion concerned the concentration, quality and occupancy levels of HMOs, applications approved despite Town Council objections, and the historic loss of council housing. A case was highlighted where poor coordination between councils following a housing placement had prevented access to food support. Members referred to ongoing work through the Town Centre Action Group and encouraged representations to Alison Griffiths MP.

The Chair reconvened the Meeting at 6.47pm

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

There were no written dispensation requests received from Town Councillors.

87. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER REPORTS, MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES (OTHER THAN ANY SPECIFIC ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA)

88. Policy and Resources Extraordinary Committee Meeting of 29th June (deferred from the previous meeting – Min. 54 refers) and the Committee Meeting of 27th July 2026

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Wells, reported.

88.1 Recommendation to adopt the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, Training and Development Policy, Social Media Policy and Working from Home Policy, as proposed, without any further suggested changes - Min.

63 refers
Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, Training and Development Policy, Social Media Policy and Working from Home Policy, as proposed, without any further suggested changes.

89. <u>Planning and Licensing Committee Meetings of 30th June (deferred from the previous meeting – Min. 55 refers), 21st July and 11th August 2026</u>

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

90. <u>Environmental and Leisure Committee Meeting of 13th July 2026</u>

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

91. <u>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</u>

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'.

92. <u>TO NOTE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS AND TRANSFERS MADE IN JUNE AND JULY 2026 AND TO NOTE THE BALANCES, BANK RECONCILIATIONS AND FINANCIAL REPORTS (JUNE NOT YET AVAILABLE) AND OUTTURN AND APPROVAL OF THE CONTENTS AND THEIR PUBLICATION</u>

The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** 'to note the payments and transfers made in June and July 2026 and to note the balances, bank reconciliations and financial reports (August not yet available) and outturn and approval of the contents and their publication'.

93. <u>TO NOTE THE RESPONSE FROM ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL IN RELATION TO THE LETTER SENT BY THE TOWN COUNCIL CONCERNING THE BREWERS FAYRE BUILDING (MIN. 66 REFERS)</u>

The Deputy Clerk's report, including the appendix pertaining to a District Council report relating to the site, was **NOTED**.

Members appreciated the "helpful" response and looked forward to further feedback from Arun District Council after their Economy Committee meeting later in the week. Members understood that a Motion had been brought forward by a Member as the next agenda item.

94. **NOTICE OF MOTION (S.O. 9.0) PROPOSED BY CLLR. J. BARRETT - PRESENT & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE BOGNOR REGIS AREA**

Cllrs. K. Batley, S. Goodheart, R. Nash, F. Oppler, Mrs. J. Warr and Mrs. G. Yeates re-declared their Ordinary Interest as an Arun District Councillor in Agenda Item 13 and left the Meeting

Members briefly discussed the Motion in which they felt it was premature given Arun District Council's upcoming Economy Committee Meeting at which they would be discussing the potential options for the Brewer's Fayre site.

94.1 A Member requested the vote be recorded, the request subsequently granted (in accordance with Standing Order 3u), and shown as: -

FOR	**AGAINST**	**ABSTAIN**
Cllr. Barrett	None	Cllr. Botterill
		Cllr. Dawes
		Cllr. Ralph
		Cllr. Smith
		Cllr. Wells
		Cllr. White
		Cllr. Woodall

Whilst it was assumed that the Motion was not carried, in English local councils, abstentions do not count as negative votes. They are completely excluded from the majority calculation. Decisions are made strictly by a simple majority of the Councillors who are physically present and actually cast a vote (either for or against). Therefore, the Motion was **CARRIED**, with one vote in favour, none against and seven abstentions.

In accordance with Standing Order 9a, the Motion stood **REFERRED** to the Environmental and Leisure Committee for consideration and report at a future meeting.

Cllrs. K. Batley, S. Goodheart, R. Nash, F. Oppler, Mrs. J. Warr and Mrs. G. Yeates returned to the Meeting

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

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

The Town Clerk, following the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 27th July 2026, at which Members had resolved to write to Sussex Police about policing in the town and attending future Full Council meetings (Min. 52 of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on 27th July 2026 refers), shared a response that had been received by Sussex Police.

Sussex Police acknowledged concerns about police visibility and outlined ongoing patrols, targeted enforcement and partnership work to address crime, anti-social behaviour and vulnerability. It was explained that resources were deployed according to risk, intelligence and demand, and that much policing activity was not visible to the public. Further operations were planned during September.

Members were advised that Chief Inspector Kay Hutchings had taken over as District Commander for Arun and Chichester. Sussex Police apologised for being unable to attend the meeting and confirmed that arrangements would be made for representation at the November Council Meeting. Ongoing engagement and attendance at future meetings would then be reviewed, subject to operational commitments.

96. TO CONSIDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BUSINESS PLAN INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING PARTY

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

Whilst having some reservations owing to the nearing local elections in May 2027, Members were agreeable to exploring the feasibility of developing a business plan.

Members **AGREED** that the Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk meet with the WSALC CEO Mr. Leggo, with any suggested ways forwarded to be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee at a future meeting.

97. TO CONSIDER ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW PROGRAMME, AND TO AGREE ANY COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THE SECOND CONSULTATION

The Deputy Clerk's report, including the appendices detailing the District Council's recommendations, was **NOTED**.

Members were pleased that the suggestion of returning to 4 Wards, with Hatherleigh Ward to be absorbed back into Pevensey Ward had been provisionally accepted by Arun District Council's Community Governance Review and therefore **AGREED** not to send any further comments in response to the second consultation.

98. TO RECEIVE ANY FEEDBACK FROM THE COUNCILLOR DROP-IN SURGERIES HELD ON 28th MAY AND 22nd AUGUST 2026

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

Members thanked the Officers and Members who gave up their time to run the surgery on Saturday 22nd August 2026.

99. TO CONSIDER ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL'S REQUEST FOR A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE LOSS OF PARKING REVENUE ARISING FROM THE INCREASE IN THE PARKING DISC SCHEME FROM TWO HOURS TO THREE HOURS

Cllr. Wells redeclared his Ordinary Interest and confirmed that he would not take part in a vote

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

Members **AGREED** that the request be **REFERRED** to the Policy and Resources Committee, to be added to the agenda for a future meeting.

100. TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES ON REGENERATION IN THE TOWN INCLUDING REPORT FROM CLLR. NASH (IF AVAILABLE)

Cllr. Nash stated he had nothing to update for this meeting, and there were no questions.

101. TO NOTE THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE AND REPORT YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2026 ACCOUNTS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTION IF REQUIRED

The Town Clerk's report, and receipt of the External Auditor's Certificate and Report, was **NOTED**.

Members unanimously **NOTED** the External Auditors limited assurance opinion 2025/26 which states that on the basis of their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Also, that there are no other matters affecting their opinion which they draw to the attention of the authority.

102. MAYOR'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN

Cllr. White left the Meeting

The Civic & Office Manager's report on the Mayor's activities was **NOTED**.

103. TOWN CRIER'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN

The Civic & Office Manager's report on the Town Crier's activities was **NOTED**.

104. 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.

104.1 Cllr. Goodheart - Arun District Association of Local Councils (ADALC); Bognor Regis Town Centre Forum Group (Reserve); Bognor Regis Heritage and Arts Partnership Board; Bognor Regis Twinning Association; Southdowns Music Festival; West Sussex ALC Ltd.

104.2 Cllr. Ralph – Bognor Regis Concert Band, NALC Super Councils Network, Stonepillow

104.3 Cllr. Woodall – Arun Business Crime Reduction Partnership Board, Southdowns Music Festival, Bognor Regis Carnival Association

105. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

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

106. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE INCLUDING: -

Cllr. White returned to the Meeting

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

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

A verbal update was given by the Director with correspondence having been received from the tenant, who operates the cinema, prior to the meeting.

As was widely known, the cinema was currently closed whilst the operator proactively worked with the local Fire Service to reopen as soon as they could. Members were advised that a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) had been completed, with reports and required actions received on 4th September. Works to address the findings were underway, and an electrician had reviewed the emergency lighting, with sign-off outstanding. Requested documentation had been submitted to the Fire Service.

Following completion and sign-off of the works, an updated FRA would be submitted to the Fire Service, which would review whether the prohibition notice could be lifted. The operator's priority was to reopen Screens 1 and 2 as soon as possible, although this was not anticipated for at least a further two weeks and remained subject to the necessary approvals.

This further update was **NOTED**.

107. TO RESOLVE TO MOVE TO CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS (S.O. 3d) (CONTRACTUAL)

Members **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 27 (contractual).

108. CONFIDENTIAL PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION

Members **NOTED** the Director's confidential, verbal report.

Members **AGREED** that the Director would write to the cinema operator, setting out the position of Bognor Pier Company Ltd. in relation to the ongoing development work at the cinema.

The Meeting closed at 8.05pm