



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE TOWN MEETING OF THE ELECTORS OF BOGNOR REGIS HELD ON MONDAY 13th MARCH 2017

PRESENT (BRTC)

Cllr P Dillon - Town Mayor (in the chair)
Cllr K Batley
Cllr J Brooks
Cllr J Cosgrove
Cllr A Cunard
Cllr Mrs S Daniells
Cllr T Gardiner
Cllr S Goodheart
Cllr D Maconachie
Cllr M Smith
Cllr Mrs J Warr
Cllr P Woodall

(Note: Cllrs Brooks, Mrs Daniells, Dillon and Maconachie are also Arun District Councillors)

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs G Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs S Norman (Assistant Clerk)
Mrs J Davis (Civic and Office Manager)
Mrs R Hambleton (Minutes Secretary)
Mrs K Bourne (Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner) (part of meeting)
2 representatives of the press
Approximately 14 members of the public

COPIES OF DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR THE PUBLIC

Notice and Agenda for the Meeting
Minutes of the Town Meeting of Electors held on 14th March 2016
Audited Accounts to 31st March 2016
Proposed Expenditure for the year 2017/2018
Schedule of Councillors' Attendance at Meetings

The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm

1. WELCOME BY THE TOWN MAYOR AND INTRODUCTION OF COUNCILLORS PRESENT

The Town Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and attention was drawn to the evacuation procedure in the event of fire. The Town Mayor introduced Councillors to those present.

2. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS HELD ON MONDAY 14th MARCH 2016 AND ANY MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the Town Meeting of Electors held on Monday 14th March 2016 were considered and agreed as a true record, and signed by the Town Mayor as presiding Chairman.

Min. 11 - Update on Picturedrome Expansion Plans

A member of the public asked whether work had begun on the Picturedrome expansion. The Town Mayor explained that delays to the project had taken place, and that it was hoped that these would be coming to an end shortly. More details would be available in the coming months.

A further question followed regarding the loan and whether the Town Council is paying interest on the loan. The Town Mayor responded that the Town Council are paying interest on the loan.

3. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The Town Mayor gave his report (appended to Minutes as **Appendix 1**).

4. TO RECEIVE THE ACCOUNTS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2016 AND BUDGET FOR 2017-2018

The Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee, Cllr. Cunard reported on the Accounts of the Town Council to year ending 31st March 2016 and answered questions from the public before giving his report on the budget.

Following an inquiry regarding the interest payment figures the Town Council was paying on the fourth screen loan for the Picturedrome, the Committee Chairman advised that he would ask the Accountant to respond in writing. A further question followed regarding the budget header 'Theatres and Public Entertainment' detailed on page 12 of the cost analysis, which would be referred to the Accountant for a written response of the breakdown. A Member asked that a copy of this information be circulated to all Councillors.

The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee gave his report on

the budget (appended to Minutes as **Appendix 2**).

A Councillor requested it be recorded what a fantastic job the Chairman and Officers did on the budget, keeping services going with minimal increase in Precept.

5. TO RECEIVE THE ACCOUNTS OF THE BOGNOR PIER COMPANY LTD YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2016 (IF AVAILABLE)

The Town Mayor reported that the Bognor Pier Company Accounts were not yet available.

6. TO CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN BY FRIDAY 10th MARCH 2017

There were none.

7. OPEN FORUM WITH QUESTIONS TO COUNCILLORS/ATTENDEES

The Town Mayor welcomed the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner Mrs Katy Bourne, to the meeting. He invited members of the public and Councillors to ask the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner questions as well as put any questions to the Council.

A summary of the questions/statements to Mrs Bourne includes:

Q: The Sussex Police Precept 2017/18 leaflet - There seemed to be a discrepancy in the figures for the Police Budget for Officers which was reduced, the PCC was asked to explain how it was possible to increase Officer numbers but reduce spend?

A: Mrs Bourne explained that the leaflet was created to show the public where their money had gone. Yes, funding has gone down due to cuts from central government. Policing has had to tighten the belt, £42 million needed to be saved between now and 2020, in addition to the £10 million savings already made. There were clear areas where the money would be spent. Sussex needed to be prepared for a terrorist attack and additional highly trained Specialist Firearms Officers, who would be dual hatted, were needed. These armed officers would be shared with Surrey Police. Money is also being put into specialist units for sexual offences, particularly historical sexual abuse cases. The number of historical child abuses cases being reported was rising and the victim has a right to justice, but each case takes up a lot of Officer time. Additionally, Neighbourhood Policing is changing as crime is going online, more police are needed to deal with this. These are the things that the Precept will be spent on.

Q: Business Crime - Comment was made that shoplifting in the Town was rife; Sussex Police are not being proactive in stopping crime or reactive on incidents reported.

A: Mrs Bourne spoke about the new Business Wardens, a shared service

with Littlehampton, for which she had sought funding. She stressed the importance of businesses reporting all incidents of crime on the 101 number. The more reports of incidents there are, can be used as evidence for her to take it up with the Chief Constable. She acknowledged the problems with the 101 number which was a national problem, caused by staff shortages, and that this was being addressed.

Q: Problem of untaxed and uninsured vehicles being involved in incidents. Example given of a number of these vehicles being clamped recently and the question was asked as to whether these type of 'sweeps' could be carried out more regularly. Would it be possible to introduce an education programme for foreign drivers on UK laws and road signage?

A: Mrs Bourne responded that the clamping had likely been carried out by the DVLA and that she was unable to influence them. With regards to educating foreign drivers, Mrs Bourne said that she would pass this concern on to Assistant Chief Constable Steve Barry to raise as an issue with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.

Q: Youth Services Review - The PCC was asked if the Police would get involved with the Town Council's Youth Services Review.

A: Mrs Bourne talked about the Community Youth Teams, which worked with some schools. She was unaware of the Town Council's Review but would pass the information on to the Assistant Chief Constable in charge of Youth Policing (ACC Laurence Taylor, who is also the National Policing Representative for Young People).

Q: An incident of suspicious activity was raised. The matter had been reported to a PCSO nearby who had shown no interest in investigating.

A: Mrs Bourne advised that all crimes should be reported. Each incident will be recorded as a crime by Sussex Police, how they deal with it is up to them and Officers have autonomy of choice. It is their decision if they investigate it. Sussex Police crime data recording is rated as 'good' and has the highest rate of reporting accuracy.

Q: The portfolio of land that the Police owned was queried.

A: Mrs Bourne explained that decisions regarding Police land are hers to make. She promised that no Police Station would be closed unless something similar could be opened in its place.

Q: Local Policing - It was not possible to recognise local Police anymore.

A: Mrs Bourne encouraged Councillors to get to know their community Officers, to contact the local District Commander and ask to meet them, their team and to visit your local Police Station.

Q: The absence of promised Police support to a young victim and her family, 6 years ago was raised.

A: Mrs Bourne explained that things have improved since that time and that a lot of support is now offered. However, what happened in the past is shameful.

Q: Sexual Offences - The size of the specialist Police team involved in these cases was queried.

A: Mrs Bourne explained that they were making significant investment in this area but unfortunately, due to the nature of the job and the length of training, it was a national problem seeking specialist Officers.

Q: Historic Abuse cases - Would future reported cases be investigated?

A: Mrs Bourne advised that sexual abuse cases were now classed as 'current' and 'non-current'. £1 billion was being spent annually on 'non-current' cases and reported cases would continue to be investigated.

There being no other questions for the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, the Town Mayor thanked her for attending. Mrs Bourne stated that feedback from these kind of meetings was really important and invited anyone to contact her office where she would be happy to talk (if available). Mrs Bourne left the meeting

The meeting continued and questions/statements to the Council related to:

- **Community Engagement and Leisure Committee**

A member of the public queried a comment made at a recent Council meeting by a Councillor. The Councillor offered his apologies to those he had offended. Engaging with the public was discussed including taking Community Engagement out of the Council Chamber and Councillors hosting surgeries in their wards, pop up events in the Town Centre, a local Public House or knocking on resident's doors. Those Councillors who had put on surgeries were congratulated. It was noted that it was early days with surgeries and it was hoped that with time, the idea would develop with residents. Comment was made on the advances the Town Council was making in relation to community engagement and that the Town Councillors do a great job.

- **Facebook**

Following a suggestion that the Town Council should have a corporate Facebook page, the Assistant Clerk advised that one had been launched at Christmas, which was purely an information forum, administered by Officers. Members of the public were encouraged to contact the Town Council directly and not through the Facebook page.

- **Regeneration**

In response to speculation that the Town Council had supported ADC's regeneration plans, a Member clarified that no response had been formulated by the Town Council to Arun's recently announced proposals. The proposals from Arun were still in their early stages, no developers were on the table and the Town Council hoped it could liaise with ADC on the proposals, in particular with regards to the Town Hall.

The Town Mayor thanked all those present for attending.

The Meeting closed at 8.56pm