



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE TOWN MEETING OF THE ELECTORS OF BOGNOR REGIS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2018

PRESENT (BRTC)

Cllr. J. Brooks
Cllr. J. Cosgrove
Cllr. P. Dillon
Cllr. Mrs. S. Daniells
Cllr. S. Goodheart
Cllr. M. Stanley
Cllr. Mrs. J. Warr
(Note: Cllrs. Brooks, Dillon, Mrs. Daniells and Stanley are also Arun District Councillors)

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. R. Nash (in the Chair)
Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs. S. Norman (Deputy Clerk)
Mrs. J. Davis (Civic & Office Manager)
2 representatives of the press
Approximately 64 members of the public of which 44 were Electors

COPIES OF DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR THE PUBLIC

Notice and Agenda for the Meeting
Minutes of the Town Meeting of Electors held on 19th March 2018
Town Council Privacy Notice

The Meeting opened at 6.06pm

1. In the absence of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor, electors nominated Mr. R. Nash to take the Chair and this was agreed. The Chairman welcomed everyone present and attention was drawn to the evacuation procedure in the event of fire.
2. **TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS HELD ON MONDAY 19th MARCH 2018 AND ANY MATTERS ARISING**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Electors held on Monday 19th March 2018 were considered and agreed as a true record and signed by Mr. R. Nash as presiding Chairman. It was agreed that the business of the meeting continue as per the proposals on the agenda.

3. MOTION AS PROPOSED BY CLLRS. BROOKS, COSGROVE AND GOODHEART

Opposes the plans by Arun District Council to construct a Linear Park at Hothamton, whose cost has been estimated by Arun at £3.5 million;

Reminds Arun and BR Town Councils that the BR Neighbourhood Plan contains specific reference to the current Sunken Gardens (The Area is listed in Policy 9, no 2, of the BR Neighbourhood Plan adopted 2015 designated as local green space - page 58 'Sunken Gardens A key landscape in the Conservation Area typical of nineteenth century squares visually important for historic as well as amenity reasons and highly valued by the community') so that the current area should be maintained and that there should be no loss of amenity space;

Calls on Arun District Council to abandon the current scheme and instead to allocate substantial funding to the improvement and upgrade of the current Gardens, which can be achieved for a very substantial lower sum, to include features wanted by the Community and ongoing involvement by the Community Gardeners Group, BRTC Town Force etc, and a long-overdue statue of the Town's Founder, Sir Richard Hotham;

And to Resolve accordingly

Cllr. Cosgrove spoke for the Motion outlining the recent background and explained that the Electors Meeting had been called as a result of a large number of members of the public having recently attended a Town Council Meeting at which it became evident that the issues highlighted in the Motion were a hot topic.

Cllr. Stanley seconded the Motion and reserved the right to speak.

Those present commented/discussed:

Sunken Gardens could be preserved and enhanced for far less than £3.5m. Comparisons were made between all regeneration proposals that had been put forward in the past for both the Hothamton and Regis Centre sites. The current Hothamton Play Area and Sunken Gardens are not safe or family-friendly.

Arun's proposals include the provision for the relocation of the Health Centre to the ground floor of one of the new buildings with cafés and an entertainment area within the Linear Park which will benefit the Town.

Reports of anti-social behaviour in the Sunken Gardens is exaggerated. Bognor Regis Community Gardeners have tried to liaise with Arun's Anti-Social Behaviour Team but have received little response in support.

Doubt was cast on the figures reported by Arun regarding greenspace at the Sunken Gardens and the proposed Linear Park.

Concern with access to Fitzleet House for emergency vehicles if the existing slip road goes.

Apparent lack of discussion between Arun and the Health Authority and future provision for the 9,200 patients that presently use the Health Centre.

Rather than spending £3.5m on the Linear Park, Arun should be putting money towards tackling homelessness, mental health, local policing etc.

Jewel in the crown of Bognor Regis is the seafront and attracts visitors.

Concerns about the level of high-density housing being proposed in the Town, with Houses of Multiple Occupation increasing.

Previous consultations on regeneration proposals made clear that the public do not want housing developments on the seafront. Brownfield land is running out and housing has to be created somewhere.

It was questioned as to whether Arun's proposals were regeneration, which should improve social/economic wellbeing, or rather redevelopment.

The proposed layout of the Linear Park will put children playing, and pregnant mothers, at risk of pollution from vehicle brakes and tyre wear.

Two proposed roads are close to existing junctions but should be clearly separated; Hopes that WSCC will highlight these problems in consultation.

Nice flats, built well and affordable would increase the number of residents and result in Town Centre shops being at less risk of closing.

Customers of the Picturedrome Cinema recently struggled to park in Hothamton Car Park during the evening. Once the 4th screen opens, where will all the additional customers for the cinema park?

A member of the public put forward an additional item to the Motion, that: 'Bognor Regis Town Council rescind the decision made by the Planning and Licensing Committee, at the meeting held on 30th October 2018, to raise no objection to Planning Application BR/254/18/A (Min. 120.4 refers) on the grounds that insufficient information was available to them at the time of considering the application'. This was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original Motion.

Cllr. Cosgrove asked that the Deputy Chairman of Bognor Regis Civic Society be invited to attend a pre-meeting briefing prior to the Planning and Licensing Committee Meeting at which Planning Application BR/254/18/A would be reconsidered.

A member of the public thanked Cllr. Dillon for attending, and speaking at, the meeting, knowing that he would face opposition as a Conservative Member of Arun District Council (ADC). Cllr. Dillon was asked if he would write to the Leader of ADC in support of the opinions expressed by those electors present at the meeting. Cllr. Dillon stated that he would personally sign a copy of the unconfirmed Minutes of the Electors Meeting held on 21st November 2018 and deliver them to ADC.

A member of the public suggested that the Sunken Gardens could be improved by opening up the southern end of the gardens, with an iron archway, which would improve visibility and thereby discourage anti-social behavior.

As proposer of the original Motion, Cllr. Cosgrove accepted the additional item to the Motion, that: 'The southern end of the Sunken Gardens, Bognor Regis, be opened up and an archway installed'. This was accepted by the seconder of the original Motion.

As seconder, Cllr. Stanley spoke for the Motion.

Following a right to reply by the proposer, a vote was taken, en bloc, on the 5 Motions as amended.

This meeting of Electors of Bognor Regis:

*Opposes the plans by Arun District Council to construct a Linear Park at Hothamton, whose cost has been estimated by Arun at £3.5 million;
Reminds Arun and BR Town Councils that the BR Neighbourhood Plan contains specific reference to the current Sunken Gardens (The Area is listed in Policy 9, no 2, of the BR Neighbourhood Plan adopted 2015 designated as local green space - page 58 'Sunken Gardens A key landscape in the Conservation Area typical of nineteenth century squares visually important for historic as well as amenity reasons and highly valued by the community') so that the current area should be maintained and that there should be no loss of amenity space;*

Calls on Arun District Council to abandon the current scheme and instead to allocate substantial funding to the improvement and upgrade of the current Gardens, which can be achieved for a very substantial lower sum, to include features wanted by the Community and ongoing involvement by the Community Gardeners Group, BRTC Town Force etc, and a long-overdue statue of the Town's Founder, Sir Richard Hotham;

Bognor Regis Town Council rescind the decision made by the Planning and Licensing Committee, at the meeting held on 30th October 2018, to raise no objection to Planning Application BR/254/18/A (Min. 120.4 refers) on the grounds that insufficient information was available to them at the time of considering the application;

The southern end of the Sunken Gardens, Bognor Regis, be opened up and an archway installed;

And to resolve accordingly.

A vote was taken and the result was 35 in favour, 0 against and 2 abstentions. Accordingly the Resolution was **RESOLVED**.

A courtesy Non-electors vote was taken, 15 in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention.

The Chairman thanked all present for attending

The Meeting closed at 7.27pm