



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING OF BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 10th AUGUST 2020

PRESENT:

Cllrs: J. Barrett, J. Brooks, A. Cunard, Mrs. S. Daniells, Mrs. I. Erskine, J. Erskine, S. Goodheart, Miss. C. Needs, Ms. A. Sharples, W. Smith, M. Stanley and Mrs. J. Warr

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)
Mrs. S. Norman (Deputy Clerk)
Mrs. J. Davis (Civic & Office Manager)
2 members of the public

The Meeting opened at 6.33pm

241. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members were advised that as the Town Mayor, Cllr. Woodall had sent his apologies, the Deputy Mayor would be Chairman for this Meeting and therefore nominations were invited for a Vice-Chairman.

Following a proposal by Cllr. Mrs. Warr which was seconded by Cllr. Stanley, Members **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Barrett be appointed as Vice-Chairman for this Meeting.

The Chairman, welcomed everyone to the Online Meeting being held in accordance with The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 and reminded Members that the Meeting was being recorded by Bognor Regis Town Council, streamed live on Facebook and may also be recorded or filmed by any member of the public.

The Chairman advised that in the event of any loss of internet coverage or power cuts, steps would be taken to recover the connection. However, if connection could not be re-established the meeting would stand adjourned at the point of loss of connection, to be reconvened and continued at a publicised time in the future.

Finally, Members were reminded of the protocol for the Online Meeting, details of which had been circulated to all previously.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. K. Batley due to work commitments, Cllr. Mrs. S. Staniforth due to annual leave and Cllr. P. Woodall who was unwell.

No apologies had been received from Cllr. H. Jones.

- 242.** The Chairman referred to the Additional Agenda item as published and queried the point on the Agenda at which this should be inserted. It was noted that the items relating to the Annual Accounts under Agenda item 8 were time critical and had to be determined at the meeting. Therefore, after discussion, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to vary the order of business, and that item 8 should be considered after Agenda item 2, Declarations of Interest, with the Additional Agenda item taken after item 4, Reports from WSCC and ADC Councillors.

243. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

Members and Officers should declare an Interest by stating: -

- a) the item they have an Interest in
- b) whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary or Ordinary Interest
- c) the nature of the Interest
- d) if it is an Ordinary Interest whether they intend to leave the room for the discussion and vote
- e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary 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.

In accordance with good practice, individual forms were available to those Councillors present in order that they could personally record their Interest - both Disclosable Pecuniary and Ordinary. These forms should be returned to the Committee Clerk at the end of the meeting to enable all declarations of Interest to be accurately recorded in the Minutes. Members were reminded that it is their responsibility to notify the Monitoring Officer of all Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, 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. Brooks declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 14, as a supplier to the Kite Festival, stating that he would leave the meeting if any debate ensued and would not be voting on this item

Cllr. Cunard declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda items 16 and 18, as the tenant of the Picturedrome Cinema, and stated that he would leave the meeting when these Agenda items were discussed

Cllr. Mrs. Daniells declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda items 16 and 18, as an employee of the Picturedrome Cinema, and stated that she would leave the meeting when these Agenda items were discussed

Cllr. Goodheart declared an Ordinary Interest in any discussions pertaining to Regeneration or Rox

244. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2020

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

244.1 Members **NOTED** the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2019/2020 (Page 3 of the AGAR) prepared by the Town Council's Internal Auditor, Mr. N. Archer from Auditing Solutions Ltd.

Members further reviewed the system of internal control and unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that the systems that the Council has in place are effective.

244.2 Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to confirm "yes" as the Council's response to Statements 1 to 8 on the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/2020, noting that Statement 9 was not applicable to this Council.

244.3 Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/2020 and that Section 1 be signed by the Chairman of this meeting and by the Town Clerk.

244.4 Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Financial Statements for year ended 31st March 2020 and furthermore unanimously **RESOLVED** that these be signed by the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk.

244.5 Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements for 2019/2020 and furthermore unanimously **RESOLVED** that Section 2 of the AGAR be signed by the Chairman of this meeting.

Furthermore, Members **NOTED** that these Accounting Statements for 2019/2020 were previously signed by the Responsible Financial Officer prior to their presentation to the meeting.

245. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING OF BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 29th JUNE 2020

The Minutes of the Online Meeting of Bognor Regis Town Council held on 29th June 2020 were **APPROVED** by the Council as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

246. REPORTS FROM WSCC AND ADC COUNCILLORS

Members were advised that invitations to address the Council Meeting had been sent to Cllr. Oppler for ADC and Cllrs. Oppler and Patel for WSCC.

Cllr. Patel had sent his apologies as he was attending another meeting but had provided the following update which was read to Members by the Chairman:

1. WSCC Cabinet after lot of discussion have agreed on Climate Change Strategy for 2020-2030 to reduce WSCC overall Energy consumption. Reduce demand for fossil fuel energy. Contribute to green grid.
2. Cycle way to be implemented in Worthing this week and next week in Chichester.
3. Open day for Fire and Rescue Service on 15th August online.
4. Due to hot weather lots of fire calls have been logged, so request to all to check their smoke alarm in working condition.
5. Dangerous hair clippers found on Online sales. Seven checked; six failed safety checks. Only one found safe but with a two-pin plug. No Earth connection so please be cautious where to purchase one.

247. NOTICE OF MOTION (S.O. 9.0) PROPOSED BY CLLR. J. BROOKS

247.1 The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED** including the Motion proposed by Cllr. Brooks as follows:

"The Council: -

- 1. Resolves to suspend Standing Order 9a to enable this Motion to be discussed at this meeting.*
- 2. Resolves to establish and to agree the membership of a COVID19 Recovery Task and Finish Group, composed of all Councillors, to examine the challenges now faced by the Council, to examine all relevant issues such as:*

Council Priorities

Budgetary

Structures

Staffing

and that the Group shall report directly to a further Full Council Meeting before 14th September 2020 with recommendations which shall take into account evidence submitted by Councillors, Committees, Staff, invited Outside Bodies, and also the outcomes of any available similar considerations by the County, District and other Parish Councils in the BR area”

247.2 The Motion was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Warr.

247.3 Members were advised that it was intended to amend the Motion but before considering this, the Town Clerk made the following report.

Firstly, with regard to whether this item should be discussed immediately, or stand referred to the appropriate Committee Meeting, Members will be aware that when the Standing Orders were agreed by Council they were in the main based on the NALC model. However, Council added to this model by including at 9a the following:

*If the subject matter of a Motion comes within the province of a Committee of the Council, **it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such Committee or to such other Committee as the Council may determine for report; provided that the Town Mayor, if he/she considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.***

Members did this as they considered such referral was of paramount importance that items should be considered by the relevant committee who could then advise Council. Moreover, it gave the express power of allowing the item to be discussed to the Town Mayor who would allow such discussion only in cases of urgency.

In the absence of the Mayor, if in a few moments the Deputy Mayor deems the matter as urgent and therefore requiring immediate discussion, I would like to make the following comments:

Firstly, the Motion as has been submitted will require Part 1 to be withdrawn as the decision will have already been taken to deem the matter as urgent and therefore the suspension of Standing Orders is unnecessary.

With regard to the content of the Motion, I would make two comments.

With regard to matters relating to staffing and structure, the section 3 of the Council Terms of Reference clearly state that overall staffing and other personnel matters are delegated to the Policy and Resources Committee. Furthermore, section 14 of the Policy and Resources Committee Terms of Reference state that the Committee administers personnel matters on behalf of the Council after receiving recommendation from the Joint Consultative Sub Committee (Staffing). It would therefore be wholly inappropriate for any matters relating to structure or staff to be discussed initially anywhere but at a meeting of the Joint Consultative Sub Committee (Staffing).

Finally, Cllr. Brooks has set a deadline for this to be referred back to Council as 14th September. As Members will know from the report circulated regarding Delegated Decisions, the next Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday 7th September and it is to this meeting that any recommendations from the Task & Finish Group would have to be referred. Furthermore, I have noted that Cllr. Brooks has suggested that any recommendations from the Task & Finish Group should take into account the outcomes of any available similar consideration by the County and District. Having looked into the consideration of this matter by the two higher levels of local authorities, I have noted that the District Council is not holding another meeting of its COVID Recovery Working Party until 8th September and I have been unable to confirm how any similar discussions are to be handled by the County Council. Members therefore need to be mindful that any discussion may not be informed by the District and Council's own deliberations if scheduled before they have updated their position and we are able to obtain this information.

247.4 As it had been indicated previously that an amendment to the Motion would be tabled, it was **AGREED** that this would be considered and determined before the debate was opened.

247.5 It was subsequently proposed by Cllr. Ms. Sharples and seconded by Cllr. Smith that the following amendments to the Motion be tabled:

- i) Deletion of Part 1 relating to suspension of Standing Orders
- ii) Replacement in Part 2 of "COVID19 Recovery Task and Finish Group" with "special COVID seminar"; and
- iii) Deletion of all words after "recommendations"

Following debate and with the agreement of Cllrs. Brooks and Mrs. Warr as the proposer and seconder of the original Motion, Members **AGREED** to the amendments with the resulting amended Substantive Motion as follows:

The Council: -

Resolves to establish and to agree the membership of a special COVID seminar, composed of all Councillors, to examine the challenges now faced by the Council, to examine all relevant issues such as:

Council Priorities

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and that the Group shall report directly to a further Full Council Meeting before 14th September 2020 with recommendations.

247.6 The Chairman invited Cllr. Brooks to speak for his Motion and opened the debate.

Cllr. Brooks explained the reasoning behind his original Motion was that the Council had now been working under the new COVID Regulations for 5 months and no review of the changes to processes and practices had taken place. Cllr. Brooks explained that he had supported the agreed amendment as it was acknowledged that a seminar (facilitated using Zoom) may be more appropriate than a Working Group with resulting recommendations to a meeting of the Council.

Members expressed views for the need of a review to assess how the pandemic had affected the Council's functions and activities and make appropriate plans for the future.

Concern was expressed by some Members about the proposed timetable and deadline for a report to Council, but other Members felt that speed was of the essence due to the time already elapsed.

With regard to the deferral of the matter to the Policy and Resources Committee a Member stated that, whilst respecting that Committee's work, it was felt that this was a matter for the whole Council.

Discussion took place regarding the practicalities of any seminar i.e. who would lead it, what the agenda would be and would there be a report to inform the seminar.

It was suggested that the services of Mr. G. Chambers of EQ Harmony Ltd be engaged to assist with any seminar. However, there was some concern at the resulting cost of this course of action, especially in the early stages of discussion.

A Member suggested an amendment to the Motion so that in the first instance an online survey be undertaken of all Councillors, with Officers collating comments, suggestions and opinions. This summary would then be sent to Members, together with a report from staff, for discussion and this would form the basis for a discussion via Zoom with Mr. Chambers' input. The amendment was seconded but it was ruled that the proposal was not an amendment but rather would negate the Motion and therefore could not proceed (S.O.1f refers).

247.7 Following the full discussion, the Deputy Mayor moved to the vote on the amended Substantive Motion as detailed in Min. 247.5 above, and Members **RESOLVED** by a majority to carry the Motion and furthermore it was **AGREED** to invite Mr. G. Chambers to facilitate this seminar.

248. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Chairman informed Members that questions for the Mayor had been received from Cllrs. Brooks and Ms. Sharples. However, Cllr. Brooks informed the Council that in view of the previous discussion and decision taken, he would withdraw his question.

The Chairman then invited Cllr. Ms. Sharples to read her question as follows: -

Does the Mayor agree that the online meeting format has proved capable of allowing us to do what we previously did as a council, and therefore the (drastic) or (arguably undemocratic) changes made to our standing orders were largely unnecessary and that we should return immediately to our normal pre-covid procedures?

The Chairman informed Members that as the Mayor was not present, the question from Ms. Sharples would be forwarded to him for a direct response via email and copied to all Councillors.

249. ADJOURNMENT FOR THE MAYOR TO READ PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS

The Chairman read, to Members, questions addressed to the Mayor that had been submitted by Mr. J. Cosgrove regarding regeneration in Bognor Regis.

The Chairman informed the Meeting that, as these questions had been addressed to the Mayor, they would be forwarded to him for a direct response via email. However, it was noted that any comment relating to the support of any regeneration proposal must come from the Council as a whole and not an individual Member.

250. TO CONSIDER INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS 2019 - 2020 (INTERIM AND FINAL UPDATES)

The Town Clerk's report, including the circulated copies of the Internal Audit Reports 2019-2020 (Interim and Final), was **NOTED**.

251. TO RATIFY DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE TOWN CLERK IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DELEGATED AUTHORITY AND PROCESS

The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED**, and the following decisions **RATIFIED**:

- Cancellation of all previously scheduled Meetings July to December 2020
- Replacement Online Meetings until the end of December as follows:
 - Tuesday 16th June 2.30pm P&L Committee
 - Monday 22nd June 6.30pm CE&E Committee
 - Monday 29th June 6.30pm Full Council
 - Monday 6th July 6.30pm P&R Committee
 - Tuesday 7th July 6.30pm P&L Committee
 - Tuesday 28th July 6.30pm P&L Committee

➤ Monday 10 th August	6.30pm	Full Council
➤ Tuesday 18 th August	6.30pm	P&L Committee
➤ Monday 7 th September	6.30pm	Full Council
➤ Tuesday 8 th September	6.30pm	P&L Committee
➤ Monday 14 th September	6.30pm	EP&L Committee
➤ Tuesday 29 th September	6.30pm	P&L Committee
➤ Monday 12 th October	6.30pm	CE&E Committee
➤ Tuesday 20 th October	6.30pm	P&L Committee
➤ Monday 2 nd November	6.30pm	Full Council
➤ Tuesday 10 th November	6.30pm	P&L Committee
➤ Monday 16 th November	2.30pm	P&R Committee (Grant Aid)
➤ Monday 16 th November	6.30pm	EP&L Committee
➤ Monday 30 th November	6.30pm	P&R (Budget)
➤ Tuesday 1 st December	6.30pm	P&L Committee
➤ Monday 7 th December	6.30pm	CE&E Committee
➤ Tuesday 22 nd December	6.30pm	P&L Committee

- A schedule of all meetings (Online until COVID restrictions allow) for 2021 will be considered by Full Council at the September meeting
- Planning around COVID safe working practices for all staff including expenditure for supplies to meet requirements
- Flexible Community Fund Grant to My Sister’s House for £350 to assist with increasing the availability of their drop-in service
- A series of virtual activities and entertainment for children in August, via the Facebook page, to be funded by the Funshine Days budget

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

253. Policy and Resources Committee Online Meeting of 6th July 2020

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Stanley, reported.

253.1 Min. 142 - Public Questions

A Member expressed his dissatisfaction that questions submitted by him under this Agenda item were not read out at the Meeting and that furthermore, no response had been received from Cllr. Stanley, and questioned whether there was a time limit within Standing Orders for a response to be received.

Cllr. Stanley advised the Member that he believed that he had responded. The Member subsequently acknowledged this had been received but he felt that it did not give detailed replies to the questions posed and requested that a more detailed response be provided.

253.2 Min. 151 - Recommendation to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Climate Change Topic Team

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Climate Change Topic Team.

254. Community Engagement and Environment Committee Online Meeting of 22nd June 2020

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Smith, reported.

254.1 Min. 98.3 - Recommendation that Cllr. Ms. Sharples be the Appointed Representative to the committee of the 39 Club

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation that Cllr. Ms. Sharples be the Appointed Representative to the committee of the 39 Club.

255. Planning and Licensing Committee Meeting of 10th March, and the Online Meetings of the Planning and Licensing Committee of 6th and 26th May, 16th June, 7th and 28th July 2020

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. Goodheart, reported.

256. 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

The Council **RESOLVED** to 'formally receive the reports, Minutes and recommendations of the Committees, and refer any suggested amendments decided upon at this meeting back to the relevant Committee'.

257. TO NOTE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS AND TRANSFERS MADE IN MAY AND JUNE 2020 AND TO NOTE THE BALANCES, BANK RECONCILIATIONS AND FINANCIAL REPORTS (JULY NOT YET AVAILABLE)

The Council **RESOLVED** 'to note the payments and transfers made in May and June 2020 and to note the balances, bank reconciliations and financial reports'

258. TO CONSIDER THE CONTINUED SUPPORT AND FUNDING OF THE PARKING DISC SCHEME TOGETHER WITH THE TERMS OF ANY FUTURE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT

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

A Member questioned whether the requested sum of £21,000 was the same as in previous years and the Town Clerk confirmed that it was. The

Member went on to inform the Council that the previous Administration had challenged the amount requested by ADC and as a result, had successfully saved the Town Council several thousand pounds.

Whilst there was widespread support for the scheme, concern was expressed by some that the Town Council's level of contribution was based on the revenue that was lost to ADC by the use of the free parking scheme and that with demand for parking in the car parks possibly dropping, it would be advisable to have the contribution rate reviewed.

258.1 It was therefore proposed that amendments be tabled to the decision in the report as follows:

To include "up to £21,000" and to add ". . . with negotiations with ADC over the exact amount up to this maximum to take into account any changes in circumstances to the levels of parking".

The amendment having been seconded was voted and **AGREED** with the resulting amended Substantive Motion reading as follows: -

To commit up to £21,000 within the 2021/22 budget as the Town Council's contribution to the 2021 parking disc scheme with negotiations with ADC over the exact amount up to this maximum to take into account any changes in circumstances to the levels of parking.

258.2 It was then proposed, and **AGREED**, to take en bloc both the vote on the amended Motion as noted above and the vote to commit the maximum contribution to the end of this Administration.

258.3 Following debate Members **RESOLVED** to commit up to £21,000 within the 2021/22 budget as the Town Council's contribution to the 2021 parking disc scheme with negotiations with ADC over the exact amount up to this maximum to take into account any changes in circumstances to the levels of parking and that this maximum commitment and review of the contribution level be applicable until the end of this Administration and that as a result make the necessary allowance each year in the Town Council's Budget up to and including that for 2023/24.

259. Members **RESOLVED** to extend the Meeting by 15 minutes in accordance with S.O. 3aa.

260. TO AGREE IF THE 2020 GRANT AID FOR THE KITE FESTIVAL MAY BE EARMARKED FOR PAYMENT IN 2021, IN LINE WITH OTHER RECIPIENTS AS AGREED AT THE ONLINE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8th JUNE - MIN. 227 REFERS

Cllr. Brooks redeclared his Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and stated that he would leave the meeting if there was a discussion

Cllr. Goodheart redeclared his Ordinary Interest due to his involvement with Rox

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

A Member questioned whether, if the 2020 Kite Festival had gone ahead, the organisers would have reapplied to the 2021 Grant Aid for a 2021 Event. The Town Clerk responded that they possibly would have.

Noting Cllr. Brooks' abstention from the vote, Members **RESOLVED** that the organisers of the Bognor Regis Kite Festival could have their Grant Aid 2020 award Earmarked for their 2021 event with the Earmarked funds released after 1st April 2021 upon receipt of written confirmation that the event will be proceeding in 2021 together with confirmation of the procedures to be adopted in line with any COVID-19 related Government guidelines in place at that time.

261. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTE CIRCULATION BY EMAIL OF LIST UP TO 3rd AUGUST 2020

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

- 262.** As per S.O. 3aa, due to the time elapsed the remaining Agenda items relating to the Picturedrome Site Update (Confidential and Non-Confidential) would be deferred to the next meeting. The Town Clerk reminded Members that they already had the reports for Agenda items 16 and 18 and it was **NOTED** that there were no decisions to be taken, just ratification of actions taken. Furthermore, the Town Clerk advised Members that should they have any queries on the reports, these could be emailed to her for response.

The Meeting closed at 8.50pm