



# BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020**

### **PRESENT:**

Cllrs: J. Barrett, K. Batley (until Min. 213), J. Brooks (until Min. 216), Mrs. S. Daniells, Mrs. I. Erskine, J. Erskine, S. Goodheart (until Min. 216), H. Jones (until Min. 216), Miss. C. Needs, Miss. A. Sharples, W. Smith and M. Stanley (during Min. 193 and until Min. 216)

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs. G. Frost (Town Clerk)  
Mrs. S. Norman (Deputy Clerk)  
Mrs. J. Davis (Civic & Office Manager)  
Major Matt Butler (Salvation Army) (part of meeting)  
5 members of the public (part of meeting)  
1 member of the Press (part of meeting)

***Prior to the Meeting, Members received a presentation from the Pier Trust on their past work and hopes in the future for this important asset of the Town***

***The Mayor's Chaplain, Major Matt Butler of the Salvation Army, then led prayers***

***The Meeting opened at 6.37pm***

### **187. WELCOME BY TOWN MAYOR AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor Cllr. Goodheart would Chair the meeting and 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.

As the Deputy Mayor was to act as Chair for the meeting, Members **AGREED** that Cllr. Smith should act as Vice-Chairman for this meeting.

The Town Clerk gave apologies for Cllr. Cunard due to an emergency meeting elsewhere, Cllr. Mrs. Staniforth due to another meeting, Cllr. Mrs. Warr who was unwell and Cllr. Woodall, the Town Mayor, for personal reasons. Apologies were also given for Cllr. Stanley who would arrive late to the meeting.

### **188. 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.

Members sought the opinion of the Town Clerk regarding declarations of Interests for ADC Members in relation to any discussion about the Town Hall – Agenda item 25.

The Town Clerk referred Members to the advice they had all received from the Monitoring Officer at ADC previously which stated that in their opinion, Members could not be part of the debate on this matter at both Councils and therefore Members needed to decide at which Council they wished to participate.

***Cllrs. Mrs. Erskine and Miss. Needs declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, as they are also Members of Arun District Council, the owner of the Town Hall, but stated that they would continue to participate in the Meeting when this Agenda item was discussed***

***Cllrs. Batley, Brooks, Goodheart and Jones declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, as they are also Members of Arun District Council, the owner of the Town Hall, and stated that they would leave the Meeting when this Agenda item was discussed***

***Cllr. Mrs. Daniells declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Agenda items 22 and 23, as an employee of the Picturedrome Cinema, and stated that she would leave the Meeting when these Agenda items were discussed. Cllr. Mrs. Daniells also declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, as she is also a Member of Arun District Council, the owner of the Town Hall, but stated that she would continue to participate in the Meeting when this Agenda item was discussed***

**189. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AND WELCOME A REPRESENTATIVE FROM SUSSEX POLICE TO PROVIDE A REPORT ON LOCAL POLICING (IF AVAILABLE)**

Unfortunately, there was no representative from Sussex Police available to provide a report on local policing.

**190. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020 AND THE EXTRAORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and the Extraordinary Town Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 were **APPROVED** by the Council as a correct record and were signed by the Deputy Town Mayor.

**191. REPORTS FROM WSCC AND ADC COUNCILLORS**

Apologies had been received from County Councillor Ashvin Patel, who was unable to attend the meeting, but the Town Clerk gave a verbal update on his behalf.

Cllr. Patel reported that WSCC had recently had a Budget Meeting at which it was agreed that there would be extra funding for Children's Services, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, Adult Social Care and Highways (with a new contract for Highways coming into force in April). Grass cutting in the County is reduced from 7 cuts a year to 5, however, weed clearance is reinstated back to previous years.

Members were invited to send any questions to Cllr. Patel, and he would do his best to get them answered.

There were no reports from ADC Councillors.

**192. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

None were received.

**193. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND STATEMENTS**

***Meeting adjourned at 6.47pm***

With the Chairman's approval, a Councillor asked a question on behalf of a member of the public who had been unable to attend the meeting about how meetings of the Town Council might be affected by coronavirus.

***Cllr. Stanley arrived at the Meeting***

Members of the public, seated in the public gallery, spoke of ongoing concerns in relation to anti-social behaviour, an increase in graffiti, and the provision of public toilets on the promenade.

***Meeting reconvened at 7.10pm***

**194. TO CONSIDER ANY WRITTEN DISPENSATION REQUESTS RECEIVED FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS**

There were none.

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

**196. Policy and Resources Committee Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020**

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

**196.1 Min. 124.1 - Recommendation to adopt the revised Standing Orders based on the NALC model**

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation to adopt the revised Standing Orders as circulated based on the NALC model.

**196.2 Min. 124.2 - Recommendation to adopt the updated Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts**

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation to adopt the updated Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts as circulated.

**196.3 Min. 126.1 - Recommendation to approve the Audit Plan for 2020/21**

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation to approve the Audit Plan for 2020/21.

**196.4 Min. 128 - Recommendation that the Overall Summary and Action Plan of the Annual Assessment/Review of Risks for 2019/2020 be approved**

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation to approve the Overall Summary and Action Plan of the Annual Assessment/Review of Risks for 2019/2020. The Action Plan will now be signed by the Town Mayor, as Chairman of the Council and the Town Clerk.

**197. Community Engagement and Environment Committee Meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

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

**197.1 Min. 77 - Climate Change**

A Councillor, having attended two of the Topic Team for Climate Change Meetings, wished to congratulate the Projects Officer for the excellent work being carried out by them. Gratitude was also expressed towards the members of the community that had become involved with the project.

**197.2 Min. 77.2 - Topic Team for Climate Change**

Members noted the request from "Power for the People" requesting that the Town Council pass a Motion in support of the Local Electricity Bill and following discussion it was **AGREED** that this matter would be an Agenda item for a future Council Meeting.

**198. Planning and Licensing Committee Meetings of 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2020, and of 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

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

**198.1** Cllr. Ms. Sharples was commended for having acted as Chairman during the Planning and Licensing Committee Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

**199. Events, Promotion and Leisure Committee Meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

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

A Member expressed their disappointment that several items of business had been deferred from the Agenda due to a lack of time.

**199.1 Min. 72 - Letter to WSCC regarding relocation package of recently departed Chief Executive**

Members considered the proposal from the Committee that a letter be written, on behalf of taxpayers, to enquire whether the relocation package paid to the recently departed Chief Executive had been paid back and if not, request an explanation as to why not.

A Member highlighted that it had been reported in the press that the payment had not been returned to WSCC but following a brief discussion it was **AGREED** to get clarification of the situation by sending the letter.

**200. 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'.

**201. TO NOTE THE LIST OF PAYMENTS AND TRANSFERS MADE IN DECEMBER 2019 AND JANUARY 2020 AND TO NOTE THE BALANCES, BANK RECONCILIATIONS AND FINANCIAL REPORTS (FEBRUARY NOT YET AVAILABLE)**

The Council **RESOLVED** 'to note the payments and transfers made in December and January and to note the balances, bank reconciliations and financial reports'.

**202. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S INTERNAL CONTROL PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES**

The Town Clerk's report, including the appended Statement of Internal Control, was **NOTED** and Members subsequently **RESOLVED** that the Town Council's internal control procedures and practices are adequate and operating effectively.

**203. TO CONSIDER NOMINATIONS FOR DEPUTY MAYOR 2020/21 AND MAKE RECOMMENDATION TO THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING 2020, AS AGREED AT THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD 2<sup>nd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019 - MIN. 98 REFERS**

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

A proposal was made and seconded that Cllr. John Barrett be nominated as Deputy Mayor for 2020/21.

With there being no other nominations, the Mayor moved to the vote and Members unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** that Cllr. John Barrett be nominated for this appointment with the recommendation put before Full Council at the Annual Town Council Meeting.

**204. TO NOTE THAT CLLR. MRS. STANIFORTH NO LONGER WISHES TO BE THE APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOGNOR & BERSTED UNITED CHARITIES, AND TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF A REPLACEMENT REPRESENTATIVE**

The Town Clerk's report, including notification that Cllr. Mrs. Staniforth no longer wished to be the appointed representative for Bognor & Bersted United Charities, was **NOTED**.

With regard to a replacement, following a brief debate, Members **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Batley should be the replacement Councillor representative to Bognor & Bersted United Charities and **NOTED** that he would serve until the end of the current Administration.

**205. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARUN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS ON 13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

The Town Clerk's report, including the appended Notes of the Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020, was **NOTED**. Members also noted receipt of the presentation given by Kevin Owen from ADC at that meeting and a "tick list" circulated to ADALC Members.

**206. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FOLLOWING CLLR. STANLEY'S MOTIONS CARRIED ON 6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020 - MINS. 168 & 169 REFER**

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

***Cllr. Smith left the Meeting***

**206.1 Min. 168 - Opportunities to purchase properties for the purpose of commercial lettings**

With regard to the circulated article extract from Local Council's Update with comments from the National Audit Office (NAO), a Member asked that Members noted the context for this article, in that the original Motion considered by Council was looking to reduce reliance on the precept rather than offsetting cuts in funding, as was referred to in the article. Furthermore, the Member stated that the Motion had included no suggestion that any investment should be outside of the 5 Wards of the Town.

***Cllr. Smith returned to the Meeting***

**206.2 Min. 169 - Presentation around residential lettings and Community Land Trusts**

Members considered the offers for presentations regarding both residential lettings and Community Land Trusts, and following discussion it was **AGREED** to initially invite Sussex Community Housing Hub to address Members about Community Land Trusts (CLT) at no charge. Members **NOTED** that this would be facilitated through a stand-alone Members' Briefing one evening.

Members further **AGREED** to defer any decision about inviting an Estate Agent to brief Members on the residential letting market (at a cost of £150 plus VAT) until after the CLT presentation had taken place.

**207. REGENERATION INCLUDING TO NOTE THE PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED BRIEFING NOTES FROM THE BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2019; TO NOTE RECEIPT OF THE RESPONSE, PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED TO MEMBERS, FROM ADC CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN RELATION TO REGENERATION IN BOGNOR REGIS - MIN. 172.5 REFERS**

**207.1** The Briefing Notes of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019, previously circulated to all Members via email, were **NOTED**.

**207.2** Members **NOTED** receipt of the original letter sent by the Town Clerk, as agreed by Members via email, and the response from the Chief Executive of ADC in relation to Regeneration in Bognor Regis, both of which were appended to the Agenda.

Acknowledging that the drafted letter to the Chief Executive had been agreed following a tied vote, a Member expressed concern about the tone of the letter sent by the Town Council and felt that it was challenging and not constructive and asked that in future communications, the Council approaches matters with a more collaborative attitude.

**208. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN**

The list was **NOTED**.

**209. TOWN CRIER'S REPORT AND DUTIES UNDERTAKEN**

The list was **NOTED**.

**210. 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:

**210.1 Cllr. Brooks** - Chamber of Commerce.

**210.2 Cllr. Ms. Sharples** - Bognor Regis Heritage Partnership; Parish Liaison Meetings.

Verbal Reports:

**210.3 Cllr. Mrs. Daniells** - Apologised for not submitting a report but she had attended a Twinning Association Meeting and reported that the group are due to be visiting Weil am Rhein.

**210.4 Cllr. Smith** - Apologised for not submitting a report from the meeting of the Youth Steering Group which he had attended.



***Cllr. Mrs. Daniells redeclared her Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and left the Meeting***

**211. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Committee **NOTED** receipt of correspondence as detailed in the lists including the items highlighted by the Town Clerk.

**212. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE - DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION; AGM OF THE BOGNOR PIER COMPANY LTD - TO ADOPT THE ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2019 AND TO NOTE THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT; TO NOTE RECEIPT OF THE £13,250 MANAGEMENT FEE FROM THE BOGNOR PIER COMPANY LTD (FOURTH QUARTER)**

The previously circulated Director's Report was **NOTED**, and actions taken as detailed were **RATIFIED**.

**212.1 Disabled Ramp Access**

With regard to the proposal to install a disabled ramp to the cinema, a Member highlighted that electric wheelchairs and scooters are becoming heavier and wider and therefore, a low wall may be better than a railing. The Town Clerk advised that she had met with ADC's Conservation Officer to discuss potential alteration plans. There were requirements that would have to be met in any design but the suggestion of a wall to match the brick of the building would be considered.

**212.2 A.G.M. of Bognor Pier Company Ltd.**

Members **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the accounts year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, of The Bognor Pier Company Ltd, as circulated to Members and **NOTED** the Director's Report.

**212.3 Management Fee from the Bognor Pier Company Ltd.**

Members **NOTED** receipt of the £13,250 Management Fee received from the Bognor Pier Company Ltd. (fourth quarter payment).

**213.** The Council **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 22, 23 and 25 (contractual).

***Cllr. Batley declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda items 22 and 23 as a personal acquaintance of the current tenant of 1b Linden Road and left the Meeting***

***Cllr. Stanley declared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, as a Cabinet Member for Arun District Council, the owner of the Town Hall, and stated that he would leave the Meeting when this Agenda item was discussed***

**214. PICTUREDROME SITE UPDATE - DIRECTOR'S REPORT, ANY URGENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR RATIFICATION**

Members **NOTED** the Confidential Report together with the proposed monthly budget for 2020 for The Bognor Pier Co Ltd, and actions taken as detailed were **RATIFIED**.

Members discussed further the report regarding the tenancy of 1b Linden Road and subsequently **AGREED** to proceed as detailed in the Confidential Report, appended to the file Minutes.

**215. REDEVELOPMENT OF THE PICTUREDROME CINEMA - RISK REPORT**

Members received and **NOTED** a verbal report from the Town Clerk and actions taken as detailed were **RATIFIED**.

***Cllr. Mrs. Daniells returned to the Meeting***

***Cllr. Stanley redeclared an Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, as a Cabinet Member for Arun District Council, the owner of the Town Hall, and elected to leave the Meeting***

***Cllrs. Brooks, Goodheart and Jones redeclared their Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, and left the Meeting***

***Cllr. Batley, having already left the Meeting owing to his Ordinary Interest in Agenda items 22 and 23 as a personal acquaintance of the current tenant of 1b Linden Road, continued to be absent due to his previously declared Ordinary Interest in the following item for which had had confirmed his intention to leave***

***Cllrs. Mrs. Erskine, Mrs. Daniells and Miss. Needs redeclared their Ordinary Interest in Agenda item 25, and confirmed that they would continue to participate in the Meeting***

**216.** As Cllr. Goodheart had left the Meeting, Members **AGREED** that Cllr. Smith would chair the next Agenda item.

**217. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN HALL**

Members received and **NOTED** the Deputy Clerk's Confidential Report as circulated at the Meeting.

Following discussion, Members **AGREED** to reaffirm the previous decision taken at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 (Min. 196 refers) that there be no immediate action to submit an offer to ADC to purchase the Town Hall.

Whilst there was a desire for the Town Council to take ownership of the building, the majority of Members were not willing for the high cost to be met through public funds and the necessary raising of the precept.

**217.1** Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** an extension to the Meeting of 15 minutes as per S.O. 3aa.

**217.2** A Member suggested that external funding, such as the Lottery, should be considered. It was noted that Members of the previous Administration had received a presentation from the Architectural Heritage Fund on the grants that they can provide but that these only supported the projects and were not to fund the purchase.

However, Members were keen to continue to engage with the District Council on this matter and specifically the leading Liberal Democrat party for whom a manifesto pledge at the Elections last May was to facilitate the transfer of the Town Hall to the Town Council.

**217.3** It was therefore **AGREED** that a letter should be sent to ADC seeking continued communication and cooperation to consider ways of transferring ownership of the building with a report back to Council in due course.

***The Meeting closed at 8.37pm***