

# Arun District Council

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>REPORT TO:</b>   | <b>Full Council – 18 January 2023</b>  |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>   | <b>Consideration of a Petition</b>   |
| <b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>  | <b>Carolyn Martlew – Interim Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer</b> |
| <b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>   | <b>Councillor Paul Dendle – Chair – Corporate Support Committee</b>            |
| <b>WARDS:</b>   | <b>All</b>   |
| <b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b><br>Customer Services, supports most Council Service Areas and Priorities |  |
| <b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b><br>Customer Services Strategy  |  |
| <b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b><br>There are no financial implications as the service is operating within budget.                             |  |

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution at Part 8, Codes and Protocols – Section 4 – Petitions Scheme outlines the procedure in place for dealing with Petitions that are received by the Council containing signatures in excess of 1,500 signatures.
- 1.2 The Council received a petition regarding saving services at the Bognor Regis Town Hall. This report provides the Council with all of the necessary information to decide whether it supports what the petition is asking for.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. Members are asked to consider the report and to confirm how the Council should respond to the Petition based upon the facts presented.

## 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.2. This report accompanies a petition received by the Council on 24 October 2022 entitled "Save our Town Hall".

## 2. DETAIL

- 2.1. The petition is asking the Council to "Immediately restore frontline face to face services for the public to Bognor Regis Town Hall and maintain those services there for the foreseeable future. We are concerned that those in the town and surrounding villages who are on limited income, have limited mobility, are not on the internet and are not able to be diverted to appointments elsewhere or at another time, will lose the convenient access to Council services that the Town

Hall has provided since 1930. We call on all Arun District Councillors to recognise their responsibility to provide convenient and easy LOCAL access to all Council services for all members of the public in Bognor Regis and surrounding villages, particularly the elderly and those of limited income and mobility.

2.2. The Petition received confirmed that the total number of signatures was 2,263. Following a validation exercise, it is confirmed that 1,796 were valid signatures. If a petition contains more than 1,500 signatures it will be debated by Full Council.

2.3. The process for considering this petition, is set out below and confirmed in the Council's Constitution:

- Petition organiser presents their petition [5 minutes]
- The relevant Committee Chair, in this case the Chair of the Corporate Support Committee, Councillor Dendle, will have a right to reply [5 minutes]
- Councillors to have the opportunity to discuss the petition [maximum of 30 minutes] with each Councillor allowed to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes.
- The length of the debate can be extended at the Chair of the Council's discretion
- The Council will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting. It may decide to take/support the action the petition requests; not to take/support the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate; or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant Committee.
- Where the issue is one which a Committee is required to make the final decision, the Council will decide to make recommendations to inform that decision.
- The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision with the decision also being published on the council's web site.

2.4. Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual and there are no plans to change the situation. There is no requirement for this petition. The opening times as quoted on the Council's website are:

| Day       | Telephone service opening times | Face to face service opening times |
|-----------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Monday    | 8.45am to 5.15pm                | 9am to 4pm                         |
| Tuesday   | 8.45am to 5.15pm                | 9am to 4pm                         |
| Wednesday | 11am to 5.15pm                  | 11am to 4pm                        |
| Thursday  | 8.45am to 5.15pm                | 9am to 4pm                         |
| Friday    | 8.45am to 4.45pm                | 9am to 4pm                         |

### **3. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

3.1. None, the petition asks that services be restored at Bognor Regis Town Hall. This is already the case.

### **4. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

4.1. The report has no financial implications.

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

5.1. No risk assessment considerations are necessary.

### **6. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

8.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation there are no law and Governance implications. necessary.

### **7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

9.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **8. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

10.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **9. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

11.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **10. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

12.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **11. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

14.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **13. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

15.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

### **14. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

16.1 Bognor Regis Town Hall is open for business as usual. As there are there are no plans to change the situation no impact assessment is necessary.

---

#### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Name: Carolin Martlew  
Job Title: Interim Group Head of Finance & S151 Officer  
Contact Number: 01903 737568

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** None