

Minutes of the MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Wednesday 12 November 2014 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: C.M. Ray  
Cllrs: G.J. Ackerman Mrs M.J. Ray  
Miss S.A. Brown Ms A-M.A. Vincent (until 8.50pm)  
Ms G.E. Massey

Also in attendance: Cllrs: D.G. Rickard and Mrs E.A. Rickard.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

Mr Alan Leach, from the Asker Meadows/New Zealand Steering Group, thanked the Town Council for all its support and progress made to date on the New Zealand project.

### **83. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Cllr Ms S.J. Williams.

### **84. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 September 2014 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute 97 - Cllrs G.J. Ackerman and Miss S.A. Brown declared an interest under Appendix B of the Code of Conduct (non-pecuniary interests) as members of the Museum Board. In accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code and Standing Order 35 (c), the members left the room during the decision making and voting on that item.

Minutes 98 - Cllr Ms A-M.A. Vincent declared an interest under Appendix B of the Code of Conduct (non-pecuniary interests) as a member of Skills Training Bridport. In accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code and Standing Order 35 (c), Cllr Ms A-M.A. Vincent left the room during the decision making and voting on that item.

### **86. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON SUB COMMITTEE**

Members paid tribute to Ray McClaren, the Market Superintendent, who was to retire next year. It was noted that there would be a presentation to the Market Superintendent at a future Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 21 October 2014 be received and noted.

### **87. CODE OF CONDUCT DISPENSATION REQUESTS**

There were no items reported.

**88. TOWN PLAN PROJECTS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2897.

RESOLVED: that the latest position on priority 1 Town Plan projects be noted.

**89. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2014/2015 – 2nd REVISION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2896.

RECOMMEND: that the 2nd revision of the estimates for the year 2014/2015 be approved.

**90. BUDGET PROCESS 2015/16**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2898.

RESOLVED: that the following process be approved for consideration of the 2015/16 budget:

Budget Working Group November (date tbc)  
Best Value, Scrutiny and Town Plan 9 December  
Finance and General Purposes Committee 21 January  
Town Council agree budget 27 January

**91. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor, ENCL: 2900.

(a) War Graves

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission had offered to upgrade and maintain the cluster of graves in the lower lawn. The Commission would meet the costs of the work.

RESOLVED: that the initiative be welcomed and approved.

(b) Market Leaflet

It was reported that the cost of designing the new leaflet was £760.

RESOLVED: that the costs be approved, to be met from existing budgets.

(c) Office Changes

It was reported that it was proposed to introduce a partition in the office, to create a separate space for a new multi-function photocopier / printer / scanner.

RESOLVED: that the proposed partition works be approved at a cost of no more than £1,500, to be met from existing budgets.

The following updates were reported for information:

Borough Gardens – the Community Group had recently held work days at the Gardens, which had gone well. They thanked the Town Surveyor and his team for their support.

Millennium Green – the northern access was open and members thanked the Trust for all their work on that project. On the Millennium Green itself, two trees had been identified as having to come down. The cost of this work was to be discussed with the Trust.

Skatepark – it was hoped that the new equipment would be installed by Christmas.

Planters – the town centre planters were being sponsored by local businesses.

Event Marquee – this was now being used for town events.

Mountfield Kitchen Extension – it was intended that this scheme would be progressed to delivery stage, so that if funding became available, it could be implemented. However, there would be a further report to the Committee before that time, seeking approval for the works.

Christmas Festival and Lights – the lights would be installed over the next week or so. The preparations for the Christmas Cheer Festival were going well, with a large number of applications for traders / arts and crafts stalls.

South Street toilets – it was proposed, subject to the agreement of the District Council, to submit a planning application for a canopy. If approved, funding for the works could then be discussed with the District Council.

Asker Meadows classroom – Amanda Streatfeild had kindly donated a unit for a mobile classroom on Asker Meadows and it was proposed to seek relevant permissions to allow this to be provided.

Roundabouts – the maintenance of the roundabouts was being raised with the Highways Agency, in the ongoing discussions on the town centre cycle routes.

## **92. VERGE CUTTING**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor, ENCL: 2905.

It was reported that the County Council had confirmed that it would contribute £12,000 per year for 3 years under an SLA with the Town Council, to support the delegation of the town centre verge cutting work, on the basis of a minimum of 6 cuts per year, starting in March 2015.

RECOMMEND: that in principle the Town Council enter into a service level agreement with Dorset County Council for the maintenance of highway verges, as set out above, subject to approval of the Town Council's budget for 2015/16.

## **93. NEW ZEALAND SITE FUNDING SUPPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor, ENCL: 2902.

RESOLVED: that a contribution of £3,000 from the Environment Committee budget be approved towards the costs of the New Zealand site project.

**94. CEMETERY WORKSHOP SOLAR PANELS**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2903.

The Town Clerk reported that there would be a further report back to members, prior to committing to the solar panels, to enable confirmation that there were no restrictions on the Town Council participating in the scheme and also whether it could invest in the scheme. However, the works to the Cemetery workshop roof would proceed, if approved, as this work was necessary, regardless of whether the panels were installed.

RESOLVED:

(1) that in principle the Town Council participates in the Dorset Community Energy Ltd scheme to allow free solar panels to be installed on the Cemetery Workshop roof as outlined in the Appendix, subject to a further report back before committing to the scheme.

(2) that funding of up to £5,000 be approved for the necessary works to the Cemetery Workshop roof.

**95. FOOTBALL CLUB CAR PARK**

The Town Clerk reported that discussions were taking place with the District Council regarding the introduction of the new fees at the car park.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**96. BRIDPORT LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP (BLAP)**

Consideration was given to a report of the Community Planning Officer, ENCL: 2899.

Members welcomed the report and supported the position taken by BLAP on the service review, which was to ask that the funding from West Dorset District Council be retained.

RESOLVED: that the response from BLAP to the service review be noted and endorsed as set out in the report.

**97. MUSEUM – SUPPORT FOR HLF PROJECT DELIVERY PHASE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2904.

RESOLVED: that the Council's support for the Museum's HLF project be confirmed and it be agreed to earmark £5,000 in reserves in 2015/16 (to be approved as part of the budget), as a contribution to the capital works, to be released should the Stage 2 application be successful.

**98. SKILLS TRAINING BRIDPORT – FUNDING REQUEST**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2906.

It was reported that Skills Training Bridport had managed to raise £2,000 of the £3,000 required to continue with the job club until September 2015. The Town Council was being asked if it would contribute £1,000 towards the costs, which would enable the Job Club to continue, and for the funding to be released as soon as possible.

Members discussed the request and generally supported the proposal and the need to retain the job club

RESOLVED: that a grant of £1,000 be awarded to Skills Training Bridport from the 2014/15 community initiatives budget, to fund the maintenance of the Bridport Job Club until September 2015, subject to the Town Council's standard grant conditions. The grant be made under the the Power of Wellbeing, as it was considered that the expenditure will achieve any one or more of the following three objectives:

- 1) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of the area
- 2) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of the area
- 3) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of the area (or persons in its area) having regard to the principal councils' community strategies.

**99. UKULELE OPERA - SUPPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2907.

It was reported that West Dorset District Council had agreed funding of £3,000 from its Leisure Development Fund for the community outreach project and an application had been made to the Arts Council for £12,000 funding for the overall project. The Town Council was asked if it would earmark £500 towards the project, to be released if the all the funding was raised, to allow the project to proceed. The outcome of the funding applications should be known by March 2015.

The grant would be subject to the Town Council standard conditions.

RESOLVED: that £500 be earmarked from the 2014/15 smaller grants budget, for the Ukulele Opera Project, to be released once it had been confirmed that match funding had been received to enable the project to proceed.

**100. PUBLIC TELEPHONE BOX ADOPTION**

The Town Clerk reported that two more telephone boxes in the Bridport parish had been identified for removal. It was reported that there was an option for the Town Council to adopt a telephone box, but members had previously indicated that they did not wish to take on the maintenance liabilities. It was though open to a community group to consider, if there was any interest.

RESOLVED: that the proposed removal of two public telephone boxes in the parish - jct of Sea Road North/St Andrews Road and o/s 30, West Bay Road - be noted.

**101. DAPTC AND SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS**

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council's motion to repeal the legislation that required an Annual Town/Parish meeting to be held was not supported by the DAPTC AGM on 8 November. It was made clear that the motion would not prevent councils holding annual meetings if they wished, but it was generally felt that these meetings were well attended and that any change to the legislation was unnecessary.

It was understood that this issue was being taken forward at a national level, by the Society of Local Council Clerks, as there were a number of councils that agreed with the Town Council that the annual meetings should not be mandatory.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**102. MAGNA CARTA 2015 UPDATE**

The Town Clerk reported on the arrangements to mark a "Year of Democracy in Bridport":

February - launch at community fair.

June – exhibition / event to mark anniversary of Magna Carta

During the year there would be Democracy events / meetings, including hustings for young people.

The Home Project was also hoping to hold an exhibition in the Town Hall on democracy in October 2015, subject to funding.

A steering group had been established to oversee the arrangements and it was proposed that the year would include work on rights respecting and development of a new citizen's charter for Bridport.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**103. WEST BAY WATER SPORTS CENTRE – PROJECT UPDATE**

The Town Surveyor reported that the building works were due to be completed by the end of November.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**104. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE**

The Neighbourhood Plan was formally launched on 8 November, with a large number of people visiting the information exhibition in the Town Hall. People made comments on what issues they would like to see the Plan cover and put their names forward to find out more, or be part of the Steering Group that will lead on the delivery of the Plan.

The aim now was to convene a meeting of the Councils' Joint Committee, which will appoint the Steering Group, so that it is in place to start work early in the New Year.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**105. DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTORAL REVIEW**

Councillors considered ENCL: 2901.

The Local Government Boundary Commission was consulting on new electoral arrangements for Dorset County Council, including proposals to draw up a pattern of divisions to accommodate 46 county councillors (currently 45 councillors). This was the first stage consultation and the deadline for a response was 1 December.

RECOMMEND: that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to respond to this consultation, subject to any comments from the Council.

**106. DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS' DIVISIONAL FUND**

The Town Clerk reported that County Councillor Ms R.C. Kayes had asked if a cross party group of Town Council members would work with her on the allocation of the County Council Members' Divisional Fund of £5,000. It was proposed that the funding was allocated to local voluntary and community group projects, using similar criteria to the Town Council's grants scheme.

RECOMMEND: that Cllrs Miss S.A. Brown and Ms E.A. Rickard be nominated to be part of a working group with the County Councillor, to consider applications for funding from the County Council's Members' Divisional Fund.

**107. HEALTH AND SAFETY STATEMENT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor, ENCL: 2909.

RECOMMEND: that the Health and Safety Statement be adopted by the Town Council and the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to ensure implementation of the statement and any health and safety recommendations from Ellis Whittam.

**108. OFFICE EQUIPMENT**

The Town Clerk reported that the contract for the existing photocopier was due to expire shortly and that it was hoped that savings could be made when selecting a replacement. It was proposed to replace the copier and printers with a multi-purpose device and quotes were being sought.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the Town Clerk be given authority to award the contract for a new multi-purpose copier/printer.

**109. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

The following reports were received:

Cllr Ms G.E. Massey reported that the Apple Day at the Community Orchard on 18 October had been a great success and had raised £600.

Cllr Ms E.A. Rickard, on behalf of the Food Festival, said that they were very grateful for all the Town Council's continued support.

#### **110. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor expressed her thanks to all concerned for their efforts in arranging and attending the Remembrance Day Parade and Service, which had been very well supported by the town.

#### **111. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented List 3 of the 2014/15 accounts, in the sum of £192,294.01, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information, was approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **112. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

*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."*

#### **113. PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported that the District Council wished to vary the following provisions in the current Town Hall TIC lease:

- Rent and service charge review due January 2015
- Option to determine by tenant end of 2014

The proposal was to vary the lease to extend these provisions for a further year, in view of the ongoing review of the Tourist Information Service.

RECOMMEND: that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to agree any amendments to the current lease with the TIC at the Town Hall.

#### **114. INSURANCE CLAIMS**

The Town Clerk reported for information, two potential insurance claims received.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

#### **115. STAFFING MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported that the existing post of Market Superintendent was to be advertised, following the pending retirement of the existing post holder. It was to be advertised for two days a week and there would be a further report to members, as part of the budget making for 2015/16, on other proposed changes to the outside team in the light of the additional responsibilities.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the arrangements to recruit to the post of Market Superintendent be noted and endorsed.

The meeting closed at **8.55 p.m.**

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 21 January 2015**