

Minutes of the MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Wednesday 17 June 2015 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: Mrs M.J. Ray (Chairman from item 2)

Cllrs: G.J. Ackerman	Ms G.E. Massey
Miss S.A. Brown	C.M. Ray
K.A. Day	Mrs E.A. Rickard
Ms F.K. McKenzie	Ms S.J. Williams

Also in attendance: Cllr K.C. Clayton.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: that Cllr Mrs M.J. Ray be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2015/2016.

Cllr Mrs M.J. Ray in the Chair

2. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ms G.E. Massey be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2015/2016.

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers in the public forum.

3. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

4. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2015 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Ms S.J. Williams declared an interest in the item Literary and Scientific Institute - Funding Support for the Project (min.18) as a Trustee of the Bridport Area Development Trust. She left the room during consideration of this item.

6. BEST VALUE, SCRUTINY AND BRIDPORT AND WEST BAY TOWN PLAN SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 9 June 2015 be received and the following recommendations be approved.

(Min 6) NEW COUNCIL – TOWN PLAN REVIEW AND PROJECT REPORTING AND MONITORING

The following timetable was reported:

June 2015	Agree process
July 2015	Review Existing Plan
September/October 2015	Public and stakeholder consultation
November 2015	Adoption of Plan

It was proposed that the detailed development of the Plan be looked at by the Budget and Service Review Working Group.

RECOMMEND: that the Town Council commence preparation of a new Town Plan in line with the proposed arrangements set out above, including extending the remit of the Budget and Service Review Working Group, to include review of the Town Plan.

(Min 8) ELECTRONIC BANKING & REVISED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

RECOMMEND: that a report on revised Financial Regulations be submitted to the September meeting of the Sub Committee, with options for electronic banking.

(Min 9) INTERNAL AUDIT AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15

RECOMMEND: that the outcome of the internal audit and the Annual Financial Risk Assessment be noted and the proposed actions in the Risk Assessment be implemented.

(Min 12) EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AMENDMENTS

RESOLVED: that the proposed amendments to the Employee Handbook be approved as set out.

(Min 14) STANDING ORDERS REVIEW

RECOMMEND: that a Working Party, with the membership as below, meet to review and report back to Council on any amendments to Standing Orders. Proposed membership: Cllrs Miss S.A. Brown, C.M. Ray, Mrs M. J. Ray and Ms S.J. Williams (other nominations to be reported).

7. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 31 March 2015 be received.

8. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS – YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2015

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2976.

The Finance and Office Manager was thanked for all his work on the accounts.

RECOMMEND: that the Annual Accounts for 2014/15 be approved.

9. TOWN PLAN PROJECTS UPDATE

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2973.

RESOLVED: that the Town Plan projects update be noted.

10. DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL “FORWARD TOGETHER”

The Town Clerk reported on the Forward Together initiative from Dorset County Council, which is looking at how it delivers services and the way it works in partnership with other public services, including town and parish councils. This includes looking at how it delivers its services, the scope for efficiencies and looking at different ways of working. There had been some discussion with town councils on potential different ways of working and this will be discussed further over the coming year. There was to be a meeting for all local councils on 23 June from 5-7pm, although this was the same evening as the Town Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and this issue be looked at further, through the Budget and Service Review Working Group.

11. ELECTORAL REVIEW OF DORSET- DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2980.

Members discussed the proposed recommendation for two Bridport divisions and made the following comments:

- There was a lot of concern about the geographical size of the new divisions.
- The areas covered, particularly for the proposed northern division, did not seem to reflect the interests and identities of local communities. As an example, Hooke and Compton Valence and their communities would look more to Beaminster and Dorchester respectively, rather than Bridport.
- It would be very difficult for one councillor to cover so many different parish areas, with the number of parish council or parish meetings.
- The proposed divisions did not bear any relation to existing electoral boundaries for the town area.
- There were dedicated town divisions elsewhere in Dorset, such as in Sherborne. Bridport should be retained as a one member division for the town area.

- Such a significant change to the Bridport division, coming after changes to the District wards, whilst making no changes to the parish boundaries, would mean that the boundaries at each level of local government were not consistent. This would create confusion for electors at a time of joint elections – as in May this year – and cannot properly reflect community identities at each level of local government.
- The Committee felt strongly that the proposals for Bridport did not meet the Boundary Commission’s criteria for boundary changes, as they did not reflect community interests and identities and would not provide effective and convenient local government. The single member division for the town should be retained.
- The Committee felt that parishes in the areas affected should be contacted for their views and, in view of the changes proposed, it was asked that an extension was requested to allow for additional time for the public to respond.

RECOMMEND: that the comments be agreed as the Town Council’s response on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England’s proposed new electoral arrangements for Dorset County Council.

12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN AND LARGER COUNCILS

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2975.

Members generally supported the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman to larger parish and town councils and that the definition of larger councils could be those councils with a turnover of over £750,000 and a population of around 10,000.

RECOMMEND: that the proposal to extend the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to cover larger town and parish councils be supported, with the comments as above and the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to respond.

13. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE SURVEYOR

Councillors considered a report of the Town Surveyor, ENCL: 2979.

a. Salt House Doors

RESOLVED: that the replacement of the doors be agreed at a cost of £3,003, which can be met from within existing budgets.

b. Skatepark

RESOLVED: that the following additional works be approved, to be met from within existing budgets:

A new jump end at a cost of £1,115

A new platform end at a cost of £1,790

c. Cemetery Gates

RESOLVED: that the installation of new gates be approved, at an estimated cost of £3,830, to be met from earmarked reserves.

d. West Bay Play Area

RESOLVED: that planning permission be sought from West Dorset District Council at an estimated cost of £1,500.

e. JCB Cage

RESOLVED: that a contribution of £1,000 be made to West Dorset District Council towards the cost of the purchase of a JCB cage.

f. Town Hall

RESOLVED:

- i. that the maintenance costs of up to £2,000 for external works and £1,500 internal works be approved, to be met from within existing budgets
- ii. that the proposals to dispose of surplus furniture from the Town Hall be approved but there be a further report back on the trunk.
- iii. that the proposal for new storage at the northern end of the Hall and the reported costs of the works, £4,000, be approved to be met from existing budgets.

The Town Surveyor also provided updates on:

- g. Verge Cutting – an update was reported on the verge maintenance work and that additional areas, with funding from the County Council, were now being covered, which was supported.
- h. Outdoor Table Tennis Table – to be installed in Plottingham very soon.

14. WEST BAY WATER SPORTS CENTRE

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2981.

RESOLVED: that the pontoon next to the Water Sports Centre be transferred to the District Council, for management by the Harbour Master, subject to conditions on usage by the Canoe Club as set out in the report.

15. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2982.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Town Clerk in consultation with the Steering Group be given delegated authority to appoint a consultant for the next stages of the Plan, the costs to be

met from the Locality Programme.

- (2) That the Town Clerk brings forward proposals for continued Project Management support of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- (3) That the Joint Committee of participating councils meets in July to receive a full update on progress.

16. BUDGET AND SERVICE REVIEW WORKING GROUP

The Town Clerk provided an update of the meeting held on 12 June 2015.

The main issues discussed were the review of the Dorset County Council boundaries, the current position of the District Council service reviews and the proposed review of the Town Council's budget later in the year, as part of next year's budget setting. The Working Group will meet again on 26 June at 11.00am.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

17. YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE

The Town Clerk reported on the recent meeting held on 29 April 2015 and he was joined by all members in thanking Helen Farmer, Head Teacher of St Mary's School, for all her work in co-ordinating the Youth Council. The next meeting was due to be held in the autumn term.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

18. LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE – FUNDING SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2974.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to release the £5,000 earmarked funding for the LSI restoration project, subject to receiving assurances that the funds are being used to support the delivery phase of the project and that the capital works will proceed.

19. COASTAL COMMUNITIES TEAM – SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2977.

RECOMMEND: that the Town Council submit an application to establish a Coastal Communities Team, as set out in the report.

20. FOOTBALL CLUB CAR PARK AND CAR PARK LEASE

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed amendments to the lease with the Football Club, which will see their lease extended for 99 years, with the car park land no longer being part of the lease. However, the existing arrangement whereby the club retain 50% of the proceeds of the car park income, after deduction of a management fee, would continue for the 99 years of the amended lease. The Town Council would be liable for any repairs to the car park, but it was considered that

this arrangement was still beneficial, due to the income that the Town Council received from the car park.

RECOMMEND: to agree amendments to the Bridport Football Club lease and the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be given delegated authority to arrange for the lease to be completed, signed and sealed.

21. DAPTC

The Town Clerk reported on recent meetings of the Western Area of DAPTC and Larger Council's Committee.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

22. "DEMOCRACY YEAR" IN BRIDPORT

The Town Clerk reported that the Democracy Year Exhibition, to be hosted by Robert Golden, had been successful in obtaining Arts Council funding and it was hoped now to go ahead with the Exhibition in the Town Hall from 2 October. There was to be a meeting in early July, to agree the next steps.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

23. EVENTS UPDATE

The Town Surveyor reported on the events during the year.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

24. EVENTS ON ASKER MEADOWS 2015

The Town Surveyor reported on the three events on Asker Meadows. The Food Festival had been held last weekend and the next events were the Circus, arriving on 28 June to 5 July and the Jurassic Music Festival on 11 July. Members felt that as a new community event, the Music Festival should be supported and that the fee to be charged be looked at following the event.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

25. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

The following reports were presented, for information:

Food Festival Committee - Cllr Mrs E.A. Rickard said that the event had been very successful and the Town Council was thanked for all its help.

Borough Gardens – Cllr Mrs M.J. Ray reported that the Wednesday weeding sessions were going well.

Bridport and District Tourism Association – Cllr C.M. Ray reported that the Association was pleased to be working with the Town Council and other stakeholders on the Market and Business Liaison Sub Committee.

Community Orchard – Cllr Ms G.E. Massey said that the Orchard was looking good, with a lot of apples on the trees.

26. PARK AND RIDE ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2015

The Town Surveyor reported the arrangements for this year's Park and Ride, which will run on market days from Saturday 18 July to Saturday 5 September 2015.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

27. APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2966.

RECOMMEND:

(1) that the Town Clerk consult with all members and report to the Town Council on proposed nominations for outside bodies as listed in the report.

(2) that the Leader of the Council, Cllr Ms. S.J. Williams be confirmed as the Town Council's representative on the Neighbourhood Plan Joint Committee, with Cllr D.G. Rickard as reserve member.

(3) that the cheque signatories remain as Councillors G.J. Ackerman, Miss S.A. Brown, C.M. Ray and D.G. Rickard.

28. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council was joined by all members in congratulating Fido Vivian-May on his award of the British Empire Medal. The Town Clerk was asked to write to Mr Vivian-May on behalf of the Town Council.

The Town Clerk reported that the new Town Crier was John Collingwood.

The Town Clerk said that he proposed to appoint Bridport Camera Club as the Council's official photographer for formal occasions such as Mayor Making and other civic events and to pay an annual honorarium of £200. This was supported by members.

29. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented List 1 of the 2015/16 accounts, in the sum of £151,096.30, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information, was approved and signed by the Chairman.

30. 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:

31. MAGISTRATES' COURT – PROPOSED ACCESS RIGHTS UPDATE

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2978.

The Town Clerk reported the latest position, including revised financial information and the advice from the Council's Valuer.

RESOLVED: that the latest position be noted and that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to complete a revised agreement with the Courts Service for the access rights, as set out in the report.

32. PROPERTY MATTERS

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2983.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the proposals in respect of the proposed moves in Mountfield be approved, subject to confirmation of the financial implications and the Town Clerk be given delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, to approve the final details.

(2) that there be no changes to the Sea Cadets lease at Plottingham.

33. STAFFING MATTERS

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2984.

RESOLVED: that the proposals as set out in the report be approved.

The meeting closed at **8.58p.m.**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 16 September 2015