

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON SUB COMMITTEE held at Mountfield, Bridport on Tuesday, 21 October 2014 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: G.J. Ackerman (Chairman)

Cllrs: Mrs M.J. Ray Ms S.J. Williams
 D.G. Rickard

Also present: Cllr C.M. Ray

Also in attendance: Scott Condliffe (Bridport and District Tourism Association), Richard Smith (Chamber of Trade and Commerce), Terri Foxwell (Bridport TIC Manager) and Ray McLaren (Market Superintendent).

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers in the Public Forum.

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Amanda Streatfeild (BLAP).

13. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2014, which had been previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15. REPORT BACK SUB COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP

The Town Clerk reported that the Working Group had recently met to oversee the production of the Town Guide, which was issued in August and had been well received, and the new signage for car parks.

In discussion of the car park signage, it was felt that it would be good if they could also be put up in the Holiday Parks, as well as asking if they could be installed at the Co-op and Morrisons Supermarkets.

The Tourist Information Centre Manager was thanked for all her work on the new car park signage.

It was proposed that the Working Group would next look at the community web site and other potential town centre initiatives.

RESOLVED: that the Working Group meet again in early November on a date to be confirmed.

16. TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICE IN BRIDPORT

The Town Clerk reported that he was hoping to meet with the Head of Tourism and Events at the District Council to discuss options further, as part of the District Council's service review. This would then be discussed with the Town Council, as part of its response to the review. It was emphasised that no decisions had been taken and it was a case of finding out more information so that all options could be considered. Members were very supportive of the TIC and ideally the District Council would continue to provide the service but, as part of the review process and bearing in mind the District Council's budget reductions, it was important that all options to safeguard the service were considered.

Members congratulated the West Dorset District Council Tourist Information Service on being awarded Gold in the recent Dorset Tourism Awards 2014.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

17. EVENTS 2014 AND 2015

The Town Clerk and Town Surveyor reported on the events supported by the Town Council this year and the forthcoming events next year.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

18. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN LAUNCH EVENTS

The Town Clerk reported that the neighbourhood plan launch event was to be held on Saturday 8 November, 10am to 4pm, in the Town Hall, to be followed by similar sessions in venues in each of the parishes across the plan area.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

19. MARKET OPERATION

The latest reports on the market performance, ENCLS: 2886 and 2887, were noted.

The market had continued to do well this year, although it had been affected on a number of Saturdays during the summer due to poor weather. The numbers of traders on a Wednesday also appeared to be picking up.

The Town Surveyor announced that Ray McLaren, Market Superintendent, was to retire next February after 15 years working with the Town Council. He was joined by all the Sub Committee in thanking Ray for all his work with the Council.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**20. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MARKET AUTHORITIES
UPDATE ON CURRENT ISSUES**

The Town Surveyor reported on his recent presentation to the Annual General Meeting of the National Association of British Market Authorities in London. He had spoken about the market and the presentation had been very well received. There had been a lot of interest in the market and Bridport, as a result of the presentation. The National Market Traders' Federation were keen to follow up with a visit Bridport.

He had also recently visited Chard Town Council to advise about their market.

There was a discussion about the importance of the market to the vitality of the town centre and also about what could be done to encourage shops, particularly cafes, to stay open a bit later in the day. It was reported that some shops were tending to close when the market finished on a Saturday.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

21. MARKET TRADERS

There were no issues raised on behalf of the market traders.

22. CHAMBER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

Richard Smith, on behalf of the Chamber, said that the Town Guide and the new signs had been welcomed, although it was commented that in one or two cases, contact information in the Guide needed to be updated.

There was work ongoing into establishing a West Dorset Business Forum, which potentially could be led by Bridport. It was hoped that this would help to attract funding to the area. More information would be reported in due course.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

23. BRIDPORT & DISTRICT TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Scott Condliffe, on behalf of the Association, updated on the following issues:

- the Town Council was thanked for producing the Town Guide and the new car park signs and for the positive working arrangements with business representatives through the Sub Committee and Working Group.
- one area to be looked at was the establishment of an electronic portal with a consistent look and feel to access information about the area.
- it was important to retain Bridport's identity with more business chains and brands in the area.
- Destination Dorset had managed to secure funding from Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, which would be an opportunity to move tourism forward.

- a conference had been held recently on how businesses could prepare for extreme weather. Links to further information at thebci.org.uk and climatesouthwest.org.uk.
- looking at the possibility of a federation of rural tourism associations, working together to bring regional funding into the west of the county.

Members hoped to hear more about regional funding through the LEP and the opportunities that may come out of the previously reported West Dorset Business Forum.

Further to the comment on extreme weather, it was reported that there was to be a further drop-in event on community resilience, arranged by Communities Living Sustainably supported by the Town Council, on 4 November, 4pm to 7pm in the Town Hall.

The update was noted.

24. FUTURE MEETINGS AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Sub Committee Working Group will meet again in early November, date to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 10:59am.

The next meeting of the Sub Committee will be held on 17 February 2015 at 10am