

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the BEST VALUE, SCRUTINY AND BRIDPORT AND WEST BAY TOWN PLAN SUB COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Tuesday 4 March 2014 at 11.00 am

PRESENT Cllr Miss S.A. Brown (Chairman)

 Cllrs: G.J. Ackerman D.G. Rickard
 C.M. Ray Mrs E.A. Rickard
 Mrs M.J. Ray Ms S.J. Williams

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

30. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

31. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Best Value, Scrutiny and Bridport and West Bay Town Plan Sub Committee held on 10 December 2013 and reconvened on 13 January 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

33. INTERNAL AUDIT 2013/14

The Town Clerk reported the two matters raised at the recent visit.

These related to insurance levels and the annual inflationary increase and the administration of the craft fairs at the Town Hall. It was noted that the insurance levels this year were set following the tendering exercise and that the administration of the craft fairs was to be reviewed.

RESOLVED: that the matters raised by the Internal Auditor and the action taken be noted.

34. APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2014/15

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2786.

RESOLVED: that the details of the selection process and recommendation for the appointment of a new internal auditor be considered in closed session (item 46 of these minutes).

35. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ACTION PLAN 2012/13

Councillors considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2796.

RESOLVED: that the action taken to address the issues raised following completion of the External Audit 2012/13, be noted and endorsed.

36. INVESTMENT REVIEW 2013/14 AND STRATEGY 2014/15

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2783.

RESOLVED: that the investments made in 2013/14 be noted as in the report, and

RECOMMEND: that the Annual Investment Strategy for 2013/14, attached as an Appendix to the report, be adopted without amendment for 2014/15.

37. ELECTRONIC BANKING

The Town Clerk reported that the repeal of legislation, that requires all cheques or other payable orders to be signed by two councillors, was due to take place very soon. Guidance was to be issued to all councils on the “proper practices” that need to be adopted, before electronic payments can be made. The change will also need to be approved by the Town Council and will be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED: that a report be submitted to the Finance and General Purposes Committee, when the guidance has been issued to allow consideration of electronic banking.

38. REVISION OF STANDING ORDERS

The Town Clerk reported that members were asked to review the current rules regarding non committee members attending the Plans Committee. The current arrangement, agreed by the Town Council in November 2012, was that Councillors, who were not members of the Committee, should sit in and speak from the public gallery, as part of the public forum.

Following discussion, it was generally agreed that non committee members should sit, not in the public gallery, but separately from the Committee, so that the members of the public present could make a clear distinction between councillors on the Committee and those that were not. Non committee members should have the opportunity to speak on an item prior to the decision making, but it would be made clear that they were not entitled to vote.

RECOMMEND: that Standing Orders for speaking at the Plans Committee be amended, as set out above.

39. ASSET REGISTER

Councillors considered the asset register, ENCL: 2795.

RECOMMEND: that the asset register be approved for 2014 and the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to make any final amendments.

40. COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID

The Town Clerk reported that initial work had been undertaken to identify local authority owned and other public buildings in Bridport and he hoped to bring a report to members very soon, regarding the process of requesting possible designation of community assets.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

41. GRANT CRITERIA FOR 2014/15

RESOLVED: that the existing 2013/14 criteria and application form be used unchanged for 2014/15.

42. TOWN GUIDE AND NEWSLETTERS

The Town Clerk reported that discussions had taken place with two businesses interested in producing the next version of the Town Guide. The outcomes would be reported to the next meeting of the Market and Business Liaison Sub Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

43. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that the four larger grant bodies would make a presentation at the 2014 Annual Town Meeting, to be held on Tuesday 8 April. It was also asked that refreshments be provided for the meeting.

RECOMMEND: that the arrangements for the Annual Town Meeting be noted.

44. COMMUNITY WEB SITE

The Town Clerk reported on the latest position with the web site.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

45. 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.

46. **APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2014/15**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2794.

The Town Clerk and Finance and Office Manager reported on the interviews held with three audit companies and presented information on all three applicants.

Following discussion, it was agreed to:

RECOMMEND: that Fair Account & Lightatouch be appointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditors for 2014/15.

The meeting closed at 12.34 pm

The next meeting of this Sub Committee will be held on a date to be agreed at the next Finance and General Purposes Committee