

Minutes of the Special MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Wednesday 13 December 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: Maggie Ray (Chairman)

Cllrs: Geoffrey Ackerman Gillian Massey
Keith Day Martin Ray
Anne Rickard

Also in attendance: Cllrs Derek Bussell and Dave Rickard.

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers in the public forum.

106. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllrs Sandra Brown, Kelvin Clayton and Sarah Williams.

107. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 November 2017 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

108. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

109. BEST VALUE & SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 5 December 2017 be received and the following recommendations be approved.

(Min. 28) Grants Update

RESOLVED:

(1) that the change of use of the grant to the Arts Development Company be agreed.

(2) that £500 be paid as a grant to the Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Service, subject to confirmation on the usage in Bridport and that it would be possible to drop off people in the centre of town on Bridport shopping visits.

(Min. 30) Investments

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk report back on options for investments, to enable the Town Council to take a decision before the end of the current financial year.

110. BUDGET PROCESS 2018/19

The Town Clerk reported on the recent meetings of the Budget Working Group and that the group would meet again on Friday 5 January 2018, to consider options prior to the next meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

111. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3264.

The Town Clerk reported that the full capital programme would be reported, alongside the revenue budget, in January 2018.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and the proposed capital programme be endorsed.

112. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3265.

Members agreed that the Town Clerk should make a response to the Secretary of State, welcoming the proposed unitary authority, but commenting on the need for local governance arrangements to be agreed such as area boards and the need for local agreements on the devolution of assets, to meet the costs of any devolution of services.

The Town Clerk reported on the meeting of the External Programme Board held on 8 December 2017.

The Committee considered the report on the District Council's Strategy Committee agenda on 14 December 2017 relating to the External Programme Board and in closed session the separate report on potential asset transfers to the Town Council.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the report on the meeting of the External Programme Board held on 8 December 2017 be noted.

(2) that the actions taken so far in the asset transfer discussions with West Dorset District Council be endorsed. (These were considered in detail in the closed session part of this agenda).

(3) that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to submit a statement to the District Council's Strategy Committee, which in summary, should state:

That the Town Council welcomes the establishment of the External Programme Board and the District Council's commitment to work with the town councils to enable a successful transfer of services that have been identified for potential devolution. The Town Council feels strongly that services and assets need to be managed locally, is very supportive of this process and is keen to continue the discussion of asset transfers to support the toilets transfer. However, time does

need to be allowed for further work through the External Programme Board on the wider picture of the costs of all the services that could be transferred and also to enable consideration of other assets that could be included in the package. The Town Council would hope that the Strategy Committee will agree the asset transfers in principle, as recommended, but recognise that more time will be needed to allow for further discussion and negotiation, including the option to discuss other transfers, before a package can be finalised and agreed by the Town Council.

113. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – NEXT STAGES AND CONSULTANCY SUPPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3266.

The Town Clerk reported that further funding from Groundwork UK could be available, in addition to a sum in earmarked reserves, to fund consultancy work.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to make the appointments for the Neighbourhood Plan consultancy work, as proposed in the report.

114. ONGOING PROJECTS

There was nothing further to report at this time.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

115. SECTION 106 / COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

The Town Clerk reported on the receipt of the first instalment of the new Community Infrastructure Levy. This money was provided on the basis that it would be spent within five years and an annual report must be made available to the public and reported back to the District Council. Future contributions in respect of liable developments will be paid twice a year, in April and October.

The Town Clerk would report back in the New Year on Section 106 funding currently held for Bridport.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

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."

116. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION – ASSET TRANSFERS

The Town Surveyor reported on the recent meetings that he had had with officers of West Dorset District Council.

RESOLVED: that the updated be noted.

117. STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed working arrangements for Christmas and that these would be the same as for the District Council. The offices would close on 22 December 2017 at lunchtime and reopen on 2 January 2018, with the Tourist Information Centre opening on 23 December 2017 until lunchtime, but also closing for the remainder of the Christmas period.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

The meeting closed at **8.45p.m.**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 17 January 2018