

At a MEETING of the **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Town Hall, Bridport on Tuesday 27 March 2018 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT Cllr Anne Rickard – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Geoffrey Ackerman	Julian Jones
	Derek Bussell	Gill Massey
	Kelvin Clayton	Maggie Ray
	Keith Day	Martin Ray
	Terry Harrison	Dave Rickard
	Sarah Horniman	Barbara Vousden
	Barry Irvine	Sarah Williams

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor welcomed the public to the meeting and introduced the open public forum topic. This was “Local Government Reorganisation, what it could mean for local services and to hear what people think about more services being managed locally.”

The following members of the public spoke in the Open Public Forum:

Caroline Meredith spoke about the need for more car parking. She also spoke separately to support the calls for the car parks to be managed by the town.

Mike Farmer raised the traffic congestion in the town, the impact of the traffic lights and the need to consider a mini roundabout at the Town Hall junction.

Bob Driscoll, WATAG, mentioned public transport issues and the impact of service changes locally.

Maureen Jackson, Bridport Local Area Partnership, stated that BLAP was supporting a Liaison Group of Town and Parish councils, to look at how they could work together to support services. She also said that the new unitary council and its impact was the topic on the agenda for the BLAP Annual Assembly on 12 April.

George Streatfeild, Museum Trust and Symondsburry School Governor, said that this was an opportunity for the Town Council to seek the transfer of assets, along with services. It was important for the Town Council and organisations grant funded by the District Council to work together.

Bryan Brown, Citizens’ Advice Bureau, thanked the Town Council for its ongoing support and said that they were keen to work in partnership with other local organisations, to respond to the challenge of local government reorganisation.

John Collingwood asked if the bus station was one of the assets under discussion with the District Council.

Edward Burt, Arts Centre and Millennium Green Trust, emphasised the importance of the town getting back control of the car parks.

Amanda Streatfeild from the Bridport Area Development Trust said that the Trust might be able to help in respect of asset management.

Brian Wilson asked for confirmation on the services that were under consideration for delegation.

Public Forum

Joe Burlington spoke about Dorset Low Carbon initiatives and the importance of reducing carbon emissions.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone who had spoken. The issues raised regarding local government reorganisation were to be considered by the Town Council later on this agenda.

58. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Sandra Brown and Ros Kayes.

59. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman).

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All the previously recorded interests declared under this item in the Committee minutes were noted.

61. STANDING ORDER 14(b)

There were no questions pursuant to standing order 14(b).

62. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 29 January 2018 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Sarah Williams.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 29 January 2018 be received.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26 February 2018 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Sarah Williams.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26 February 2018 be received and the recommendation therein be adopted, as set out below (the recommendation was moved, seconded and declared to be carried):-

(Minute 93) ST MICHAEL'S & SOUTH WEST QUADRANT COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP

RESOLVED: that the proposals to establish a Community Liaison Group be approved, as attached to the report.

(c) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 March 2018 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Maggie Ray.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 March 2018 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below (each recommendation was moved, seconded and declared to be carried):-

(Minute 153 – 38) INVESTMENT REVIEW 2017/18 STRATEGY 2018/19

Members considered the revised Strategy, as had been attached to the minutes of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee. This was recommended for approval by the F&GP Committee. Members noted the advice and guidance, as summarised in the Committee minutes. Whilst some members felt that ethical considerations should be given a higher priority in the Strategy, after a detailed discussion, it was:

RESOLVED:

(1) that the revised Annual Investment Strategy be approved for 2018/19, as attached to the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee 27 February 2018 minutes.

(2) that the Council be asked to consider investing up to £200,000 in the CCLA Property Fund. That decision to be taken by June 2018.

(Minute 153 – 39) ASSET REGISTER

RESOLVED: that the Asset Register be approved for 2018 and the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to make any final amendments, before it is signed by the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk.

(Minute 155) LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE – SERVICES/ASSETS

Members reiterated the Council's wish to protect any discretionary services that potentially may be at risk from local government reorganisation (LGR)

and its willingness to take on additional services. This was, though, subject to being able to negotiate a package of asset transfers, or funding that would provide an income to cover the costs of providing these services.

The Town Council was being asked to give an Expression of Interest to the District Council on which services and assets it would be interested in assuming responsibility for, following LGR. The Town Clerk had circulated an additional confidential report on services and assets to be discussed further and included in an Expression of Interest.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the latest position on Local Government Reorganisation be noted and the Town Clerk be given authority to submit an Expression of Interest to the District Council, in respect of services and assets that could be managed locally and the detailed package then be discussed with a members' working group, before any firm recommendations were made to the Council.
- (2) that the additional confidential report, with the detail of the proposals on assets and services, be considered in closed session at the end of the meeting, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. A summary of the discussion from the closed session is set out under minute 67 below.

(Minute 158) RIVERSIDE GARDENS CYCLE PATH (UNDER SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR)

RESOLVED: that the Council allows the works to proceed, to install the cycle path on Riverside Gardens in accordance with the approved planning permission.

(Minute 159) MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

RESOLVED: that Members' Allowances for 2018/19 shall be £772 per annum.

(Minute 160) PENSIONS DISCRETIONARY POLICY

RESOLVED: that the existing Pensions Discretions Policy be confirmed with no changes.

(Minute 161) CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED: that the calendar of meetings for 2018/19 be approved, noting that an additional Planning Committee would take place on 14 May 2018 at 7pm, if needed.

(Minute 165) FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVISIONS

RESOLVED: that the amendments to Financial Regulations be approved, as set out in the report.

(Minute 168) FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED: that a Special Council meeting be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 24 April 2018 in the Town Hall and a special meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 23 May 2018 in Mountfield.

(Minute 170) COMMUNITY BUS

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the decision on the round Bridport pilot service be taken at the Special Council meeting on 24 April 2018.

(d) **ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 14 March 2018 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Kelvin Clayton.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 14 March 2018 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted as set out below (each recommendation was moved, seconded and declared to be carried):-

(Minute 64) DORSET LOW CARBON PROGRAMME AND FUND

RESOLVED: that an Expression of Interest be submitted under the Dorset Low Carbon Programme, in respect of the potential projects noted in the minutes and further reports be submitted on the next stages, outline costs etc. before approval was given to proceed further.

(Minute 65) NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK – CONSULTATION

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to make a response, subject to any comments from the Planning Committee.

(Minute 70) RIGHTS RESPECTING

RESOLVED: that the Town Council support further events and actions to promote and publicise the Rights Respecting Charter.

63. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

RESOLVED: that the subject for the next Open Public Forum be agreed at the Special Council meeting on 24 April 2018.

64. REPORT BACK FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

The following reports were received:

Cllr Sarah Horniman reported on the recent meeting of the Axe Valley Ring and Ride Service.

The Mayor reported on the recent AGM of the Minerva Trust.

65. COMMUNICATIONS

The following items were reported for information:

The Town Mayor reported her list of engagements, ENCL: 3301.

66. 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."

67. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE – SERVICES/ASSETS

The Town Clerk's report was considered in closed session, as agreed under Finance and General Purposes Committee minute 155 above.

Members discussed the report on the discretionary services that the Council could manage, potential assets to be transferred and financial information to be requested.

It was agreed that the Council was willing to discuss taking on the services that have been identified as ones that may no longer be funded by the District Council. These services were:

- Public Conveniences – 5 in town centre and West Bay;
- Discretionary Grants - Arts Centre, Museum, CAB, Small Grants, Social Inclusion grants
- Economic Development
- Town Centre street cleansing (funding contributions from District Council)
- Community Development

It was estimated that it would cost in the region of £450,000 per annum to deliver these services, as they were currently delivered by the District Council. In addition, it was estimated that there would be a one off sum needed for improvement works on the public conveniences.

The costs were estimates and there was still a need for more financial detail. The annual running costs were also based on maintaining the services as currently delivered. However, the Town Council would look at savings and income generation opportunities, particularly in the operation of the public toilets. Some services, such as discretionary grants, could also be subject to separate funding arrangements with the District Council, which could reduce the level of funding support needed from the Town Council. The final costs could therefore be less than estimated, but at this stage it was necessary to work on having to meet all of the costs.

Work was continuing, through the local area partnership, to assess the level of support for partnership working with parish councils to support the delivery of delegated services. The Town Council was also meeting with the town centre organisations currently funded by WDDC - Arts Centre, Museum, CAB etc. – to look at potential opportunities to work together to deliver cleaning, maintenance etc.

Other services undertaken by the District Council could also be discussed, where it made more sense for those to be managed locally. These were set out in the report and included services such as car park routine maintenance, street name signage etc.

Prior to the establishment of the Programme Board, the Town Council had been in discussion with the District Council to seek to agree a package of asset transfers, primarily to support the local management of the public toilets. Negotiation of terms on a number of asset transfers had been agreed in principle by West Dorset District Council, but the potential income was still some way short of what was estimated to be the annual running costs of the WDDC services that could be transferred.

Members agreed that there was therefore a need to discuss other income generating assets and supported the Town Clerk's request for further financial information from the District Council on a number of additional assets. Also, members emphasised that it should not be limited to those assets identified by the District Council as potential transfers. The Council felt strongly that car parks and the holiday park should be included in the discussions.

Members supported the proposals in the report (as summarised above) and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should submit the Expression of Interest and that there would then be a need for members to look at the detail of any proposed package of services/asset transfers, before any recommendations came to the Council.

The meeting closed at **8.45 pm**.

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be a special meeting, to be held on 24 April 2018

The Annual Council (Mayor Making) will be held on 17 May 2018