

Minutes of the MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 9 September 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: Maggie Ray (Chairman)

Cllrs: Geoffrey Ackerman	Martin Ray
Karen Hunt	Anne Rickard
Julian Jones	Sarah Williams
Gill Massey	

Also in attendance: Cllr Dave Rickard.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no speakers in the public forum.

### **24. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr Rose Allwork.

### **25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members requested that interests declared in respect of grants to smaller and larger bodies considered by the Best Value & Scrutiny Sub Committee at its meeting on 3 September 2019 (minutes 16 and 17 of that meeting) be noted as follows:

Councillors declared interests, left the meeting and did not vote as follows:

- Cllr Sandra Brown – Charter Fair and the New Elizabethan Singers.
- Cllr Ros Kayes – Bridport Youth and Community Centre Trust.
- Cllr Geoffrey Ackerman – Melplash Agricultural Society.
- Cllr Barry Irvine – Mind Fest and Burrough Harmony.
- Cllr Steve Williams – Burrough Harmony.
- Cllr Martin Ray – ASD and Social Anxiety Group.
- Cllr Maggie Ray – ASD and Social Anxiety Group.

Interests declared but which did not preclude discussion and voting:

- Cllr Geoffrey Ackerman – Bridport Museum.
- Cllr Sandra Brown – Bridport Museum.
- Cllr Barry Irvine – Bridport Citizen's Advice Bureau and Bridport Arts Centre.
- Cllr Karen Hunt – Bridport Museum.

### **26. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Hunt raised questions arising from the minutes in respect of the Bridport Collaboration Group, CCTV and the cycle path to West Bay. The Town Clerk and Town Surveyor provided updates and noted the need for progress with each.

Cllr Julian Jones asked that progress be pursued in respect of the cycle path between Hollow Way and the Crown roundabout.

Cllr Hunt asked whether Dorset Waste Partnership had been approached for a funding contribution for bins at West Bay. The Town Clerk reported that a request had been made but that as the bins were not a requirement, such funding was not available.

Cllr Jones asked about progress with the West Bay Welcome Hub. The Town Surveyor reported that works were due to restart in October.

## 27. **BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 3 September 2019 be received and the following recommendations be approved.

### **(Min. 16) Town Council Grants to Smaller Bodies 2019/20**

(a) that the following grants be approved under the General Power of Competence:

	£
Child Contact Centre – Play equipment and running costs	500
Melplash Agricultural Society – Discover Farming Project	500
ASD and Social Anxiety Group – Insurance, transport and activities	300
St Mary's Honorary Ringing Guild – Repair of tenor clock and hammer	500
Home Start West Dorset – Running costs	500
Community Shed – Tools and health and safety items	450
Dorset Race Equality Council – Running costs	550
Bridport & District CAB – Website development	500
Axe Valley & West Dorset Ring and Ride – running costs	1000
Mind Fest – The Sunflower Project	500
Charter Fair – Annual Charter Fair	250
Stepping Out Cancer Rehabilitation Community Group – Provision of group exercise and wellbeing scheme	500
Gig Rowing Club – Flooring	Deferred
Harmony Centre – Refurbishment	500
Small Things – Creative Arts Workshops	500
Bridport Youth Dance – Programme of after school dance classes	500
Bridport Boys Dance – Day residency dance workshop	400
The New Elizabethan Singers – Concerts	250
Hughes Unit Group Supported (HUGS) – Produce leaflets and website and purchase a gazebo	250
Bridport Youth Performers (BYP) – Rehearsal costs	500
<b>Total Small Grants</b>	<b>£8950</b>

### **(Min. 17) Town Council grants to larger bodies 2019/20**

RESOLVED: that the grants under a one-year Service Level Agreement be awarded for 2019/20 as follows:

Arts Centre	Leisure Centre	CAB	Museum	Youth Centre	WBDC	Total
£6,000	£4,000	£5,000	£4,500	£10,000	£3,000	£32,500

## **(Min 18) Community and Car Boot Grants Schemes**

A recommendation from the sub committee was amended and resolved as follows:

RESOLVED: that revised guidance and application forms for the two grant schemes be drafted under delegation by the Chairman and Town Clerk, taking account of the comments made by the Sub Committee, and that Car Boot grants be considered by a panel comprising five town councillors and two Dorset Council members.

The Chairman and Clerk were asked to consider inclusion of the following when reviewing guidance for the schemes:

- Discretion to fund running costs.
- Objectives to be met as criteria for Car Boot funding.

## **28. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2019/20 – 1<sup>ST</sup> REVISION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3448.

Cllr Karen Hunt asked for clarification in respect of the following budget lines:

- Postage
- Cleaning costs
- Honorarium
- Rates and water
- Lengthsman
- Planters
- Bridport Youth & Community Centre
- CCTV income

The Finance and Office Manager provided explanations and was thanked for his work in the effective management of the Council's accounts.

RECOMMEND: that the 1<sup>st</sup> revision of the estimates for the year 2019/20 be approved.

## **29. TOWN PLAN REVIEW – PRIORITY PROJECTS**

The Town Clerk reported that public consultation was ongoing via questionnaires and public events, that a working group would draft a Plan in September and October, which would be presented for approval in November.

The latest update on the existing Town Plan had been displayed at the Melplash Show and was available at the meeting if requested.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Clerk be noted.

## **30. BUDGET PLANNING 2020/21**

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed process and timetable for setting the Council's budget for 2020/21. He further advised that membership of the Budget Working Group would need to be reviewed.

RESOLVED: that town councillors be advised via the Members' Bulletin of the need for nominations to the Budget Working Group, and that the matter be considered at the next Full Council meeting.

**31. EXTERNAL AUDIT 2018/19**

The Finance and Office Manager reported that the external auditor had not yet reported on the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return as had been hoped, but that it was being worked on. The report would be tabled at the first available meeting following receipt.

RESOLVED: that the update of the Finance and Office Manager be noted.

**32. COMMUNITY BUS UPDATE**

The Town Clerk reported that the Community Bus and Highways Working Groups had considered the future of the service taking account of concerns about take-up. There had been no appetite for withdrawal of the service and the trial period had been extended to mid-October for a review to be carried out. This included consideration of a minibus with volunteer driver, use of Dorset Community Transport, a taxi alternative and continuation of the current service. Dorset Community Transport and one local taxi firm had shown interest in developing proposals. Given the complexities of a taxi alternative, the Clerk advised that it may be necessary to extend to November or beyond.

Members noted the need for mobility issues to be accommodated in any revised service, and suggested that prospective alternative providers be invited to address councillors and provide quotations.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**33. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR**

The Town Surveyor reported that works were under way to bring The Grove up to standard at the expense of Dorset Council, ahead of agreement on a lease which it was hoped would run from 1 October 2019. Heads of terms had been agreed with a prospective commercial tenant.

In view of the commercial nature of this part of the discussion it was

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.

Members received an update from the Town Surveyor on issues for proposed sub-tenancies.

RESOLVED: that the public be invited to re-join the meeting.

The Town Surveyor further reported on:

- West Bay WiFi – fibre broadband connections were currently being installed.
- Mountfield extension – work was due to commence on 19 September 2019.
- Skatepark – a trial patch of resurfacing was due to be laid the following week.

- Bus Station – a meeting of officers and councillors had been scheduled for 18 September, and a meeting with the MP was expected in November.
- Town Hall – scaffolding was due to be erected and exterior works carried out before Christmas. This would impact on traffic circulation.
- Sitting Out Licences – arrangements were in place with all but two local businesses.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Surveyor be noted.

#### **34. MEMORIAL PLAQUE REQUEST**

Members considered a request from a member of the public for a memorial plaque to be installed above the 'horse trough' in West Bay, commemorating those from West Bay who lost their lives in wars.

Issues of cost, landownership and conservation were considered. Members noted that the names of the fallen were already memorialised on the town War Memorial, and that the arrangements for commemoration needed to be considered beyond the traditional memorialisation arrangements.

RECOMMEND: that the request for a memorial plaque to be installed above the 'horse trough' in West Bay be gratefully acknowledged and politely declined.

#### **35. RIGHTS RESPECTING PROJECT – PHASE 2**

The Town Clerk reported that the Council had agreed to lead the next phase of Rights Respecting work, and that a Steering Group had been set up to oversee this. A grant of £13,150 had been received from Global Dialog, and recruitment of a consultant to review current activity and develop strategic/action plan was under way.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

#### **36. DORSET ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS**

The Town Clerk reported that:

- The DAPTC AGM would be held in November.
- New councillor training had been provided in Bridport. Planning training had been proposed but following discussion with DAPTC this had instead been provided by the Town Council.
- DAPTC had notified councils of a review of external audit which would consider proportionality, standards and transparency.
- A Dorset Council officer contact directory had been forwarded, for use by Clerks only. The Town Clerk had sought clarification that this could be used by other Town Council officers. Members highlighted concerns about delays and in some cases the absence of a reply from Dorset Council.
- The Town Clerk had booked to attend a DAPTC Clerks' seminar in September.

RESOLVED: that the BLAP Parish Liaison Working Group be asked to provide feedback on the new councillor and planning training provided.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**37. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Gill Massey reported that Bridport Community Orchard Group would be hosting a film showing at the Literary & Scientific Institute on 9 September, and that the next Community Orchard Apple Day would be 12 September.

Cllr Geoffrey Ackerman reported that the Twinning Association would be visiting St Vaast La Hougue from 20 to 23 September, and this 2019 was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the twinning agreement.

Cllr Maggie Ray reported that a sculpture by local artist Isla Chaney had been erected in Borough Gardens, with help from the Friends of Borough Gardens. Members welcomed this and another sculpture in Millennium Green, and asked whether this could become a permanent feature. The Town Clerk said he would investigate.

**38. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements were received from the Leader, Town Clerk, or Town Mayor.

**39. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented List 2 of the 2019/20 accounts, in the sum of £\*\*\*,\*\*\*.\*\* which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information, was approved and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at **8.50pm**.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 11 November 2019**