

Minutes of the MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 13 January 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: Maggie Ray (Chairman)

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

Also in attendance: Cllr Dave Rickard.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

Mr Kit Glaisyer spoke in support of a proposal to provide an artist workshop and gallery in the town centre.

### **61. APOLOGIES**

There no apologies for absence.

### **62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **63. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 November 2019 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 3 December 2019 be received as a correct record.

### **65. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2019/2020 – 3rd REVISION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3477.

RECOMMEND: that the 3rd revision of the estimates for the year 2019/2020 be approved.

### **66. BUDGET AND ESTIMATES 2020/21**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3478.

In considering this item, members noted:

- The position of the current year 2019/20 revenue budget estimates

- The position on the Town Council's finances held in reserves and proposed Capital Budget
- The recommended revenue budget (estimates) for next year (2020/21) with a commentary on recommended significant variations from this year
- The recommended fees and charges for 2020/21
- Comments of the Budget Working Group
- Medium Term Financial Forecasts
- Summary of Budget Considerations
- Options on the level of precept to fund the budget for 2020/21

The estimates and projects had been considered at the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee and the Budget Working Group.

The Town Clerk highlighted the considerations for members, which included to:

- present a balanced budget
- maintain and develop existing services provided by the Council.
- maintain appropriate levels of reserves and continue to earmark reserves to support project delivery including a capital programme
- make provision for salary increases including an estimated national pay award
- make provision to continue to deliver Town Plan projects
- provide continuing support for town events
- maintain grant funding for community projects and support of key organisations through service level agreements – Arts Centre, Museum, Leisure Centre, CAB, Youth & Community Centre and the West Bay Discovery Centre.
- through the delegated services budget, seek to make ongoing revenue provision to meet some of the costs of discretionary services that are likely not to be delivered by Dorset Council and that the Town Council may need to manage e.g. public toilets

The Town Clerk drew members' attention to the options on the precept and advised that whilst the officer recommendation was to set a balanced budget, it was open to members to consider any level of precept. The options put forward were:

- Option 1: increase the precept by £24,162. In total, this would raise £708,341 and provide a deficit budget of £10,000.
- Option 2: increase the precept by £34,162. In total, this would raise £718,341 and provide a balanced budget.
- Option 3: increase the precept by £44,162. In total, this would raise £728,341 and provide a cushion of an additional £10,000 towards future delegated services.

The current Band 'D' Town Council charge was £227.54, resulting in the following annual and weekly increases in Council Tax for a Band 'D' Council Tax Payer:-

	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Band 'D'</u>
Option 1	£ 7.95	£0.15	3.49%
Option 2	£11.28	£0.22	4.96%
Option 3	£14.60	£0.28	6.42%

Following consideration of the report, it was unanimously RECOMMENDED to Full Council:

- (a) that the draft estimates for 2020/21 be approved as set out in Appendix A.

- (b) that the proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 be approved as set out in Appendix B.
- (c) that the Medium Term Financial Plan be approved as a guide for future years as in Appendix C, noting that each year's budget will be subject to separate approval.
- (d) that the draft capital programme and proposed use of reserves for 2020/21 and future years, as set out in section 4 of the report and at Appendix D.
- (e) that in terms of the precept, Option 2 be approved, as set out above and in section 10 of the report, which would increase the precept by £34,162 to £718,341 with the annual Band 'D' charge increasing from £227.54 to £238.82, equivalent to 4.96% or 22p per week.

**67. MEETINGS CALENDAR**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3479.

RESOLVED: that the meetings calendar be approved as tabled.

**68. ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 January 2020 be received.

**69. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2020/21**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3480, setting out the arrangements for internal audit, and recommending the retention of the existing auditor, Lightatouch Internal Audit Services.

RECOMMEND: that the existing internal audit arrangements continue for 2020/21.

**70. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT: ANNUAL REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3481.

The report set out the Council's approach to risk management, and included a risk management policy that had been updated to incorporate one newly identified risk relating to Asset Transfers.

RECOMMEND: that the Risk Assessment and Management Strategy Policy be approved as tabled.

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

The Town Surveyor reported on the following matters:

- Asset Transfers
- Mountfield kitchen extension

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

**72. EVENTS 2020**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3482, which provided details of scheduled public events in Bridport for 2020.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

**73. SCULPTURE TRAIL**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3483.

RESOLVED: that a budget of £5,000 per annum for three years from 2020/21, to support the delivery of the Sculpture Trail project be agreed.

**74. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

The following reports were received:

Community Orchard Group - Cllr Gill Massey reported on the recent Wassailing Day in the Orchard on Sunday 12 January 2020. Over 200 people attended and it had been very successful. The AGM would also be held in the Town Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 23 January 2020.

**75. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no items to report.

**76. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented List 4 of the 2019/20 accounts, in the sum of £307,957.35, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information, was approved and signed by the Chairman.

**77. 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."*

**78. PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Town Surveyor reported on discussions

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

The meeting closed at **8.30pm**.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 16 March 2020**