

At a MEETING of the **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Town Hall, Bridport on Tuesday 21 January 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT Cllr Barry Irvine – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Geoffrey Ackerman	Ros Kayes (from 7.17pm)
	Rose Allwork	Gill Massey
	Ian Bark	Maggie Ray
	Dave Bolwell	Martin Ray
	Sandra Brown	Anne Rickard
	Sarah Carney	Dave Rickard
	Kelvin Clayton	Sarah Williams
	Julian Jones	Steve Williams

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

Mr Rob Ridge addressed members regarding a proposed indoor skate park at Gore Cross Business Park. He outlined the history of the Trick Factory, a previous facility, and set out the benefits of, and the financial and other support for, a new facility. He hoped that it would be open in the spring. Practical help and materials were available but support was needed for administration, planning and funding.

Mr Bob Driscoll, Chair of the Western Area Transport Action Group (WATAG) addressed members on the withdrawal of First Wessex bus service 6 from 6 May 2020. He outlined the background to the decision, the importance of this inter-urban strategic route, and the impact on passengers including commuters and students at Yeovil College. Mr Driscoll said a decline in passenger numbers was the result of frequent changes to the timetable since 2017; the service had been run successfully by Damory until then. He sought the support of the Town Council.

Members discussed possible sources of funding to save the service, the impact on other areas such as Beaminster, issues with Dorset Council contracting, and the need to engage Cllr Ray Bryan, Dorset Council Cabinet Member for Transport.

Mr John Collingwood added that the withdrawal of the service would adversely affect the climate.

Building Better Lives initiative

With the aid of a presentation and video clip provided by Dorset Council, the Town Clerk outlined plans for a care village at Flood Lane/Fisherman's Arms, part of Dorset Council's Building Better Lives initiative.

Roz Copson said that previous facilities at Flood Lane had been for people with severe learning difficulties. She expressed concern that there was not enough time to organise the remaining demand in Bridport, and not enough demand for the self-funded accommodation included in the plans.

Members discussed the following issues:

- Concern for the future of residents currently living at Sidney Gale House.

- Concern that the proposed affordable accommodation may not be genuinely affordable.
- The lack of information on key worker housing.
- A welcome for the proposed provision of much-needed dementia care, and the mix of care accommodation and housing.
- Concerns regarding the profit motive for companies involved in the initiative.
- The importance of meaningful and effective community engagement, and the need for Town Council and Dorset Council Bridport ward membership on the planning group for the project.

Eryl Balazs, who had formerly worked in social care commissioning, said that this was an exciting development and that there was unmet need locally, but was concerned that the public information was too complex at this stage and should be made simpler.

The Mayor thanked members of the public for their input.

54. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr Karen Hunt, and Terri Foxwell, Tourist Information Centre Manager.

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All previously recorded interests declared in committee minutes were noted.

56. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman).

57. STANDING ORDER 14(b)

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

58. COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 25 November 2019 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Anne Rickard.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 25 November 2019 be received.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 January 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Anne Rickard.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 January 2020 be received and the recommendation therein be adopted, as set out below: -

(Minute 74) TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED: that reasons for non-attendance by partner organisations at Town Centre Working Group meetings be explored, consideration be given to changing the timing of meetings, and that an environmental group be considered for membership.

(c) **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13 January 2020 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 13 January 2020 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below: -

(Minute 65) FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2019/2020 – 3rd REVISION

The recommendation, after being moved and seconded, was put to the vote, declared to be carried and

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

(Minute 66) BUDGET AND ESTIMATES 2020/2021

Members discussed the proposed budget and precept recommendation from the Committee.

Members commented on the considerations set out in the report and the Committee minutes, including in particular:

- The impact of the proposed precept on Council Tax;
- Local inequalities in Council Tax and the impact of residents in adjoining parishes using Town Council services;
- The importance of reminding residents of the wide extent of the Town Council's work;
- The impact of housing growth outside the parish boundary; and
- The need for a law change to ensure that an element of business rates be paid to the Town Council.

The recommendation, after being moved and seconded, was put to the vote, declared to be carried unanimously as follows:

RESOLVED: (a) that the draft estimates for 2020/21 be approved as attached 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 budget and proposed use of reserves for 2020/21 and future years be approved, as set out in section 4 of the report.
- (e) that in terms of the precept, Option 2 be approved, which increases the precept by £34,162 to raise £718,341.

The annual Band 'D' charge to increase from £227.54 to £238.82 (4.96%).

(Minute 69) REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2020/21

The recommendation, after being moved and seconded, was put to the vote, declared to be carried and

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

(Minute 70) RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT: ANNUAL REVIEW

The recommendation, after being moved and seconded, was put to the vote, declared to be carried and

RESOLVED: that the Risk Assessment and Management Strategy policy document be approved, as attached to the Committee report.

(d) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 8 January 2020 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 8 January 2020 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below: -

(Minutes 42) CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

The recommendation, after being moved and seconded, was put to the vote, declared to be carried and

- RESOLVED:
- (a) that a sub committee be established comprising five members, with a remit to deliver the Climate Emergency Action Plan, a limit on expenditure to be agreed under delegation by the Chairman and Clerk, and a quorum of four members.
 - (b) that the sub committee members be Cllrs Rose Allwork, Ian Bark, Kelvin Clayton, Karen Hunt and Dave Rickard.
 - (c) that the Climate Emergency Action Plan be updated to include reference to mitigation measures in respect of floor projection and flood risk, and pressure on Dorset Council for action on both emergency planning and flood defence requirements, taking account of the climate emergency.

59. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR, DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR AND LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2020/2021

The Town Clerk reported that the following nominations had been received:

Town Mayor – Cllr Anne Rickard
Proposed by Cllr Sarah Williams and seconded by Cllr Barry Irvine.

Deputy Town Mayor – Cllr Ian Bark
Proposed by Cllr Dave Rickard and seconded by Cllr Maggie Ray.

Leader of the Council - Cllr Dave Rickard
Proposed by Cllr Maggie Ray and seconded by Cllr Steve Williams.

No further nominations had been received.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council's preferred candidates for the positions of Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and Leader of the Council for 2020/21 be approved as listed above, to go forward to the Annual Town Council meeting (Mayor Making), where the elections to these positions shall take place.

60. BUS SERVICES

The Town Clerk reported on the proposal by First Wessex to withdraw Service 6, highlighting:

- Contracting issues over the previous six years
- Lack of timetabling certainty for citizens
- The impact on the climate emergency
- Access to Yeovil, and Bridport Hospital
- Withdrawal of subsidies since 2010

Members discussed:

- Opportunities for employment in Yeovil for people from Bridport if transport was available.

- The need for strategic thinking in the Town Council's response to the decision, and meetings with the key people of influence at Dorset Council and First Wessex.
- The low level of subsidy and concessionary reimbursement rates provided by Dorset Council.
- The need for improved contracting.
- Concerns about the efficiency of the current operator.
- Opportunities for Dorset Council to reallocate spending from pro-car priorities to pro-public transport priorities.
- A long-term plan to change transport habits.
- Wider cuts to bus services across West Dorset.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk and Leader of the Council arrange a meeting with the Chairman of Beaminster Town Council and WATAG to discuss a way forward and agree a public statement in respect of cuts to local bus services.

RESOLVED: that support for the public statement be sought from all parish councils on strategic bus routes to and from Dorchester, Yeovil, Lyme Regis and Weymouth.

RESOLVED: that the statement be publicised in the media.

RESOLVED: that a meeting be sought involving Dorset Council members Ray Bryan and Spencer Flower, the relevant Dorset Council director, the constituency MP, the Leader of Bridport Town Council, and representatives of parish councils.

61. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

RESOLVED: that the subject for the next Open Public Forum shall be public transport, to which the Dorset Council Cabinet Member and Director for Transport be invited.

62. COMMUNICATIONS

The following items were reported for information:

- (1) The Town Mayor reported his list of engagements, ENCL: 3484.
- (2) The Leader of the Council reported that the
 - (i) Appraisal of the Town Clerk had recently been carried out by Cllr Maggie Ray and himself.
 - (ii) Mayor's Charity Fundraising Quiz would be held in the Town Hall on 28 February 2020.
- (3) The Town Clerk reported that the:
 - (i) Neighbourhood Plan referendum would take place on Thursday 27 February 2020.
 - (ii) Dorset Council was to begin a review of discretionary grants.
 - (iii) Community Fair will be in the Town Hall on Saturday 1 February 2020.

- (4) The Town Surveyor reported that support for a new indoor skate park was growing and that he would be involved in ongoing discussions to help to provide this replacement amenity.

The meeting closed at **9.16pm**

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on the earlier than originally scheduled date of 31 March 2020