

ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a VIRTUAL meeting (GoToMeeting ID: 670-959-173) of the CLIMATE ACTION SUB COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held on Thursday 29 October 2020 at 11.00am.

PRESENT Cllr Rose Allwork Karen Hunt
Ian Bark Dave Rickard
Kelvin Clayton

ALSO PRESENT: Will Austin (Town Clerk), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor) and David Dixon (Project Manager and Community Initiatives Officer).

PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised at the Public Forum.

9. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the notes of the meeting of the committee held on 24 September 2020 be agreed and signed by the Chairman at the earliest practicable opportunity.

12. DIVESTMENT

Cllr Rickard introduced a report on divestment from fossil fuel investments in favour of zero carbon investments, in respect of the Dorset County Pension Fund.

Members considered the report and the Town Council's own investment portfolio.

RESOLVED: that a report be tabled outlining green options for Town Council investments, at the next or subsequent meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Finance and Office Manager be invited to that meeting to provide information on the liquidity of Town Council deposits and investments.

RESOLVED: that a letter to the Dorset County Pension Fund be drafted for consideration by Finance & General Purposes Committee, calling for a wider remit for investment managers to identify remaining investments in all fossil fuel extraction.

The Town Clerk asked members to provide views on appropriate investments and areas for divestment in respect of Town Council funds, to contribute to the agreed sub committee report.

13. SOLAR PV CAR PORT INSTALLATION

The Project Manager and Community Initiatives Officer reported that a grant application had been submitted to Low Carbon Dorset to support this initiative. More detailed cost information had been requested and this was expected shortly.

The Town Surveyor advised that he had engaged with local contractors with a view to the structure and the PV panels being provided and installed by local companies.

Members discussed:

- The need to ensure innovation in the project to meet the grant application requirements.
- A preference for local contractors.
- Timescales for delivery.
- Engagement with Energy Local Bridport.
- Moving the Town Council's energy supplies to Octopus Energy.

Officers advised that it was hoped that an installer could be appointed by the end of November 2020, with installation possible by Spring 2021, subject to planning permission.

The Town Surveyor reported that Bridport Football Club could also be considered as a potential location for further installations.

Cllr Kelvin Clayton advised that Dorset Council was considering locations for public electric vehicle charging points.

RESOLVED: that the Council's energy broker be invited to the next meeting, to discuss energy contracts.

RESOLVED: that representatives of Dorset Community Energy be invited to the next meeting, to consider Town Council engagement with Energy Local Bridport.

14. LOW CARBON DORSET ENERGY REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3552.

Members discussed:

- Solid wall insulation in the part of Mountfield occupied by the Town Council. The Town Surveyor advised this would be looked at, along with secondary glazing. Specialist contractors would be needed, to ensure that the character of the building was not adversely affected.
- The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme as a potential source of funding.

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

15. BUDGET

The Town Clerk reported that the Council's Budget Working Group had met for initial consideration of a challenging budget situation, as a result of COVID-19. A deficit of £120,000 to £130,000 had been estimated for the current year, and a similar figure could be expected in 2021/22 if the situation remained unchanged. Members had, however, indicated a preference to avoid adverse impact on the climate emergency reserve.

16. COMMUNICATIONS AND UPDATES ON OTHER ISSUES

Cllr Ian Bark updated members on engagement with Plastic Free Bridport, which was working with community groups initially. He would liaise with the Town Clerk to arrange for the Town Council to sign up.

Members considered:

- The impact of COVID-19 on use of single use plastics.
- The extensive use of plastics by dentists and other services.
- The need to consider appropriate disposal, where single use plastic was necessary.
- Engagement with Bridport Business Chamber.
- The appointment of a Plastic Free Champion for Town Council activities.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Sub Committee meeting will take place on Thursday 26 November at 11am.

In addition to the energy broker and Dorset Community Energy, Seeding the Future would be invited, subject to progress with a proposal document agreed at the last meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.