

Minutes of a VIRTUAL meeting (GoToMeeting ID: 777-258-597) of
BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL held on Tuesday 29 September 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT Cllr Ian Bark – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Geoffrey Ackerman	Julian Jones
	Rose Allwork	Gill Massey
	Ian Bark	Maggie Ray
	Dave Bolwell	Martin Ray
	Sandra Brown	Anne Rickard
	Sarah Carney	Dave Rickard
	Kelvin Clayton	Sarah Williams
	Karen Hunt	Steve Williams

Also present: Will Austin (Town Clerk), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor),
Paul Fuszard (Finance and Office Manager) and Terri Foxwell
(Tourist Information Centre Manager).

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

Members considered whether the Town Council should embrace virtual meetings after COVID-19, return to physical meetings, or consider a hybrid of the two. The general consensus was that a return to physical meetings was preferable when circumstances allowed, and that virtual meetings tended to be more tiring, less accessible to the public and that the quality of discussion was not as good.

No other matters were raised during the Public Forum.

24. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr Ros Kayes, due to a family emergency.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2020 be agreed as a correct record, and that the Mayor should sign the minutes at the earliest available opportunity.

27. QUESTIONS, IF ANY, PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 14 (a and b)

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

28. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 June 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 June 2020 be received.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 27 July 2020 were presented by Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 27 July 2020 be received.

(c) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 7 September 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 7 September 2020 be received.

(d) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 September 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 September 2020 be received.

(e) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 September 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 21 September 2020 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below (each recommendation was moved, seconded and declared to be carried):-

(Minute 21) FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2020/21 – 1ST REVISION

RESOLVED: that the 1st revision of the estimates for the year 2020/21 be approved.

(Minute 23 (i)) EXTERNAL AUDIT 2019/20

RESOLVED: that the report and finding of the external auditor in respect of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/2020 be approved.

Members thanked the Finance and Office Manager for his hard work and attention to detail in achieving a 24th successive annual report from the auditor with no matters of concern raised.

(f) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 9 September 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 9 September 2020 be received.

29. MOTION ON ANTI-RACISM

Members considered a motion submitted by Cllrs Sarah Carney and Ros Kayes in accordance with Standing Order 11(a). The motion was seconded and members debated.

Cllr Sarah Williams proposed and Cllr Sarah Carney seconded an amendment to the wording, and this was agreed by members. Following further discussion it was

RESOLVED: that the following motion be agreed:

Bridport is a rights-respecting town and Bridport Town Council notes with serious concern and distress the recent incidents of racial and homophobic attacks in the centre of our town.

Council strongly condemns racism in any form and commits to work proactively against all hate crime and for racial equality in our town.

Bridport Town Council acknowledges and supports the work that is being done, in this country and across the world, by BLM and others, to address issues of our colonial past, systemic racism and racial inequalities that are still evident today.

Council further notes with concern the recent government report showing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black, Asian and ethnic minority people.

Council resolves:

- To continue to promote our rights-respecting agenda and work with the community and the police in Dorset to ensure that policing and behaviour in Bridport is fair to all residents and visitors, and to ensure that everyone enjoys equal respect and protection from prejudice, bias and abuse.
- To liaise with local representatives of the Stand up to Racism Dorset movement and the Dorset Race Equality Council in order to explore how we can ensure Council activities are not affected by unconscious bias, are racially inclusive and do not contribute to systemic racism.

- To ask Dorchester County Hospital Foundation Trust for information on demographic data on their COVID-19 patients to determine any local disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black, Asian and ethnic minority people
- To ask our MP to ask government for an investigation into the reasons behind the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black, Asian and ethnic minority people and other causes of health inequalities.

30. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2020

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3540.

The Town Clerk summarised the report, which set out proposed amended arrangements for a Parade and an Act of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday, to accord with COVID-19 restrictions, and sought a volunteer to host a secular gathering.

Members considered:

- The possible impact of bad weather.
- The challenges of managing public attendance.
- Whether to proceed with a secular gathering in light of the COVID-19 situation.

RESOLVED: that the proposed arrangements be agreed in principle, and that the secular gathering be deferred until 2021.

31. BUDGET WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3541 which sought to agree any membership of the Budget Working Group over and above that already approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Summarising the report, the Town Clerk advised that the Finance & General Purposes Committee had agreed seven members for the Working Group and had requested that Full Council be invited to nominate more if required.

RESOLVED: that no further members be elected to the 2020/21 Budget Working Group.

32. CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM

The Town Clerk reported on the draft response tabled with the agenda, to a consultation relating to specific proposed changes to the current planning system. He also drew members' attention to further written comments submitted by Cllr Sarah Carney, following publication of the agenda.

Members thanked the Project Manager and Community Initiatives Officer for his draft response. Having considered this, and the comments submitted by Cllr Carney, it was: -

RESOLVED: that the draft be finalised by the Chairman of the Planning Committee and the Project Manager and Community Initiatives Officer under delegation, and be submitted as the Council's response.

33. RURAL SERVICES NETWORK – RURAL/MARKET TOWNS GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3542 inviting members to consider an invitation from the Rural Services Network to take up free membership of a recently formed rural and market towns consultative group. The free membership period was until April 2021, after which the annual fee would be £150.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council should become members of the Rural Services Network Rural and Market Towns Group, and that Cllr Sarah Williams be elected as the Town Council's representative.

34. TOTALLY LOCALLY SHOP

The Town Clerk reported on a request from Totally Locally, for an expression of support for a proposed business website for Bridport, and for funding support for a person to set up and manage the site.

Members complimented Totally Locally on their work to date, welcomed the initiative and discussed:

- Links with the Seeding the Future initiative.
- Whether Dorset Council could provide support.
- Whether funding support might be seen as directly funding local businesses.
- The inclusion of links to the website from the Town Council site.
- Alternative sources of funding.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council should offer an expression of support, and that Totally Locally be advised of possible funding sources.

35. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

RESOLVED: that the topic for discussion at the next full Council meeting should be local food.

36. COMMUNICATIONS

The following items were reported for information:

- (1) The Town Mayor reported the list of engagements, ENCL: 3543, and invited members to advise him of any suggestions for the Mayor's blog.
- (2) The Town Clerk reported that:
 - Beaminster Town Council had sought an indication of support or otherwise for possible buying of Dog Warden services from them. Members gave an informal indication that, having declined a request from Dorset Council to fund the service locally, the request should be declined.
 - A planning application had been notified, proposing the conversion of Chancery House from a day centre to 10 flats and other associated works. This would be considered by the Planning Committee on 26 October 2020.

- (3) The Leader reported that a motion to DAPTC in respect of planning legislation was to be amalgamated with a similar motion submitted by Beaminster Town Council.

The meeting closed at **8.40pm**.

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on 17 November 2020