

Minutes of a VIRTUAL meeting (GoToMeeting ID: 910-098-317) of the ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held on Wednesday 6 January 2021 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Kelvin Clayton (Chairman)

Ian Bark	Ros Kayes
Sarah Carney	Anne Rickard
Karen Hunt	Dave Rickard
Barry Irvine	

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Rose Allwork (as an observer, from 7.29pm, part way through minute 47) and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no speakers for the Public Forum.

#### **42. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Steve Williams.

#### **43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **44. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 November 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record, and that the Chairman should sign the minutes at the earliest available opportunity.

#### **45. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 26 November 2020 and 17 December 2020 be received and adopted.

The Town Clerk advised that, as agreed at the meeting of 17 December 2020, the Council's response to a consultation on the Dorset Council Climate Strategy had been submitted on 6 January 2021. Cllr Clayton was to attend a meeting regarding the short timescale for scrutinising the consultation results. Members echoed this concern and the absence of a 'road map' and checks and balances. Cllrs Rose Allwork and Karen Hunt were liaising, to make a submission to Dorset Council.

#### **46. TREE PLANTING SCHEMES**

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council would be working with Bridport Tree Group over the winter on tree planting sites at Asker Meadows, West Bay and Wellfields Drive/Acer Avenue. In respect of the latter site, the Tree Group and a group of local residents were keen to plant trees and install a wildflower planter on highway verges owned by Dorset Council, and a request had been made for the Town Council to accept liability for the management of the trees.

Members welcome the project, and considered the management costs arising from tree planting activity generally. It was felt that a limit should be set on the number of trees to be planted at Wellfields Drive/Acer Avenue, and that Dorset Council should be consulted on the type of tree. Fruit trees were discussed, although it was recognised that these can require a lot of management and be costly to maintain.

Members further considered ways in which the costs of tree management outside of the Bridport parish might be offset, such as through the Lengthsman Scheme, and the benefits of groups emerging to maintain green spaces. Cllr Ian Bark recommended that such groups should be encouraged to consider the Bridport Community Orchard Group as a good model to follow.

RECOMMENDED: that Bridport Town Council accepts liability for the management of trees planted by the residents group at Wellfields Drive/Acer Avenue, subject to agreement with the group and Dorset Council on the appropriate type of trees.

RESOLVED: that the group be encouraged to become a constituted organisation.

#### **47. BRIDPORT RIGHTS RESPECTING STEERING GROUP**

The Town Clerk reported that the Rights Respecting project, that had been adopted by the Town Council in March 2019, was now complete. The Steering Group had disbanded, although some members were now engaged in a new project in partnership with the Lyric Theatre, which held the project grant funding. In order to avoid any confusion over responsibility for the new project, the Clerk recommended that the Town Council should end its formal adoption of the earlier project.

Members acknowledged the good work of the Rights Respecting Steering Group and discussed its origins, community objectives and the specific implications for the Town Council, which had already embedded the Rights Respecting ethos into its work.

The Clerk advised that ending the adoption of the initiative did not prevent the Council from adopting further Rights Respecting projects in the future. He further noted that the original decision to act as responsible body had been recommended by the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, due to the financial implications. He advised that any end to the arrangement should follow the same decision-making route.

RECOMMEND to the Finance and General Purposes Committee: that Bridport Town Council ends its adoption of the Rights Respecting Town initiative.

#### **48. COMMITTEE BUDGET 2020/2021**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3577, proposing that the Committee forego its budget for 2021/22, in light of the financial impact of COVID-19. He noted that there remained a significant reserve allocation for the Climate Emergency Action Plan, and that any unspent portion of the current year's budget could be carried forward.

Members considered the impact should the decision be a permanent one, and recognised the opportunity to assess the consequences of such a change when considering the 2022/23 budget.

RESOLVED: that the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee forego its budget for 2021/22.

**49. PLASTIC FREE BRIDPORT**

Cllr Ian Bark, the Town Mayor, updated members on the Plastic Free Bridport initiative. The project was progressing well, although activity had reduced recently. Work with businesses had eased over Christmas, given the pressures they faced then, and similarly subsequently due to the lockdown. A business mailshot had been well received. The Town Mayor thanked the Climate Action Sub Committee for agreeing formal support for the initiative, as this was one of the requirements of Plastic Free status. Responding to a query from Cllr Barry Irvine, the Town Mayor confirmed that the emphasis was on single use plastic, including responsible disposal where single use was unavoidable.

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

**50. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

There were no reports from representatives to outside bodies.

**51. COMMUNICATIONS AND UPDATES ON OTHER ISSUES**

The Town Clerk reported on the Dorset Coast Forum e-News, which had been highlighted to him by Cllr Dave Rickard as an important and useful source of information. The Town Clerk reminded members that a link to the newsletter was routinely published in the weekly Members' Bulletin.

Cllr Ian Bark reported that he had received an email from Litter Free Dorset that he would circulate.

The Town Clerk reported on the Town Council's arrangements for remote working following the announcement of the lockdown, and those for staff whose jobs could not be carried out at home. This included the outdoor, cemetery, market and cleaning staff.

Responding to a query from Cllr Kelvin Clayton, the Town Clerk reported that a traveller encampment at Station Road Car Park was being addressed by Dorset Council, as owner and operator of the car park. The Police were aware and are working with Dorset Council on the matter.

The meeting closed at **7.58pm**.

**The next meeting of this committee will be held on 10 March 2021**