

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a VIRTUAL meeting (GoToMeeting ID: 768-405-933) BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE held on Tuesday 8 December 2020 at 11.00a.m.

PRESENT Cllr Sarah Carney

Cllrs: Barry Irvine (to 12.08pm) Martin Ray
Maggie Ray Steve Williams (from 11.47am)

Also in attendance: Cllrs Anne Rickard and Dave Rickard.
Will Austin (Town Clerk).
Paul Fuszard (Finance & Office Manager).
Vanessa White and Phyllida Culpin (Bridport Area Development Trust, from 11.25am until minute 28, 12.08pm).
One member of the press (until minute 27, 11.35am).

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers at the Public Forum.

20. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Geoffrey Ackerman and Sandra Brown.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Sarah Carney declared an interest as a trustee of the Bridport Area Development Trust. As Cllr Carney's status as a trustee was as the Town Council's representative, this was not considered to be a disclosable pecuniary interest.

22. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee held on 8 September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record, and that the Chairman should sign the minutes at the earliest available opportunity.

23. OPERA CIRCUS

Consideration was given to a grant application previously considered. ENCL: 3567.

RESOLVED: that a grant of £500 be awarded.

24. FINGERPRINT DANCE CIC

Consideration was given to a request for support, ENCL: 3568.

Members supported the project in principle, but considered that further information was needed on the type of support required. It was clear that venue support was being sought, but less clear whether funding was being requested.

Members also noted that the applicant had received a grant of £500 earlier in the year from the Council's community grants scheme.

RESOLVED: that further discussions take place to ascertain the best type of support to be provided, and that any decision on funding support be delegated to the Chairman.

25. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY CONTRACTS

The Town Clerk reported that the Climate Action Sub Committee had discussed energy contracts at its last meeting and has asked that a policy be developed that prioritises the climate in awarding contracts. Traditionally, the Council had tended to look for the lowest cost 'reputable' provider and any change from that policy would need agreement via the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee. Members' views were being sought to feed into the drafting of a revised policy.

Cllr Dave Rickard requested that any review should look at which energy suppliers could meet the Council's requirements, and at the ethics of any brokerage used. He also advised that the Council's Financial Regulations may need to be reviewed, to incorporate a more ethical position.

Members supported the approach taken by the Climate Action Sub Committee and

RESOLVED: that any comments for inclusion in a draft Ethical Energy Policy be forwarded to the Town Clerk.

26. COMMUNICATIONS

The taxi rank in West Street and its potential relocation to the rear of Waitrose is to be further investigated by the Town Surveyor. Members indicated their informal support for an approach to Dorset Council.

27. 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.

28. LITERARY & SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE

Consideration was given to ENCL: 3570.

Vanessa White and Phyllida Culpin presented a paper and discussed the plans for the immediate and long term future of the Literary & Scientific Institute, and requested funding support from the Town Council, governed by a service level agreement.

Cllr Steve Williams joined the meeting during this item, at 11.47am

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that a decision on support funding to the Bridport Area Development Trust for the specific purpose of the management of the Literary & Scientific Institute be deferred, pending receipt of the feasibility study and business plan currently being developed.

Cllr Barry Irvine left the meeting at this point, at 12.08pm

At 12.08pm it was

RESOLVED: that the meeting be suspended for a comfort break.

The meeting resumed at 12.17pm.

29. DRAFT ESTIMATES 2021/22

The Town Clerk reported the latest position on the draft budget. Members considered the Clerk's report and made a number of suggested amendments to guide the draft and noted that confirmation of receipt of the tax base for 2021/22 would be welcomed, to help inform that process.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and recommendations go forward to the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 11 January 2021 and the full Council on 20 January 2021.

The meeting closed at 13:08pm.

The next meeting of this Sub Committee will be held on 2 March 2021