

Minutes of a virtual meeting (GoToMeeting ID: 619-038-277) of **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held on Thursday 14 May 2020 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Barry Irvine (in the Chair for item 1)

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

ALSO PRESENT: Town Council Officers Will Austin (Town Clerk), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Paul Fuszard (Finance and Office Manager), Terri Foxwell (TIC Manager), Linda Bullock (Mayor's Secretary), Steve Yarde (Clerical Officer), Claire Peters-Way (Clerical Officer) and Jill Bead (TIC Assistant).

George Streatfeild (High Sheriff of Dorset) and Amanda Streatfeild.

1. **ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR (CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL)**

The Mayor welcomed attendees, and reflected on his year in office before inviting members to nominate the Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

It was moved by Cllr Sarah Williams, seconded by Cllr Barry Irvine and, on being put to the vote:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ian Bark be elected Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council for the ensuing municipal year 2020/2021.

The vote was unanimous.

Cllr Ian Bark read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and presented the signed declaration to the meeting.

The Mayor offered thanks for his election, and assumed the chair. Before proceeding with the remaining business of the meeting, he thanked the outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor for their terms of office, and Cllrs Sarah Williams and Barry Irvine for their nominations. He further thanked Linda Bullock, the Mayor's Secretary on her last official day in that role, for her long and invaluable service to him and to past Mayors. He also thanked his wife Anne for her support.

The Mayor received the chains of office.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geoff Ackerman and Sandra Brown.

RESOLVED: that a dispensation be granted to exempt all members from the requirement to attend physical meetings until such time as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR (VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL)

The Mayor invited members to nominate the Deputy Town Mayor and Vice Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

It was moved by Cllr Dave Rickard, seconded by Cllr Maggie Ray and, on being put to the vote:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Sarah Williams be elected Deputy Town Mayor and Vice Chairman of the Council for the ensuing municipal year 2020/2021.

The vote was unanimous.

Cllr Sarah Williams read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and presented the signed declaration to the meeting.

Cllr Sarah Williams offered thanks for her election.

The Deputy Mayor received the medallion of office.

5. ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor invited members to nominate the Leader of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

It was moved by Cllr Maggie Ray, seconded by Cllr Steve Williams and, on being put to the vote:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Dave Rickard be elected Leader of the Council for the ensuing municipal year 2020/2021.

The vote was unanimous.

Cllr Dave Rickard read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and presented the signed declaration to the meeting.

The Leader offered thanks for his election.

6. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

7. COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 27 January 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Anne Rickard.

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

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 February 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Anne Rickard.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 February 2020 be received.

(c) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 27 April 2020 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Anne Rickard.

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

(d) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 11 March 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 11 March 2020 to be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below: -

(Minute 60) REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ian Bark be appointed as the Town Council representative to the Plastic Free Bridport Group.

(e) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 16 March 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 16 March 2020 be received.

8. STANDING ORDER 14(b)

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

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS FOR 2020/21

Consideration was given to the establishment of the committees, sub committees and working groups for the ensuing municipal year 2020/21, their terms of reference and delegations as set out in the Town Council's constitution, ENCL: 3503.

RESOLVED: that the committees, sub committees and working groups be established for 2020/21, with the terms of reference and delegations, including the delegations to the Town Clerk, as set out in the Appendix to the report.

10. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS FOR 2020/21

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3504.

RESOLVED: that the membership of committees, sub committees and working groups for the municipal year 2020/21 be approved as set out in the Appendix to these minutes.

11. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Town Clerk reported that the Council was required to review these documents annually. A detailed review during the year was planned but the current versions were considered fit for purpose and the Clerk recommended they be adopted to ensure that the legal requirement was met, in case of any unforeseen disruption to Council business as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak.

RESOLVED: that the Council's existing Standing Orders and Financial Regulations shall apply for 2020/21, as previously adopted.

12. MEETINGS CALENDAR 2020/21

The Town Clerk advised that the schedule of meetings previously agreed in February 2020 had been updated to include meetings of the Climate Emergency Sub Committee. He asked that members consider approving the updated schedule.

RESOLVED: that the calendar of meetings for 2020/21 be confirmed.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reported his list of engagements, ENCL: 3507.

The Mayor further reported that:

- The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan had been formally 'made' by Dorset Council at its Cabinet meeting on 5 May 2020. The Cabinet had resolved to thank Bridport Town Council and the Joint Councils Committee on producing the document.
- Brigadier John Dean had advised that he would continue as Parade Commander for Remembrance.

- John Collingwood would continue in his role as Town Crier.
- Jill Beed had taken over the role of Mayor's Secretary.

The Town Clerk reported on the Council's operations in the context of the COVID-19 situation. Office-based staff were carrying out their duties from home, supported by technology. The Clerk said he was incredibly grateful to officers for their work to keep the Council operating. This also applied to the outdoor staff who had continued to work since the 'lockdown', with appropriate safety measures in place. Council services continued to be delivered, with modifications where necessary. Council meetings had been suspended in March, and the resumption in April via virtual means had resulted in the cancellation of two meetings. The changes, alongside lost income as a result of the lockdown had in effect cost the Council an estimated £50,000 over a two-month period. Further costs and losses were to be expected, and these were considered manageable at this time. Some external support funding had been received but no Government support had been available. Plans were being developed to respond to the relaxation of the lockdown, including the possible re-opening of Bridport Market to non-essential stalls and a return to office working.

Members discussed the financial impact of the COVID-19 emergency, and the need to keep this under review as the situation developed.

At 7.56pm it was:

RESOLVED: that the meeting be suspended to enable members and other attendees to participate in the clap for carers and other key workers, and that the meeting should resume at 8.10pm.

At 8.10pm the meeting resumed.

The Town Clerk reported on:

- The Town Council's involvement in supporting the community through the lockdown, including the development of a helpline to provide integrated support from over 20 organisations to the wider Bridport area, liaison with the MP and countywide agencies, support for the 'Bridport Lockdown' archive, tributes at the Town Hall thanking key workers, promotional banners in support of the local economy.
- The cancellation of planned VE Day events. Bunting had been erected and a virtual commemoration has been provided, including an address by the Mayor.
- A planned meeting of the Bridport Collaboration group to consider collective activity during the COVID-19 recovery period.
- The current situation for organisations in receipt of annual financial support from the Town Council.
- The drafting of the Town Council's annual report and video.
- The Annual Town Meeting, which was cancelled due to COVID-19. No virtual alternative was provided for in legislation, but this could be considered in any case to show an attempt to accord with the requirements.
- The drafting by Dorset Council of an engagement strategy for the Building Better Lives development. This would be discussed at a virtual meeting with town councillors.

Members discussed:

- Disappointment at the suspension of some virtual meetings by Dorset Council, which had been described in the media as the ‘suspension of democracy’. Cllr Clayton advised that he would keep town councillors updated on this. Cllr Sarah Williams confirmed that some committee meetings were being held, but did not understand why the Full Council could not meet virtually. Cllrs Sarah Williams and Dave Bolwell advised they would continue to liaise with Cllr Nick Ireland regarding local concerns.
- The advantages and disadvantages of a possible reopening of car parks and public toilets by Dorset Council.

The Council Leader reported on:

- The challenges of working with Dorset Council in the context of COVID-19 and the recent reorganisation of local government in Dorset. He thanked officers and the three Dorset Council members for Bridport, for their working in maintaining the relationship.
- The need to review Town Council plans to take account of the impact of COVID-19.
- The impending retirement of Linda Bullock. He thanked her on behalf of all ex-Mayors for her excellent support and guidance as the Mayor’s Secretary over many years.
- A desire to capture some of the more positive aspects of community life during the lockdown.

The meeting closed at **8.38pm**.

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on 16 June 2020

Bridport Town Council Memberships 2019/20

	Geoff Ackerman	Ian Bark	Dave Bolwell	Barry Irvine	Gill Massey	Martin Ray	Maggie Ray	Anne Rickard	Dave Rickard	Sarah Williams	Steve Williams	Kelvin Clayton	Julian Jones	Ros Kayes	Karen Hunt	Rose Allwork	Sarah Carney	Sandra Brown	Total	
MAIN COMMITTEES																				
F&GP (9)	*				*	*	*	*		*			*		*	*				9
Plans (9)	*	*	*	*				*		*		*	*				*			9
Environment (9)		*		*				*	*		*	*		*	*		*			9
JOINT COMMITTEE																				
NPJCC (1 + 1 reserve)		*								Res										1 + Res
JOINT COMMITTEES																				
Best Value (9)	*			*		*	*				*			*	*		*	*		9
WORKING GROUPS																				
Highways (5)	*	*				*							*				*			5
Market & Business (5)	*	*								*						*		*		5

Notes

1. No preferences were received in respect of membership of the Staffing Appeals Sub Committee. As a sub committee of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, this will be a matter for that committee.
2. The membership of working groups other than Market & Business Liaison and Highways & Transportation will be determined by the 'parent' committees.