

Minutes of a Meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at Mountfield on Monday 14 March 2022 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr: Maggie Ray (Chairman)

Cllrs: Geoff Ackerman	Gill Massey
Rose Allwork	Martin Ray
Karen Hunt	Anne Rickard
Julian Jones	Sarah Williams

Also in attendance: Cllrs Dave Rickard (ex-officio), Paul Fuszard (Finance and Office Manager), Terri Foxwell (Tourist Information Centre Manager), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Will Austin (Town Clerk), and one member of the public.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no speakers in the public forum.

### **68. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Rose Allwork, who attended virtually up to and including minute 76.

### **69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Julian Jones declared an interest in Minute 74 as a member of the Tennis Club.

### **70. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 January 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **71. BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 1 March 2022 be received and adopted, and that the following recommendations be approved:

**(min. 35)**

RESOLVED:

#### **Grant application – Seeding our Future**

that a grant of £500 be awarded on condition that

- (i) detailed spending plans be agreed with the Chairman of the Best Value & Scrutiny Sub Committee; and
- (ii) regular updates be provided by Alan Heeks to the Council's Climate Action Sub Committee.

Cllrs Anne Rickard and Sarah Williams abstained.

**(min. 37)**

RESOLVED:

**Investments Review 2021/22 and Strategy 2022/23**

- (i) that the investments made in 2021/22 be noted as in the report; and
- (ii) that the Investment Strategy for 2022/23 be approved as drafted.
- (iii) Further consideration be given to ethical investments and a report to be brought back to a future meeting.

**(min. 38)**

RESOLVED:

**Asset Register**

that the Asset Register be approved and the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to make any final amendments, before it is signed by the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk.

**72. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 8 February 2022 be received, with thanks to the Tourist Information Centre Manager and her team.

Responding to a query, the Town Clerk advised that business input to the Council's work was being expanded to include Totally Locally and other business stakeholders.

**73. ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE**

Members considered two recommendations agreed at the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 9 March 2022.

The Town Clerk reported on a recommendation from the committee to consider funding support for Park Yoga, a weekly free community activity for local people delivered by a charitable organisation. The cost to deliver this for a year was approximately £1,400, of which Park Yoga would potentially fund £700 of this for the initial year. Dorset Council would potentially support with £350 for the initial year. The committee had resolved that the Council consider supporting with £350 for this pilot opportunity for the Spring/Summer of 2022. Following discussion it was:

RESOLVED: that funding support to Park Yoga be provided from the West Bay Car Boot Sale grants scheme, subject to the Town Clerk checking that the criteria for the scheme are met.

**74. SERVICES ADMINISTED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor, ENCL: 3705. The Town Surveyor summarised the current position in respect of a number of ongoing projects.

**Mountfield Windows**

The Town Surveyor reported that window replacement works would commence this year.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

### **Bus Station/Bus Shelter**

RESOLVED: that an informal meeting be held with councillors to discuss further, prior to a presentation at Full Council.

### **Tennis Courts**

RECOMMEND: that funding of £22,500 be agreed, and that works may proceed on the basis of two quotes as these are highly specialist works.

### **Fisherman's Green**

The Town Surveyor reported that a company had requested licensed access to the pontoon, having previously used it without permission. A gated access was to be installed to prevent unauthorised use.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

### **Town Hall Redecoration**

RESOLVED: that internal decorations be approved at a cost of £7,300.

### **Cemetery Chapel**

RESOLVED: that repairs be approved at an estimated cost of £9,400, subject to insurance not being an option.

### **New Benches and Planters**

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

### **St Mary's Playing Fields**

RESOLVED: that protective perimeter fencing around the sports pitches be supported, subject to community consultation.

### **Land/Asset Transfers and Leases**

RESOLVED: that updates on asset transfers of Magna land, the WI Hall, and West Bay Discovery Centre be noted.

RESOLVED that progress with leases to Bridport FC and the Community Shed be noted.

### **North Mills and Court Orchard Play Areas**

RESOLVED: that play equipment funding of £19,000 be approved, from earmarked reserves and revenue budgets.

## **Murals**

RESOLVED: that ongoing discussions be noted.

## **Greta Berlin Sculptures**

RESOLVED: that the preferred location for these sculptures is Riverside Gardens.

### **75. UKRAINE – TOWN COUNCIL RESPONSE**

The Town Clerk reported that:

- The Town Hall clock had been illuminated in blue and yellow, and Ukraine flags had been raised at the Town Hall and Mountfield. He thanked Bridport Banners, who had provided the Town Hall flag at no cost.
- He had engaged with Chris Loder MP, Dorset Council Housing, and Bridport Refugee Support regarding arrangements for refugees.
- The Government had announced more details of the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, where people could offer to open their homes to those fleeing the war in Ukraine. The scheme appeared not to provide for any local council role in coordination.

Following discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: that further engagement in the refugee scheme be explored, the update be noted, and thanks be given to Bridport Banners.

### **76. BUDGET 2021/22 – EARMARKING**

The Finance and Office Manager reported that, in line with previous years, budget headings underspent may be reserved, to help finalise the budget outturn for the current financial year budget and to give flexibility for spending, outside of the formal annual accounts cycle.

RESOLVED: that the earmarking be carried out under delegation, in line with the approach set out by the Finance and Office Manager.

### **77. PENSIONS DISCRETIONS POLICY – REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3706.

RESOLVED: that the existing Pensions Discretions Policy be confirmed, with no changes.

### **78. STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

This item was not required, as a decision had been made at Full Council in May 2021.

### **79. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Gill Massey reported that the Bridport Community Orchard Group would be holding its MayFest on Monday 2 May 2022 at 3.00pm.

**80. COMMUNICATIONS**

The Town Clerk reported that:

- the post of Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer (Climate & Resilience) had recently been advertised;
- The Police & Crime Commissioner would be visiting to meet town councillors on 5 April at 3.30pm; and
- The Town Clerk would be on leave for the rest of the week.

**81. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented List 5 of the 2021/22 accounts, in the sum of £179,847.43 which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This was tabled for members' information, and it was

RESOLVED: that List 5 of the 2021/22 accounts be approved for signature by the Chairman at the earliest available opportunity.

**82. 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 and press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

**83. PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Town Surveyor updated members on matters relating to two leases.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

The meeting closed at **8.45pm**.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 13 June 2022**