

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Sarah Williams (Chairman)

Cllrs: Rose Allwork (from 7.08pm) Maggie Ray
Julian Jones (until 8.35pm) Martin Ray
Gill Massey Anne Rickard

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

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers in the public forum.

17. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllrs Geoffrey Ackerman, Rose Allwork (for lateness, having arrived at 7.08pm) and Karen Hunt.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Anne and Dave Rickard declared an interest in minute 20 as members of Transition Town Bridport.

Cllr Sarah Williams declared an interest in minute 20 as the council representative for Citizens' Advice Bridport and in minute 21 as a trustee of the Bridport Museum Trust.

19. MINUTES

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 6 September 2022 be received and the following recommendations be approved.

(Min. 14) Town Council Grants to Smaller Bodies 2022/23

(a) that the following grants be approved under the General Power of Competence:

	£
Bridport & District CAB – LED lighting	500
Stepping Out Cancer Rehabilitation Community Group – Group exercise and wellbeing scheme	500
The Bank of Dreams & Nightmares – conversion of a van in mobile banking unit	500

Bridport Heritage Forum – Tree planting, war walk and 50’s exhibition	1,000
Melplash Agricultural Society – Discover Farming Project	500
Bridport Food Matters – charity registration and community hub	500
Transition Town Bridport – Edible Garden project	500
Bridport Literary Festival – Brid Lit Kids project	350
Axe Valley & West Dorset Ring and Ride – Running costs	500
Bridport Chamber Orchestra – Summer concert 2023	250
The Chapel in the Garden – Warm hub	500
Bridport Youth Dance – Programme of after school dance classes	500
Bridport Youth Dance – Summer Art Workshop	400
Bridport Youth Dance – Education programme	500
AScape – Residential stays	500
Bridport Gig Club – Purchase of a new boat	500
Total Small Grants	£8,000

(Min. 15) Town Council grants to larger bodies 2022/23

RESOLVED: that, subject to the approval of the Council Leader following Service Level Agreement review meetings, the grants under a one-year Service Level Agreement be awarded for 2022/23 as follows:

Bridport Arts Centre	Bridport Leisure Centre	Citizens Advice Bureau	Bridport Museum	Bridport Youth & Community Centre	West Bay Discovery Centre (BADT)	2020 Skate & Ride	Literary & Scientific Institute (BADT)	Total
£6,000	£4,000	£5,000	£6,000	£15,000	£3,000	£5,000	£5,000	£49,000

RESOLVED: that 2020 Skate & Ride be contacted regarding Town Council representation.

21. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2022/23 – 1ST REVISION

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3745.

The Town Clerk explained the revised layout of the summary sheet, as requested at the last meeting and after answering one question, members thanked the Finance and Office Manager for his work in the effective management of the Council’s accounts.

RECOMMEND: that the 1st revision of the estimates for the year 2022/23 be approved.

22. BUDGET PLANNING 2023/24

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL 3746.

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed process and timetable for setting the Council’s budget for 2023/24, and key issues for consideration. He further advised that membership of the Budget Working Group would need to be reviewed. Following discussion, it was: -

RECOMMENDED: that

- (i) the membership of the Budget Working Group includes Cllrs Sarah Carney, Julian Jones, Gill Massey, Maggie Ray, Martin Ray, Anne Rickard, Dave Rickard and Sarah Williams; and
- (ii) further nominations be invited at the next Full Council meeting.

23. EXTERNAL AUDIT 2021/22

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk: 3747.

RESOLVED: to continue to opt in to the SAAA-appointed external audit arrangements for the period 2022-23 to 2026-27.

24. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR

The Town Surveyor updated members on:

- Solar Car Ports
- Changing Places toilets
- Plottingham Fields planning application
- Allotments
- Mountfield window replacement
- Bridport Football Club lease
- West Bay Discovery Centre transfer
- East Street public toilets
- Bridport Bus Station
- Murals
- Play areas
- Events
- Bridport Sculpture Trail
- Mountfield reception

In addition, The Old Dairy Site was discussed. Members considered a revised design following comments of the Conservation Officer, which had been submitted under the delegation previously given by the committee.

Members thanked Daryl Chambers, the Town Surveyor, for all his hard work in progressing these and other projects, so skillfully.

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

25. BANK ACCOUNT

Consideration was given to the Council's current account banking arrangements, ENCL: 3748.

Members considered the ethical aspects of these banking arrangements and the challenges presented in establishing the most ethical alternative, and in the practical aspects of changing bankers.

RESOLVED: that no change be implemented at this time and until after the Community Governance Review is complete, to enable further deliberations to

achieve a more ethical alternative, which in time, might be in a position to meet the Council's current account needs.

26. FLAG FLYING POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3749. The Town Clerk summarised the report, which proposed a revised policy taking account of comments from the previous meeting. He thanked the Chair for highlighting that the proclamation of a new King needed to be reflected in the policy.

RESOLVED: that the Flag Flying Policy be approved as tabled, subject to changing the draft wording and dates relating to the Queen, such that the policy refers to the monarch's actual and official birthdays.

27. BEACH WHEELCHAIRS

The Town Clerk reported that, following the successful installation of beach matting at West Beach, local volunteers were now pursuing beach wheelchairs. Their work included discussions with Parkdean Resorts in respect of on-site management, with Dorset Council regarding storage, and with the Town Council regarding booking, ownership, insurance, and support funding. A crowdfunding campaign had been launched.

Members welcomed the pursuit of beach wheelchairs, and following discussion

RESOLVED: funding of up to £3,500 be approved towards this project, subject to match funding.

28. APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3750.

RECOMMEND: that this matter be considered further at Full Council, with the inclusion of Bridport Football Club as an additional body requiring representation.

29. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3751.

RECOMMEND: that this matter be considered further at Full Council.

30. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Gill Massey highlighted the success of the Community Orchard Group's recent juicing sessions.

Cllr Dave Rickard updated members on his recent attendance at the Dorset Coast Forum annual conference.

RESOLVED: that the reports from outside bodies be noted.

31. COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Clerk reported that

- (1) Extensive extra work had been carried out at short notice upon the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 2, and he thanked the Mayor and officers for their work on this;
- (2) The Town Council was a finalist in the Star Council Awards for 2022, which were due to be held online at 12.00pm on Thursday 13 October 2022, and
- (3) The Town Council had received a clean audit for 2021/22, which would need to be approved at Full Council.

Members thanked Paul Fuszard, Finance and Office Manager, for his sterling work on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

32. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented List 2 of the 2022/23 accounts, in the sum of £482,626.08, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: that Payment List 2 of 2022/23 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

33. 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.

34. STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk updated members on a staffing matter.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

The meeting closed at **8.55pm**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 14 November 2022