

Minutes of the ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Wednesday 11 January 2023 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Dave Rickard (Chairman, in place of Kelvin Clayton)

Ian Bark                      Anne Rickard  
Karen Hunt                     Steve Williams

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Ros Kayes (attending virtually, which does not meet the legal requirement), Kim Squirrell (Totally Locally Bridport), and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no speakers for the Public Forum.

### **39. APOLOGIES**

In the absence of the Chairman, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Dave Rickard be elected Chairman for this meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sarah Carney, Kelvin Clayton and Ros Kayes, whose virtual attendance did not meet the legal requirement for members to be present at the meeting.

### **40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **41. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 November 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **42. CLIMATE ACTION SUB COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 24 November 2022 be received and adopted.

### **43. CLOSE THE DOOR**

The Town Clerk reported that the Chairman had requested this subject, a campaign to encourage retail and other public outlets to keep their doors closed to save energy and cost, be tabled for consideration. There was no current national campaign, the previous campaign having been dormant since 2019. A local campaign could however be considered.

Cllr Anne Rickard reported on activity during the previous campaign. 22 businesses had signed up to the scheme.

At the invitation of members, Kim Squirrell of Totally Locally Bridport reported that there had been a positive response from businesses at the last Totally Locally meeting, and that the matter would be discussed at the next team meeting on 12 January 2023. Information could also be shared via letter and a WhatsApp group.

Members considered:

- The more pressing need for action in the current economic conditions, and the urgency of the climate emergency;
- Who would lead a local campaign and which partners might be involved;
- The need for media coverage of a campaign;
- A design for a local campaign logo;
- Whether the national campaign might reappear;
- Use of the business contacts from the previous campaign; and
- The idea of a trial campaign to be reviewed at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that

- (i) Cllr Anne Rickard should provide business details and other supporting information from the previous Close the Door Campaign to Totally Locally Bridport; and
- (ii) The Town Clerk should attempt to contact the national Close the Door campaign, to enquire as to its current status and activity.

#### **44. BRIDPORT HARDSHIP FUND**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3772, summarising a proposed community hardship scheme and inviting members to agree arrangements for Town Council involvement in approving hardship payments.

Members discussed the proposed scheme and possible delegations, and

RESOLVED: that the proposed scheme be supported, and that Town Council involvement in decision-making be delegated to the Town Clerk and the Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer.

#### **45. EMERGENCY HOMELESS PODS**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3773 setting out a request from Bridport Community Kitchen for the possible installation of an emergency sleeping pod in Bridport.

Members considered:

- The need for a co-ordinated approach, and 'buy in' from both statutory and non-statutory stakeholders in a holistic process, that sees the use of the pod as a starting point for further support and a 'journey' out of street homelessness;
- The importance of the involvement of Dorset Council as housing authority, and Julian House, along with associated services such as health and mental health in delivering this process;
- A need for housing officer capacity in Bridport to enable the longer-term solutions beyond the individuals' use of the pod;
- Whether the pods might be optimally used and welcomed, if seen by the prospective users as independent of any one particular organisation;

- How the operational running costs would be met;
- Whether there was a need for a prioritisation process, if demand exceeds supply of the pods at any given time;
- How the project would ensure that the pods did not attract demand from elsewhere, given the likely limitations of support available beyond the use of the pod; and
- A further need for the Community Kitchen to discuss locations with the Town Surveyor, and to agree the first location, if the plan was to purchase one pod now ahead of further fundraising.

RESOLVED: that the proposal be supported in principle, subject to the matters noted in these minutes being addressed.

#### **46. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Anne Rickard reported that Transition Town Bridport had been awarded a grant for the 'Building on our Established Foundations' film project by Transition Network, and that the initiative was supported by Bridport Arts Centre. Lesley Windsor would be facilitating this.

Cllr Ian Bark reported that the Bridport Community Orchard Group would host the annual Wassail event on Sunday 15 January 2023.

RESOLVED: that the reports from outside bodies be noted.

#### **47. COMMUNICATIONS AND UPDATES ON OTHER ISSUES**

The Town Clerk reported that the Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer had engaged with Bridport Bird Club to help facilitate a small project to install nest boxes for Dippers under a number of bridges along the rivers Brit and Asker. An estimated cost for the boxes of £100 would be met from existing delegated budgets.

The meeting closed at **8.08pm**.

**The next meeting of this committee will be held on 8 March 2023**