

## ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the CLIMATE ACTION SUB COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held on Thursday 24 November 2022 at 11:00am.

PRESENT Cllr Rose Allwork (via zoom) Kelvin Clayton  
Ian Bark Dave Rickard

ALSO PRESENT: Tim Jelfs (National Farmers Union Beaminster Branch), Will Austin (Town Clerk), David Dixon (Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer), and Caroline Pearce (Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer).

### PUBLIC FORUM

Tim Jelfs, Vice Chairman of the NFU Beaminster branch, introduced himself to the sub-committee. The branch area included Bridport and surrounding parishes, and was interested in working with the Town Council. He invited members to attend a stakeholder meeting at Kingston Maurward College on 6 December 2022, at which the issue of food security would be amongst the items discussed. The organisation was committed to achieving net zero by 2040.

Cllr Rose Allwork advised members that Mr Jelfs was attending, due to the Town Council's work on food security.

The Chairman thanked Mr Jelfs for his address.

### **18. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Karen Hunt, and from Cllr Rose Allwork whose virtual attendance via Zoom could not in law be regarded as actual attendance.

### **19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **20. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the notes of the meeting of the committee held on 18 August 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record, and signed by the chairman.

### **21. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN PRIORITIES 2022/23**

Consideration was given to a report of the Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer, ENCL: 3766, providing position statements on Climate Emergency Action Plan priorities. The following were considered in detail:

- Bridport Investment Plan. The Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer advised that the net zero ambition for business was now embedded in this newly drafted plan. Responding to a question, he also advised that the farming

community had been engaged in the development of the plan and was specifically referenced under the environment theme.

- Solar car ports. A note was circulated providing an update on the car ports; construction was complete and a grant from Low Carbon Dorset would be claimed, once testing confirmed that the panels were functioning. The project had been complicated by supply chain issues, inflationary price increases, and current complexities in engaging an energy supplier, not least because the Council's main provider, Ecotricity, was not currently offering a Smart Export Guarantee scheme, to enable the sale of solar energy. There also remained a need for a decision on whether to use the solar energy generated to feed into the Energy Local Bridport 'grid', and/or to run electric vehicle charging points. The latter option was further complicated by large increases in the cost of charging points, and both options were hampered by the exorbitant cost of a metering system, arising from the current energy crisis.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the following be pursued:

- (i) Single phase electric vehicle charging using the solar panels; and
  - (ii) A Smart Export Guarantee agreement with Octopus, aimed at feeding energy into the Energy Local Bridport initiative.
- Energy Champions. A network of five Warm Hubs, that provided a means of providing energy efficiency information to people in fuel poverty, had been instigated. The initiative was a partnership with the Youth & Community Centre, local churches, and the Chapel in the Garden. Demand was limited at present but was increasing and the two most recent sessions had attracted 12 and 25 people respectively. It was hoped that the Warm Hubs might also identify new volunteer Energy Champions. Further Energy Champions sessions had also been organised to commence from January 2023, working with Citizens Advice. The next step following this, was to engage residents in energy saving, using thermal imaging cameras. Social media campaigns were heavily promoting the Energy Champions and Warm Hubs.

Cllr Dave Rickard asked whether there had been contact with Transition Town Bridport regarding a 'Close The Door' campaign. Cllr Kelvin Clayton advised that the issue would be tabled for discussion at the next meeting of the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

## **22. LOCAL FOOD INITIATIVES**

The Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer reported that a discussion with Seeding Our Future had been deferred to the next meeting.

A paper was circulated setting out the issues to be addressed in developing local food 'mapping' as previously requested by the sub-committee, and recommending that the Town Council should arrange a stakeholder meeting to develop the approach, and to link the initiative to food-related actions contained in the Bridport Investment Plan.

Members considered:

- The relative roles of stakeholders, government, Dorset Council, and Bridport Town Council.
- The provisions made in the Bridport Investment Plan.
- The arrangements for a stakeholder meeting.
- Whether supermarkets should be engaged.
- The limitations of the Town Council's financial and staffing capacity.
- The challenges of food production.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Town Council should call a meeting between Bridport Local Food Group and Bridport Food Matters to map out what food and food security projects are underway or planned for 2023, and what kind of support the two groups want to request from the Town Council.
- (ii) That any requests arising from the meeting be considered by the Council, alongside commitments linked to the Bridport Investment Plan.

### **23. CO-CARS PROPOSAL**

The Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer summarised a proposal from Co-Cars to provide a car club and/or an e-bike club in Bridport. The proposal estimated the VAT exclusive costs to be:

- For a car club, £3,000 as a one-off payment, followed by monthly payments of £750 per month underwritten utilisation for 12 months, with any shortfall also covered by the Town Council.
- For an e-bike club, £78,000.

Members considered:

- The challenge of the significant cost and raising funding to meet this.
- Links with Bridport Cohousing and the Foundry Lea development.
- Involving Dorset Council to develop a countywide scheme.
- The benefits of a wider scheme with more locations.
- Encouraging take-up.

RESOLVED: that the proposal be shared with Dorset Council, the Foundry Lea development consortium, and Bridport Cohousing.

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

The Town Clerk reported that the West Bay Car Boot Sale grants scheme was open for applications with a closing date of 16 December 2022. Applications that contributed to the Climate Emergency Action Plan were particularly welcomed, and members were asked to promote the grants scheme.

### **25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Sub Committee meeting will take place on Thursday 15 December 2022 at 11:00am.

The meeting closed at 12.33pm.