

Minutes of the meeting of **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held on Tuesday 24 January 2023 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Ian Bark – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Dave Bolwell	Gill Massey
	Sandra Brown	Anne Rickard
	Sarah Carney	Dave Rickard
	Kelvin Clayton	Sarah Williams
	Karen Hunt	Steve Williams
	Ros Kayes	

ALSO PRESENT Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Paul Fuszard (Finance & Office Manager), Terri Foxwell (Tourist Information Centre Manager), Will Austin (Town Clerk), and two members of the public.

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor advised that a scheduled discussion regarding youth work would be deferred to the March meeting, the date of which might need to be changed to enable a change of venue to Bridport Youth & Community Centre.

The public and councillors engaged in discussion regarding a 20mph speed limit for Bridport. Mr John Collingwood spoke with regard to the Twenty's Plenty campaign, and the need for evidence to support an application for a town-wide 20mph speed limit. He considered that 'Speedwatch' devices did not provide good data, and that satellite-based alternatives were available. He suggested that 'Twenty's Plenty' signs could be attached to bins to provide an effective message.

Members discussed:

- Requesting that the Neighbourhood Plan Joint Councils Committee discuss the 20mph limit, so that all parishes in the built-up area of Bridport were engaged;
- Targeting specific roads using Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs);
- A contrast between Dorset, where implementation of 20mph limits was limited by a suggested lack of resources for enforcement, and Cornwall, where a widespread roll-out of a 20mph limit was under way;
- A reduced signage requirement if a town-wide limit was to be implemented;
- Existing 20mph limits in all local centres in London; and
- A suggestion that a 'blanket' 20mph limit would be simpler for motorists to understand and follow.

Mr John Collingwood also spoke in the Open Public Forum, reminding the Town Council that 22 September would be International Car-Free Day, and asking whether the Council would participate in any way. The Mayor advised this would be followed up.

The Mayor thanked the two members of the public present for their attendance, and they left the meeting at this stage.

57. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllrs Geoffrey Ackerman, Rose Allwork, Maggie Ray, Martin Ray, and Barry Irvine, who had been granted a leave of absence.

The Town Clerk advised that Cllr Irvine would not be able to attend meetings for the foreseeable future, for health reasons, and asked that members consider an extension to a previously granted leave of absence that would expire on 4 March 2023. This expiry date was prior to the next scheduled Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Barry Irvine be granted a leave of absence, for 6 months, to run from 5 March 2023.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

59. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Town Mayor.

Members noted a need to follow-up with NALC regarding the National Planning Policy Framework, and on a proposed meeting with Dorset Council's Head of Planning and Conservation Officer.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Bridport Communities Trust held on 9 January 2023 as a correct record, and signed by the Town Mayor, with the correction that councillor Karen Hunt had not attended.

60. STANDING ORDER 14(b)

There were no questions pursuant to Standing Order 14(b).

61. COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5 December 2022 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5 December 2022 be received and adopted.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9 January 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9 January 2023 be received and adopted.

(c) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 16 January 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Sarah Williams.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 16 January 2023 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below: -

(Minute 52) FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2022/2023 – 3rd REVISION
(ENCL: 3774)

RESOLVED: that the 3rd revision of the estimates for the year 2022/2023 be approved.

(Minute 53) BUDGET AND ESTIMATES 2023/2024

The Town Clerk summarised a report setting out the draft budget and precept setting out options for 2023/24. Members thanked officers for the report and discussed the proposed budget and precept recommendation. Members noted the detailed discussions that had previously taken place at Finance & General Purposes Committee. Following discussion it was

- RESOLVED:
- (a) that the draft estimates for 2023/24 be approved as attached in Appendix A.
 - (b) that the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 be approved as set out in Appendix B, noting that a further review of charges will be tabled for consideration at the March meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
 - (c) that the Medium Term Financial Plan be approved as a guide for future years, as in Appendix C, noting that each year's budget will be subject to separate approval.
 - (d) that the draft capital programme and proposed use of reserves for 2023/24 and future years be approved, as set out in section 4 of the report and at Appendix D.
 - (e) that in terms of the precept, Option 2 be approved, as set out in section 12 of the report, which increases the precept to £844,484 with the annual Band 'D' charge to increase from £249.81 to £274.53, the increase being equivalent to (9.9%) or 48p per week.

(Minute 56) REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2023/24 (ENCL: 3777)

RESOLVED: that the existing internal audit arrangements continue for 2023/24.

(Minute 57) RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT: ANNUAL REVIEW (ENCL: 3778)

RESOLVED: that the Risk Assessment and Management Strategy Policy be approved.

(d) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 11 January 2023 were presented by the Committee Vice-Chairman, Councillor Dave Rickard..

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 11 January 2023 be received and adopted.

62. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR, DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR AND LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2023/2024

The Town Clerk reported that the following nominations had been received:

Town Mayor – Cllr Dave Bolwell
Proposed by Cllr Sarah Williams and seconded by Cllr Anne Rickard.

Deputy Town Mayor – Cllr Ian Bark
Proposed by Cllr Gill Massey and seconded by Cllr Dave Rickard.

Leader of the Council - Cllr Dave Rickard
Proposed by Cllr Dave Bolwell and seconded by Cllr Anne Rickard.

No further nominations had been received.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council's preferred candidates for the positions of Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and Leader of the Council for 2023/24 be Cllrs Dave Bolwell, Ian Bark, and Dave Rickard respectively, to go forward to the Annual Town Council meeting (Mayor Making), where the elections to these positions shall take place.

63. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Consideration was given to a report from Cllr Sarah Carney, ENCL: 3781 in respect of Bridport Area Development Trust. Cllr Carney summarised the report, which showed positive progress in terms of both the operation of the Literary & Scientific Institute, and the extent of community use of the building. She advised that the report had been tabled to ensure that councillors were aware, and able to communicate the successes.

Members thanked Cllr Carney for the report, and

RESOLVED: that the report of Cllr Sarah Carney, ENCL: 3781, be noted.

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL 3782, requesting that members review the arrangements for reporting from outside bodies.

Members discussed potential changes to the system of reporting by the Council's representatives, including:

- Separating reports of significant matters, from general announcements;
- A review to establish whether representatives were still required and appropriate on all of the current bodies;
- A need to ensure effective communications between the Council and outside bodies;
- Whether representatives should ensure at least one report per year, and whether this should be written or verbal;
- A need to ensure that both positive and negative aspects are reported and considered;
- A preference that any formal reporting should not be at the Annual Town Meeting, as this should be focused on outside bodies themselves reporting to the community;
- Whether the designated agenda item for reporting to committees be removed other than in exceptional or urgent circumstances, and instead be considered at Full Council; and
- The use of the committee 'Communications' agenda item, and the Members' Bulletin, to communicate general announcements.

RESOLVED: that the range and reporting of appointments be considered further and be tabled for consideration by Finance & General Purposes Committee in June 2023.

64. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

RESOLVED: that the next Open Public Forum subject shall be held over from the intended topic for this meeting, which was unavoidably cancelled, this being the youth work carried out by the Bridport Youth & Community Centre Trust.

65. ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS

The following items were reported for information:

- (1) The Town Mayor reported his list of engagements, ENCL: 3783.
- (2) The Leader of the Council reported that meetings with the parishes regarding the Community Governance Review would begin in earnest following the issue of the legal order from Dorset Council.
- (3) The Town Clerk reported that

- (i) Members should advise him of any suggestions for marking the Coronation of HM King Charles III;
- (ii) The Town Crier would be holding a competition in the town as part of the Hat Festival on 2 September 2023;
- (iii) HSBC Bank had written offering to meet Councillors in view of the branch closure scheduled for May 2023;
- (iv) The Town Council would be moving its IT support away from Dorset Council on cost grounds and a new provider had been identified following a competitive process, and
- (v) From 2023/24 the Town Council would not be paying a contribution towards the provision of CCTV in the town.

The meeting closed at **8:28pm**

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council is scheduled for 28 March 2023, although this date may be changed to allow for the use of Bridport Youth & Community Centre as the venue.