

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 12 June 2023 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Sarah Williams (Chairman from minute 2)

Cllrs: Rose Allwork Gill Massey  
Karen Hunt Anne Rickard  
Julian Jones

Also in attendance: Cllrs Dave Rickard (ex-officio), Will Austin (Town Clerk) and Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor).

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Nominations were sought for Chairman by the Town Clerk and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Sarah Williams be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2023/24.

Cllr Sarah Williams took the chair.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

No members of the public spoke at the Public Forum.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Geoff Ackerman, Maggie Ray and Martin Ray.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Gill Massey was nominated and seconded. Following a vote, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Gill Massey be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2023/24.

**5. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 March 2023 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Julian Jones asked whether there had been any further information on homeless 'pods' proposed by Bridport Community Kitchen. The Town Surveyor advised that the organisation was now considering a building, pending discussion with the Bridport Area Community Housing Trust.

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

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 6 June 2023 be received and adopted, and that the following recommendations be approved:

**(min. 5) Internal Audit and Accounts 2022/23**  
RESOLVED: That the report of the internal auditor be approved.

**(min. 7) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**  
RESOLVED: that the updated documents be approved.

RESOLVED: that the Finance and Office Manager be thanked for his oversight of the internal audit process.

## **7. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS – YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3816. Members considered the level and use of reserves, projects delivered during 2022/23, and the need for care in use of reserves during the current financial year.

RECOMMENDED: that the Annual Accounts for 2022/23 be approved and that the Finance and Office Manager be thanked for his effective stewardship.

## **8. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR**

The Town Surveyor reported on:

- Community Governance Review
- Changing Places Toilets
- Temporary toilets on Fisherman's Green
- Events
- Bridport FC car park
- Solar car ports
- Bridport WI Hall
- Jellyfields and Bothenhampton Nature Reserve
- Bridport Investment Plan
- Town Centre planters
- Notice boards
- Boldwood House/Asset Transfers

Members discussed:

- The need for signage to inform that electric vehicle charging points, to be powered by the solar car ports, are provided by the Town Council.
- That the charging points at South Street Car Park, provided by Dorset Council, were not operating.
- Whether surplus power from the solar car ports would be exported to the grid. The Town Surveyor confirmed it would, and that battery storage would also be considered for the future.
- Dorset Council's ongoing review of assets, including the need for a coordinated local response on issues affecting Bridport Museum Trust. The Town Surveyor advised that he had requested a list of assets in Bridport, from Dorset Council, and that this would be circulated to affected organisations when received.

- A delay in the planting of planters at East Road roundabout.
- Whether notice boards outside the newsagent at West Bay had been replaced. The Town Surveyor confirmed they had, with help from West Bay Discovery Centre.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the Town Surveyor be thanked for his work.

## **9. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP**

The Clerk reported that the committee should review the remit and membership the working group, and note the scheduled meeting dates.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the existing Working Group remit – “to take forward issues relating to the market and local business promotion” – be confirmed, and that the scheduled dates for meetings: 20 June 2023, 17 October 2023, 6 February 2024 and 9 April 2024, all at 4:00pm be noted;
- (ii) that Roy Gregory be added as a member of the working group, acting on behalf of a WhatsApp group of local traders; and
- (iii) that the Town Clerk should liaise with Cllr Geoff Ackerman regarding his working group membership, and report back to the next meeting.

## **10. APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL**

The Town Clerk presented a draft list of appointments for 2023/24, ENCL: 3817, based on existing appointments.

RECOMMENDED: that the list of representatives on outside bodies be approved as in Appendix 1 to the minutes.

The Town Clerk advised that he would clarify whether Cllr Ian Bark would continue as a trustee to Bridport Charities in a personal capacity, and Cllr Sandra Brown’s position in relation to Bridport Local Area Partnership.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS**

Cllr Dave Rickard reported that an empty home on the Skilling estate was being pursued for compulsory purchase by Dorset Council. Members discussed whether action could be taken by Dorset Council to bring empty shops back into use.

## **12. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented List 6 of the 2022/23 accounts, sum of £155,014.66 which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information was approved by the Chairman.

The Town Clerk presented List 1 of the 2023/24 accounts, in the sum of £222,184.97 which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information was approved by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the payments presented be approved.

**13. 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.

**14. STAFFING MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported on plans to develop a staffing structure taking account of (i) the likely impending retirement of an existing employee, (ii) changes in operational needs arising from the community governance review, and (iii) protections afforded by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk notify affected parish councils of the Town Council's view that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations apply to the community governance review.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 11 September 2023**

**Appointments and Representatives of the Council 2023-24**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>No. of Reprs</b>	Geoff Ackerman	Ian Bark	Dave Bolwell	Barry Irvine	Gill Massey	Martin Ray	Maggie Ray	Anne Rickard	Dave Rickard	Sarah Williams	Steve Williams	Kelvin Clayton	Julian Jones	Ros Kayes	Karen Hunt	Rose Allwork	Sarah Carney	Sandra Brown
Asker Meadows Steering Group	1					✓													
Axe Valley and WD Ring and Ride	1													✓					
Bridport & District Tourism Assn	1						✓												
Bridport & WD Sports Trust Mgmt Cttee	1			✓															
Bridport & Dist Comm Football P'ship	1			✓											R				
Bridport Area Development Trust	1																	✓	
Bridport Arts Centre Mgmt Cttee	1									✓									
Bridport Business Chamber	1+R												✓				R		
Bridport Charities Trustees	Mayor+2			✓		✓													✓
Bridport CAB Mgmt Committee	1		✓																
Bridport Community Orchard Group	1		✓																
Bridport Hat Festival	1	No representative nominated																	
Bridport Heritage Forum	1															✓			
Bridport Local Area Partnership	2									✓									✓
Bridport Food Festival Committee	1			✓															
Bridport Millennium Green Trust	1					✓													
Bridport Museum Trust	1										✓								
Bridport Young Persons Action Trust	1			✓															
Bridport Youth and Community Ctr	1			✓															
Bridport Twinning Association	2		✓									✓							
Burrough Harmony Trust	1											✓							
Christmas Festival Committee	1								✓										
DAPTC*	2									✓									
Dorset Coast Forum	1									✓									
St Michaels Community Liaison WG*	2									✓									
The Stephen Rook Memorial Fund	1						✓												
West Bay Community Forum	1									✓									
WATAG	2														✓			✓	

\* Vacancy exists