

Minutes of the meeting of **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 26 September 2023 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Dave Bolwell – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Ian Bark	Anne Rickard
	Sandra Brown	Dave Rickard
	Kelvin Clayton	Sarah Williams
	Julian Jones	Steve Williams
	Gill Massey	

Also present: David Sidwick (Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner), PC Paul Miners (Dorset Police), Will Austin (Town Clerk) and one member of the public.

### **OPEN PUBLIC FORUM**

David Sidwick, Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) addressed councillors, setting out his role, priorities from the Police & Crime Plan, and details of a forthcoming community grants scheme.

PC Paul Miners highlighted the need to work more with young people, for example using a graffiti wall. He updated members on short-term community policing work, including increased patrolling by the local team of four to focus on the main crime and antisocial behaviour issues in Bridport. He emphasised the importance of reporting incidents to assist in this process. The current top priority was to address 'county lines', having identified that their were suspects living in Bridport who were housed by vulnerable people.

Those present discussed:

- Concerns about the effectiveness of the CCTV system for detection and evidencing of crime;
- Moral among officers given the pressures they face;
- The importance of community engagement by the Police;
- An expectation that Police numbers would be at their highest level under any Dorset PCC, by Christmas 2023;
- Changes to policing to deal with issues such as fraud and online child abuse;
- Concerns that, of calls to the 101 service, only 25% related to criminal matters, with the remainder including issues that were for other bodies. These included mental health, health, and local government responsibilities;
- Changes to the 101 reporting service, including an online form to replace email reporting, and a separate online facility for non-victim reporting and intelligence;
- The PCC grants scheme, to be made available via the PCC website;
- A need to improve Police engagement with young people, including the involvement of the Bridport Youth & Community Centre Trust;
- The importance of awareness raising work by the Police, including via the media and social media, to highlight the work of the Police and the issues discussed at this meeting;
- Opening times for Bridport Police Station, which were confirmed as Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10.00am to 3.00pm;

- Confirmation by the PCC that there would be no reintroduction of local restorative justice panels for the foreseeable future, because a long-term contract was in place for the existing arrangements;
- The potential for funding of PCSOs by town and parish councils, which the PCC would be discussing with the new Chief Constable; and
- An aspiration of the PCC to ensure that feedback is provided to people who report crime, in addition to the existing engagement with victims.

The Mayor thanked all present for their engagement in this issue.

## **22. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllrs Geoff Ackerman, Rose Allwork, Sarah Carney, Karen Hunt, Barry Irvine, Ros Kayes, Maggie Ray and Martin Ray.

## **23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **24. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2023 be agreed as a correct record, and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman).

## **25. QUESTIONS, IF ANY, PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 14 (a and b)**

There were no questions pursuant to standing order 14 (a and b).

## **26. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

### **(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26 June 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26 June 2023 be received.

### **(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 July 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 July 2023 be received.

### **(c) PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 September 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 September 2023 be received.

(d) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 25 September 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Dave Bolwell.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 25 September 2023 be received.

(e) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 11 September 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 11 September 2023 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted, as set out below (each recommendation was moved, seconded and declared to be carried):

(Minute 19) FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2023/24 – 1<sup>ST</sup> REVISION

RESOLVED: that the 1<sup>st</sup> revision of the estimates for the year 2023/24 be approved.

(Minute 20) BUDGET PLANNING 2024/25 ENCL: 3833

RESOLVED: that the membership of the Budget Working Group includes Cllrs Rose Allwork, Ian Bark, Sarah Carney, Julian Jones, Gill Massey, Anne Rickard, Dave Rickard and Sarah Williams.

(f) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 6 September 2023 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Kelvin Clayton.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 6 September 2023 be received.

**27. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS**

The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Geoff Ackerman had stepped aside from his committee memberships, and that replacements were sought for the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Best Value & Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Sarah Williams be confirmed as a member of the Best Value & Scrutiny Sub-Committee, and Cllr Sandra Brown be confirmed as a member of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

**28. EXTERNAL AUDIT 2022/23**

The Town Clerk tabled the report of the External Auditor following the submission of the Council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year 2022/23. There had been no substantive issues reported and one minor matter.

RESOLVED: that the Finance & Office Manager be thanked for his work and diligence.

RESOLVED: that the report of the external auditor for the year 2022/23 be approved.

**29. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM**

RESOLVED: that the topic for discussion at the next full Council meeting shall be entitled Community Engagement, to be introduced by the Council Leader.

**30. COMMUNICATIONS**

The following items were reported for information:

- (1) The Town Mayor reported the list of engagements, ENCL: 3836. The Town Clerk thanked the Mayor's Secretary, Jill Beed, for her excellent organisation of the Mayor's Civic Day.
- (2) The Leader reported that he and the Town Clerk were working through a schedule of meetings with organisations receiving Service Level Agreement-supported funding from the Town Council.
- (3) The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Ian Bark had asked that the Council consider declaring itself a Sustainable Palm Oil Community. This matter would be tabled for consideration at a future meeting.

The meeting closed at **8.15pm**.

**The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be on 21 November 2023**