

Minutes of the BRIDPORT COMMUNITIES TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held at Mountfield, Bridport on Thursday 27 April 2023 at 11.00am.

PRESENT:

Cllrs: Ian Bark (Chairman from item 2) and Sandra Brown

Other members: Phyllida Culpin (Bridport Area Community Housing Trust)
Geoff Jones (Bridport & District Citizens Advice)
John West (Bridport Area Development Trust)

ALSO PRESENT: Will Austin (Town Clerk) and Terri Foxwell (Tourist Information Centre Manager).

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public attended for the Public Forum.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ian Bark be elected Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year 2023/24.

Cllr Ian Bark took the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Williams, and representatives of Bridport Business Chamber, and Wessex Community Assets.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

John West declared an interest as lead Bridport Area Development Trust trustee for West Bay Discovery Centre.

Phyllida Culpin declared an interest as Chair of Bridport Area Development Trust.

4. TRUST CONSTITUTION

The Town Clerk introduced the Constitution document, including the status of the Trust, its objectives, and the respective roles of the Town Council as sole trustee, and the Management Committee.

Members discussed:

- An apparent error at paragraph 10, which should reference the Council in place of the Committee.

- Whether the committee quorum could include any member of a stakeholder body.
- Why the wording at paragraph 1.1 did not reflect the same categories as the Equalities Act.
- Whether the banking arrangements could specify ethical banks such as Unity Trust or CAF.
- Whether “inhabitants” referenced at paragraph 10 must be above a particular age.

RESOLVED: that these matters be pursued by the Town Clerk and reported back at a future meeting.

5. **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

The Town Clerk proposed that an agreement between the Town Council and the Management Committee be drafted, such that officers of the Council could carry out the day-to-day work of the Trust. This would avoid the need for the Trust to employ staff. He further proposed that a bank account be established, and that further work be carried out towards Charity Commission registration.

RESOLVED: that these administrative matters be pursued.

6. **PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Tourist Information Centre Manager reported that the Town Council had taken responsibility for bookings and general management of the WI Hall in 2022, prior to the transfer of ownership to the Trust in February 2023. All pre-existing bookings were being honoured, and other activities included:

- Trialling markets in the building.
- Installation of WiFi and other technical improvements.
- Clearance of the courtyard area.

Further work was planned, including the installation of a fire alarm system, and replacement of the windows.

The Town Clerk reported that alongside the transfer of the asset to the Trust, the Bridport WI Trust had transferred its remaining funds of approximately £7,000 to Bridport Town Council. He confirmed that this funding had been ring-fenced for the WI Hall.

The Town Clerk further reported that discussions regarding the transfer of West Bay Discovery Centre to the Trust had been in abeyance for a period but that these could restart in the near future. John West advised that Bridport Area Development Trust (BADT) had been considering a possible transfer for about two years. The BADT was not a body that aimed to keep properties; instead it sought to deliver building projects, transfer the buildings, and then move on to a further project. The benefits of the transfer of West Bay Discovery Centre included the expertise in property management that could be provided, closer working with Bridport Town Council, and resilience.

Phyllida Culpin asked whether the Trust could pursue vacant buildings, such as Barclays Bank and HSBC, and whether a 'buildings at risk' register could be produced.

Geoff Jones asked whether the building occupied by Citizens Advice could be considered.

RESOLVED: that a Buildings at Risk Register and Action Plan be drafted.

RESOLVED: that the reports of the Tourist Information Centre Manager and Town Clerk be noted.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES

No matters were reported.

8. FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED: that the scheduled dates for future meetings of the Committee: 22 June 2023, 26 October 2023, and 22 February 2024 (all 11.00am at Mountfield), be noted.

John West advised that he would be on leave on 22 June 2023.

RESOLVED: that consideration be given to adjusting the scheduled dates, so that all members could attend.

The meeting closed at **11.44am**.