

## FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE held at Mountfield on Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 11.00am.

PRESENT Cllr Sarah Carney

Cllrs: Sandra Brown Sarah Williams  
Anne Rickard

Also in attendance: Paul Fuszard (Finance & Office Manager) and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

### PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers in the Public Forum.

### **18. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ian Bark, Maggie Ray, Martin Ray, Dave Rickard and Steve Williams.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

### **20. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee held on 5 September 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **21. WEST BAY CAR BOOT SALE GRANTS SCHEME**

The Town Clerk reported that five town councillors and one Dorset councillor were to be appointed to the panel, which would make recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in March 2024.

RESOLVED: that the West Bay Car Boot Sale Grants Scheme Panel comprises Cllrs Ian Bark, Sandra Brown, Sarah Carney, Anne Rickard and Steve Williams, with Dave Rickard ex officio, and two Dorset Council members, one of whom will be Cllr Sarah Williams.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk should seek one additional nomination from the Dorset Council ward members for the Bridport Local Area Partnership area, excepting the Bridport ward.

### **22. AUDIT MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported on the following:

- (i) Confirmation that the 2022/23 Annual Governance & Accountability Return had been approved by the external auditor, BDO LLP;
- (ii) Interim internal audit report, reported to Finance & General Purposes Committee on 13 November 2023, ENCL: 3846. This confirmed that the auditors had carried out testing and found the Council's procedures to be satisfactory.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the reports of the Town Clerk be noted and that the level of precept necessary to continue to deliver council projects be a factor in the budget setting process for 2024/25.

### **23. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3857.

RESOLVED: that

- (i) a Community Engagement Task and Finish Group be established, comprising Cllrs Ian Bark, Sandra Brown, Sarah Carney, Kelvin Clayton and Sarah Williams, with Anne Rickard the nominated reserve.
- (ii) the remit of the group be to develop effective and ongoing communications via traditional and electronic means to keep residents, councillors, other organisations, and the general public informed of, and participating and engaged in, council matters and decisions.

### **24. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no items to report.

### **25. 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.

### **26. DRAFT ESTIMATES 2024/25**

The Town Clerk reported the latest position on the draft budget, ENCL: 3858. Members considered the Clerk's report, as informed by meetings of the Budget Working Group, and noted that confirmation of receipt of the tax base for 2024/25 would be welcomed, to help inform that process.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted, and recommendations go forward to the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 15 January 2024 and the full Council on 23 January 2024, incorporating tax base and any further known changes.

The meeting closed at 12.11pm.

**The next meeting of this Sub Committee will be held on 5 March 2024**