

Minutes of the meeting of **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held at the Town Hall on Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 7.00pm.

**PRESENT** Cllr Anne Rickard – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Nigel Amor	Anna Killick
	Ian Bark	Ann Langridge
	Jonathan Bourbon	Patrick Mooney
	Sarah Carney	Nigel Rawlings
	Rob Casey	Dave Rickard
	Kelvin Clayton	Steve Williams
	Andy Holdridge	David Worthington
	Julian Jones	

**ALSO PRESENT** Will Austin (Town Clerk), 4 members of the public, Sarah Howard (NHS Dorset), Damien Kendrick (Dorset Healthcare), and PCSO Pete Smith (Dorset Police).

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

PCSO Pete Smith introduced himself as a member of the Neighbourhood Policing team covering the local area over the previous 17 years. Current priorities were antisocial driving in West Bay, antisocial behaviour in Borough Gardens, a specific case of antisocial behaviour involving a local resident, and an ongoing inquiry into a dog attack. PCSO Smith noted that he was the only officer on duty in Bridport at the time of the meeting. Councillors discussed a possible Community Speed Watch initiative at Victoria Grove, pavement parking, parking outside schools, and speeding by electric bikes.

Cllr David Worthington introduced the Public Forum topic for the evening, “the impact of the population increase arising from the Foundry Lea development on health and care provision” and introduced Sarah Howard of NHS Dorset.

The Town Clerk read a statement from Dr Andy Finucane of Ammonite Health Partnership, who was unable to attend. This set out an expected 10% increase in demand for services; changes made in the last two years that would enable better responses to this pressure; some additional pressures expected in the short term with funding for additional patients lagging behind service provision; and concerns about the Medical Centre’s ability to recruit into reception, phlebotomy, HCA, and administrative roles due to high housing costs.

Ms Howard outlined national health policy announcements including a 50% reduction in the running costs of the Integrated Care Board. She introduced a plan for integrated neighbourhood teams, which were to provide better coordination of local health provision with reduced barriers and bureaucracy. The teams involved had previously worked in ‘silos’ and were now getting to know each other. Ms Howard outlined funding provision from the Foundry Lea development to enhance the Medical Centre building, and additional roles at the centre including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and paramedics.

Damien Kendrick of Dorset Healthcare described joint working to support patients and residents. There was a move away from referrals to ensure the right professional at the right time, with a particular focus on frailty that would learn from other areas. There were good working relationships and co-location at Bridport Hospital. He expected an impact from Foundry Lea including on District Nurses, the Minor Injuries Unit, and mental health services, but was unable to provide figures.

Cllr Sarah Carney read statements from residents who were unable to attend, including from social media posts, many focusing on the provision of £225,000 in Section 106 funding from the development, which Cllr Carney advised would be increased to account for inflation. There were concerns that the funding would not be sufficient to cater for physical and mental health impacts, and an increase in annual funding was also needed. ADVEARSE had thanked the Town Council for raising the matter.

Councillors and others present discussed and queried:

- How the Section 106 funding would be used, and it was noted that this funding was a contribution towards infrastructure that would be accompanied by an additional 'per patient' amount for ongoing costs of local healthcare.
- The delivery of over 300 affordable homes in the development, and the need to maximise the availability of social rented accommodation.
- Confusion over the estimates for the population increase arising from the development, with estimates ranging from 1,800 to over 3,000. Concerns were expressed that healthcare providers were working on the lower estimate, which was considered to be a significant understatement of the likely increase.
- The pressures arising from Foundry Lea, the need for growth in healthcare provision, improved working methods, and early interventions.
- Current difficulties in provision of sufficient NHS dentistry services, and concerns that the development would exacerbate the situation.
- Measuring success in meeting the development's demands, which was aid to be by staffing and productivity levels, patients feeling in control, and a quality of life measure.
- The need for joint working to include Dorset Council, especially on planning and infrastructure issues.

The Mayor thanked all those attending and participating in the Public Forum.

## **62. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bridget Bolwell, Dave Bolwell, and Sarah Williams.

## **63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **64. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman).

Responding to a question from Cllr Nigel Rawlings, the Town Clerk advised that discussions had been held with a local charity that had agreed in principle to manage the operational aspects of the Beach Wheelchair Scheme.

**65. STANDING ORDER 4(k)(vi)**

There were no questions pursuant to standing order 4(k)(vi).

**66. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

**(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 February 2025 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Ian Bark.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 February 2025 be received and adopted.

**(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17 March 2025 were presented by the Committee Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17 March 2025 be received and adopted.

**(c) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 March 2025 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Paddy Mooney.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 March 2025 be received and adopted, and that the recommendations therein be approved, as set out below: -

(Minute 66(c))      BEST VALUE & SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

(Minute 36) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

RESOLVED:            that a Governance Working Group be established, and that the membership be Cllrs Ian Bark, Sarah Carney, Paddy Mooney, Jonathan Bourbon, and Rob Casey, with meetings to be held in the evening only.

**(d) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 4 March 2025 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 4 March 2025 be received and adopted.

It was noted that Cllr Jonathan Bourbon was present at this meeting. The Town Clerk advised that this omission would be corrected at the next meeting of the committee.

**67. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR, DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR AND LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2025/2026**

Cllr Paddy Mooney proposed, and Cllr Nigel Rawlings seconded Cllr Anne Rickard as Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2025/26, and there being no other nominations it was then

RESOLVED: that Cllr Anne Rickard be approved as Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2025/26, to be confirmed at the Annual Town Council meeting.

Cllr Nigel Rawlings proposed, and Cllr Ann Langridge seconded Cllr Jonathan Bourbon as Deputy Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2025/26, and there being no other nominations it was then

RESOLVED: that Cllr Jonathan Bourbon be approved as Deputy Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2025/26, to be confirmed at the Annual Town Council meeting.

Cllr Andrew Holdridge proposed, and Cllr David Worthington seconded Cllr Ian Bark as Leader Elect for the municipal year 2025/26, and there being no other nominations it was then

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ian Bark be approved as Leader Elect for the municipal year 2025/26, to be confirmed at the Annual Town Council meeting.

**68. HOUSING WORKING GROUP**

Members considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3994 regarding the establishment of a working group in support of the Town Council's housing objectives.

RESOLVED: that a Housing Working Group be established, comprising six members and reporting to Full Council, the membership to be Cllrs Sarah Carney, Kelvin Clayton, Anna Killick, Paddy Mooney, Bev Thornton, and David Worthington.

RESOLVED: that the remit of the Housing Working Group be as follows:

In line with the motion passed by Full Council on 21 January and the 2025-9 Five-year Plan which identified the provision of social and affordable housing as the Council's main priority:

- To develop policy and undertake actions in order to pro-actively work with local authorities, developers, housing associations, community land trusts, charities and other organisations, to do everything possible to reduce the number of people on the housing register and to ensure that as much additional and genuinely affordable housing is provided on appropriate, available land, with

social rent housing being given the highest priority on the re-development of brownfield and other development sites in the area.

- To work to influence Dorset Council and other partners to prioritise a redevelopment scheme for the Bus Station site that includes a social housing element, incorporating St Michael's, Plottingham, and Boldwood House, into a wider vision for Bridport.
- To work closely and coordinate with the work of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) light review 2020–36 and the Joint Councils Committee (JCC).
- To champion the development of homeless emergency accommodation and develop a homelessness strategy as part of our housing strategy.
- To lobby for the development of the Care Village and South Street sites to seek optimum use and capacity of this and other council-owned land to include social rent housing and infrastructure contributions.
- Champion retrofit and carbon reduction initiatives with housing associations, private landlords, local community land trusts and developers. Work with others to encourage government to lift EPC ratings on private landlords across the town.
- To work, also with residential and commercial landlords to improve the availability, standards and affordability of rental accommodation in the town.
- To promote the need for all our new housing to be supported by improvements in local services and infrastructure.
- Periodically to make reports and recommendations to Council, and undertake specific housing related projects as requested by the Council.

#### **69. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

No reports were received from councillor representatives to outside bodies.

#### **70. REPORTS**

It was noted that Dorset Police had provided a report during the Public Forum prior to the meeting. No Dorset Council members were present to provide reports, and there were no reports from Bridport Town Council ward members.

#### **71. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

RESOLVED: that Bridport Business Chamber be invited to the next Public Forum in June 2025 to contribute to a discussion about the business community.

Members highlighted farming and local food, and the needs of Bridport's young adults, as possible topics for subsequent meetings.

#### **72. ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS**

The following items were reported for information:

- (1) The Town Mayor reported her list of engagements, ENCL: 3995.

RESOLVED: that the Mayor's engagements be noted with thanks.

(2) The Town Clerk reported on arrangements for recruitment of his successor.

(3) Cllr Andrew Holdridge reported that a Smartphone Movement meeting would be held at the Town Hall on 26 March 2025 at 7pm.

**73. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

RESOLVED: that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

**74. HONORARY TOWNSPERSON**

The Town Clerk reported on a nomination for the status of Honorary Townsperson, ENCL: 3996. Following consideration of the report it was

RESOLVED: that that the award of the Honorary Townsperson honour to Monique Pasche be approved, and that the necessary arrangements for the special meeting and presentation ceremony, as set out in the Town Council's policy, be delegated to Cllrs Paddy Mooney, Ian Bark, and Anne Rickard.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

**The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on 8 May 2025**