

CONFLICT OF INTEREST WITH BDO LLP

To be completed annually and minuted at a meeting of the smaller authority.

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Name of Smaller Authority | Bridport Town Council |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|



I confirm that there are no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.



I confirm the following conflicts of interest (please detail below:

This was confirmed and minuted at the following meeting:

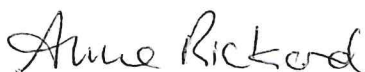
| Date of Meeting | Minute Reference |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 24/06/2025 | 24 (iv) |

Signed (Clerk/RFO)



Print Name WILL Austin

X AR
Signed (Chair)



Print Name CLLR ANNE RICKARD

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

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Name of Smaller Authority: BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL

County:

| | Clerk/RFO (Main contact) | Chair |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Name | Will Austin (to 30 June 2025) Sally Freemantle (from 1 August 2025) | Cllr Anne Rickard |
| Address | Mountfield Rax Lane Bridport DT6 3JP | "Rydens" Westown Bothenhampton Bridport DT6 4BQ |
| Home telephone number | N/A | 01308 420908 |
| Work telephone number | 01308 456722 | 01308 456722 |
| Mobile telephone number | N/A | 07472 536181 |
| Email address | enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk | a.rickard@bridport-tc.gov.uk |

FINANCIAL ESTIMATES

| | 2024/2025 | | 2025/2026 | |
|----------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| | Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Precept | 451,760 | 15,956 | 473,100 | 16,435 |
| Tax Base | | | | |
| Band 'D' | | 1,032,114 | | 1,191,075 |
| | 21,750 | | 31,400 | |
| | | Office Expenses | | |
| | 41,490 | 64,100 | 44,760 | 59,995 |
| | | Mountfield | | |
| | 27,950 | 38,000 | 27,185 | 43,300 |
| | | The Grove | | |
| | 15,000 | 15,000 | 12,950 | 15,450 |
| | | W.I. Hall | | |
| | 17,785 | 23,000 | 21,160 | 23,690 |
| | | Town Hall | | |
| | 385,445 | 215,900 | 438,120 | 222,375 |
| | | Tourist Information Centre | | |
| | 0 | 0 | 16,300 | 34,000 |
| | | West Bay Discovery Centre | | |
| | 7,518 | | 7,572 | |
| | | Civic | | |
| | 24,125 | 25,375 | 23,355 | 26,135 |
| | | Cemetery | | |
| | 416,590 | 49,088 | 438,080 | 54,523 |
| | | Amenity Areas & Playing Fields | | |
| | 16,015 | 93,000 | 16,015 | 97,075 |
| | | Market | | |
| | 21,190 | | 24,840 | |
| | | Miscellaneous | | |
| | 75,970 | 6,000 | 92,958 | 6,180 |
| | | Grants and Donations | | |
| | 3,925 | 18,000 | 3,925 | 13,500 |
| | | Salt House & Fisherman's Green | | |
| | 78,270 | 9,250 | 141,538 | 9,525 |
| | | Other Council Services | | |
| | 1,604,783 | 1,604,783 | 1,813,258 | 1,813,258 |

Appendix A

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| 2024/2025 | | 2025/2026 | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Administration | | | |
| 406,500 | | 419,500 | |
| 6,675 | | 6,675 | |
| 4,385 | | 4,385 | |
| 235 | | 235 | |
| 23,660 | | 32,000 | |
| 3,625 | | 3,625 | |
| 3,180 | | 3,180 | |
| 2,970 | | 2,970 | |
| 530 | | 530 | |
| | | | |
| Income | | | |
| | 956 | | 985 |
| | 15,000 | | 15,450 |
| 451,760 | 15,956 | 473,100 | 16,435 |
| Office Expenses | | | |
| 2,720 | | 2,720 | |
| 1,225 | | 1,225 | |
| 1,235 | | 1,235 | |
| 2,100 | | 2,100 | |
| 3,120 | | 3,120 | |
| 11,350 | | 21,000 | |
| | | | |
| 21,750 | | 31,400 | |
| Mountfield | | | |
| 13,780 | | 13,780 | |
| 1,245 | | 1,245 | |
| 4,390 | | 6,950 | |
| 3,265 | | 3,975 | |
| 7,420 | | 7,420 | |
| 8,900 | | 8,900 | |
| 525 | | 525 | |
| 1,965 | | 1,965 | |
| | 64,100 | | 59,995 |
| 41,490 | 64,100 | 44,760 | 59,995 |
| The Grove | | | |
| 15,000 | | 15,000 | |
| 2,570 | | 2,570 | |
| 6,015 | | 5,250 | |
| 4,365 | | 4,365 | |
| | 38,000 | | 43,300 |
| 27,950 | 38,000 | 27,185 | 43,300 |

| 2024/2025 | | | 2025/2026 | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Expenditure | Income | | Expenditure | Income |
| | | WI Hall | | |
| 2,000 | | Rates | 2,000 | |
| 1,000 | | Water | 1,000 | |
| 2,500 | | Electricity | 850 | |
| 2,000 | | Gas | 1,600 | |
| 350 | | Cleaning Materials | 350 | |
| 7,150 | | Maintenance | 7,150 | |
| | 15,000 | Income | | 15,450 |
| 15,000 | 15,000 | Total | 12,950 | 15,450 |
| | | Town Hall | | |
| 5,000 | | Rates and Water | 5,000 | |
| 5,625 | | Electricity and Gas | 9,000 | |
| 410 | | Cleaning Materials | 410 | |
| 6,750 | | Maintenance | 6,750 | |
| | 23,000 | Income | | 23,690 |
| 17,785 | 23,000 | Total | 21,160 | 23,690 |
| | | Tourist Information Centre | | |
| 184,250 | | Salaries | 228,250 | |
| 180,000 | | Tickets and Services | 185,400 | |
| 10,600 | | Stock | 10,600 | |
| 2,650 | | Maintenance | 2,650 | |
| 6,470 | | Telephone and Card charges | 6,470 | |
| 1,475 | | Miscellaneous | 4,750 | |
| | | Income | | |
| | 200,000 | Tickets and Services | | 206,000 |
| | 15,900 | Stock | | 16,375 |
| 385,445 | 215,900 | Total | 438,120 | 222,375 |
| | | West Bay Discovery Centre | | |
| | | Expenditure | 16,300 | |
| | | Income | | 34,000 |
| | | Total | 16,300 | 34,000 |
| | | Civic | | |
| 1,414 | | Mayoral Allowance | 1,468 | |
| 2,395 | | Mayoral Expenses | 2,395 | |
| 1,414 | | Leader Allowance | 1,414 | |
| 820 | | Mayor Making | 820 | |
| 820 | | Remembrance | 820 | |
| 95 | | Macebearers | 95 | |
| 260 | | Honorarium | 260 | |
| 185 | | Regalia | 185 | |
| 65 | | Sign Writing | 65 | |
| 50 | | Town Crier | 50 | |
| 7,518 | | Total | 7,572 | |

| 2024/2025 | | 2025/2026 | |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Cemetery | | | |
| 5,830 | | 5,830 | |
| 1,345 | | 1,345 | |
| 2,120 | | 1,350 | |
| 3,600 | | 3,600 | |
| 235 | | 235 | |
| 320 | | 320 | |
| 1,165 | | 1,165 | |
| 805 | | 805 | |
| 3,710 | | 3,710 | |
| 3,180 | | 3,180 | |
| 1,060 | | 1,060 | |
| 530 | | 530 | |
| 225 | | 225 | |
| | 25,375 | | 26,135 |
| Income | | | |
| 24,125 | 25,375 | 23,355 | 26,135 |
| Total | | | |
| Amenity Areas and Playing Fields | | | |
| 7,685 | | 7,685 | |
| 640 | | 640 | |
| 1,060 | | 1,750 | |
| 320 | | 320 | |
| 246,250 | | 265,250 | |
| 1,965 | | 1,965 | |
| 6,555 | | 6,555 | |
| 72,500 | | 72,500 | |
| 30,000 | | 30,000 | |
| 7,230 | | 7,230 | |
| 250 | | 250 | |
| 3,180 | | 0 | |
| 6,615 | | 6,615 | |
| 1,330 | | 1,330 | |
| 6,720 | | 11,700 | |
| 9,615 | | 9,615 | |
| 14,675 | | 14,675 | |
| | | | |
| | 3,500 | | 3,605 |
| | 17,250 | | 26,000 |
| | 13,588 | | 13,588 |
| | 3,750 | | 0 |
| | 11,000 | | 11,330 |
| | | | |
| Income | | | |
| 416,590 | 49,088 | 438,080 | 54,523 |
| Total | | | |
| Market | | | |
| 5,905 | | 5,905 | |
| 630 | | 630 | |
| 9,480 | | 9,480 | |
| | | | |
| | 3,000 | | 4,375 |
| | 90,000 | | 92,700 |
| | | | |
| Income | | | |
| 16,015 | 93,000 | 16,015 | 97,075 |
| Total | | | |

| 2024/2025 | | 2025/2026 | |
|---|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Miscellaneous | | | |
| 3,200 | | 3,200 | |
| 2,250 | | 3,500 | |
| 14,140 | | 14,140 | |
| 1,600 | | 4,000 | |
| 21,190 | | 24,840 | |
| Grants and Donations | | | |
| 54,000 | | 72,405 | |
| 15,970 | | 14,373 | |
| 6,000 | | 6,180 | |
| | | Income | |
| | 6,000 | West Bay Car Boot | 6,180 |
| 75,970 | 6,000 | 92,958 | 6,180 |
| Salt House and Fisherman's Green | | | |
| 1,430 | | 1,430 | |
| 2,495 | | 2,495 | |
| | | Income | |
| | 18,000 | Hire | 13,500 |
| 3,925 | 18,000 | 3,925 | 13,500 |
| Other Council Services | | | |
| 4,015 | | 4,015 | |
| 385 | | 385 | |
| 6,235 | | 6,235 | |
| 15,000 | | 15,000 | |
| 2,650 | | 2,650 | |
| 17,425 | | 17,425 | |
| 11,000 | | 0 | |
| 2,120 | | 2,120 | |
| 17,120 | | 17,120 | |
| 2,320 | | 1,500 | |
| 0 | | 0 | |
| 0 | | 75,088 | |
| | | Income | |
| | 6,250 | Allotments | 6,435 |
| | 3,000 | Events | 3,090 |
| 78,270 | 9,250 | 141,538 | 9,525 |

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 13 January 2025 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Paddy Mooney

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Cllrs: Nigel Amor | Ann Langridge |
| Rob Casey | Anne Rickard |
| Andrew Holdridge | Sarah Williams |
| Anna Killick | |

Also in attendance: Cllrs Ian Bark (from 7:40pm), Dave Rickard, and Bev Thornton (until 8:00pm), three members of the public, Paul Fuszard (Finance & Office Manager), Claire Peters-Way (Property Manager) and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

PUBLIC FORUM

Anne Disson, a resident of Borough Gardens, spoke about the wish of the residents, with some support from Dorset Police and Magna Housing, for the gardens to be locked using a PIN-controlled lock from 7pm to 7am daily, to reduce anti-social behaviour, vandalism, drug dealing, and drunken behaviour. She advised that the Police were routinely called, but lacked resources to address these issues, which affected all nearby residents. Miss Disson decorated her house for occasions such as Christmas and Remembrance, but her displays were vandalised. Community use of the gardens was disrupted by drug needles and other hazardous waste, and the situation had become dangerous.

Gill Massey also spoke about the Borough Gardens outlining issues encountered by the volunteer friends group that tends the area, confirming that all residents had been canvassed as regards security and were in favour of the proposal to lock the gates. Previous similar proposals, including in 2010, had not been taken forward due to tenant issues. Ms Massey compared the arrangements to those in the Borough Gardens in Dorchester, where the gates were locked at night, and added that originally the gates were locked in Bridport. Adding to Ms Disson's request, Ms Massey suggested a motion sensor light, and training for residents who would volunteer to carry out the locking and unlocking. Problems included drug use, broken glass which was difficult to remove from grassed areas, an attempted fire, and noise. Young people were involved but the perpetrators also included those leaving pubs at night. The area was also sometimes used as a toilet. As a rights respecting town, Ms Massey considered that users should show respect for the area.

Members asked Miss Disson about:

- The locking and unlocking arrangements. Miss Disson advised that her partner and another couple had volunteered to ensure that the gates could always be locked and unlocked, including in an emergency.
- Whether the damage was uniquely after dark. Miss Disson advised that it was.
- Whether locking hours could be shortened in the summer when evenings were lighter. Miss Disson agreed this could be considered.
- How the emergency services would be provided with access. Miss Disson suggested they be provided with the access code.

Josef Davies-Coates, of United Diversity Bridport (UDB), outlined plans for a pilot shuttle bus service between Bridport town centre and West Bay, for which UDB had fundraised approximately £1,750 and acquired in principle grant funding of £20,000. He had also

looked into a Dorset Council fund that might provide an additional £5,000. He was looking for the support of the Town Council, as the accountable body, with no additional financial commitment. He outlined challenges to moving forward with the project, which included reaching agreement with Dorset Community Transport over the contract for operation, further fundraising, and a deadline of March for the grant to be spent.

Members discussed the request with Mr Davies-Coates for clarification, including the need to establish detailed costs, the role of a proposed Project Manager, whether the project might draw the Town Council into financial and/or resource commitments, the status of the Dorset Council funding, and deadlines for reaching a decision. Members indicated that further investigation would be required into all of these matters.

The Chairman thank all three members of the public for their input. Ms Massey and Mr Davies-Coates left at this point.

56. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ian Bark (for lateness) and Nigel Rawlings.

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

58. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 11 November 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

59. BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 3 December 2024 be received and adopted and the following recommendations approved:

Minute 22: that the report of the internal auditor be approved, and

Minute 24: that the draft reserves policy be approved as tabled.

It was also noted that for Minute 27, draft estimates 2025/26, the work of the Budget Working Group had been summarised by Cllr Andy Holdridge and not Cllr Ann Langridge, as stated.

Minute 23: RECOMMENDED that the draft Councillor/Officer Protocol be approved.

60. ENVIRONMENT & SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The following recommendations arising from the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee meeting on 8 January 2025 were considered by the Committee:

Community Bus Service – Bridport & West Bay. To agree to act as accountable body for this initiative.

The Town Clerk outlined the proposal, which had been discussed during the Public Forum, and the requirement that the Town Council would need to confirm itself as the fully liable accountable body for the bus service, in order to hold the funding without breaching

regulations and audit requirements. In addition to the matters discussed during the Public Forum, he asked members to consider the as yet undetermined conditions of the £20,000 grant from the Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body, the potential for financial implications for the Town Council, the clarification needed regarding project management, and an indication from Dorset Community Transport (DCT) that their preference as operator, would be to work direct with the Town Council rather than via United Diversity Bridport. DCT had also advised that they did not have drivers for weekend working, and that the costing information previously provided would need to be reviewed. The Town Clerk advised that Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee had resolved that the project was a worthwhile one, but that the request to act as accountable body was a matter for the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Welcoming the proposal in principle, members considered:

- The as yet unestablished viability of, and demand for the service;
- A lack of clarity over the funding arrangements;
- A need for clarity over the duration of the pilot scheme;
- Concerns about the role and employment status of any Project Manager engaged;
- Further information required to give certainty over the cost of the pilot;
- A requirement for a detailed business plan for the project; and
- A need for clarification of the timing and deadlines involved.

RESOLVED: that the proposal to act as accountable body for a pilot bus service between Bridport and West Bay be approved in principle, subject to financial implications being limited to the already approved grant and other established fundraising.

RESOLVED that formal approval be considered at the next meeting of the committee, following provision by United Diversity Bridport of further detailed information addressing the points raised at the meeting.

Asker Meadows Cider & Music Festival. To approve the use of Asker Meadows for this event.

The Town Clerk reported that Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee had recommended the use of Asker Meadows for this event, following a presentation by Ben Pimbley. A summary had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, but further detail in the form of an event management plan and associated documents would be required. He suggested that any approval be subject to detailed clarification of the event, including a full event plan, to be signed off by the Town Council.

RESOLVED: that the use of Asker Meadows for a Cider & Music Festival be approved subject to detailed arrangements, and that approval or otherwise of these details be delegated to the Town Clerk, in conjunction with other council officers.

Right to Grow. To approve the property and insurance provisions required to enable this right to be delivered by the council.

The Town Clerk reported that as part of its approval of an action plan associated with the council's Food Security Plan, Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee had included provision for the 'Right to Grow', an arrangement that identified council land suitable for community cultivation and facilitated its use for that purpose. A motion, which had been promoted by the organisation Incredible Edible passed by Hull City Council, set out the actions required and had been circulated prior to the meeting. The particular issues for Finance & General Purposes Committee related to the identification of suitable land, licensing of land to community groups, provision of supporting infrastructure, a right to bid

where land was sold, and the provision of public liability insurance for community groups working the land.

Members considered the issues involved, and whilst the initiative was welcomed, concerns were expressed about the legal, resource, and financial liabilities arising from it.

Recognising that some progress could be made, it was

RESOLVED: that land suitable for inclusion in a 'right to grow' initiative be identified.

Cllr Sarah Williams asked that her abstention be noted in the minutes.

61. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2024/2025

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3960. The Town Clerk summarised the report, and following member discussion it was

RECOMMENDED: that the 3rd revision of the estimates for the year 2024/2025 be approved.

62. BUDGETS AND ESTIMATES 2025/2026

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3961. The Budget Working Group, Town Clerk, and other officers involved were thanked for their work.

The Town Clerk summarised the report, setting out background to the budget and precept setting process, issues considered, future financial planning, and options for consideration.

It was noted that the contributions to reserves figure in para. 5.4 should be £75,088 as also listed in para. 1.2 of the report and the final page of Appendix A.

Members considered the report, and

RECOMMENDED to Full Council:

- (a) that the draft estimates for 2025/26 be approved as set out in Appendix A.
- (b) that the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 be approved as set out in Appendix B.
- (c) that the Medium Term Financial Plan be approved as a guide for future years as in Appendix C, noting that each year's budget will be subject to separate approval.
- (d) that the draft capital programme and proposed use of reserves for 2025/26 and future years, as set out in section 4 of the report and at Appendix D, be approved, noting again that further approval is required.
- (e) that in terms of the precept, Option 2 be approved, as set out above and in section 12 of the report, which would increase the precept to £1,191,075 with a consequent annual Band 'D' charge of £204.44.

63. INCOME GENERATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Committee Chairman, ENCL: 3967.

RESOLVED: that an Income Generation Task and Finish Group be established, with a remit to investigate suggestions for increasing income generation within the town council's budget.

RESOLVED: that the membership of the Income Generation Task and Finish Group be Cllrs Ian Bark, Jonathan Bourbon, Anna Killick, Ann Langridge, Paddy Mooney, and Sarah Williams.

64. CCLA INVESTMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk and the Finance and Office Manager, ENCL: 3962. Following discussion of the report, it was

RESOLVED: that the Town Council's investment with CCLA be withdrawn in full and returned to general funds for alternative investment options to then be considered.

65. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR AND PROPERTY MANAGER

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk and Property Manager, ENCL: 3963, about the following projects:

Borough Gardens

A request had been received from Dorset Police and a resident of the Gardens, to install locks to the existing gates and to facilitate locking of the gardens in the evenings, following an extended period of incidents of vandalism and antisocial behaviour. The request had the support of the volunteer group Friends of Borough Gardens and 13 residences managed by Magna Housing, whose access was solely via the Gardens. Magna Housing, whose right of way was set out in a legal agreement with the Council, had not given support to the proposal and had raised reservations. Magna had also not responded positively to a request to consider a funding contribution.

Members were asked to consider agreeing to the proposal in principle, with detailed arrangements to be delegated to officers, if approved. The cost of locks and associated signage was estimated at £350, although this excluded any provision for motion-sensitive lighting which had been discussed during the Public Forum.

RESOLVED: that the request be approved, subject to detailed arrangements and resolution of issues relating to a Magna Housing right of way.

West Bay Discovery Centre

Works to windows at the Centre were needed, and the Council had agreed with this assessment prior to the handover of the building and service. Four sash windows were to be replaced, and with associated scaffold, fencing, and painting costs, the total estimated cost is £6,200. This would be funded from a specific reserve fund transferred to the Town Council, when the building was acquired.

Members were asked to approve expenditure estimated at £6,200 (excluding VAT).

RESOLVED: that the works and funding be approved.

Market Parking

Following concerns expressed by Bridport Business Chamber and others, Dorset Council has agreed to a request for town centre laybys to be made available for general parking on wet days, when not occupied by market traders. This would be achieved by covering the signs with a separate sign, with detailed wording and design to be agreed. Another issue raised by businesses and visitors, of market traders causing traffic issues when loading and unloading, was to be addressed by changes to parking in South Street, from Gundry Lane to St Mary's Church on market days only; the west side would be restricted to residents' use, and the east side would be for market traders.

No decision was required, as this item was for information only.

Bridport WI Hall

A Dorset Council grant fund had opened for applications that would provide up to 20% of the cost of improvements previously proposed to, and agreed in principle by the committee, at an estimated cost of £75,000. An application had been submitted and if successful, members would need to consider how the remaining funds can be provided.

No decision was required, as this item was for information only.

Bridport FC Car Park

Works to improve the surface and drainage on the east side of the car park commenced in October 2024 and were progressing. Whilst the original target completion date of the end of December 2024 had passed, works were expected to be completed in January 2025. The projected cost of £170,000 was to be met by a £100,000 Shared Prosperity Fund grant funded by central government and approved by Dorset Council. The remaining costs would be met from Town Council funds, as previously approved by this committee.

No decision was required, as this item was for information only.

Events – VE / VJ Day

2025 marked the 80th anniversary of VE Day (8 May) and VJ Day (15 August). The Council had been asked whether any civic events and/or public realm activity would be considered. No specific budget was available for such provision.

Members were asked to consider what provision the council might make.

RESOLVED: that street decorations be provided to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day, and that the Council should organise a proclamation for both.

Events – Melplash Show

With members' approval, the Town Council pitch and marquee would shortly be booked for this year's show, at a total estimated cost of £3,500. This cost was offset by fees totalling an estimated £900, paid by community stallholders in the marquee.

Members were asked to approve the Council's continued presence at the Melplash Show.

RESOLVED: that the Council maintain its presence at the Melpash Show, in line with previous years, and that the Income Generation Task and Finish Group look at possible increases in contributions by stallholders in the Town Council's marquee.

Events – other

The Council was preparing its events calendar for 2025 and this was expected to be available by the end of January 2025, albeit that some dates would be subject to confirmation. Officers were preparing for the first significant Town Council events: Commonwealth Day in March, and the Community Charter Fair in May. Officers were also supporting others' event preparations. Members had agreed to continue with Commonwealth Day in 2024, despite modest attendance. With a newly elected council, members had the opportunity to reaffirm this decision.

Members were asked to consider the continued staging of the Commonwealth Day event.

RESOLVED: that the Council should no longer organise or stage the annual Commonwealth Day event.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Clerk and Property manager be noted.

66. BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Members considered the draft five-year plan, ENCL: 3964, for onward approval to the Full Council meeting on 21 January 2025.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the draft five-year plan be recommended for approval by Full Council.

67. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT: ANNUAL REVIEW

Members considered a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3965 setting out the corporate risks faced by the council, mitigations, and residual risk level. A risk register had been reviewed by the Town Clerk and was now presented for approval.

RECOMMENDED: that the Corporate Risk Assessment be approved as tabled.

68. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented List 4 of the 2024/25 accounts, ENCL: 3966, in the sum of £559,637.74, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: that Payment List 4 of 2024/25 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

69. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

70. 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.

71. PROPERTY MATTERS

The Property Manager reported on a tenant request at The Grove. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the committee, when other comparative options should be presented.

The Property Manager further reported on changes to one existing tenancy at Mountfield, and consideration of alternative uses of available space vacated.

RESOLVED: that alternative uses be agreed in principle, and that further detailed discussion should be tabled for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the reports of the Property Manager be noted.

The meeting closed at 9:37pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 10 March 2025

Minutes of the meeting of **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held at the Town Hall on Tuesday 21 January 2025 at 7.00pm.

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

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

ALSO PRESENT Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Paul Fuszard (Finance & Office Manager), Will Austin (Town Clerk), 10 members of the public, and 1 representative of the press.

PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public engaged in the agreed topic for the Public Forum, social housing.

Tricia Mitchell of the Dorset Area Community Land Trust introduced the work of the Trust since its inception in 2017, and ongoing plans for delivery of 15 affordable homes on the former tennis courts site in Dorchester. She outlined the obstacles faced and was hopeful of a positive outcome soon.

Jim Tigg spoke on behalf of Bridport Area Community Housing (BACH), and explained the status of local affordable housing, including sites that had been delivered, missed housing opportunities, an ongoing review of local housing need, planned social rent housing, a potential role for BACH if sites were made available, and a need for the Town Council to use its limited influence to drive provision of affordable homes.

Jan Parker set out concerns about the large number of people on the local housing register, the poor supply of social rented accommodation, and a general lack of affordability.

Glenn Crawford stressed the urgent need to address the housing crisis, and urged the council to include, in addition to those on the housing register, over 600 young people living in their parents' homes. Development continued to provide larger family homes, despite the Neighbourhood Plan's recognition of the need for small homes. There was a disconnect between local need and local delivery, and cooperation across all involved was needed.

Sylvia Stafford emphasised a need for crisis accommodation and suggested that Sidney Gale House could be used, pending its redevelopment. The former isolation hospital set a precedent when used to house Vietnamese refugees.

Paul Overall introduced the work of a housing need group set up by Bridport Local Area Partnership. The group included Town and Parish Councils, and other stakeholder organisations, and could open doors at Dorset Council. He hoped this work would continue to be supported by the Town Council.

In the open part of the Public Forum, Elaine Leader outlined the operation of the Beach Wheelchair Scheme, which catered for all disabilities. The originally planned operation had not worked as envisaged, and it had become overwhelming and unsustainable for Elaine alone. The Town Council had been supportive as the accountable body for the scheme. £50,000 had been raised and permission had been obtained for a storage unit. Other Town Councils were running similar schemes and Elaine asked that Bridport Town Council amend its five-year plan to accommodate scheme bookings. Volunteers would operate the rest of the scheme to keep costs down.

Paula Reader of Mountjoy School spoke in support of the Beach Wheelchair Scheme. Students had benefited from fulfilling activities provided, and it was the community's duty to maintain the scheme.

Paul Hallett of Mencap spoke in support of the scheme. The organisation, which supported five adults, the Gateway Club, and more, had contributed to it having seen the benefits. Mencap would soon be working with Mountjoy School and others and hoped the Town Council would take on the bookings.

Bill Shelton, a local resident, supported the scheme and the beach matting, and Elaine Leader's request. He was a regular user of the matting, as it helped his health and mobility. The scheme was good for trade, health, and accessibility, and he had seen the joy it brought.

The Mayor thanked all those who had contributed to the Public Forum.

49. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Andy Holdridge and Bev Thornton.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

51. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman).

52. STANDING ORDER 4(k)(vi)

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

53. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 December 2024 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Ian Bark.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 December 2024 be received and adopted.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 January 2025 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Ian Bark.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 January 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 13 January 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 13 January 2025 be received and adopted, and that the recommendations therein be approved, as set out below: -

(Minute 59) BEST VALUE & SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the draft Councillor/Officer Protocol be approved.

(Minute 61) FINANCE AND ESTIMATES 2024/2025 – 3RD REVISION
(ENCL: 3960)

RESOLVED: that that the 3rd revision of the estimates for the year 2024/25 be approved.

(Minute 62) BUDGET AND ESTIMATES 2025/26 (ENCL: 3961)

The Town clerk summarised a report, setting out the draft budget and precept setting out options for 2025/2026. Members thanked officers for the report and discussed the proposed budget and precept recommendation. Members noted the detailed discussions that had previously taken place at Finance & General Purposes Committee. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: (a) that the draft estimates for 2025/26 be approved as set out in Appendix A.

(b) that the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 be approved as set out in Appendix B.

(c) that the Medium Term Financial Plan be approved as a guide for future years as in Appendix C, noting that each year's budget will be subject to separate approval.

(d) that the draft capital programme and proposed use of reserves for 2025/26 and future years, as set out in section 4 of the report and at Appendix D, be approved, noting again that further approval is required.

(e) that in terms of the precept, Option 2 be approved, as set out above and in section 12 of the report, which would increase the precept to £1,191,075 with a consequent annual Band 'D' charge of £204.44.

(Minute 67) RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT: ANNUAL REVIEW

RESOLVED: that the Corporate Risk Assessment be approved as tabled.

(d) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 8 January 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 8 January 2025 be received and adopted.

54.

MOTION SUBMITTED BY CLLRS
S CARNEY, A KILLICK AND P MOONEY

Cllr Paddy Mooney proposed, and Cllr Anna Killick seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 8:

Bridport Town Council believes that every resident of the town has the right to a decent and affordable home, which is also safe, secure and energy efficient. We reflect this in our new 5-Year Plan where we have given the highest priority to finding solutions to the housing crisis that exists in our community.

Based on the latest housing needs data our priority is securing the delivery of 1- and 2-bedroom properties, with a particular focus on providing homes for social rent for young adults (our highest priority) and larger properties for families, as these two groups are bearing the brunt of the affordability and availability crisis locally. We are united in tackling this issue which is vital to delivering successful outcomes for all our residents and contributing to the future economic, cultural and social success of the town.

We are committed to pro-actively working with local authorities, developers, housing associations, as well as community land trusts, charities and other organisations, 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.

We are also keen to work with residential and commercial landlords to improve the availability, standards and affordability of rental accommodation in the town. Last but not least, we will promote the need for all our new housing to be supported by improvements in local services and infrastructure.

Cllr Ann Langridge proposed, and Cllr Anna Killick seconded an amendment to the motion such that it read as follows:

Bridport Town Council believes that every resident of the town has the right to a decent and affordable home, which is also safe, secure and energy efficient. We reflect this in our new 5-Year Plan where we have given the highest priority to finding solutions to the housing crisis that exists in our community.

Based on the latest housing needs data our priority is securing the delivery of 1- and 2-bedroom properties, with a particular focus on providing homes for social rent for young adults (our highest priority), but also some larger properties for families, as these two groups are bearing the brunt of the affordability and availability crisis locally. We are united in tackling this issue which is vital to delivering successful outcomes for all our residents and contributing to the future economic, cultural and social success of the town.

We are committed to pro-actively working with local authorities, developers, housing associations, as well as community land trusts, charities and other organisations, 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.

We are also keen to work with residential and commercial landlords to improve the availability, standards and affordability of rental accommodation in the town. Last but not least, we will promote the need for all our new housing to be supported by improvements in local services and infrastructure.

RESOLVED: that the amendment be approved.

Members discussed:

- The emergence of social housing as a priority issue;
- The limitations of Town Council capacity and influence;
- Holding the government to account in the delivery of social housing;
- Councillors' experiences of people in acute housing need;
- The absence of guarantees of forecast affordable housing provision;
- The importance of working with community land trusts and other stakeholders;
- The potentially significant achievement of Dorchester Area Community Land Trust if 15 affordable homes are delivered;
- The challenges of bringing empty homes into productive use; and
- Recent Town Council engagement with Magna Housing.

Following the debate, it was unanimously

RESOLVED: that the motion be agreed as amended.

55. REPORTS

The Town Clerk reported that apologies had been received from Dorset Police.

Reports were received from

- Dorset Council – Cllr Sarah Williams reported that the 2025/26 budget would be considered in Mid-February.
- Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward – Cllr Anne Rickard reported good attendance at ward meetings across two venues. Members had found the Ward Clerk, Jo Hughes, to be very efficient and were pleased with her work.
- West Bay Ward – Cllr Ann Langridge reported that the last ward meeting had attracted 42 members of the public. The Police had been robustly challenged on the issue of antisocial behaviour. Cllr Langridge thanked the Town Clerk for controlling the behaviour of some present.

RESOLVED: that the reports be noted.

56. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Ann Langridge had indicated she would be stepping down as Town Council representative to Bridport Food Matters. Cllr Langridge advised that she would no longer planned to step down, and it was therefore

RESOLVED: that no action is required on this matter.

57. TOWN COUNCIL FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3969.

Members discussed the plan, including a possible change to incorporate actions relating to the Beach Wheelchair Scheme. Cllr Sarah Williams suggested that this could be carried out under delegation through the Chairmen of Environment & Social Wellbeing and Finance & General Purposes Committees.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council Five-Year Plan be approved.

58. MEETINGS CALENDAR

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3970.

The Town Clerk summarised a draft calendar of meetings.

RESOLVED: that the meetings calendar be approved as tabled.

59. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Jonathan Bourbon reported that the Twinning Association sought £200 in Council funding for a civic reception for visitors from St Vaast La Hougue in July 2025. Members indicated informally that this would be supported and the Town Clerk confirmed that a payment would be made from delegated budgets as with the previous visit.

RESOLVED: that the report of Cllr Jonathan Bourbon be noted.

60. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Members considered a subject for discussion in the Open Public Forum prior to the next Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that the subject for the next Open Public Forum at the next meeting on 25 March 2025 shall be “the impact of the population increase arising from the Foundry Lea development on health and care provision”, and that the Medical Centre, Dorset Council, Dorset County Hospital, Public Health Dorset and the Integrated Care Board be invited.

The Town Clerk advised he would circulate the Section 106 Agreement associated with the Foundry Lea development.

61. ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Mayor reported her list of engagements, ENCL: 3971.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Mayor be noted with thanks.

Cllr Paddy Mooney reported that a leaflet from McCarthy & Stone included 1-bedroom properties for sale from £329,000, or rent from £2,800 per month. This was a postscript to the motion discussed earlier.

At the Mayor’s suggestion, councillors observed a minute’s silence in respect of former Mayor Roger Draper, who had recently passed away.

The Town Clerk reported on a forthcoming meeting with Dorset Council regarding a proposed care development, and on a forthcoming councillor awareness day.

The meeting closed at 8.53pm.

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on 25 March 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 9 September 2024 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Paddy Mooney

Cllrs: Nigel Amor Ann Langridge
 Rob Casey Nigel Rawlings
 Andrew Holdridge Anne Rickard
 Anna Killick Sarah Williams

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Also in attendance: Cllrs Sarah Carney and Dave Rickard, Will Austin (Town Clerk), Paul Fuszard (Finance and Office Manager) Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor, via Zoom), Claire Peters-Way (Property Manager), and John West (Bridport Area Development Trust).

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public spoke at the Public Forum.

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ian Bark.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Ann Langridge left the room during the Bridport Youth & Community Centre grant discussion and decision (minute 22) as a fundraiser for that organisation.

21. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 10 June 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that item 10 on the agenda, West Bay Discovery Centre, be brought forward as the next business.

22. WEST BAY DISCOVERY CENTRE

John West (Bridport Area Development Trust (BADT), for West Bay Discovery Centre) was invited to join the meeting and set out the background to discussions with the Town Council ahead of the transfer of the building to Bridport Communities Trust, and the transfer of its operation to Bridport Town Council. He thanked all involved in the three years' work on the transfers, which had been delayed by both the pandemic and the more recent Community Governance Review. The transfer had however been carefully considered and the BADT and Town Council had reached agreement on the arrangements. John would continue to be involved as Chair of a new 'Friends of West Bay Discovery Centre' group. He was pleased that the transfer would offer future resilience to the Centre, and that the Mayor had chosen it as one of the venues for the forthcoming Civic Day.

John West left the meeting at this point (7.10pm).

The Town Clerk presented the terms of an agreement between the BADT and the Town Council setting out the handover arrangements, and asked members to give it their approval.

RESOLVED that the arrangements for the transfer of both West Bay Discovery Centre and the management of the facility from 1 October 2024 be noted.

RESOLVED: that the agreement between the Town Council and the BADT accompanying the transfer be received and approved.

23. **BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY WELLBEING COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 3 September 2024 be received and the following recommendations be approved:

(Min: 14) TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS TO SMALLER BODIES 2024/25

| Applicant and Purpose of Grant | Award (£) |
|--|------------------|
| St. Catherine's Pre School - Weldmar's Stampede by the Sea and their linked learning programme; and adopting one of the baby elephants that will form part of the art trail. | 250 |
| Equintervention - 20 subsidised sessions available to those experiencing mental health including: dementia, trauma, anxiety, autism & oppositional defiance disorder and ADHD. | 500 |
| Age UK North, South & West Dorset - Assist our Welfare Benefit provision in Bridport. | 500 |
| The Stepping Out Cancer Rehabilitation Group - An exercise and wellbeing programme to help members with their recovery, during and after receiving a diagnosis of cancer. | 500 |
| ASCape - A fortnightly 75-minute after school art club for Autistic and/or socially anxious children aged 12-17, with local artist Kathy Kelly. ASCape's aim as a charity is to support these children, whether or not they have a formal diagnosis. | 500 |
| Home-Start Wessex - To support our expansion into a new catchment of West Dorset, developing services to support vulnerable families with young children, filling the gap left by the closure of Home-Start West Dorset (HSWD) in Oct' 2023. | 950 |
| The Bank of Dreams & Nightmares - The RESONATE event aims to give marginalised groups; who may otherwise be excluded from regular arts activities because of rural isolation, social exclusion or lack of prior engagement in the cultural community; broader skills and more confidence in their creative writing skills. | 500 |
| Bridport Millennium Green Trust - To continue to improve the entrance to the footpath up Coneygar Hill from Mountfield and to clear the adjacent area surrounding the grotto/archway. | 500 |
| Bridport Literary Festival - An event with the UK Children's Laureate, past or present. This year we are happy to have secured Joseph Coelho as our main school's event. This comes at greater cost, but we believe it really is worth it as he is such a widely respected and well-known poet and children's author, who promises to inspire students both to read, and write creatively. | 500 |
| B Sharp - Bridport Jams, a weekly out-of-school music making project for young people ages 11-18. We used to run this group for teenagers but had to stop during the pandemic. We would | 500 |

| Applicant and Purpose of Grant | Award (£) |
|--|------------------|
| like to start this up again, as an opportunity for teenagers to meet up and play music together in a safe, supportive environment. | |
| West Bay Community Forum - Run by a committee on behalf of members to look at issues in and around West Bay, to be raised with relevant bodies. Twice a year we have an open members' meeting, usually with a speaker to allow members to meet up and discuss anything that the forum can help with. | 100 |
| Bridport Youth Dance – Art and Dance in the Landscape initiative - Choreography Geography 2025 – a site specific performance in the local rural/coastal landscape in September 2025. This colourful spectacle will involve young dancers from the BYD contemporary programme, BYD alumni and be intergenerational. | 500 |
| Bridport Youth Dance – Education & development programme. This includes the after school programme and 21 st annual production at the Electric Palace in March 2025. | 500 |
| Bridport Boys Dance - Workshops led by a professional dancer and choreographer for the specific boys dance programme. | 350 |
| Friends of the Lyric CIC - HERSONG III is a performance platform for young women and girls to perform new work co-produced with TOCIYA Town of Culture young adult group – in collaboration with BSharp. bacStage, Youth Centre, TOCIYA connections, Ascape, Ripple Workshop. | 400 |
| Total Small Grants | £7,050 |

RESOLVED: that

- (i) the above grants be approved under the General Power of Competence, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Home-Start Wessex – the grant amount is considered exceptional in the circumstances and the organisation should not expect repeat funding of this order in future; and
 - b. West Bay Community Forum – the grant is not guaranteed to be repeated and the group should seek alternative funding.
- (ii) The following applications be not supported at this time:
 - a. Loders Youth Club – members suggested approaching Loders Parish Council.
 - b. Electric Backroom Studio – insufficient information was provided to allow a satisfactory assessment against grant criteria.
 - c. Bridport and District Citizens Advice – considered to be an extension of the larger Service Level Agreement grant.
- (iii) Unsuccessful applicants be reminded that the West Bay Car Boot Sale grants scheme opens for applications in November 2024.

(Min: 15) TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS TO LARGER BODIES 2024/25

| Organisation | Amount |
|---|---------------|
| Bridport Citizens Advice | £10,000 |
| Bridport Arts Centre | £7,500 |
| Bridport Leisure Centre | £5,000 |
| Bridport Youth & Community Centre | £30,000 |
| Bridport Museum | £7,500 |
| Literary & Scientific Institute (Bridport Area Development Trust) | £6,250 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 2020 Skate & Ride | £5,000 |
| Friends of the Lyric Theatre CIC | £5,000 |
| Precision Football Arena | £3,000 |
| Total | £79,250 |

- (i) that Bridport Arts Centre be asked to demonstrate community use and benefit including for 'hard to reach' communities.

Members discussed a recommendation in respect of Bridport Youth & Community Centre, noting its current financial difficulties, possible fundraising opportunities including subscriptions and a 100 Club. Concern was expressed that any fundraising support should be dependent on resolving the current issues and developing a resilient plan for the future.

Cllr Ann Langridge declared an interest as a fundraiser for the Trust, and left the meeting prior to a vote on funding.

- (ii) that funding for Bridport Youth & Community Centre be set at £30,000 for the first year of the agreement only, and that any future award be dependent on robust evidence to show the stabilisation of the financial position.
- (iii) that the Bridport Area Development Trust be required to provide a business plan for the LSi prior to next review of the Service Level Agreement.
- (iv) two further agreements with Pymore Village Management Company, and the Allington Hill, Cooper's Wood and Field Community Group be delegated to the Chair, Leader and Council representative to the groups, with any resulting awards estimated to be a combined cost of £1,250.

24. ENVIRONMENT & SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The Town Clerk reported that there were no recommendations arising from the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 4 September 2024.

25. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP

The notes of the Market & Business Liaison Working Group held on 18 June 2024 were presented. There were no recommendations arising from the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Market & Business Liaison Working Group held on 18 June 2024 be received and noted.

26. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2024/25 – 1st REVISION

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3920.

The Town Clerk and the Finance & Office Manager summarised the report, which set out the financial position after the first five months of 2024/25, including any significant deviations from the profile budget as a percentage of the annual totals. Although the overall situation looked satisfactory after this first quarter, it was noted that significant additional pressures were expected, including a major increase in insurance costs, the previously agreed increases in SLA-supported funding, and match funding for improvements at Bridport Football Club Car Park. These alone would place a strain on the

council's reserve funding, if not matched by savings elsewhere and members were asked to note this position when considering any new funding requests, and when setting a budget for 2025/26.

Following discussion of future spending and the maintenance of an appropriate level of reserves, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the 1st revision of the estimates for the year 2024/25 be approved.

27. BUDGET PLANNING 2024/25

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL 3921.

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed process and timetable for setting the Council's budget for 2025/26, and key issues for consideration. He further advised that membership of the Budget Working Group would need to be reviewed. Following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED: that

- (i) membership of the Budget Working Group shall be Cllrs Ian Bark, Andrew Holdridge, Ann Langridge, Paddy Mooney and Sarah Williams; and
- (ii) further nominations be invited at the next Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that the timetable for setting the budget be approved.

28. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE SURVEYOR

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3922. The Town Surveyor reported as follows:

The Grove

The building was now at capacity, with the new Tenants Hartleys taking the whole of the 2nd floor and a meeting room on the ground floor, and Gillingham's taking the whole of the 1st floor, with a ground floor meeting room. Both new tenants had signed long leases. The Museum had also taken the last remaining ground floor room, giving them five rooms until such time that they could move back to the Coach House in Gundry Lane. The building had been substantially upgraded as fit for a multi-occupancy building, and 18 parking spaces were rented to individuals and businesses.

A35 Proposed Cycleway and Crossing at Pasture Way

The Town Surveyor was moving forward with this as a priority scheme and works, in conjunction with Dorset Council and National Highways over funding.

Bridport Football Club Car Park

Tenders had been found to be higher than expected for improvement works at the car park. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Town Surveyor be delegated to revisit the proposal, in light of the tenders received.

Works to Bucky Doo Square

The existing lamp column was to be relocated, and fitted with a feeder pillar, with electric connections for Christmas lighting. A new feeder pillar to run music and events on Bucky Doo was included in the works, which would take place in October 2024.

Cemetery Gates

The existing gates at the East Road entrance were in disrepair and repairs by a specialist wrought iron company at a cost of £2,400 would be considered at a later date, if budgets allowed.

Mountfield External Fire Escape Stairs

There was a need to replace corroded steps and platform areas, and to replace the handrail. These works had been identified in the annual Health & Safety Audit at a cost of £4,100 and would be considered at a later date, as and when budgets allowed.

St Mary's Playing Fields

Proposed works to extend paths at St Mary's to create a better surface for Parkrun and other users through the winter, at an estimated cost of £3,400 would be considered as and when budgets allowed.

Plottingham Skate Park

Long-term plans to replace the Skate Park were not considered affordable at present, and given the poor state of the existing facility, an intermediate replacement costing £32,316 was proposed, with funding split between revenue budgets and earmarked reserves.

RESOLVED: that funding of £32,316 for an intermediate solution at the skate park be approved.

Bridport WI Hall Works

Planning permission was in place for WI Hall improvements, and because of the usage and high demand for the venue, it was proposed to complete the work in stages, to limit the time the hall is closed. Cost and timing information would be worked up and reported to committee for approval.

Court Orchard Play Area

The first stage of the improvement scheme had been delivered, with the official opening scheduled for September. It was now the intention to work with the steering group, made up of local residents, to deliver the next stages, subject to finance and approval by committee.

Electric Power Hand Tools

A demonstration of electric equipment had been arranged with Kress Tools, their agent being Small Engine Services in Bridport. It was proposed to proceed initially with one of the following pieces of machinery: one strimmer, one mower, one backpack blower, two 240Kwh batteries, two 660Wh batteries and one Van Power recharging station. A charging station would be installed at the Plottingham workshop, alongside an existing array of handheld power tools, the workshop having solar panels feeding into the system. If this proved successful, replacement of power tools with electric would be considered, as older redundant equipment was replaced.

RESOLVED: that the cost of electric equipment, estimated at £15,000, be deferred until such time as budgets allow.

Sitting out Licences

When the Council took over administration of Sitting Out Licences from Dorset Council in 2019, this allowed the Town Council to fully integrate the food outlets and cafes into the market scene, with no loss of revenue. The annual charges at the time were £303 for the licence. During the pandemic, the government introduced a maximum charge of £100 along with other measures to support the hospitality industry. This restriction was expected

to end at the end of September and the Town Council would be able to set new fees. Confirmation from Dorset Council of their policy was needed prior to setting new charges, as the Town Council was, in effect, acting as their licensing agent. Once received, officers would review the rates and charges for the future, including the possibility of a three-tier system, with a charge according to the extent of space occupied. If the amended policy was received from Dorset Council prior to the next meeting, members may be asked to consider a formal proposal.

Asker Meadows Pedestrian Gates

To improve access arrangements and ensure the safe confinement of livestock, four new 'kissing gates' were being considered for installation at the meadow.

West Bay Temporary Toilets

Dorset Council had advised that repairs to the harbour wall would not now commence until Autumn 2025, and that the public toilets at The Mound would consequently be closed for a further extended period. An extension to the current arrangements, allowing siting of temporary toilets on Fisherman's Green, was under discussion.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Surveyor be noted.

29. BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The Town Clerk reminded members to send submissions for inclusion in the five-year plan, to the Project Manager by 23 September 2024.

30. DORSET COUNCIL – BIG CONVERSATION

The Town Clerk reported that a draft response to Dorset Council's survey on its proposed corporate plan would be tabled for consideration at the next Full Council meeting.

31. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

Consideration was given to ENCL: 3923, showing that the external auditor had offered no adverse comment in its report on the Bradpole Parish Council Annual Governance & Accountability Return. The Town Clerk asked members to approve the report of the external auditor, BDO.

Other returns would be tabled as and when the auditor's reports on former parish councils and Bridport Town Council, were received.

RESOLVED: that the conclusion of the audit for Bradpole Parish Council for 2023/24 be noted and that Sandy Goldsmith and Paul Fuszard be thanked for their efforts in achieving this outcome.

RECOMMENDED: that the report of the external auditor for the former Bradpole Parish Council for 2023/24 be received and approved.

32. INSURANCE

The Town Clerk reported that a new year 3 year agreement had begun, with our existing insurers, following a competitive process, noting a large increase in premium due to the extended council area and an increase in rates. Due to the timing of renewal this agreement had been approved under delegation by the Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

33. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: that Full Council be requested to:

- (i) elect Town Council representatives to: Allington Hill & Cooper's Wood & Field Community Group, Magna Housing, Precision Football Arena and Pymore Village Management Company.
- (ii) approve a recommendation of the Planning Committee that Cllr Andy Holdridge be elected as representative to National Highways.

34. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented List 2 of the 2024/25 accounts, in the sum of £484,683.19, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: that Payment List 2 of 2024/25 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

35. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

36. 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.

37. STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk updated members on a review of staffing, ENCL: 3924, and asked that the proposals therein be approved. These included the reallocation of a number of duties within the existing staff, and the creation of two new posts, Works Manager and Apprentice Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the proposals contained in the report be approved.

38. PROPERTY MATTERS

There was nothing to report.

The meeting closed at 9:35pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 11 November 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 11 November 2024 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Paddy Mooney

| | | |
|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Cllrs: | Nigel Amor | Ann Langridge |
| | Rob Casey | Anne Rickard |
| | Andrew Holdridge | Sarah Williams |
| | Anna Killick | |

Also in attendance: Cllrs Ian Bark (from 7:14pm, minute 42) and Dave Rickard, Giles Smith, Candida Dunford-Wood (Bridport Food Matters), Sarah Wilberforce (Bridport Food Matters), one representative of the press, Claire Peters-Way (Property Manager), Paul Fuszard (Finance and Office Manager), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor via Zoom) and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public spoke at the Public Forum.

39. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ian Bark (for lateness) and Nigel Rawlings.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

41. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 9 September 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Members noted that subsequent to the previous meeting, a payment of £7,500 had been made to Bridport Youth & Community Centre Trust under the service level agreement arrangements, such that a total of £15,000 had been paid in the current financial year. Any further payment would be dependent on provision of a robust business plan.

Members further noted that Full Council had agreed the addition of Cllr Anna Killick to the membership of the Budget Working Group.

RESOLVED: that item 6 on the agenda (Pump Track and Community Hub Proposals) be brought forward as the next business.

42. PUMP TRACK AND COMMUNITY HUB PROPOSALS

Outline proposals for a Community Food Hub, as tabled with the agenda and subsequent circulation of revised plans, were presented to councillors by Mr Giles Smith, Candida Dunford-Wood and Sarah Wilberforce.

Cllr Ian Bark joined the meeting at this point (7.14pm)

Giles Smith set out his business background as a caterer and co-founder of Kings Cross Market. He described the proposal for a food hub within up to five shipping containers on the Old Dairy site, incorporating a tap house, café, storage, meeting rooms, and a hub for food groups. It would be privately and council-funded and would use local contractors in the build. Mr Smith advised that he also had some relevant building skills. He had operated the Alembic Café at the LSi for a year, before his tenure was terminated. Similar hub facilities existed elsewhere; Bridport needed one too, and success was dependent on funding.

Candida Dunford-Wood said that a food hub had been talked about for years and had been operating virtually for four years. Activities included a newsletter and the Food Festival. A physical space was now wanted, to bring groups together. The proposal set out the skills needed and an objective of nutritious food for all. Other venues had been considered, but affordability was a concern. The proposal would involve a long lease from the Town Council, and partnership working with the council, private sector and the community. Bridport was now a sustainable food place, with strong links. This built on work with the Town Council on a Food Security Plan which envisaged a food hub. The hub would assist with climate resilience, the economy, diets, and health and wellbeing. A hub and spoke model already existed, along with outreach work.

Sarah Wilberforce added that the estimated cost of the containers was £6,650, excluding conversion costs.

The request to the Town Council was for a peppercorn rent and an estimated £15,000 to support building works, and advice.

Members discussed:

- The business model, said to be a mix of private and community, with a charitable structure.
- The LSi as an alternative location. Mr Smith said he did not know it was available, but that steps were a problem, and he had previously found it difficult to work in. He had spoken to Crowdfunder and understood they were turning away potential occupants. Ms Dunford-Wood added that a location closer to Skilling was preferred, in order to reach excluded communities.
- The current use of the Old Dairy site for parking.
- Previous collaboration with the Museum Trust in developing plans for the site, and the existing planning permission that had been granted.
- Whether a food hub could be piloted at a temporary location, such as the Youth and Community Centre.
- Existing similar facilities in Manchester, London, Bristol, Cambridge and Brisbane. The nearest to an equivalent market town facility was a long table in Frome.
- Previous Bridport Food Matters engagement with vulnerable communities, such as the glut stall and work with schools.
- A need for more detailed plans and costings.
- The Town Council's financial capacity to support a hub.
- Planning issues, including the location in a conservation area.
- Dorset Council's restrictions on the lease of the Old Dairy site to the Town Council.
- The impact of a Jurassic Fibre junction box located on the site.

The Chair summarised discussions, and it was

RESOLVED: that, subject to provision of a more detailed feasibility study, and further information addressing the issues raised at this meeting, the proposal be referred to Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee for further consideration.

Mr Smith went on to summarise a second proposal, for a pump track, which had been circulated with the agenda. He advised that a site was needed and suggested Happy Island or Asker Meadows.

Members discussed:

- The existing designation of part of Happy Island as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- Plottingham Field as an alternative and possibly preferable location alongside the skatepark.
- The complexities of the wider plan for refurbishment of Plottingham Field.
- The requirements of a pump track.
- The challenge of achieving the required funding of £40,000 to £150,000.
- The need to incorporate any proposal into the five-year plan and the plans for Plottingham Field.

RESOLVED: that Mr Smith be asked to work with the Town Surveyor to develop the proposal, in accordance with the current development schedule for Plottingham Field.

43. ENVIRONMENT & SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The Town Clerk reported that there were no recommendations to the Finance & General Purposes Committee arising from the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 6 November 2024.

44. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP

The notes of the Market & Business Liaison Working Group held on 15 October 2024 were presented. There were no recommendations arising from the notes.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Market & Business Liaison Working Group held on 15 October 2024 be received and noted.

45. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2024/25 – 2nd REVISION

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3937.

The Town Clerk and the Finance & Office Manager summarised the report, which set out the financial position after seven months of 2024/25, including any significant deviations from the profile budget as a percentage of the annual totals.

Following discussion of the costs of The Grove in preparing for incoming tenants and updated safety requirements, future spending and the maintenance of an appropriate level of reserves, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the 2nd revision of the estimates for the year 2024/25 be approved.

46. BUDGET PLANNING 2024/25

The Committee considered a verbal report by the Town Clerk, summarising an initial discussion by the Budget Working Group. The meeting had considered financial pressures including inflation, adding to reserve funding, and funding for the council's five-year plan.

There had also been a request to add Cllr Jonathan Bourbon to the membership, so that the West Bridport & Allington ward was represented.

Members discussed the council's investment with CCLA and the Town Clerk agreed to bring forward a report outlining the merits or otherwise of withdrawing the investment.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Clerk be noted.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Jonathan Bourbon be elected to the Budget Working Group.

47. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR AND PROPERTY MANAGER

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3922. The Town Surveyor and Property Manager reported updates on Plottingham Skate Park replacement, Sitting Out Licences and associated fees, Bridport FC Car Park improvements, A35 Eype Amenity Area, Remembrance Sunday, Bucky Doo Square improvements and Christmas Cheer.

Members discussed:

- A decision due to urgency, taken under delegation by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Finance & General Purposes and the Council Leader, to allocate additional funding for the skate park.
- Progress with processing 25 Sitting Out Licence applications, and the possibility for changes to the fee structure in future. Members also considered a proposal that the fee be set at £350 for a two-year licence, in line with Dorset Council's fee, and with government guidance.
- The positive impact of improvements to Bucky Doo Square.
- Arrangements for Christmas Cheer.

Following this discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the decision taken under delegation to allocate additional funding for the skate park be supported.

The vote was seven in favour and two against, with no abstentions. Cllrs Andrew Holdridge and Ann Langridge requested that their votes against be recorded in the minutes.

RESOLVED: that the uplift in Sitting Out Licence fees, from £100 per annum to £350 for a two-year licence, be agreed.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Surveyor and Property Manager be noted.

48. BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The Committee considered the draft five-year plan tabled with the agenda, ENCL: 3939. The Town Clerk summarised the report and asked members to consider any changes within the committee's remit. The ensuing discussion focused on reprioritising the draft plan, and it was

RESOLVED: that any suggestions for revised priorities in the five-year plan be submitted to the Project Manager by 14 November 2024.

RESOLVED: that the Project Manager be thanked for his work on the draft plan.

49. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairman reported that due to other changes in representatives to outside bodies, a vacancy had arisen on Pymore Village Management Company (PVMC). He advised that he was happy to take up this position and had engaged in initial discussions with PVMC.

The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Steve Williams had resigned his positions on Bridport Local Food Group and Bridport Millennium Green Trust, and replacements were sought.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Paddy Mooney be elected as representative to Pymore Village Management Company.

RECOMMENDED: that Full Council be asked to elect representatives to Bridport Local Food Group and Bridport Millennium Green Trust.

50. INTERNAL AUDIT ENGAGEMENT 2024/25

The Committee considered the terms of engagement of the independent internal auditor for 2024/25, ENCL: 3943. Members considered proposed terms of engagement for Lightatouch as the internal auditor for 2024/25, and the requirement for the auditor to be clearly independent of the council. These matters have been satisfactorily addressed, and it was

RECOMMENDED: that Lightatouch be appointed as the council's independent internal auditor for 2024/25.

51. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented List 3 of the 2024/25 accounts, in the sum of £384,600.07, which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: that Payment List 3 of 2024/25 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

52. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

53. 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.

54. STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk updated members on matters arising from the recent review of staffing, and the need to ensure that decisions made were in accordance with the current year budgetary position, and the budget setting process for 2025/26.

RESOLVED: that recruitment of an Apprentice Clerk and Administrative Officer, and a Works Manager, not be progressed at this time and that the issue be reconsidered after the budget for 2025/26 has been set.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

55. PROPERTY MATTERS

The Town Surveyor reported on one recently agreed five-year lease of Town Council premises, and agreement on heads of terms for a nine-year lease with another tenant.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

The meeting closed at 9:23pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 13 January 2025

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Tuesday 3 December 2024 at 10.00am.

PRESENT Cllr Sarah Carney

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Cllrs: Jonathan Bourbon | Paddy Mooney |
| Andrew Holdridge | Anne Rickard |
| Ann Langridge | Steve Williams |

Also in attendance: Cllr Ian Bark (ex officio), Paul Fuszard (Finance & Office Manager) and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

18. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Anna Killick and Dave Rickard.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

20. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 3 September 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, including the following amendments:

- Minute 14 (i) (b) should end “and the group should seek alternative funding”.
- Minute 15 (iii) means that future funding should not go beyond £30,000.

The Town Clerk advised that a report on investments, as noted at minute 13, had been deferred until the March 2025 meeting.

Responding to a query in respect of minute 15(iv), Cllr Ian Bark confirmed that a meeting with Bridport Area Development Trust had been scheduled for 5 December 2024.

21. WEST BAY CAR BOOT SALE GRANTS SCHEME

The Town Clerk reported that a panel to determine grant applications had in previous years comprised five town councillors, with the Leader as a reserve, and two Dorset members; one from the Bridport ward and one from any of the other wards in the Bridport Local Area Partnership area. He invited members to consider the membership for 2025.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the West Bay Car Boot Sale Grants Scheme Panel should comprise:

- (i) Town councillors Sarah Carney, Ann Langridge, Paddy Mooney, Anne Rickard and Steve Williams, with Cllr Ian Bark as a reserve; and
- (ii) One Dorset Council member from the Bridport ward, and one from any of the other wards in the Bridport Local Area Partnership area, to be agreed in consultation with the Town Clerk.

22. INTERNAL AUDIT

The interim report of the independent internal auditor, ENCL: 3950, was received and considered at length at the meeting.

Members discussed the report, focusing on:

- The availability of the Town Council's asset register, which the Town Clerk advised was published on the council's website;
- A proposed review of the council's banking arrangements, which the Town Clerk advised would be brought forward in due course;
- Pursuit of a debt referred to in the report, which the Town Clerk advised was in hand;
- Ensuring the appropriate wording of minutes in respect of appointment of the internal auditor;
- Consideration of the council's reserves, including a reserves policy later in the meeting;
- Financial software in use by the Town Council;
- Arrangements for a review of Financial Regulations; and
- The impact of increased employer National Insurance contributions on the council's finances.

RECOMMENDED: that the report of the internal auditor be approved.

23. COUNCILLORS/OFFICER PROTOCOL

A draft protocol, ENCL: 3951, governing relations between councillors and officers was considered at the meeting. Members welcomed the report and discussed:

- Sanctions available to the council in the case of transgressions, which the Town Clerk advised were limited;
- Training, monitoring, and conflict resolution arrangements;
- The relationship between the draft policy and the Members' Code of Conduct; and
- Whether councillors could research possible conflict resolution processes for further discussion.

RESOLVED: that councillors will research conflict resolution and discuss this at a future meeting of the sub-committee.

RECOMMENDED: that the draft Councillor/Officer Protocol be approved as tabled.

24. RESERVES POLICY

A draft reserves policy, ENCL: 3952, was considered at the meeting. The Town Clerk reported that this was in response to a recommendation of the internal auditor.

Members discussed:

- The current position regarding the council's reserves. The Finance & Office Manager reported that total reserves were reported as approximately £570,000 as at March 2024, and were likely to reduce when next reported in March 2025.
- The appropriate level of reserves. The Town Clerk advised there was no statutory minimum, but that sector guidance advised a figure of no less than three months' net expenditure; and
- Arrangements for delegated decision-making that involved the use of reserves.

RESOLVED: that the next review of Standing Orders, the Scheme of Delegation, and Financial Regulations should review the arrangements for delegated decision-making.

RECOMMENDED: that the draft reserve policy be approved as tabled.

25. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no items to report.

26. 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.

27. DRAFT ESTIMATES 2025/26

The draft budget proposals for 2025/26 were received at the meeting and the Town Clerk outlined the main areas of change, and the potential effect of the impending Tax Base for 2025/26. Members also considered a briefing note tabled by members of the Budget Working Group, which was summarised by Cllr Ann Langridge.

RESOLVED: that the draft budget be further updated, for consideration at the next meeting of the Budget Working Group.

The meeting closed at **12:28pm**

The next meeting of this Sub-Committee was scheduled to be held on 4 March 2025, but will now take place on a date to be agreed.

13 JANUARY 2025

BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2025/26

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the draft budget estimates for 2025/26 for consideration, leading to this Committee making a recommendation to Full Council for the approval of the budget and level of precept for the next financial year.
- 1.2 This is an extensive report that includes information on a range of matters that have affected the council's finances in 2024/25, and others expected to impact from 2025/26 onwards. Key points that members will wish to note are:
- During the budget-setting process, councillors indicated a desire to set a balanced budget for 2025/26 that maintains services, with any increase being no more than required for inflation. The proposals in this report meet that aim. Whilst the proposed increase, at 8.05% is higher than the current rate of CPI (estimated 2.8% in December 2024), this higher figure more readily reflects the Council's experience of ongoing price pressures than CPI.
 - A particular example is the unavoidable increase in employer's National Insurance, which alone accounts for an uplift of over 2% on the existing revenue budget.
 - The Council will also need to plan to bolster its reserve funding. This is addressed in this report through both the draft revenue budget, which incorporates a contribution to reserves of £75,088, and the Medium Term Financial Plan, which anticipates further contributions in future years. This has been achieved by foregoing any inflation-linked increase across non-staffing revenue costs.
 - The current year 2024/25 has highlighted unusual cost pressures that are accommodated in the draft budget, including a large increase in insurance, elections, and IT costs, and a significant uplift in funding support to larger community organisations.
 - The financial impact of the expansion of the Town Council in April 2024 has been refined on the basis of experience of the new arrangements to date.
 - Similarly, the finances for the newly adopted (from October 2024) West Bay Discovery Centre have been accommodated.
 - For the three financial years from 2022/23 onwards, the Council set a balanced budget following two deficit years in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Returning to a balanced budget meant finding savings and additional income to remove a deficit agreed during the challenges of Covid-19 restrictions, even before incorporating inflationary and other cost pressures. This fiscal tightening remains challenging in terms of meeting the aims outlined above.
- 1.3 Changes to the calculation of the 'tax base' – the figure that estimates the number of properties eligible for payment of Council Tax – have affected both the budget discussion and the Band D Council Tax figure arising from the draft budget. The tax base increased by an unusually large margin this year, mainly due to Dorset Council's decision to levy a double charge on second homes. The delivery and

occupation of housing at Foundry Lea and St Michael's Trading Estate remain some way off and as a consequence, financial planning in this report makes no assumptions about the anticipated beneficial impact of these at this time.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Town Council is required each year to agree an annual revenue budget – known as annual estimates – showing estimated expenditure for the following financial year and income to meet that expenditure.
- 2.2 The Town Council currently raises a significant proportion (approximately 65%) of the money to meet expenditure with a precept, which is the amount that the Town Council will ask Dorset Council, as the billing authority, to raise through the Council Tax. This is the “parish” element of the Council Tax. The remainder of household Council Tax bills also include the Dorset Council, Fire, and Police precepts that they require to fund their services.
- 2.3 This report recommends an annual revenue budget for 2025/26 and also the precept figure to meet the costs of the budget (the Council also has other sources of income – market fees, leases, charges for services, etc.). The report is broken down into the following sections:

Section 3.0 Position of the current year 2024/25 revenue budget estimates

Section 4.0 Position on the Town Council's finances held in reserves and proposed capital budget

Section 5.0 Use of reserves

Section 6.0 Recommended revenue budget estimates for next year (2025/26) with commentary on significant variations from this year

Section 7.0 Recommended fees and charges for 2025/26

Section 8.0 Comments of the Budget Working Group

Section 9.0 Medium term financial forecasts

Section 10.0 Carbon budget

Section 11.0 Summary of budget considerations

Section 12.0 Options on the level of precept to fund the budget for 2025/26

- 2.4 This report follows regular monitoring of the approved estimates during the year, meetings of the Budget Working Group and discussions at the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee meeting on 3 December 2024.

3.0 Estimated Budget Outcome for the Current Year 2024/25

- 3.1 In the previous report on this agenda, members have a copy of the latest estimates for the current year's budget, 2024/25. These show the financial position at the end of December and give some indication in projecting the likely outturn for 2024/25.
- 3.2 The current budget has enabled the Town Council to deliver its services and projects, which include:
- Allotments
 - Beach Wheelchair Scheme
 - Bridport Cemetery
 - Bridport Local Area Partnership administration

- Capital Projects
- Climate Emergency Action Plan projects
- Community Emergency Response/Resilience
- Community Leadership
- Civic and Ceremonial activities
- Community Bus
- Community grants and SLA-supported funding to local organisations
- Energy Champions
- Events including Community and Town Council events, and support to other organisations' events
- Green route and other footpaths
- Highway verges
- Hire/Lease of Premises and Facilities
- Lengthsman
- Licensing (Sitting Out, and Charity Collections)
- Markets
- Mayoral support
- Parks and Play Areas
- Planning (as statutory consultee)
- Public Toilets (East Street Car Park, and two Changing Places toilets)
- Sculpture Trail
- Social media and website
- Strategic Planning, e.g. Bridport Investment Plan, Access & Movement Study
- Support to Bridport Local Area Partnership, and other partnership Working
- Support to the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan JCC, and BANP project delivery
- Tourist Information Centre
- Town Council projects
- West Bay Discovery Centre
- WI Hall

3.3 2024/25 has seen some significant pressures, some of which were unforeseen:

- The unexpected failure of the skatepark at Plottingham, with a cost of over £52,000 for replacement.
- An increase in the council's insurance premium of over £10,000 resulting mainly from changes in the insurance market.
- Unanticipated costs of approximately £30,000 associated with a change of tenancy and updated safety requirements at The Grove.
- The unexpected opportunity to obtain grant funding of £100,000 to help fund works to Bridport FC Car Park, which requires a contribution of £70,000 from the Town Council in order to deliver the project.
- Costs of about £10,000 for the implementation of and ongoing support for IT provision for both town councillors, and four officers transferred into the council's employment under TUPE regulations.

3.4 These have affected both the revenue (ongoing annual) budget and the Council's reserves. It remains too early to determine how this will affect the year-end, but a revenue budget outturn deficit is considered likely and this will in turn affect the level of reserves shown in the final accounts.

3.5 The Council budgeted adequately for the nationally agreed cost-of-living pay award.

4.0 Reserves/Capital Budget

- 4.1 The Town Council's reserves at 31 March 2024, were £571,417 comprising £289,887 General Reserves, £276,295 Earmarked Reserves, and £5,235 Capital Reserve (paragraph 5.1).

For context, the council reserves figure as at 31 March 2018 was £1,015,757. The reduction since then arises mainly from:

- Use of reserves: The Climate Emergency reserve (£100,000), Tourist Information Centre commuted sum (£150,000) and the capital reserve have all been fully spent. In addition, two years of deficit outturn, totalling over £136,000 and caused by the impact of the pandemic, were funded using reserves.
- Investments: In 2018 the Town Council invested £200,000 in CCLA. This is deemed a fixed asset, so it does not display on the balance sheet and is not reflected in the figures listed above. The capital value of this investment is currently less than the deposit value.

- 4.2 In terms of the future use of reserves, it is recommended that the Town Council agree and earmark funding for further projects, in a planned capital budget, the costs of which can be met from reserves and other funding, including Community Infrastructure Levy receipts, Section 106 contributions, and grants. This is considered to be a prudent use of reserves, although there will remain a sum in the revenue budget for project delivery.
- 4.3 Attached at Appendix D is the recommended capital programme for 2025/26 and two subsequent years. This includes existing commitments, proposed projects from the draft Town Council Plan (not yet approved) and other asset improvements. This totals £299,000 which would then be taken from reserves over the three-year period, if achievable.
- 4.4 Members are reminded that including an item or project in the Capital Programme does not mean that it has been approved to be delivered. The Council would just be making provision within its reserves for these schemes. There would be a separate report before any funding is committed.
- 4.5 In January 2025 the Council approved a Reserves Policy that will be used to guide future decision-making and levels of reserve provision.

5.0 2024/2025 - Use of Reserves

- 5.1 The Town Council has committed to support or contribute to various schemes and agreed that funding be held in reserve. Earmarked reserves totalled £276,295 as at 31 March 2024. At the time of publishing the agenda £47,562 has been spent in 2024/25, reducing the level of earmarked reserves to £228,733.
- 5.2 General reserves are the balances held that are not allocated for any specific purpose, but are required to allow for business interruption such as that experienced during the pandemic restrictions. As previously stated at 1.2 above, the impact of Covid-19 and subsequent 'bounce back' activity on these reserves was significant and demonstrates the importance of maintaining a satisfactory level of unallocated balances.

- 5.3 Recovering these reserves and budgeting for future costs, offset to a degree by revenue generation, will continue to be addressed over the coming years, with a plan as to what level of precept increases would be acceptable, to meet the future increase in ongoing annual costs. The Medium Term Financial Plan (see 9.0) seeks to set expectations.
- 5.4 For 2025/26, the draft budget incorporates a specific contribution to reserves of £73,491. It should be noted however that Budget Working Group discussions recognised the potential call on this fund arising from the recommendation to forego inflation-linked increases to the majority of the non-staffing budget lines.

6.0 Recommended Revenue Budget 2025/26

- 6.1 In terms of the revenue budget, there are several factors that need to be considered in setting next year's budget, as set out below:
- An initial preference identified by the Budget Working Group to limit any increase in the Council Tax at Band D such that it would be below £200. Subsequent discussions considered this unachievable and aimed to limit any increase above £200 as far as possible.
 - A further preference identified by the working group, to reduce the funding support to SLA-supported organisations compared with that agreed by the Town Council in September 2024.
 - The ongoing impact of inflation on income, expenditure and reserves as outlined earlier in this report.
 - Other unexpected cost increases such as employer National Insurance, and increased election costs
 - Support for the additional services taken on or introduced by the Town Council in recent years, including the TIC, community bus, East Street Car Park toilets, Bridport WI Hall, Changing Places toilets, and West Bay Discovery Centre.
 - Potential increased responsibility for assets and services, in addition to those above and those inherited from changes to community governance in Bridport.
 - One-off additional costs in 2025/26 such as the cost of the May elections and support for the Town of Culture initiative.
 - Incremental salary increases where appropriate, and the estimated cost of an annual cost-of-living pay award, agreed nationally and not within the control of the Town Council.
 - Cost changes arising from the expansion of the Town Council in April 2024, adapted from those assumed during planning stages as the council learns from its implementation.
 - Increases in budgeted amounts for income from fees and charges (subject to later detailed review).
- 6.2 The budget has been drafted to reflect these factors.
- 6.3 The net result is an overall increase in budgeted expenditure of £208,475, and an increase in budgeted income of £49,514 in the estimates for 2025/26 (compared with the current year's budget). Significant changes are highlighted for members as below:

- **Administration**
 - Staffing costs increase allowing for an expected cost-of-living pay award and incremental increases where appropriate.
 - Increased insurance costs arising from changes in the insurance market and new insurable assets.
- **Office Expenses**
 - Increased IT costs due to the introduction of IT services for councillors, and support for new staff.
- **Mountfield**
 - Reduced income from tenancies.
- **The Grove**
 - Increased income from tenancies.
- **Town Hall**
 - Increased energy costs.
- **Tourist Information Centre**
 - Staffing costs increase allowing for an expected cost-of-living pay award and incremental increases where appropriate.
 - Salary costs for one employee transferred with the West Bay Discovery Centre.
- **Amenity Areas and Playing Fields**
 - Staffing costs increase allowing for an expected cost-of-living pay award and incremental increases where appropriate.
 - Skatepark maintenance costs removed following the recent installation of new equipment.
 - An increase in car park income, offset in part by a higher amount paid to Bridport FC as part of the council's tenancy agreement with the club.
 - Reduced income from Lengthsman services to Chideock and Symondsbury Parish Councils.
- **Market**
 - Increased income from market tolls and sitting out licence fees.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Increased contribution to earmarked reserve for future election costs, learning from the actual charge levied by Dorset Council for the 2024 elections.
- **Grants and Donations**
 - Increased allocation for Service Level Agreement Grants compared with the 2024/25 budget, albeit significantly lower than the total awards subsequently agreed in September 2024.
 - Reduced community grants allocation.
- **Salt House/Fisherman's Green/Harbour Green**
 - Reduced income from licensing of Harbour Green.
- **Other Council Services**
 - Removal of one-off allocation for Dorset Town of Culture initiative.
 - Contribution of £75,088 to general reserve.

6.4 The amendments above are included in the revenue budget estimates for 2025/26 (see the attached Appendix A) for members' consideration.

6.5 The difference between the additional costs and the additional income shown at 6.3 above, are proposed to be met from the precept (see 12 below).

- 6.6 Members will note that, at the time of drafting, the council has not agreed an updated five-year plan covering the period 2024-2029. Known commitments from the 2019-2024 plan have been incorporated as far as possible, but consideration will need to be given in-year to the financial implications of the new plan, expected to be approved in January 2025.

7.0 Fees and Charges 2025/26

- 7.1 Members are asked to consider fees and charges for Town Council services, as set out in Appendix B. These are unchanged from 2024/25 as a 'stop gap' measure pending a full review recommended by the Budget Working Group. It is open to the Council to revise fees at any point during the year and it is proposed that the review be presented to members in March 2025 for implementation from April 2025.

8.0 Budget Working Group

- 8.1 The Budget Working Group met in person three times to review the Town Council's budget, alongside other exchanges by email, and the comments and suggestions made by the Group have been incorporated into this report and the draft budget.
- 8.2 The working group's activity, and the supporting information required, was markedly increased compared with previous years. Members will want to consider this when setting a timetable and other provisions for the budget-setting process for 2026/27 onwards.
- 8.3 The working group also highlighted a possible role extending beyond the budget-setting process. The detail is not known at the time of drafting this report, but is expected to be considered at the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on 13 January 2025.

9.0 Medium Term Financial Planning

- 9.1 Alongside next year's budget, forecasts are also included in Appendix C for the main budget heads for the following 3 years. These seek to forecast future income and expenditure, based on what is known about future spending commitments. The projections include commitments contained within the draft Town Council Five-Year Plan, but it should be noted that at the time of drafting the plan remains to be approved.

10.0 Carbon Budget

- 10.1 Alongside the financial budget, the Council produces a 'carbon budget'. The following summary uses information for the last full financial year – 2023/24 – to assess its overall emissions.

Carbon Budget Outturn 2023/24

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23* | 2023/24* |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Gas (Kwh) | 101,266 | 115,203 | 82,595 | 20,789 | 9,265 |
| Electricity (Kwh) | 76,954 | 66,815 | 45,061 | 59,098 | 48,746 |
| Fuel diesel (litres) | 3,842 | 5,222 | 9,352 | 7,483 | 6,836 |
| Fuel Petrol (litres) | 1,398 | 923 | 860 | 1,141 | 973 |
| Fuel Aspen (litres) | | | | 400 | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| Water use (cubic metres) | | | | 2,674 | 4,081 |
| Total Carbon Emissions Tonnes CO2 e | 53.01 | 53.40 | 51 | 39.17 | 32.95 |

Make-up of the Council's Carbon Footprint

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23* | 2023/24* |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| % Heating | 35 | 40 | 30 | 10 | 6 |
| % Electricity | 37 | 29 | 19 | 33 | 32 |
| % Fuels | 26 | 28 | 50 | 54 | 59 |
| % Water | | | | 1 | 1 |

** Method of accounting changes with switch to Ecotricity as sole energy supplier.*

10.2 Overall carbon emissions from Town Council operations are steadily declining from the baseline of 2019/20. Gas use, in particular, has reduced significantly. Electricity is also significantly reduced from the baseline, but has increased from a low of 45,061 Kwh in 2021/22.

10.3 Fuel use in 2023/24 is lower than the baseline, but shows a similar oscillation to electricity use across the 5 years. Fuel has accounted for the largest proportion of the council's carbon emissions since 2021/22.

11.0 Issues and Considerations

11.1 In summary, the budget presented to members seeks to:

- present a balanced budget.
- cater for the impact of inflation and other expected cost changes, on services, expenditure and income.
- maintain and develop existing services provided by the Council.
- maintain appropriate levels of reserves, and continue to earmark reserves to support project delivery, including a capital programme.
- make provision for salary increases, including an estimated national pay award.
- make provision to continue to deliver Town Council projects.
- provide continuing support for town events.
- maintain grant funding for community projects and support of key organisations through service level agreements and community grants.
- Allow for the expansion of the Town Council and its boundary from 1 April 2024.

11.2 The tax base (the estimated number of households in Bridport that are eligible to pay Council Tax) for 2025/26 is confirmed as 5,825.9, which is an increase of 6.8% from the 2024/25 figure of 5,455. This uplift incorporates changes arising from the introduction by Dorset Council of a double-charge for second homes.

12.0 Precept Options

12.1 Taking account of the changes highlighted above, the major source of income for the Town Council remains the precept. The Council is able to agree the level of precept that it wishes to set, to cover costs and service delivery for the coming year.

12.2 Town councillors determine the level of precept. To assist in this decision, three indicative options are put forward after discussion with members at the Budget

Working Group. However, members are not limited to these and others can be considered. The options are:

- Option 1: increase the precept by £128,961 In total, this would raise £1,161,075 and provide a deficit budget (i.e. funded from general reserves) of £30,000.
- Option 2: increase the precept by £158,961. In total, this would raise £1,191,075 and provide a balanced budget and represents the recommendation of the Budget Working Group.
- Option 3: increase the precept by £188,961. In total, this would raise £1,221,075 and provide an additional contribution of £30,000 to general reserves.

12.3 A balanced budget (Option 2) would result in a Band D Council Tax of £204.44. Option 1 would result in a Band D figure of £199.30, and Option 3 £209.59.

12.4 The current Band D Town Council Charge is £189.21 for Council Tax payers in Bridport parish. The three options listed result in the following corresponding increases in Council Tax for a Band 'D' Council Tax payer:

| | Annual | Weekly | %age |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Option 1 | £10.09 | £0.19 | 5.33% |
| Option 2 | £15.23 | £0.29 | 8.05% |
| Option 3 | £20.38 | £0.39 | 10.77% |

12.5 When considering the draft budget and precept, Budget Working Group was mindful of the significant changes to the Band D Council Tax in 2024, arising from the community Governance Review. For indicative comparison, the 2023 figures for the former parish and town areas were as follows:

| | Band D (£) |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Allington | £41.88 |
| Bothenhampton & Walditch | £49.45 |
| Bradpole | £45.54 |
| Bridport | £274.53 |

12.6 Members are reminded that the Town Council's element is only one part of the overall Council Tax bill, which includes elements from other precepting authorities. Dorset Council is expected to increase its precept by the maximum allowed without a requirement for a referendum, 4.99%. For context, the Band D charges, which alongside the Town Council charge make up the Council Tax bills were in 2024/25 as follows:

| Organisation | Band D (£) | %age |
|--|-------------------|---------------|
| Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner | £293.58 | 11.4% |
| Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service | £86.95 | 3.4% |
| Dorset Council (incl. adult social care precept) | £2,001.15 | 77.8% |
| Bridport Town Council | £189.21 | 7.4% |
| Total | £2,570.89 | 100.0% |

- 12.7 An estimated 60% of properties in the existing Bridport parish are in Council Tax bands A, B or C, and so would pay proportionately less than the Band D figure that is generally used for comparison with other councils. Residents in single occupation and on low incomes remain eligible for reductions in Council Tax.

13.0 Recommendation

13.1 The Committee is asked to recommend Council to:

- (a) approve the draft estimates for 2025/26, as attached in Appendix A.
- (b) approve the proposed fees and charges as set out in Appendix B.
- (c) approve the Medium Term Financial Plan as a guide for future years as in Appendix C, noting that each year's budget will be subject to separate approval.
- (d) agree the draft capital programme and proposed use of reserves for 2025/26 and future years, as set out in section 4 of the report and at Appendix D.
- (e) set a precept for 2025/26, taking into account the issues and options set out in this report.

6 January 2025

Will Austin
Town Clerk

| 2024/2025 | | 2025/2026 | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Administration | | | |
| 406,500 | | Salaries | 419,500 |
| 6,675 | | Training | 6,675 |
| 4,385 | | Subscriptions | 4,385 |
| 235 | | Books and Publications | 235 |
| 23,660 | | Insurance | 32,000 |
| 3,625 | | Communications | 3,625 |
| 3,180 | | Bank charges | 3,180 |
| 2,970 | | Legal and Agents Fees | 2,970 |
| 530 | | Miscellaneous | 530 |
| Income | | | |
| | 956 | Salary Contributions | 985 |
| | 15,000 | Interest and Dividends | 15,450 |
| 451,760 | 15,956 | Total | 473,100 |
| Office Expenses | | | |
| 2,720 | | Stationery | 2,720 |
| 1,225 | | Postages | 1,225 |
| 1,235 | | Advertising | 1,235 |
| 2,100 | | Telephone | 2,100 |
| 3,120 | | Equipment Maintenance | 3,120 |
| 11,350 | | Office Equipment, Software | 21,000 |
| 21,750 | | Total | 31,400 |
| Mountfield | | | |
| 13,780 | | Rates | 13,780 |
| 1,245 | | Water | 1,245 |
| 4,390 | | Electricity | 6,950 |
| 3,265 | | Gas | 3,975 |
| 7,420 | | Repairs and Maintenance | 7,420 |
| 8,900 | | Planned Maintenance | 8,900 |
| 525 | | Cleaning Materials | 525 |
| 1,965 | | Hygiene | 1,965 |
| | 64,100 | Income | 59,995 |
| 41,490 | 64,100 | Total | 44,760 |
| The Grove | | | |
| 15,000 | | Rent | 15,000 |
| 2,570 | | Rates and Water | 2,570 |
| 6,015 | | Electricity and Gas | 5,250 |
| 4,365 | | Maintenance | 4,365 |
| | 38,000 | Income | 43,300 |
| 27,950 | 38,000 | Total | 27,185 |

| 2024/2025 | | | 2025/2026 | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Expenditure | Income | | Expenditure | Income |
| | | WI Hall | | |
| 2,000 | | Rates | 2,000 | |
| 1,000 | | Water | 1,000 | |
| 2,500 | | Electricity | 850 | |
| 2,000 | | Gas | 1,600 | |
| 350 | | Cleaning Materials | 350 | |
| 7,150 | | Maintenance | 7,150 | |
| | 15,000 | Income | | 15,450 |
| 15,000 | 15,000 | Total | 12,950 | 15,450 |
| | | Town Hall | | |
| 5,000 | | Rates and Water | 5,000 | |
| 5,625 | | Electricity and Gas | 9,000 | |
| 410 | | Cleaning Materials | 410 | |
| 6,750 | | Maintenance | 6,750 | |
| | 23,000 | Income | | 23,690 |
| 17,785 | 23,000 | Total | 21,160 | 23,690 |
| | | Tourist Information Centre | | |
| 184,250 | | Salaries | 228,250 | |
| 180,000 | | Tickets and Services | 185,400 | |
| 10,600 | | Stock | 10,600 | |
| 2,650 | | Maintenance | 2,650 | |
| 6,470 | | Telephone and Card charges | 6,470 | |
| 1,475 | | Miscellaneous | 4,750 | |
| | | Income | | |
| | 200,000 | Tickets and Services | | 206,000 |
| | 15,900 | Stock | | 16,375 |
| 385,445 | 215,900 | Total | 438,120 | 222,375 |
| | | West Bay Discovery Centre | | |
| | | Expenditure | 16,300 | |
| | | Income | | 34,000 |
| | | Total | 16,300 | 34,000 |
| | | Civic | | |
| 1,414 | | Mayoral Allowance | 1,468 | |
| 2,395 | | Mayoral Expenses | 2,395 | |
| 1,414 | | Leader Allowance | 1,414 | |
| 820 | | Mayor Making | 820 | |
| 820 | | Remembrance | 820 | |
| 95 | | Macebearers | 95 | |
| 260 | | Honorarium | 260 | |
| 185 | | Regalia | 185 | |
| 65 | | Sign Writing | 65 | |
| 50 | | Town Crier | 50 | |
| 7,518 | | Total | 7,572 | |

| 2024/2025 | | 2025/2026 | |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Cemetery | | | |
| 5,830 | | 5,830 | |
| 1,345 | | 1,345 | |
| 2,120 | | 1,350 | |
| 3,600 | | 3,600 | |
| 235 | | 235 | |
| 320 | | 320 | |
| 1,165 | | 1,165 | |
| 805 | | 805 | |
| 3,710 | | 3,710 | |
| 3,180 | | 3,180 | |
| 1,060 | | 1,060 | |
| 530 | | 530 | |
| 225 | | 225 | |
| | 25,375 | | 26,135 |
| | Income | | |
| 24,125 | 25,375 | 23,355 | 26,135 |
| Total | | | |
| Amenity Areas and Playing Fields | | | |
| 7,685 | | 7,685 | |
| 640 | | 640 | |
| 1,060 | | 1,750 | |
| 320 | | 320 | |
| 246,250 | | 265,250 | |
| 1,965 | | 1,965 | |
| 6,555 | | 6,555 | |
| 72,500 | | 72,500 | |
| 30,000 | | 30,000 | |
| 7,230 | | 7,230 | |
| 250 | | 250 | |
| 3,180 | | 0 | |
| 6,615 | | 6,615 | |
| 1,330 | | 1,330 | |
| 6,720 | | 11,700 | |
| 9,615 | | 9,615 | |
| 14,675 | | 14,675 | |
| | | | |
| | 3,500 | | 3,605 |
| | 17,250 | | 26,000 |
| | 13,588 | | 13,588 |
| | 3,750 | | 0 |
| | 11,000 | | 11,330 |
| | Income | | |
| 416,590 | 49,088 | 438,080 | 54,523 |
| Total | | | |
| Market | | | |
| 5,905 | | 5,905 | |
| 630 | | 630 | |
| 9,480 | | 9,480 | |
| | | | |
| | 3,000 | | 4,375 |
| | 90,000 | | 92,700 |
| | Income | | |
| 16,015 | 93,000 | 16,015 | 97,075 |
| Total | | | |

Appendix A

| Bridport Town Council | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Fees for Services (inclusive of VAT, if applicable) | | | Notes |
| | 01/04/24 31/03/25 £ | 01/04/25 31/03/26 £ | |
| Allotments | | | |
| Whole | 28.50 | 28.50 | Double fees apply to residents outside the parish. Half charges for partial year invoiced April to June. No charge July to September. |
| Half | 14.25 | 14.25 | |
| Water - whole | 11.00 | 11.00 | |
| Water - half | 5.50 | 5.50 | |
| Cemetery | | | |
| Exclusive right | 299.00 | 299.00 | Double cemetery fees apply to residents who live outside the parish. |
| Exclusive right - ashes | 119.50 | 119.50 | |
| Interment | 201.00 | 201.00 | |
| Interment - ashes | 81.50 | 81.50 | |
| Grave Digging | 287.50 | 287.50 | |
| Grave Digging - ashes | 17.25 | 17.25 | |
| Kerb/Border stone | 207.00 | 207.00 | |
| Memorials | 119.50 | 119.50 | |
| Additional Inscription | 39.00 | 39.00 | |
| Plaques | 23.50 | 23.50 | |
| Fixed Vases | 57.50 | 57.50 | |
| Use of the Chapel | 99.00 | 99.00 | |
| Weekend charge | 28.75 | 28.75 | |
| Woodland | | | |
| Interment | 500.00 | 500.00 | |
| Interment - ashes | 201.00 | 201.00 | |
| Grave Digging | 287.50 | 287.50 | |
| Grave Digging - ashes | 17.25 | 17.25 | |
| Football pitches - seniors | 36.00 | 36.00 | |
| Pitch use by Junior football teams is free of charge | | | |
| Mountfield - room hire | | | |
| Morning, afternoon or evening | 35.00 | 35.00 | |
| Morning, afternoon or evening - commercial | 75.00 | 75.00 | |
| Salt House, West Bay, inc. Fisherman's Green if required | | | |
| Morning, afternoon or evening | 35.00 | 35.00 | |
| morning, afternoon or evening - commercial | 100.00 | 100.00 | |

| Bridport Town Council Fees for Services (inclusive of VAT, if applicable) | | 01/04/24 31/03/25 | 01/04/25 31/03/26 | Notes |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Town Hall – Main Hall | | | | |
| Community (Bridport community/charitable/voluntary groups) | | | | |
| Morning, afternoon or evening (per session) | | 35.00 | 35.00 | |
| Use of Kitchen | | 5.00 | 5.00 | |
| Commercial | | | | |
| Morning, Afternoon or Evening (per session) | | 135.00 | 135.00 | |
| Use of Kitchen | | 20.00 | 20.00 | |
| Exhibition Window (per week) | | | | |
| Events and agencies | | Free | Free | |
| Commercial local | | 40.00+VAT | 40.00+VAT | |
| Commercial regional | | 60.00+VAT | 60.00+VAT | |
| WI Hall | | | | |
| Community (Bridport community/charitable/voluntary groups) | | | | |
| Commercial | | £10 per hour On application | £10 per hour On application | |
| Lengthsman | | | | |
| Other parishes work, hourly rate | | 27.00 | 27.00 | |
| Market Tolls | | | | |
| Registered and Non-Registered | | | | |
| Sitting Out Licence Fees | | The Town Clerk be given delegated authority to set market fees including frontages for 2025/2026, following discussion at the Market and Business Liaison Working Group. | | |
| West Bay Market | | | | |
| Melplash Show | | | | |
| Costs to organisations of a stand in the Bridport Marquee | | 60.00 | 60.00 | |
| Community Web site | | | | |
| Business and commercial: | | 100.00 | 100.00 | |
| Events, Community and Market Traders | | Free | Free | |
| Outdoor Events Venues | | | | |
| Commercial/Community | | Delegated to Town Clerk or Town Surveyor Delegated to Town Clerk | | |
| Equipment Charges | | | | |
| Street Banners erected on town centre lamp posts | | 42.00 | 42.00 | |
| Football Club & Plottingham Car Parks (Mon-Sat 8am-6pm) | | £5.00 all day | £5.00 all day | |
| | | £1.50 2 hours | £1.50 2 hours | |
| | | £2.50 4 hours | £2.50 4 hours | |
| | | Season tickets £350pa / £200 for 6 months | Season tickets £350 pa / £200 for 6 months | Season tickets £350 pa / £200 for 6 months |
| | | £460 pa / £250 6 months / £150 3 months | £460 pa / £250 6 months / £150 3 months | £460 pa / £250 6 months / £150 3 months |
| | | Season tickets £350 pa / £200 for 6 months | Season tickets £350 pa / £200 for 6 months | Season tickets £350 pa / £200 for 6 months |
| The Grove Car Park - season tickets only | | | | |
| Borough Gardens Car Park - season tickets only | | | | |

Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2027/28

| | 2024/2025 (budget) | | 2025/2026 | | 2026/27 | | 2027/28 | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| | Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income | Expenditure | Income |
| Administration | 451,760 | 15,956 | 473,100 | 16,435 | 487,293 | 16,928 | 501,912 | 17,436 |
| Precept | | 1,032,114 | | 1,191,075 | | 1,307,807 | | 1,365,041 |
| Office Expenses | 21,750 | 0 | 31,400 | | 32,342 | 0 | 33,312 | 0 |
| Mountfield | 41,490 | 64,100 | 44,760 | 59,995 | 46,103 | 61,795 | 47,486 | 63,649 |
| The Grove | 27,950 | 38,000 | 27,185 | 43,300 | 28,001 | 44,599 | 28,841 | 45,937 |
| W.I. Hall | 15,000 | 15,000 | 12,950 | 15,450 | 13,339 | 15,914 | 13,739 | 16,391 |
| Town Hall | 17,785 | 23,000 | 21,160 | 23,690 | 21,795 | 24,401 | 22,449 | 25,133 |
| Tourist Information Centre | 385,445 | 215,900 | 438,120 | 222,375 | 451,264 | 229,046 | 464,802 | 235,918 |
| West Bay Discovery Centre | 0 | 0 | 16,300 | 34,000 | 16,789 | 35,020 | 17,293 | 36,071 |
| Civic | 7,518 | | 7,572 | | 7,799 | 0 | 8,033 | 0 |
| Cemetery | 24,125 | 25,375 | 23,355 | 26,135 | 24,056 | 26,919 | 24,777 | 27,727 |
| Amenity Areas and Playing Fields | 416,590 | 49,088 | 438,080 | 54,523 | 451,222 | 56,159 | 464,759 | 57,843 |
| Market | 16,015 | 93,000 | 16,015 | 97,075 | 16,495 | 99,987 | 16,990 | 102,987 |
| Miscellaneous | 21,190 | | 24,840 | | 25,585 | 0 | 26,353 | 0 |
| Grants and Donations | 75,970 | 6,000 | 92,958 | 6,180 | 95,747 | 6,365 | 98,619 | 6,556 |
| Salt House and Fisherman's Green | 3,925 | 18,000 | 3,925 | 13,500 | 4,043 | 13,905 | 4,164 | 14,322 |
| Other Council Services | 78,270 | 9,250 | 66,450 | 9,525 | 68,444 | 9,811 | 70,497 | 10,105 |
| Draft Council Plan Commitments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 81,000 | | 101,430 | |
| Contribution from Reserves | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 |
| Contribution to Reserves | | | 75,088 | | 77,341 | | 79,661 | |
| | 1,604,783 | 1,604,783 | 1,813,258 | 1,813,258 | 1,948,656 | 1,948,656 | 2,025,115 | 2,025,115 |
| Surplus/(deficit) | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 |

Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2027/28

| Schemes | Estimated Cost | | | | Funding | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | Total | External | S106/CiL | Reserves/ Revenue |
| Bus Station | 10,000 | 10,000 | 300,000 | 320,000 | 280,000 | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Play Area Improvements | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 10,000 | 20,000 |
| WI Hall Improvements | 75,000 | 0 | 0 | 75,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 60,000 |
| Vehicle Replacement Programme | 15,000 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 45,000 | 0 | 0 | 45,000 |
| Plottingham Field Improvements | | 20,000 | 500,000 | 520,000 | 450,000 | 50,000 | 20,000 |
| Mountfield Improvements | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0 | 100,000 | 20,000 | 0 | 80,000 |
| Old Dairy Site | 10,000 | 250,000 | 0 | 260,000 | 250,000 | 10,000 | 0 |
| Streetscape & Heritage Works | 0 | 5,000 | 10,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 5,000 | 10,000 |
| Neighbourhood Plan Projects | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 15,000 |
| 3G/4G Sports Pitch | 0 | 0 | 300,000 | 300,000 | 250,000 | 50,000 | 0 |
| Access & Movement Works | 2,000 | 5,000 | 0 | 7,000 | 0 | 0 | 7,000 |
| Riverside Corridor | 0 | 0 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 0 | 0 | 5,000 |
| Bridport FC Car Park Surfacing | 0 | 0 | 200,000 | 200,000 | 180,000 | 20,000 | 0 |
| Other Draft Council Plan Projects | 12,000 | 250,000 | 55,000 | 317,000 | 280,000 | 20,000 | 17,000 |
| Totals | 189,000 | 620,000 | 1,400,000 | 2,209,000 | 1,725,000 | 185,000 | 299,000 |

Minutes of the ANNUAL MEETING of the **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Town Hall, Bridport on Thursday 8 May 2025 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Anne Rickard (Chair and Town Mayor)

| | | |
|-------|------------------|----------------|
| Cllrs | Nigel Amor | Anna Killick |
| | Ian Bark | Ann Langridge |
| | Bridget Bolwell | Patrick Mooney |
| | Dave Bolwell | Nigel Rawlings |
| | Jonathan Bourbon | Dave Rickard |
| | Robert Casey | Bev Thornton |
| | Kelvin Clayton | Sarah Williams |
| | Andrew Holdridge | Steve Williams |

ALSO PRESENT Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Will Austin (Town Clerk), nine further council officers, and 31 members of the public.

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR (CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL)

Cllr Anne Rickard addressed the meeting as outgoing Mayor and Chair, reflecting on her year in office. She then called for nominations for the election of Town Mayor and Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2025/2026.

It was moved by Cllr Paddy Mooney, seconded by Cllr Nigel Rawlings and,:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Anne Rickard be elected Town Mayor and Chair of the Council for the ensuing municipal year 2025/2026.

There followed a short adjournment (7.10pm to 7.13pm) during which time the Mayor retired to receive the chain of office and Mayoral robes before returning to the Council Chamber.

Cllr Anne Rickard read out and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, offered thanks for her election, and assumed the chair.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sarah Carney and David Worthington.

The Mayor also noted apologies received from Sandra Brown MBE.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR (VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL)

It was moved by Cllr Nigel Rawlings, seconded by Cllr Ann Langridge and:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Jonathan Bourbon be elected Deputy Town Mayor and Vice-Chair of the Council for the ensuing municipal year 2025/2026.

Cllr Jonathan Bourbon read out and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, received the insignia of office, and offered thanks for his election.

5. ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

It was moved by Cllr Andrew Holdridge, seconded by Cllr Paddy Mooney and:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ian Bark be elected Leader of the Council for the ensuing municipal year 2025/2026.

Cllr Ian Bark read out and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, and offered thanks for his election.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2025 be confirmed as a correct record, and be signed by the Town Mayor.

7. COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 April 2025 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Cllr Ian Bark.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee on 28 April 2025 be received and adopted.

8. STANDING ORDER 4(k)(vi)

No questions were received pursuant to Standing Order 4(k)(vi).

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS FOR 2025/26

Consideration was given to the establishment of the committees, sub committees and working groups for the ensuing municipal year 2025/2026, their terms of reference and delegations as set out in the Town Council's constitution, ENCL: 4002.

RESOLVED: that the committees, sub committees and working groups be established for 2025/2026, with the terms of reference and delegations, including the delegations to the Town Clerk, as set out in the Appendix to the report.

10. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE, SUB COMMITTEE, AND STANDING WORKING GROUP MEMBERS 2025/26

The proposed memberships had been circulated to all members, prior to the meeting, ENCL: 4003. This replicated the memberships approved at the previous Annual Town Council Meeting in May 2024.

The Town Clerk reported that, subsequent to publication of the agenda and report, he had been advised of the following proposed changes:

- Finance & General Purposes Committee – Cllr Dave Rickard to replace Cllr Anne Rickard.
- Neighbourhood Plan Joint Councils Committee – Cllr Bridget Bolwell to replace Cllr Andrew Holdridge.
- Best Value & Scrutiny Sub-Committee – Cllr Nigel Rawlings to replace Cllr Andrew Holdridge
- Market & Business Liaison Working Group – Cllr Dave Rickard to replace Cllr Ian Bark.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED: that the membership of committees, sub committees and working groups for the municipal year 2025/26 be approved as set out at Appendix 1 to these minutes.

11. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

RESOLVED: that the Council's existing Standing Orders and Financial Regulations shall apply for the municipal year 2025/2026 unless otherwise reviewed by the council.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reported her list of engagements, ENCL: 4004.

The Town Clerk thanked all council officers for their outstanding work during the preceding municipal year, noting that this period had included a major expansion of the council's boundary and responsibilities, and a Town Council election that had resulted in eleven new councillors from the total of twenty elected.

The meeting closed at **7.38pm**.

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on 24 June 2025.

| | Nigel Amor | Ian Bark | Bridget Bolwell | Dave Bolwell | Jonathan Bourdon | Andrew Holdridge | Ann Langridge | Paddy Mooney | Nigel Rawlings | Anne Rickard | Dave Rickard | Bev Thornton | Sarah Williams | Steve Williams | David Worthington | Lib Dem Total | Rob Casey | Kevin Clayton | Julian Jones | Green Total | Anna Killick | Lab Total | Sarah Carney | Ind Total | Total |
|----------------------------|------------|----------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|-------|
| MAIN COMMITTEES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F&GP (9) | ✓ | L | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | 7 | ✓ | | | 1 | ✓ | 1 | | 0 | 9 |
| Plans (9) | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | | | ✓ | 6 | | ✓ | | 1 | ✓ | 1 | ✓ | 1 | 9 |
| Environment (9) | | L | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | 7 | | ✓ | ✓ | 2 | | 0 | | 0 | 9 |
| Communities Trust Mgmt (3) | | L | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | ✓ | | | 2 | | | | 0 | | 0 | ✓ | 1 | 3 |
| JOINT COMMITTEE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NPJCC (5) | | L | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | 4 | | ✓ | | 1 | | 1 | | 0 | 5 |
| SUB COMMITTEES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Staffing Appeals (3) | | L | | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | 3 | | | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | 3 |
| Best Value (9) | | L | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | 7 | | | | 0 | ✓ | 0 | ✓ | 1 | 9 |
| WORKING GROUPS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Market & Business (5) | | | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | 4 | | | | 0 | | 0 | ✓ | 1 | 5 |
| Housing (6) | | | | | | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | 3 | | ✓ | | 1 | ✓ | 1 | ✓ | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 2 | 1 (+L) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 43 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 58 |

L = Leader is a member ex officio (i.e. arising from the holding of that office)