

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 8 September 2025 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Paddy Mooney (Chairman)

Cllrs: Nigel Amor	Ann Langridge
Rob Casey	Nigel Rawlings
Andy Holdridge	Dave Rickard
Anna Killick	Sarah Williams

Also in attendance: Cllr Ian Bark (Leader ex officio), Cllr Dave Bolwell, Cllr Jonathan Bourbon, Lisa Pinch (Finance & Office Manager), Terri Foxwell (Tourism, Markets & Events Manager), Claire Peters-Way (Property Manager), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Sally Freemantle (Town Clerk), 5 members of the public and 1 member of the press.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and press to the meeting.

Three members of the public presented a proposal for the two old telephone kiosks outside of the post office to become a "Writing Box". It was explained that the idea had gained a lot of community support with 200 people signing up for updates on the project. Aims would be to link people through writing activities, showcase creative writing and give the community a sense of ownership of the project and the kiosks. The initial outlay would be £2 to transfer the kiosks from BT to the group who intend to become an unincorporated association. Support from the Town Council would be requested for insurance. Local businesses had been approached about the concept and were keen to be involved, including a volunteer who would unlock and lock the kiosks. Councillors were interested in hearing more and requested that the group provide a business plan for further consideration by the Town Council.

*** Three members of the public left the meeting and did not return (7.16pm) ***

18. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence received.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this time. It was noted that this did not preclude Councillors from declaring interests later in the meeting should they become apparent.

20. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 9 June 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 2 September 2025 be received and the following recommendations be approved:

(Min: 15) TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS TO SMALLER BODIES

Applicant and Purpose of Grant	Award (£)
Equintervention - Intervention sessions for young people with mental health challenges, on reduced timetables in education.	A1
Axminster and Lyme Cancer Support - grant support towards funding the support we provide to clients based in Bridport.	£500.00
Home-Start Wessex - To support vulnerable families in the Bridport DT6 area through our targeted home-visiting service.	£500.00
Mosaic – Supporting Bereaved Children - a child-centred service offering a pathway of support for bereaved children, young people and their families. To offer 5 bereaved young people in the Bridport area their initial 2 sessions of bereavement counselling.	£500.00
Little Green Change - To organise and deliver a Halloween-themed reuse event at Bridport Library in 2025 benefitting children and local families focusing on sourcing and offering pre-loved children’s Halloween costumes and clothing free of charge.	£450.00
Melplash Agricultural Limited - to support children and young adults and educate on farming, food production, healthy eating and career opportunities.	£500.00
West Dorset Mencap – All Sorts Club - day services and social activities for people who have a learning disability in our local area. Many people also live in a rural community, so it is vital we run these clubs to improve mental health, maintain friendships and offer personal development skills.	£500.00
Bridport Food Bank - Assistance with funding fresh fruit and vegetables. £500 will help fund fruit and vegetable provision for 3 weeks.	£500.00
Common Ground for Bridport Swift Town - To employ local contractors to fit boxes on an as-and-when basis. The group would also like to provide Swift nest boxes in circumstances where an individual does not have the funds to buy their own but has a potentially attractive site for Swifts.	£500.00
Allington Hillbilly Volunteers - As part of our Celebrate 2026 project, we are organising a youth art project.	£500.00
Bridport Millennium Green Trust - Installation archway on the Millennium Lawn and the Mountfield driveway, to formalise the ‘gap in the hedge’. To also provide a barrier in front of the arch to prevent particularly small children from running out into the driveway.	£500.00
The Stepping Out Cancer Rehabilitation Community Group - Exercise and Wellbeing programme designed to help members with their recovery, during and after receiving a diagnosis of cancer.	£500.00

West Dorset Singers - In May 2026, we hope to raise our ambitions for local music by presenting two works by living local composers putting Bridport on the wider music map.	£500.00
The Harmony Centre - Towards the costs of a two-day local event in aid of World Mental Health week- whose theme this year is 'community', and for a participatory photography project which will raise awareness of the event and of our services.	£500.00
B Sharp - Bridport Boombox – a weekly out-of-school music making project for young people from Bridport and the surrounding area ages 8–13.	£500.00
Bridport Arts Centre - To support Primordial Dance, a community focused exhibition at Bridport Arts Centre this autumn. An exhibition of paintings by Helen Garrett with poetry by Kate Innes.	£500.00
Bridport Youth Dance – Outdoor Programme - BYD builds confidence and positive mental health by empowering young people to unlock their full creative potential through the power of dance, exploring the natural world around them and stirring their imagination through creativity.	A17
Bridport Youth Dance – Education Development Programme & 25 th Birthday Celebrations . A place where they can travel and excel. Our priorities for 2026 are positive mental health, taking dance into the local environment and supporting young emerging artists.	£500.00
Bridport Youth Dance – Community Outreach Programme - BYD community outreach programme-taking movement and dance to the local community offering workshops to various local groups in Bridport.	£500.00
ASCape - To run three exclusive soft play sessions at Seal's Cove, Bridport, for Autistic and socially anxious children and young people aged 0-25, their siblings, and parent carers.	£500.00
Bridport Literary Festival - as part of our children's programme, we are once again going to bring schools together at Bridport Arts Centre for one big event.	£500.00
Friends of the Lyric Theatre CIC - Working with Inez Aponte, mixed heritage professional storyteller, under the theme of CHILDHOOD (previously HOPE and BELONGING) we will run two community workshops using childhood photographs to collect stories, develop different theatrical forms and present to audiences in The Lyric Theatre.	£400.00
West Dorset Carers - Reflexology, mindfulness, forest bathing, publicity (leaflets/posters). Regarding the reflexology, these are just 15/20-minute sessions for the individual which we have done before.	A23
Edible Bridport - supporting the development of vegetable growing in sites prominent to the public around town. Growing vegetables that are freely available to everyone.	£500.00
St. Swithins Band Bridport - To replace uniforms like for like would cost over £8000 for the band, so we have chosen to modernise our look whilst still keeping the town crest as our logo.	£500.00
Multicultural Group - The multicultural groups, Small World festival on Saturday the 13 th September 2025.	Support in kind offered as grant

	would not be awarded in time for event
Jurassic Pride C.I.C - To fund printing costs for advertising for 12 x LGBTQIA + Community Social Events in Bridport. In addition, the grant will fund the running of 1 x Zine marking workshop in Bridport for members and allies of the LGBTQIA + Community.	£500.00

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note that further information had been requested from application numbers A1, A17 and A23, and following receipt of further information the decision regarding awarding of these grants had been delegated to the Town Clerk and Town Surveyor/Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Best Value and Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Since the Best Value and Scrutiny Committee meeting, further information had been received from all three applicants which satisfied the requirements of the grant policy. Therefore the delegated decision was taken to recommend that the amounts requested A1- £500; A17- £500; A23 - £400 be awarded; and
- (ii) that the above grants and identified amounts, included those identified in (i) above, be approved under the General Power of Competence,

(Min: 16) TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS TO LARGER BODIES 2025/26

Organisation	Amount
Bridport & District Citizens Advice	£9,000
Bridport Arts Centre	£6,750
Bridport Leisure Centre	£4,500
Bridport Youth & Community Centre	£27,000
Bridport Museum Trust	£6,750
Literary & Scientific Institute (Bridport Area Development Trust)	£4,500
2020 Skate & Ride	£4,500
Friends of the Lyric Theatre CIC	£4,500
Precision Football Arena	£2,700
Pymore Village Management Company	£540
Allington Hill & Coopers Wood & Field	£540

- (ii) to note that the agreed sum of £4,500 would potentially not be required by one of the recipients.
- (iii) that due to extenuating circumstances the Bridport Museum Trust be awarded an additional £750 on this occasion.
- (iv) that the potential underspend (£3,750) be held in reserve for Grants to Larger Bodies; and
- (v) that all recipients be required to provide their annual written update.

22. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP MEETING

The notes of the Market & Business Liaison Working Group held on 17 June 2025 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 17 June 2025 be received and noted.

23. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2025/26

Consideration was given to a verbal report of the Finance and Office Manager who explained that the year to date payments list was available, but that production of a report would be deferred to the November meeting of the Committee due to the work being carried out to populate the new financial software system. The Town Clerk, Finance & Officer Manager and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting had reviewed the payments and it had been identified that payments were slightly increased in the last quarter, but that the increase was in line with budget. A question was raised regarding the risk log and the Chair confirmed that budget headings which might have issues, had been identified.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

24. BUDGET PLANNING

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 4034.

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed process and timetable for setting the Council's budget for 2025/26, and key issues for consideration. She 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, Anna Killick, Ann Langridge, Paddy Mooney and Sarah Williams; and
- (ii) Cllr Dave Rickard be a reserve member of the Budget Working Group.

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

25. WRITING BOX UPDATE

The Committee considered the presentation received during the public forum and Councillors were generally supportive of the initiative and looked forward to receiving information which would provide evidence that the project would be self-funding.

RESOLVED: that the initiative be noted and further be awaited.

26. BURTON ROAD TO WEST BAY TRAILWAY

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor and Property Manager, ENCL: 4035. Officers were commended for their work on the draft Management Plan and the public consultation. It was noted that commencement of the second consultation phase would begin in due course.

RESOLVED: that the community response to the draft Management Plan be noted; that the consultation process will continue.

27. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR AND PROPERTY MANAGER

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Surveyor and Property Manager, ENCL: 4036, in respect of the following projects:

Burton Road to West Bay Trailway Management Plan 2025-2030

The consultation period for the Management Plan closed on the 31st August 2025. Following this a second draft of the Management Plan is available for community consultation during September to October 2025.

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

Bridport Football Club and Plottingham Car Park

Discussions have taken place with Dorset Council with a draft enforcement order submitted. Bridport Town Council is awaiting information on the next stages which will include a public consultation and advertisement of the legal order. Dorset Council have advised the legal process is likely to begin in January 2026.

RESOLVED: Members considered the proposal in principle and looked forward to receiving updated information when available.

Asker Meadows

To install cycle and disability access alongside the main gate to the show field to link up the cycle route from Bradpole to West Bay. Proposed extension to the footpath in Asker Meadows.

RESOLVED: Members considered the proposal in principle and agreed that detailed arrangements are to be delegated to the Town Surveyor/Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair.

Asker Meadows Footbridge and remedial works to the riverbank

Dorset Council is to carry out vegetation clearance (mainly bramble) approximately five meters downstream of the footpath and three meters back from the top of the bank. The work will also be checking for the presence of any water vole burrows.

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

Mountfield

Work to repair the window frames on the ground floor at Mountfield have started, and work is to be carried out on the outside staircase commencing Monday 15th September 2025.

A new tenant has taken over the vacant room at Mountfield bringing the building up to full capacity.

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

Badger Row

Bridport Town Council is awaiting information from Dorset Council regarding the transfer of land proposed to be used as additional allotment plots.

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

Dorset Council Asset Transfers

Officers are working with Dorset Council on several asset transfers.

No decision required, as this item was for information only and further reports would be submitted for consideration as information becomes available.

The Grove

Works are to begin on a replacement boiler.

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

28. INTERNAL AUDITOR

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Office Manager, ENCL: 4037.

RESOLVED: that Bridport Town Council appoints Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd as its Internal Auditor.

29. INSURANCE RENEWAL

A verbal update was given by the Finance and Office Manager. The annual renewal was slightly higher than previously and three items have been added; the beach wheelchair building, Ropey the elephant and the Stalking Dog sculpture.

RESOLVED: that the update and the renewal of the Town Council's Insurance Policy be noted.

30. CCLA INVESTMENT LIQUIDATION

Consideration was given to a verbal update by the Finance and Office Manager. It was recognised that strategic objectives need to be identified.

RESOLVED: that the matter be delegated to the Budget Working Group.

31. DAPTC MEMBERSHIP

The Town Clerk reported that the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Council Membership had been renewed.

RESOLVED: that the renewal of the DAPTC membership be noted.

32. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Finance and Officer Manager presented List 2 of the 2025/26 accounts, ENCL: 4038, in the sum of £532,720.91 which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: that the payment of accounts as presented be noted.

33. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Anna Killick has now stepped down from being a representative to Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils.

Following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED: to be referred to Full Council on the 23 September 2025.

34. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

35. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED: to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity of the remaining agenda items would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3.

36. BRIDPORT MUSEUM

Consideration was given to a report of Bridport Museum.

RESOLVED: that support in principle be given to the initial investigations into the proposal.

It was proposed and RESOLVED to consider agenda item 21. Property Matters next and 20. Staffing Matters last.

38. PROPERTY MATTERS

The Town Surveyor reported on matters relating to property and devolution.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

Claire Peters-Way and Terri Foxwell left the meeting and did not return (9.04pm)

37. STAFFING MATTERS

Daryl Chambers left the meeting and did not return (9.06pm)

The Committee considered the confidential report by the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the actions identified within the report be noted and approved.

The meeting closed at 9.22pm.

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

