

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 2 December 2025 at 11.00am.

PRESENT Cllr Sarah Carney (Chair of Committee)

Cllrs: Jonathan Bourbon	Nigel Rawlings
Ann Langridge	Anne Rickard
Paddy Mooney	Steve Williams

Also in attendance: Sally Freemantle (Town Clerk) and Lisa Pinch (Finance & Office Manager).

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Anna Killick and Dave Rickard (Committee Members).

Apologies were also received from Cllr Andy Holdridge (not currently a Committee Member).

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Jonathan Bourbon explained that he is the Town Council's "Representative on Outside Bodies" for the LSi Bridport.

Cllr Nigel Rawlings declared a prejudicial interest on agenda item 6 Request from Harmony because he is a trustee of The Harmony Centre. In accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code of Conduct, and Paragraph 4k(iii) of Standing Orders, he did not participate in decision making or voting on this agenda item.

21. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 September 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 2 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Town Clerk advised that all the Town Council Grants to Smaller Bodies, including those for which further information had been requested, had now been paid. (Best Value & Scrutiny 020925, Minute 15 refers).

22. WEST BAY CAR BOOT SALES 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. She invited members to consider the membership for 2025.

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

- (i) Town Councillors Jonathan Bourbon, Sarah Carney, Ann Langridge, Nigel Rawlings, Dave Rickard and Anne Rickard; and
- (ii) One Dorset Council member from the Bridport ward (request Sarah Williams), and one from any of the other wards in the Bridport Local Area Partnership area, to be agreed in consultation with the Town Clerk.

23. INTERNAL AUDIT

Consideration was given to the interim report of the independent internal auditor, ENCL: 4064.

The report was discussed and the Committee expressed thanks to the Town Clerk and Finance and Office Manager. It was highlighted by the Town Clerk that work was required on the administration of the trust.

RESOLVED: that the interim report of the independent internal auditor be noted.

24. REQUEST FROM HARMONY

Having declared a prejudicial interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Nigel Rawlings left the meeting at 11.34am

The Committee considered a request from Harmony for a Service Level Agreement with the Town Council and noted that the request was for an annual sum of £5,000.

RESOLVED: (1) that the request for a Service Level Agreement by The Harmony Centre be supported; and (2) that the request be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for approval.

Nigel Rawlings returned to the meeting at 11.46am

Steve Williams left the meeting at 11.46am

25. REQUEST FROM BRIDPORT ARTS CENTRE

Consideration was given to a request from Bridport Arts Centre, who were preparing an application to Dorset Council for Section 106 funding, ENCL: 4067, and requested a letter of support from the Town Council.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council responds to explain that unfortunately it is not in a position to provide the letter of support due to a conflict of interests.

Steve Williams returned to the meeting at 11.50am

26. 2020 SKATE & RIDE – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 4068, regarding the 2020 Skate & Ride Service Level Agreement.

RESOLVED: that it be noted that 2020 Skate and Ride will now receive the agreed sum of £4,500 in accordance with their SLA agreement for 2025/26.

27. LSI BRIDPORT

Consideration was given to a development proposal of LSI Bridport.

RESOLVED: (1) that the Development Proposal to Unlock the Potential of the LSi Bridport be noted; and (2) that it be conveyed to the authors of the report that Bridport Town Council is not currently in a position to take on the building.

28. CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the annual report of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

RESOLVED: that the annual report for the Citizens Advice Bureau be noted; (2) that a letter of thanks for its ongoing support to the community be sent; and (3) that a recommendation be made to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the Service Level Agreement for the Citizen's Advice Bureau remain at it's current level with no reduction in financial support in 2026/27.

29. SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The Committee considered a summary of income and expenditure, and a report by the Responsible Financial Officer, ENCL: 4070 & ENCL: 4072.

RESOLVED: that the income and expenditure report be noted and approved.

30. COMMUNICATIONS

No matters for communication were reported.

31. 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 agenda item 32 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*

32. DRAFT ESTIMATES 2026/27

The Finance and Office Manager presented the Budget Working Group's proposals for next year's budget. Decisions on the budget and precept will be taken at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 12 January 2026 and then Full Council on 20 January 2026.

RESOLVED: that the draft estimates for the 2026/27 budget and precept be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.44pm

The next meeting of this Sub-Committee is scheduled to be held on 3 March 2026