

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 March 2026 at 12.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Paddy Mooney

Cllrs: Jonathan Bourbon
Nigel Rawlings
Anne Rickard

Dave Rickard
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.

33. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sarah Carney, Anna Killick and Ann Langridge.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

35. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 2 December 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36. WEST BAY CAR BOOT SALE GRANTS SCHEME

The Town Clerk reported that the West Bay Car Boot Sale Grants Panel meeting took on 3rd March 2026 (am). Members thanked the panel for its work, and it was recommended that

(a) Grants totalling £5,200 be awarded, covering 11 organisations as follows:

Ref	Applicant and Grant Purpose	£
A1	Ascape – For two Bridport-raised young creators, Milla and Eddie, working together as Falling Upwards Creations, to write and produce a short graphic novel exploring the experience of growing up autistic in Bridport.	500
A2	Bridport Millennium Green Trust - Two bench seats to be placed on each footpath ascending Coneygar.	500

Ref	Applicant and Grant Purpose	£
A3	Allington Hillbilly Volunteers - 40th anniversary of the local community raising the funds to purchase Allington Hill. The main event a country fair, will be held on Saturday 2nd May 2026.	500
A4	West Dorset Mencap Gateway Club – Fortnightly sessions welcoming in the region of 30 local people along with their carer support/pa. Club nights are for people who live locally with a learning disability and activities range from discos, dancing, music and movement sessions.	500
A5	West Dorset Mencap All Sorts Club - Club to improve mental health, maintain friendships and offer personal development skills for those who have a learning disability.	500
A6	Bridport Youth Dance - 25th anniversary, there will be a number of workshops and performances to celebrate this journey. This will include workshops with leading UK dancers and choreographers.	500
A7	The Stepping Out Cancer Rehabilitation Community Group - provides an exercise and wellbeing programme designed to help members with their recovery, during and after a diagnosis of cancer.	500
A8	Bridport Food Bank - is a community service seeking assistance with operating costs.	500
A9	WATAG - Running costs (stationery, postage, IT, website etc.) Room hire and Zoom) for public and committee meetings. Preparation, printing and distribution of comprehensive bus timetables for the WATAG area.	200
A10	Bridport Gig Club Ltd - Our current jackets have reached their service life and need replacing as do our junior life jackets. Life jackets cost approximately £65 each for adult and £140 for juniors (12 required total) and are required to be regularly updated due to fatigue/wear and tear.	500
A11	The Bank of Dreams and Nightmares – funding for a first aid training course for our staff and volunteers, so we are up to date with safety procedures.	500
	Total Grants approved	£5,200

(b) An additional request was received by the Beach Wheelchair Scheme for a contribution to servicing the four wheelchairs (£27 per wheelchair) and hoist (£144) and the purchase of a hydraulic height changing table (£1,099). It was recommended that the contribution to the servicing of the four wheelchairs and the hoist (£252 altogether) be agreed and that the request for funding a hydraulic height changing table be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

It was noted that there had been an underspend in the previous year's budget for the West Bay Car Boot Sale Grants Scheme, so the total budget available for allocation was £7,710.

RESOLVED: that all the grants in the above table be approved totalling £5,200;

RESOLVED: that the request for a contribution to servicing the four wheelchairs and hoist (£252 altogether) be approved; and

RESOLVED: that the purchase of a hydraulic height changing table be approved.

37. LETTER FROM EXTERNAL AUDITOR: GENERAL RESERVES

Consideration was given to a report by the Finance and Office Manager, ENCL: 4096 and a letter from the external auditor, ENCL: 4097.

The Town Clerk reported that discussions had taken place with the external auditor regarding the assessment of the levels of general reserves. The External Auditor had written to confirm that the level of general reserves for Bridport Town Council for the financial year 2024-25 were adequate.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and that the letter from the External Auditor be placed on the website with the 2024-25 AGAR.

38. ASSET REGISTER

Councillors considered the Asset Register, ENCL: 4098. The additions and disposals in the year were summarised since the previous year's register. Other minor changes might be required before the financial year end.

RECOMMENDED: that the Asset Register be approved and the Finance & Officer Manager be given delegated authority to make any final amendments before it is signed by the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk; and

RESOLVED: that a review of the register be carried out when resources allow, to consider asset values and inclusion in the register.

39. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Consideration was given to the draft agenda, ENCL: 4099.

Members welcomed the inclusion of reports from council grant recipients at the meeting and discussed its traditional and statutory purpose as a forum for electors to discuss town issues.

RESOLVED: that the Annual Town Meeting be postponed and the new date be set as 28th April 2026 at 6.30pm; and

RESOLVED: that the other details on the draft agenda for the Annual Town Meeting be agreed.

40. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Town Clerk explained that the proposed Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were based on NALC (National Association of Local Councils) model documents with some amendments and insertions to make the documents bespoke to Bridport Town Council.

Councillors agreed the proposed Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and recommended referral to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. It was noted that the Scheme of Delegation had not been updated as this would be reviewed as part of a wider review of processes.

RECOMMENDED: that the proposed updated Standing Orders and Financial regulations be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for approval and to Full Council for adoption.

41. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no items of urgent communication.

42. 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 item 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.*

43. UTILITIES REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Office Manager, ENCL: 4102.

RESOLVED: that the three recommendations outlined in the report be agreed.

The meeting closed at **12.45pm**

The next meeting of this Sub-Committee is scheduled to be held on 2 June 2026