

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 8 June 2026 at 6.30pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Andy Holdridge (Chairman from item 2)

Cllrs: Nigel Amor	Ann Langridge
Jonathan Bourbon	Paddy Mooney (Leader ex officio)
Rob Casey	Anne Rickard
Anna Killick	Sarah Williams

Also Present Cllr Bridget Bolwell (online)

In Attendance: Sally Freemantle (Town Clerk), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Lisa Pinch (Finance & Office Manager) and Claire Peters-Way (Property Manager).

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Nominations were sought for Chairman by the Town Clerk and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Andy Holdridge be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2026/27.

Cllr Andy Holdridge assumed the chair.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Worthington.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Ann Langridge was nominated and seconded. Following a vote, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ann Langridge be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2026/27.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 9 March 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 2 June 2026 be received and adopted and the following recommendations be approved:

Minute 5 **Annual Accounts 2026/27**

RESOLVED: that the Annual Accounts for 2026-27 be approved.

Minute 5 **Annual Account Summary**

RESOLVED: that the Annual Account Summary be noted and approved.

7. GRANT FUNDING PRIORITIES

Consideration was given to the recommendation by members of the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee.

RESOLVED: that the funding priorities for the forthcoming grant application process be: (i) Mental Health support for young people (ii) youth and young people; and (iii) mental health support.

8. ENVIRONMENT & SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 June 2026 be approved.

9. MARKET & BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP

The notes of the meeting held on 21 April 2026 were received and noted. There were no recommendations for consideration.

10. APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL

Consideration was given to the draft list of appointments for 2026/27, ENCL: 4133.

Cllr Ann Langridge reported that West Bay Community Forum has since folded, and Cllr Jonathan Bourbon asked if someone would be able to take his place as the Council representative on the Bridport Area Development Trust.

RESOLVED: that West Bay Community Forum is removed from the list of representatives on outside bodies, as in Appendix 1 to the minutes.

RECOMMEND: that the appointment and representatives of the Council be approved, as in Appendix 1 to the minutes, subject to the potential change of representative for the Bridport Area Development Trust.

11. BUDGET PLANNING 2027/28

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 4134.

The Town Clerk reported on the proposed process and timetable for setting the Council's budget for 2026/27, and key issues for consideration. Following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED: that (1) membership of the Budget Working Group shall be Cllrs Ian Bark, Andrew Holdridge, Anna Killick, Ann Langridge, Paddy Mooney and Sarah Williams; and (2) further nominations be invited at the next Full Council meeting.

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

12. BRIDPORT & DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE – REQUEST FOR FURTHER FUNDING REPORT

Consideration was given to a request from Bridport & District Citizens Advice Bureau, ENCL: 4135.

Cllr Paddy Mooney reported that the Bridport & District Citizens Advice Bureau has faced a significant drop in income due to grant funding ending. It was noted that core delivery staff hours have been reduced. The Town Clerk reported that a one-off grant could be funded from the general reserves. The annual SLA meeting will take place in August. Following the discussion it was,

RECOMMEND: (1) that a sum of £6,000 be transferred into earmarked reserves for financial support for the Citizens Advice Bureau; and (2) that this earmarked reserve be used as a one-off payment of £6,000 to be granted to Bridport & District Citizens Advice Bureau for 2026/27 in addition to their Service Level Agreement.

13. CREDIT CARD APPROVAL

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Office Manager, ENCL: 4136.

The Finance and Office Manager reported that currently bank account withdrawals can be authorised by one signatory only, it is recommended that this be changed so that two signatories are required for withdrawal to provide a layer of protection for both the Town Council and Officers and to enhance trust and accountability. This is also supported by our Internal Auditor.

RESOLVED: that the Finance and Office Manager apply for a Barclaycard and members support its use for payments which cannot be made by BACS or Direct Debit.

14. INTERNAL AUDIT

The Town Clerk reported on the Internal Audit visit which took place earlier in the day (8th June 2026). She thanked the Finance and Office Manager for all her hard work. It was acknowledged by the Internal Auditor that many of the actions identified in the Interim Audit had been completed. One additional action had been recommended. The full report from the Internal Auditor would be referred to the next Town Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

15. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR AND PROPERTY MANAGER

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk and Property Manager, ENCL:4137 in respect of the following projects:

Table 1 - Ongoing projects and maintenance

Asker Meadows	A new fence in the show field has been completed which will enable the pathway to eventually link up to form a circular accessible route for all users. This has also helped to establish a parking area for organisers of events in the show field. Plainings from the resurfacing works in West and East Street, will be used in Asker Meadows to form the base coat for a pedestrian and cycle path. To work with the Brit Valley Project on the Development Plan including new path, planting and new pedestrian and cycle entrance to the meadow as part of the works ready for National Highways to install a controlled crossing from Pasture Way.
BTC buildings	A Fire Risk Assessment and asbestos management survey was carried out at the WI Hall by Tru-Surv in April 2026. Legionella Risk Assessments have been carried out on all BTC properties on the 19th & 20th May 2026 by Dee Thornton. Two quotes were received and one further company was approached. Two quotes have now been received for Asbestos Management surveys. Further actions have been raised by Worknest which are also required and these will be addressed in order of priority.
St Cecilia's	Ongoing work with Edible Bridport to create a growing area on the piece of verge opposite the allotment site. The Town Surveyor has met with the group and agreed initially to help install fencing and raised accessible beds these were completed in April 2026 and funded from the amenities budget. A pond is under construction.
Leases	Officers are in the process of updating several leases which are due to expire in 2026/2027 these include Frampton's Butchers, Agin Care and Bridport Tennis Club.
Bridport Football Club and Plottingham Car Park – Enforcement	The Notice of Proposal and Draft Order was placed on the Town Council website and site notices (Notice of Proposal) were placed within the car parks for the public to view. New signage is to be installed in both car parks. Just Park has been set up and is now live within the Plottingham car park. Awaiting the final order from Dorset Council to start the Enforcement. Town surveyor is negotiation with children's services over parking permits.
Borough Gardens	Officers have requested an update regarding the power supply from Magna Housing Ltd to enable a CCTV camera to be installed. It was requested that all incidents to be reported to the police to build up a log and evidence base if the situation got worse. Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service have confirmed that the gates could be locked, however any decision to do so must be supported by a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment and adequate control measures are in place. Magna Housing Ltd are keen to find a solution that ensures the safety of their residents, and in-person meeting to discuss a way forward is to take place.
Millennium Green	In discussion with the Millennium Green Trust regarding future works.
Asset Transfers	On going negotiations are being held with Dorset Council and we are awaiting an asset transfer proposal.

Sitting out Licences	On going discussions with Dorset Council and it is hoped that Bridport Town Council are to retain the running of the Sitting out Licences.
Christmas Lights	A discussion has taken place between Bridport Round Table and members of the Christmas Cheer Committee to add additional Christmas lighting in the town.
BTC Management Plans	Officers to produce management plans for several areas. Currently working on a plan for Slades Green and Green Lane (Bothenhampton) and the Rivervale area from North Mills to St Cecilia's.
Events	The first two large events took place on the 17 th and 18 th May these were Bridport Community Charter Fair and Action Challenge. The event season is now underway with Food Festival in June and Folk Festival in July. The outside team have started verge cutting and helping with event logistics.

Table 2 - Future projects

Bridport Tennis Court Plottingham	Work with Tennis Club to expand the tennis offer and look to add floodlights to the existing courts.
Plottingham	To create a multi-use park including, Skatepark, Play Area, floodlights, stage, cycle routes, water fountain, seating and infrastructure. Skatepark plans ready for consultation to move forward to a planning application. Play area plans being prepared for consultation to move forward to a planning application. This scheme is very dependent on areas all around Plottingham that are marked for development, talks with the Housing Group and potential developers, Dorset Council and Housing Associations are ongoing.
West Bay Play Area	Due to the age of the equipment some were in poor condition and in need of repair, these are now complete ready for the summer season.
WI Hall	Improvement, repair and maintenance work to include replacing the front entrance doors, replace door and frame to courtyard and to courtyard wall with accessible access door and ramp, re-wire internal electrics, fire alarm and smoke detector system. A site visit to the site (all councillors invited) took place in January 2026. This scheme is now on hold as we seek external funding, we hope to bring this back for works to start in a suitable window next in January and February 2027.
Play Areas	Replace all signage in all play areas, this is ongoing and we are looking to complete by the summer season.
North Mills Play Area	Design being worked up to install paths, seating and planting to further enhance this Play Area creating the possibility of alternative use for the Peter Foote area.
New Zealand Pond	Environment Agency approval. Works timetable to be programmed, this project is seen as low priority and will be held until we have a way forward with the Brit Valley Project.

Cemetery	Chapel roof to be stripped and recovered reusing existing materials to be programmed in for this year after being delayed last year due to financial restraints. The existing gates at the East Road entrance are in disrepair. Previously agreed at F&GP but were delayed, due to financial restraints, these gates will now be programmed in for works after April in the next financial year. Some of the paths are requiring repair and will be scheduled in once the weather improves
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Table 3 – For information

West Bay Discovery Centre	The staining of the main floor was completed in February 2026 along with some minor maintenance issues ready for Easter and a new tourist season.
St Mary's	Design for a new pathway to be installed to link the circuit for Park Run. Design to be drawn up to enable consultation with user groups. This will improve the facility for the Park Run with a hard surface all around the course and prevent the cutting up of the grassed areas in the winter.
Bridport Football Club Car Park	The boundary wall to Bridport Football Club is in disrepair and is suffering from the concrete panels and posts failing. It is intended to replace the panels by new metal panels and eventually recreate the mural design depicting Bridport's High St along the riverside as part of the park and stride facility. Working on costings and funding for the second half of the resurfacing the Bridport Football Club car park near the school.
Old Railway Line	Approaches need to be made to all adjoining landowners about access. Discussion had with some adjacent landowners and looking to settle land incursion disputes. To look to establish a community working group.
Salt House	Works to remove and replace the fascia boards completed in March 2026.
The Grove	Works to replace two window frames and sashes were completed in May 2026. Decoration works on the front elevation to be scheduled later this year.

RESOLVED: that the updates be noted.

16. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Finance and Office Manager presented the payment of accounts for transactions over £500.00 from 1st January 2026 – 31st March 2026, in the sum of £237,251.91 which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information was approved by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the payments presented be approved and signed by the Chairman.

RECOMMEND: that the full payment list be approved by Full Council on the 23rd June 2026.

17. TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES OPENING HOURS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 4139.

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council Office Team have monitored and recorded the attendance of in person queries over several months. Reducing the opening hours

would not cause significant impact to the service provided. Officers to speak to tenants of the building.

RESOLVED: that the office opening hours reduce to 10am – 4.30pm Mondays, 9am – 4.30pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and 9am – 4.00pm on Fridays.

18. MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Office Manager, ENCL: 4140.

HMRC announced that the milage rate for cars and vans would increase from 45p per mile to 55p per mile. Following a brief discussion it was,

RESOLVED: that the millage rate for Officers and Councillors of Bridport Town Council increase to 55 pence per mile.

19. COMMUNICATIONS

None were received.

20. 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.

21. PROPERTY MATTERS/ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk.

Members thanked Officers and members of the Working Group for their hard work.

RESOLVED: that the progress by the Electric Palace Working Group be noted.

22. STAFFING MATTERS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

23. RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL LEASE

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the top floor of Mountfield is to become a commercial let.

24. COMPLAINTS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: (i) that the update be noted, (ii) the complaints procedure is not to be re-opened and (iii) that a revision of the complaints procedure and implementation of a Vexatious Complaints Policy be agreed.

RECOMMEND: that the membership of the ICO Working Group shall be Cllrs Paddy Mooney, Andrew Holdridge and Ian Bark.

The meeting closed at 8:16pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 14 September 2026

Appendix 1

Organisation	No. of Reps	Nigel Amor	Ian Bark	Neil Barnes	Bridget Bolwell	Jonathan Bourbon	Andrew Holdridge	Ann Langridge	Paddy Mooney	Nigel Rawlings	Anne Rickard	Dave Rickard	Bev Thornton	Sarah Williams	Steve Williams	David Worthington	Rob Casey	Kelvin Clayton	Julian Jones	Anna Killick	Sarah Carney	Total
2020 Skate & Ride	1																✓					1
Allington Hill & Cooper's Wood & Field	2					✓							✓									2
Asker Nature Reserve Project	1															✓						1
Bridport & District Football Partnership	1																✓					1
Bridport & West Bay Business Chamber	1		✓																			1
Bridport Area Development Trust	1					✓																1
Bridport Arts Centre Mgmt Committee	1 + R								✓					R								1+R
Bridport Charities Trustees	Mayor + 3	✓	✓			✓															✓	4
Bridport Citizen's Advice	1															✓						0
Bridport Community Orchard Group	1									✓												1
Bridport Harbour Advisory Group	1					✓																1
Bridport Hat Festival	1														✓							1
Bridport Heritage Forum	1													✓								1
Bridport Leisure Centre	1 + R																	✓		R		1+R
Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP)	2 + 2 reserve		✓				R					R									✓	2+2R
Bridport Local Food Group	1							✓														1
Bridport Millennium Green Trust	1							✓														1
Bridport Museum Trust	1				✓																	1
Bridport Young Persons Action Trust	1																			✓		1
Bridport Youth and Community Centre	1 + R						✓													R		1+R
Bridport Twinning Association	Mayor + 1					✓									✓							2
Burrough Harmony Trust	1 + R				R								✓									1+R
Christmas Cheer Committee	1										✓											1
DAPTC	2																			✓	✓	2
Dorset Climate Action Network	1																			✓		1
Dorset Coast Forum	1											✓										1
Lyric Theatre	1 + R												R				✓					1+R
Magna Housing	3								✓											✓	✓	3
National Highways	1						✓															
Precision Football Arena	1																✓					1
Pymore Village Management Company	1								✓													
Rural Services Network	1																				✓	1
St Michaels WG	2									✓		✓										1
West Bay Discovery Centre (R)	1 + R							✓														1+R
WATAG	2									✓											✓	2