

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE of Bridport Town Council held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 10 June 2024 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: Paddy Mooney (Chairman from item 2)

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

Also in attendance: Cllr Ian Bark (ex-officio), Cllr Sarah Carney (via Zoom), Will Austin (Town Clerk), Daryl Chambers (Town Surveyor), Claire Peters-Way (Clerical Officer), Jamie Harwood (Precision Football Arena), and Tom Richardson (Precision Football Arena).

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

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

RESOLVED: that Cllr Paddy Mooney be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2024/25.

Cllr Mooney took the chair, and it was further

RESOLVED: that agenda item 7 (Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee) be considered after the minutes of the last meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public spoke at the Public Forum.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Williams.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

4. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Sarah Williams was nominated and seconded. Following a vote, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Sarah Williams be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2024/25.

5. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 7 March 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Members considered a request from the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee held on 5 June 2024 that a proposal by Precision Football Arena for an indoor football and community facility be tabled for Finance & General Purposes Committee discussion.

Two representatives of Precision Football Arena presented on the proposal, highlighting the benefits as:

- A reliable and dedicated training facility that was not weather-dependent;
- Potentially attracting 200 footballers for Bridport Youth FC;
- A positive development for inclusivity and community engagement;
- A facility for wider community and sporting uses beyond football; and
- Providing opportunities for health and wellbeing.

The initial funding target was £30,000 and running costs were estimated at £22,000 per annum. A Crowdfunder had raised £25,000 and the remainder of the initial funding was needed to enable the facility to open by September 2024. The Town Council was asked to consider funding support.

Members discussed:

- The need for planning and any other permissions to be sought;
- Access and transport challenges, including whether the CB3 community bus service might assist;
- Whether potential users would be prepared to travel from the proposed 35-mile radius;
- The need for financial sustainability to meet running costs;
- The potential impact on Bridport Youth & Community Centre, which hosted indoor football sessions;
- Whether schools could be engaged, and whether existing school provision could be used; and
- Funding options, including the possibility of a Service Level Agreement-supported funding arrangement.

RESOLVED: that (i) the proposal for an indoor football and community facility be supported in principle, (ii) a letter and statement of support be produced, and (iii) a further report be provided at the next meeting.

7. BEST VALUE AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 4 June 2024 be received and adopted, and that the following recommendations be approved:

- (min. 5)**
RESOLVED: **Internal Audit and Accounts 2023/24**
that the report of the internal auditor be approved.
- RECOMMENDED: that the annual accounts for 2023/24 be approved.

The Chairman reported that he had met with the Finance & Office Manager and the Tourism, Markets & Events Manager to discuss the finances of the Tourist Information Centre. He had been impressed with the arrangements and had made only one minor suggestion.

(min. 7)
RESOLVED: **Community Engagement Task and Finish Group**
that Cllrs Ian Bark, Sarah Carney, Rob Casey and Paddy Mooney
be elected to the Community Engagement Working Group.

8. SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN SURVEYOR

The Town Surveyor reported on:

- Bridport WI Hall improvements - a planning application has been submitted for improvement works.
- Plottingham Fields regeneration – proposals had been drawn up for a skate park, play area, stage area, floodlights, and tennis court improvements.
- St Mary’s Fields footpaths – new paths were planned, to complete a figure of eight to aid Parkrun.
- Sale of land at the Old Railway Line – sale arrangements had previously been approved by the committee without restriction, and members were welcome to meet with the Town Surveyor to discuss any concerns.
- Mountfield – decorative, general repair, and roofing works were planned.
- New council wards – tree surveys and verge maintenance requirements had been added to work plans and the three-year verge maintenance contract.
- Court Orchard Green improvements – tree planting had been completed, and goalposts installed. Play equipment work was progressing.
- Community events – the Community Charter Fair had been a success. The Food Festival was the next major event, with logistical, ticketing and other support provided by the Town Council.
- Town centre bunting – this would be installed from 24 June 2024.
- Works to graves at Bridport Cemetery – about a dozen graves had sunk significantly, due to recent very bad weather. The council was engaging with grave owners, undertakers and stonemasons, to address this.
- West Bay Discovery Centre – discussions were ongoing about the transfer of the service to the Town Council, including ring-fencing of funding.

RESOLVED: that funding transferred alongside the West Bay Discovery Centre service be ring-fenced for the Discovery Centre, if this is required for agreement.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the Town Surveyor be thanked for his work.

9. MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON WORKING GROUP

The Town Clerk reported that the committee should review the remit and membership of the working group and note the scheduled meeting dates.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the existing Working Group remit – “to take forward issues relating to the market and local business promotion” – be confirmed, and that the scheduled dates for meetings: 18 June 2024, 15 October 2024, 4 February 2025 and 8 April 2025, all at 4:00pm be noted;

(ii) that the membership be agreed as tabled, except that three representatives be invited from Bridport and West Bay Business Chamber, and the Bridport and District Tourism Association be removed.

10. APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL

The Town Clerk presented a draft list of appointments for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDED: that the list of representatives on outside bodies be approved, as in Appendix 1 to the minutes.

RESOLVED: that Magna Housing be approached regarding the possibility of Town Council representation.

11. PAYROLL GIVING

The Town Clerk advised that, in order to take forward a request from two members to contribute part or all of their allowance to charitable causes of their choice, a payroll giving provider would need to be appointed under contract.

RESOLVED: that a payroll giving contract be established.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Clerk reported that the implementation of a town centre 20mph zone would likely be delayed a second time, due to pre-election period rules.

13. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented List 6 of the 2023/24 accounts, sum of £172,337.60 which had been authorised for payment since the last meeting. This having been tabled for members' information was approved by the Chairman.

The Town Clerk presented List 1 of the 2024/25 accounts, in the sum of £274,469.79 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.

14. 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.

15. STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk reported on changes to officer roles taken forward under delegation and with the agreement of the previous committee Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

16. WEST BAY DISCOVERY CENTRE

The Town Clerk reported on employment issues arising from the proposed transfer of the West Bay Discovery Centre service to the Town Council.

RESOLVED: that the approach outlined by the Town Clerk be approved.

17. THE GROVE

The Town Surveyor reported on proposed tenancy arrangements at The Grove, to maintain the model whereby community use of part of the building is facilitated by commercial tenancy agreements for the remainder. Approval was sought to pursue new tenancy agreements under delegation.

RESOLVED: that delegation to pursue new tenancy agreements at The Grove be approved.

18. MOUNTFIELD

The Town Surveyor reported that a lease renewal was being sought at Mountfield by one tenant. He outlined the proposed arrangements and requested agreement for this to be finalised under delegation.

RESOLVED: that delegation to pursue a renewed tenancy agreement at Mountfield be approved.

The meeting closed at 9.24pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 9 September 2024

Appointments and Representatives of the Council 2024-25

Organisation	No. of Reps needed	Nigel Amor	Ian Bark	Bridget Bolwell	Dave 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
Asker Nature Reserve Project	1															✓						1
Axe Valley Ring and Ride	1																					0
Bridport & District Football Partnership	1																✓					1
Bridport & West Bay Business Chamber	1		✓															R		R		1+2R
Bridport Area Development Trust	1					✓																1
Bridport Arts Centre Mgmt Committee	1								✓					R								1+R
Bridport Charities Trustees	Mayor + 3	✓	✓								✓										✓	M+3
Bridport Citizen's Advice	1															✓						1
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		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		1+R
Bridport Twinning Association	Mayor + 1										✓				✓							2
Burrough Harmony Trust	1			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				✓					1+R
Rural Services Network	1																				✓	1
St Michaels WG	2				✓					✓		✓										2
West Bay Community Forum	1				✓			R														1+R
West Bay Discovery Centre	1				R			✓														1+R
WATAG	2									✓											✓	2