

Minutes of the meeting of **BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL** held at the Town Hall on Tuesday 26 November 2024 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Anne Rickard – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Cllr	Nigel Amor	Anna Killick
	Ian Bark	Ann Langridge
	Bridget Bolwell	Patrick Mooney
	Dave Bolwell	Nigel Rawlings
	Jonathan Bourbon	Dave Rickard
	Sarah Carney	Bev Thornton
	Rob Casey	Sarah Williams
	Kelvin Clayton	Steve Williams
	Andrew Holdridge	David Worthington
	Julian Jones	

ALSO PRESENT Will Austin (Town Clerk).

PUBLIC FORUM

A planned discussion of social housing was deferred, pending a meeting with Dorset Council. There were no members of the public present for the general public forum.

38. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

40. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman).

41. STANDING ORDER 4(k)(vi)

In accordance with standing order 4(k)(vi), Cllr Dave Rickard had submitted the following question:

Regarding the piece in the Bridport News suggesting locking carparks at night to solve the antisocial behaviour of some younger drivers, I wish the council to note that this used to be done, but it is onerous on whoever has the responsibility. I believe the owner of the Haddon House Hotel used to do it. However, there is also the issue of irresponsible speeding along West Bay Road. It seems to me that we should be investigating having number plate recognition speed cameras introduced at all the high-risk locations. Every city has them. I would like to suggest that this is brought up at the next Planning Committee. Do councillors agree?

Cllrs Ann Langridge and Dave Bolwell reported on their engagement with Dorset Police, Dorset Council, the Road Safe team, the Station Kitchen, and local residents, in respect of speeding and anti-social driving in West Bay.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that Cllr Dave Rickard's request be referred to the Planning Committee.

42. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 July 2024 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Ian Bark.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 July 2024 be received and adopted.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 November 2024 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Ian Bark.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 November 2024 be received and adopted.

(c) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 11 November 2024 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Paddy Mooney.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 11 November 2024 be received and adopted, and that the recommendations therein be approved, as set out below: -

(Minute 45) FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2024/25 – 2nd REVISION

RESOLVED: that the 2nd revision of the estimates for the year 2024/25 be approved.

(Minute 49) REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council was asked to elect representatives to Bridport Local Food Group and Bridport Millennium Green Trust.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Ann Langridge be elected as representative to both Bridport Local Food Group and Bridport Millennium Green Trust.

(MINUTE 50) INTERNAL AUDIT ENGAGEMENT 2024/25

Consideration was given to appointing Lightatouch as the Council's independent internal auditor for 2024/25.

RESOLVED: that Lightatouch be appointed as the Council's independent internal auditor for 2024/25.

(d) ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 6 November 2024 were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor Kelvin Clayton.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee held on 6 November 2024 be received and adopted.

43. REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3945, about a draft response to a government consultation seeking to enable remote attendance and proxy voting at council meetings.

Members discussed the matter of remote attendance and

RESOLVED: that the responses numbered 1 to 9 in the report, in respect of remote attendance, be approved as tabled.

In respect of proxy voting, members considered:

- The advantages for councillors who were unavailable for medical reasons;
- Concerns that changes to an issue under debate would not be considered by the member who has nominated a proxy;
- Whether appointing a proxy might be regarded as predetermination;
- The reduced need for proxy voting if remote attendance was allowed;
- Whether the circumstances in which proxy voting is allowed could or should be restricted through the Council's Standing Orders;
- The importance of participation in debate before voting;
- Whether amendments to motions during a debate would undermine proxy voting; and
- Whether the existing quorum, as low as three for some Council meetings, gave too much decision-making power to a small number of councillors.

RESOLVED: that it would not be helpful to introduce proxy voting, and that question 10 of the consultation questionnaire be answered 'no' accordingly.

44. TOWN COUNCIL FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3946, to update members on recent discussions regarding the finalisation of the council's five-year plan and seek approval for additional actions.

RESOLVED: that, with such officer support as is required, the following actions be taken prior to the tabling of a further draft of the plan:

- Informal meeting(s) regarding priorities, operational service provision, and the structure of the plan document;
- Community engagement on the outcomes of such discussion, to inform the public; and
- Formal consideration of a further draft plan, likely to be at Full Council in March 2025.

45. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Sarah Carney summarised a report drafted jointly with Cllr Paddy Mooney, regarding a meeting held with Magna Housing on 29 October 2024. The meeting had covered new housing stock, Court Crescent, Boldwood House, The Bus Station, Plottingham and St Michael's, Chancery House, Magna surgeries, and possible next steps.

Members discussed:

- Some confusion over the use of the term 'disruptor model' by a Magna representative;
- Variations in performance by different builders;
- The widespread use of modular housing by Magna;
- Registered Social Landlords' concerns about Section 106 provisions not delivering the required standards, and costs associated with correcting this shortcoming;
- Engagement with Magna by a community land trust seeking to develop Boldwood House for social housing. Discussions had not resulted in positive outcomes;
- A planned meeting with the owners of Chancery House; and
- Whether and how Boldwood House, Plottingham Field, and the Bus Station could be considered a joined up opportunity for Magna.

RESOLVED: that the report of Cllrs Sarah Carney and Paddy Mooney be noted.

46. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Members considered a subject for discussion in the Open Public Forum prior to the next Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that the subject for the next Open Public Forum at the next meeting on 21 January 2025 shall be 'Social Housing'.

47. TOWN CRIER'S REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Crier, ENCL: 3947.

RESOLVED: that the Town Crier be thanked for his work, and that his report be noted.

48.

COMMUNICATIONS

Consideration was given to the Town Mayor's engagements, ENCL: 3948.

RESOLVED: that the Mayor be thanked for her work, and the report be noted.

The Leader of the Council reported that he had attended a meeting in Weymouth on 11 November 2024 with other Town Councils, regarding devolution.

The Town Clerk reported on the following forthcoming events:

- A meeting with Dorset Council regarding housing on 11 December 2024, to which all members had been invited;
- An informal meeting of town councillors at 2:00pm on 16 December 2024 to discuss the Council's five-year plan; and
- Christmas Cheer, which would take place on 4 December 2024.

Cllr Paddy Mooney reported that the last Town of Culture event would be Echoes and Embers, on 20 and 21 December 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.11pm.

The next meeting of Bridport Town Council will be held on 21 January 2025