

Draft Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held virtually (online) via Zoom on Tuesday 10th November 2020 at 7.30pm

A video-recording of this meeting has been posted on Bruton Town Council's Youtube channel and can be seen by clicking on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yD-4PwD4Hxw>

Present: Councillors Anderton, Brownlow, Crawford, Hood, Jones and Robinson
In the Chair: Councillor Anderton
In attendance: The Community Development Officer, the Town Clerk, the Assistant Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Skinner.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
No Committee members had interests to declare in respect of agenda items.
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September**
It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 [for-against-abstain] that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2020 be adopted as a true and accurate record.
4. **Community Development Officer**
Members welcomed the newly appointed Community Development Officer, Eve Anderton, who would be supporting Council projects and Committees, enhancing communications between the Council and the local community, and promoting volunteers and volunteering.
5. **Volunteer co-ordination**
One of the Community Development Officer's role would be to develop personal relationships with existing and potential volunteers and interest groups including those in areas which have not hitherto had many dealings with the Council, and to find out how they could best be supported. Bruton's response to the Covid-19 pandemic shows that many residents are ready and willing to help their neighbours and the community.
6. **Consultation software**
Committee members had been much impressed by a demonstration of *Citizen Space* consultation software and felt it could well be useful in the future, for example in support of a Neighbourhood Plan or in conjunction with other Town and Parish Councils when local government is reorganised. However they considered that it is expensive and perhaps too sophisticated for Bruton Town Council's current needs.

7. **Consultation methods**

Members discussed a range of consultation methods, noted that detailed door to door enquiries can be particularly useful and informative, and agreed to look into the requirements of possible formal consultation exercises in the future.

It was RESOLVED 6-0-0 that Councillors Anderton, Hood and Robinson plus the Community Development Officer would form a Task and finish Group to prepare a briefing paper on Consultation Best Practice to be considered by the Community Engagement Committee at its next meeting.

8. **Working with other towns and parishes**

Members discussed a briefing document (see below) prepared by Councillors Jones and Robinson which examined some of the formal and informal ways Bruton could liaise and engage with neighbouring parishes and nearby towns.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-1 that Councillors Jones and Robinson would incorporate the points discussed and submit the amended document to the Full Council for approval.

9. **Wessex Water Recovery Fund**

It was RESOLVED 6-0-0 that the Community Development Officer in consultation with Councillors Buckland, Jones and Pickering would apply to the Wessex Water Recovery Fund for a grant to carry out necessary improvements to the Engine House Food Drop Service.

10. **Budget 2020-21**

In the course of a wide-ranging discussion members considered how Council funds and resources like the Community and Council offices could best be deployed to promote the work of the Council and facilitate closer engagement with the local community. They agreed to explore the possibility of making Council and Committee meetings more publicly accessible in future through the continued use of media platforms like Zoom and YouTube, and by holding Committee meetings in the Library. They also discussed a contingency fund of £500 for the promotion on social media of Council projects. It was agreed that the Chairman would draft a Community Engagement budget for 2020-21, to be circulated to Committee members and submitted to the Full Council at its meeting on 24th November.

11. **Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held in early January, 2021.

Patrick Pender-Cudlip
Assistant Clerk