

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices
Fortuneswell
PORTLAND
Dorset
DT5 1LW

E-mail:- portlandtowncncnl@btconnect.com
Tel: 01305 821638

13th November 2014

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the **MEETING** of **PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**, to be held in **EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL, PORTLAND**, on **WEDNESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER 2014**, commencing at 7.00 pm when the business set out below will be transacted.

It should be noted that it is the Council's intention that all meetings of the Council and its Committees be recorded aurally.

Yours faithfully

Ian Looker
Town Clerk

A G E N D A

- 1. Prayers**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest** – to receive any declarations from Councillors or Officers of personal or prejudicial interests regarding matters to be considered at this meeting, together with a statement on the nature of those interests.
- 4. Open Forum**
 - a) Police Question Time
 - b) Public Half-Hour
 - c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors
- 5. Minutes** – to confirm the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 17th September 2014
- 6. Minute Update and Matters Arising from the Minutes**
- 7. Town Mayor's Announcements**
- 8. Written Questions for the Mayor**
- 9. Financial Matters**
 - a) Payments for Authorisation (to follow)
 - b) 2014/15 Financial Report to 30th September 2014 (attached)
 - c) Fixed Interest Account – whether to reinvest money (see attached)
- 10. Standing Orders / Financial Regulations** – to consider a review process (see attached)
- 11. Cheyne Weares** – to receive reports from Cllrs. Wild and Bradley, and consider any further action
- 12. Grit Bins Support** – to consider what action might be taken
- 13. Concession for Ice Cream Van at Cheyne Weares** – to consider a proposal from Cllr. Wild

14. **Appointments** – to fill one vacancy on each of:-
 - a) Events & Tourism Sub-Committee
 - b) Grants Sub-Committee
15. **Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC)** – at the request of Cllr. Tim Munro, to consider the support it provides to the Council in relation to the subscription fee paid (see attached)
16. **Annual Return, 2013/14: External Auditor’s Report** – to consider the report (attached)
17. **Portland Community Emergency Plan** – at the request of Cllr. Wild, to consider the addition of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to the list of contacts in an emergency and being involved with the Assistant Clerk in making Plan updates
18. **Public Participation** – at the request of Cllrs. Tim Munro and Chadwick, to consider which meetings should be held in public and which in private, where, and which should include an agenda item allowing the public to speak (see attached)
19. **Flagpoles Outside the Council Offices** – to consider the proposal of Cllrs. Hughes and Wild that flagpoles be erected on either side of the front steps at the Council Offices (see attached)
20. **1st Portland Scouts** – to consider a request received for Council’s permission that the troop adopt new neckerchiefs based on the design of the Portland flag (attached)
21. **Electoral Review of Dorset County Council** – to consider whether the Council wishes to comment on proposals for new electoral divisions (see attached)
22. **Recording or Filming of Parish and Town Council Meetings** – to consider various information received and a report from Cllr Chadwick on the purchase of new equipment (see attached)
23. **Reports from Representatives to Outside Bodies and Voluntary Posts**

24. Exclusion of Press & Public (discretionary)

“That pursuant to the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Agenda Item(s) ... by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.”

25. Date of Next Meetings

The next scheduled meetings of the Town Council are due to take place on Wednesday, 20th November 2014 (Additional) and Wednesday, 18th February 2015, both starting at 7.00 pm.

MINUTE UPDATE

a) Minute 2680(a), para 1 – Fortuneswell Speed Limit

The Council has written to Dorset Highways concerning Ventnor Road and its junction with Fortuneswell, mentioning the Brackenbury car park junction and seeking the County's views. The matter will be followed up when the County responds.

b) Minute 2680(a), para 4 – Olympic Rings Safety

No further information is to hand at present.

c) Minute 2682(a) – Overgrown Hedges

Cllr Wild may wish to provide a further update.

d) Minute 2682(d) – Discontinuance Notice

The Clerk has provided Cllr. Munro with the details.

e) Minute 2682(e) – IT Needs

The investigations continue. Cllr Chadwick may wish to report.

f) Minute 2682(f) – Crossing Patrol Wardens

The County Road Safety Officer reported to the Council that the statistics showed there remained no proven need for a warden at Osprey Quay. The Finance & Resources Committee decided not to pursue financing the Council's own warden, but asked that that the County's letter be posted on the Council website, which has not yet been done.

g) Minute 2685(a), para 2 – Late Filing Charge

Necessary information from the former Island Caretaker has been requested, but not yet sent. HM Revenue & Customs have been informed of the situation, but have not replied.

h) Minute 2685(b) – Financial Report to 31st August 2014

The Clerk presented a short discussion paper on areas of overspending to Finance & Resources. It was agreed that Cllr Matthews and the Clerk should liaise in producing the next budget report.

i) Minute 2686 – Ventnor Road

As noted above, a letter has been sent to Dorset Highways.

j) Minute 2687(a) – Future Events

At the time of writing the Civic Calendar has not yet been posted on the website.

k) Minute 2687(c) – Staffing Review

The review has been carried out and full Council will consider the consultant's report on 20th November.

l) Minute 2690 – Integrating Neighbourhood Plan Management Group Meetings with Those of the Planning Committee

A trial pair of meetings took place in October, which will be the only one before the end of December. The decision of the Council has therefore been interpreted as a three-meeting trial with the other two occasions taking place early in the New Year.

m) Minute 2692 – Remembrance Sunday

Cllr Reynolds will be absent from this Council meeting, but I shall try to contact her for a short written report.

Portland Town Council - Financial Report, 19.11.14

	Budget 2014/15	Expend. 2013/14	Expend. to 31.10.14	Projected 2014/15	Paid / Rec'd to Date (%)
EXPENDITURE					
Salaries	23,287	23,112	13,256	22,730	56.92
Advertising	400	449	190	330	47.50
Audit	805	521	1,234	1,500	153.29
Civic Expenditure	1,541	1,603	343	600	22.26
Computer Equipment	0	0	636	640	-
Computer Software	50	62	0	50	0.00
IT Support	260	200	130	260	50.00
Contingency	1,241	0	0	0	0.00
Elections	1,500	738	5,850	5,850	390.00
Furniture & Equipment	378	376	349	600	92.33
Honorarium	100	100	100	100	100.00
Insurance	1,300	1,287	1,298	1,300	99.85
Mayoral Allowance	700	700	700	700	100.00
Miscellaneous	0	144	0	50	-
Postage	600	822	292	510	48.67
Publications	0	116	18	20	-
Stationery	600	689	461	750	76.83
Subscriptions	1,400	1,676	1,433	1,440	102.36
Telephone / Internet	600	632	307	630	51.17
Training / Conferences	100	105	45	100	45.00
Travelling & Subsistence	100	110	29	60	29.00
Sub-Total	34,962	33,442	26,671	38,220	76.29
Gifts and Donations	210	50	50	50	23.81
Grants	3,000	1,994	0	1,000	0.00
Island Caretaker	15,000	7,915	3,884	3,900	25.89
Neighbourhood Plan Projects	5,500 0	4,234 0	4,294 490	5,500 980	78.07 -
Town Crier	50	35	35	40	70.00
Website	1,500	1,051	1,200	1,200	80.00
Sub-Total	25,260	15,279	9,953	12,670	39.40
TOTAL	60,222	48,721	36,624	50,890	60.81
INCOME					
Precept	50,222	47,910	50,222	50,222	100.00
Discount Grant	4,000	4,726	4,051	4,051	101.28
Fair	3,000	750	1,000	1,000	33.33
Interest	500	644	220	230	44.00
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	2,500	6,300	700	2,500	28.00
Other	0	46	-46	-46	-
TOTAL	60,222	60,376	56,147	57,957	93.23
SURPLUS / DEFICIT (-) FOR YEAR	0	11,655	19,523	7,067	

**Projected Outturn Movement
Oct 14 to Nov 14** _____

A) Net surplus position Oct 2014 £8,447

Main Movements

Increase in projects due to cost of
staffing review £980

Increase in Audit fees to provide
for 1st Audit visit in 2014/15.
Overall expenditure increase due to
delay in 2013/14 program £350

Room Hire (Civic Expenditure) £100

Stationery (copier cartridges) £160

Minor Movements

Advertising -£30

Computer Equipment -£60

Furniture and Equipment £10

Misc -£30

Postage -£90

Interest -£10

Net Minor Movements -£210

Net Minor Movements £210

B) Sub Total £1,380

**(A-B) Net Surplus position Nov
2014 £7,067**

Andy Matthews

FIXED INTEREST ACCOUNT

The Council's one-year fixed interest account with Lloyds matured in September, realising £208 interest.

Lloyds have quoted us the following rates if we wish to reinvest the money:-

3 months	0.57%
6 months	0.70%
9 months	0.98%
12 months	1.00%

These figures show a slight increase in the rates we were offered a year ago and seem to indicate the financial climate is getting marginally better for the investor.

The Town Councils Investment Group I recommended to Council has recently invited the two selected companies to come and give presentations, but no dates have been mentioned yet. My advice is that we reinvest the newly-released funds for nine or twelve months to take advantage of the higher rates currently on offer and await developments from the Investment Group.

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STANDING ORDERS / FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A review of the Council's Standing Orders was started several years ago, but suspended while NALC carried out a national review. A second national review has since been completed. NALC has also recently revised its model Financial Regulations. Though we have updated our Standing Orders from time to time a wholesale review of both documents is necessary to take account of legislative changes in the intervening years.

Guidance is sought from Council on how the review should be carried out.

GRIT BINS SUPPORT

The Council has four grit bins in service plus the long-standing stone recess on Verne Hill Road. Last year it bought in additional bags of grit to help refresh stocks, should that have proved necessary. Twelve months ago we also had our Island Caretaker on hand with the ability to transport the reserve grit supplies and assist with snow-clearing, if required.

Of course much depends on the severity of each winter as it comes by. Last year the weather was mild and no measures needed to be taken. Without a Caretaker the Council's ability to provide a fuller service is reduced. Council is asked to consider what level of service it wishes to offer this coming winter.

ORGANISATION

NALC currently employs a Chief Executive and a team of officers, including legal specialists in local government. They are supported by administrative staff and part-time consultants, one of whom specialises in Audit & Accounts. The staff are responsible to the NALC Council whose members represent each of the County Associations. Representatives to NALC's Annual General Meeting are nominated by each County Association at their own AGM.

LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE

NALC's most obvious help to member councils is a legal advisory service. The service is quick, efficient and given in language which lay people can understand; it saves councils endless time, trouble, expense and worry.

TRAINING

NALC is a lead body in the production of the National Training Strategy for Parish and Town Councils, which sets standards for training nationally and provides training materials and trainer guidance.

NALC PUBLICATIONS

NALC produces a number of training guide publications including: 'The Good Councillor's Guide', 'A guide to becoming a Quality Council' and 'Being a Good Employer'.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Information on local government matters is disseminated in the specialist magazine 'Local Council Review' and by circulars and bulletins distributed mainly through the County Association offices. NALC also provides a Direct Information Service to which many larger councils subscribe.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Contact the Chief Executive or Office Manager at
DAPTC, Colliton Annexe, Colliton Park, DORCHESTER,
Dorset DT1 1XJ
Tel/Fax: 01305 260972 e-mail: daptc@dorsetcc.gov.uk or
visit our website at: www.dorset-aptc.gov.uk

Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils



THE ROLE OF DAPTC

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE DAPTC?

The Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils provides advice, support, training and assistance to its member councils, many of whom employ only one official, the Clerk, usually on a part-time basis. The advice and support offered by DAPTC is backed-up by the Association's links with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to which it is affiliated.

WHAT DOES DAPTC DO?

SPECIALIST ADVICE

DAPTC's own Secretariat is able to advise member councils on a wide range of issues. However, where more specialist help is needed, advice is sought from NALC or, when appropriate, through well established local contacts.

TRAINING

DAPTC is lead trainer for the Dorset County Training Partnership. Training sessions at subsidised rates are regularly organised for both Clerks and Councillors. This training covers a wide range of subjects providing essential training to those new to local council work as well as updates on new government legislation and subjects of general interest to the more experienced Clerks and Councillors.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.

DAPTC publishes a regular Newsletter circulated to all Clerks of member councils for distribution to all Councillors. The Newsletter provides information of current interest to Local Councils in Dorset. DAPTC also issues other notices and information of a more urgent nature through regular mailings to the Clerks of member councils.

LOBBYING

DAPTC acts in the interest of its members locally. We lobby at national, County and District Council level.

MEETINGS

To encourage participation and to ensure an effective two way information flow, DAPTC is divided into five areas; each of which holds a meeting every three months; each member council may send two representatives to their Area Meeting. There is also a Towns and Larger Councils Committee which is open to all town councils and other councils with more than 5,000 electors.

At the Area Meetings and the Towns and Larger Councils Committee, member councils are able to exchange ideas and discuss mutual problems with their neighbouring councils. Expert speakers on issues of local interest are frequently invited to address these meetings, often giving councillors the opportunity to raise their concerns with those who formulate policy. The DAPTC Executive Committee, which comprises representatives from the Areas and the Towns and Larger Councils, also meets every three months. The DAPTC AGM is usually held in the Autumn. Each member council may send two members to the AGM, one of whom may vote.

CHARGES

DAPTC charges its members an annual subscription and in turn pays a subscription to the NALC. The membership subscription is based on the number of electors within each member parish or town. The charge per head is considerably less than that contributed to support the local government associations at District and County level. Membership of DAPTC represents excellent value for money and when the question of subscriptions is raised, what should be asked is 'Can your council afford **not** to be a member?'

WHAT DOES NALC DO?

THE NALC TASK

NALC's task is to inform, advise, train and represent its membership of 49 County Associations and approximately 7,500 parish, town and community councils at National level.

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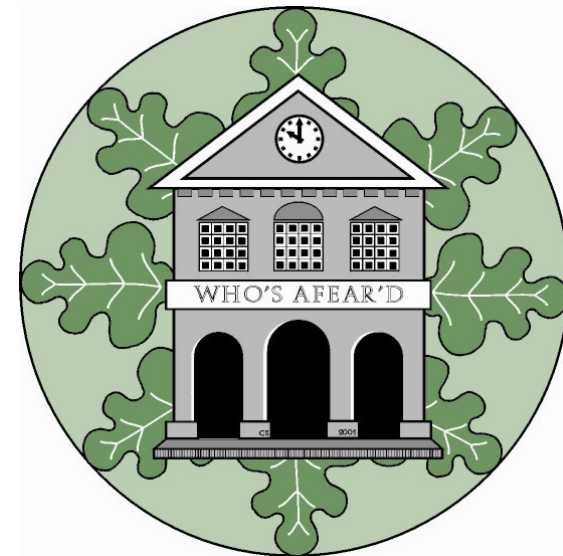
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ANNUAL RETURN, 2013/14: EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

The auditor's report is appended together with the relevant pages from the Annual Return.

The internal auditor would liked to have attended this Council meeting to have the opportunity to meet members and discuss the external auditor's report with them. Unfortunately she has another appointment and is unable to be present.

Having spoken about the report with her, I believe she thinks the Council may have misunderstood some aspects of the Governance Statement that the Council made in the Annual Return. It may be that the roles and responsibilities of the members and the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) have become confused. Perhaps the internal auditor may be given another opportunity to share her views with the Council herself.

Turning to specific aspects of the external audit report, the points raised regarding the asset register are not taken. Most of the items on the register were acquired more than ten years ago and no record exists of when items were purchased and what they cost. The internal auditor has suggested I write to BDO explaining the situation.

Concerning the Island Caretaker I think it would be of mutual benefit for the Council and internal auditor to discuss the employment status, so that members are aware of the issues before appointing a successor.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Council Standing orders state,

ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS

64)The press and public shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees and sub-committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public by means of the following resolution viz:

“That, in view of the (confidential) nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw”.

[Bold typeface indicates mandatory procedure as at 2002.]

At the Annual Town Council Meeting on 21st May 2014 it was resolved “that future meetings of the Town Council and Finance & Projects Committee should be held in public halls on the Island with disabled access, the Clerk to decide and arrange the location for each.” There was an indication in the preceding debate that was in the nature of a trial and meetings of other committees were likely to follow.

When Cllr. Thorner was elected to the Council it seemed only sensible that henceforward meetings of the Planning Committee and Marine & Environment Partnership were also held in community halls also.

As regards sub-committees Council has given no specific ruling about where they shall meet. One view among Councillors is that all their meetings should now take place in community halls. Another view is that certain elements, staffing issues is one example, should be dealt with in private. I have therefore sought guidance from the sub-committee chairmen as to where their meetings should be held. Budget & Investment meetings have been held in public, as the framing of this year’s budget is clearly of public concern, while HR/IT meetings have been in private.

As regards active public participation in meetings the Council’s long-held practice has been to allow comments and questions of any kind in full Council’s Public Half-Hour and comments on planning applications in the Planning Committee. I note that the Borough allows public participation at all its committees, limited to comment on the agendas only.

Among the Town Councils Gillingham allows questions at its Policy & Resources and General Purposes Committees, but Staff & Salaries business is conducted in private. Sturminster Newton provides ten minute “public sessions” at its committees. Wareham allows fifteen minutes public participation at its committees. Sub-Committee agendas and minutes are normally not available on town council websites, if such meetings do in fact take place.

FLAGPOLES OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL OFFICES

The flagpole on the roof of the Council Offices was irreparably damaged in a storm more than a year ago. Two wooden flagpoles have been obtained free of charge in recent months and the proposal is that they be erected one on either side of the steps leading into the building.

Clearly this would enable two flags to be flown at the same time, say the Portland flag and the Union flag on national flag days or a “guest” flag such as one to celebrate the Commonwealth, as agreed by the Council a few months ago.

Security of the flags, and indeed flagpoles, from theft or vandalism may need to be considered as a factor.

1ST PORTLAND SCOUTS

Sent: 04 November 2014
To: Portland Town Council
Subject: 1st Portland Neckers

Hi Ian, I am writing further to our telephone conversation today regarding our Scout Neckers. We are hoping to change the colours of our neckers to represent the Portland Flag, half and half green and blue with cream border and the castle emblem embroidered on the back. We need the OK from Portland Town Council to enable us to do this.

Please can you confirm, or otherwise, if you are happy for us to represent Portland, and the flag, in this way.

Many thanks.

Jayne Cox,
Group Scout Leader
1st Portland Scout Group

[Edited]

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

From: DAPTC
Sent: 14 October 2014
Subject: Electoral review of Dorset County Council

Dear Clerks,

Please find below details of a consultation on a new pattern of electoral divisions for Dorset County Council. Also attached is the letter from the Local Government Boundary Commission to Debbie Ward, Chief Executive of Dorset County Council and also a letter for you and your parish council with further details on the review.

If you have any queries on the review please contact Heather Fuller, whose details are shown at the bottom of this email.

Electoral review of Dorset County Council

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England is asking Dorset parishes and local people for their help to draw up a new pattern of electoral divisions for Dorset County Council.

The consultation is the first part of an electoral review which will re-draw division boundaries across the whole county.

The Commission has also announced that it is minded to recommend that the council should have 46 county councillors in the future: one more than the current arrangements.

The Commission now needs information from people and groups across Dorset to help it to produce a new pattern of electoral divisions to accommodate 46 county councillors.

The consultation closes on 1 December 2014.

Full details of the electoral review and this consultation are available at:
<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/3824>.

Details of the review and how to get involved are also available at:
www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/dorset/dorset-county-council.

If you have any queries do let me know.

Many thanks

Heather Fuller
Review Assistant
Local Government Boundary Commission for England

RECORDING OR FILMING OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Finance & Resources Committee discussed the purchase of its own recording equipment at its meeting on 15th October. It was agreed that Cllr Chadwick would present a report on the subject at the next Town Council meeting.

Attached are comments from DAPTC on recording meetings, an extract they recommend from the Government's Plain English Guide and an offer from the Council's website provider.

From: DAPTC

Sent: 27 August 2014

Subject: New legislation regarding the recording/filming of Parish and Town Council meetings

Dear Clerks,

You may or may not be aware that new legislation has now been passed to allow for the recording and/or filming of parish and town council meetings.

NALC have updated and re-issued Legal Topic Note No. 5 to include new references to this legislation. The updated LTN is now in our Members Area on our website and I have also attached a copy here for your convenience.

The LTN refers to the legislation (para 31 - 40) but doesn't give you as a parish or town council much practical advice on how you could deal with the possibility of having your meetings recorded. One of the documents referenced in the Legal Topic Note is the Open and Accountable Local Government Plain English Guide, where in Section 1, Pages 5 - 8 there is a good explanation of the possible issues. We would recommend that you print out these pages and ensure that all of your councillors are aware of the changes that have now been put into law.

Here's the link to the Plain English Guide :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-and-accountable-local-government-plain-english-guide>

Also attached is a Legal Briefing from NALC which reminds councils that, if they are using the NALC model standing orders, Standing Order 3L cannot continue to be used and should be suspended at council and committee meetings. Your council's Standing Orders will need to be updated at the time when you make your annual review of Standing Orders.

If you have any further queries please don't hesitate to give the office a call on [Deleted]..

Kind Regards

Debbie Morgan
Office Manager

From: Mike Henson
Sent: 22 October 2014
To: Portland Town Council
Subject: Recording Meetings

Dear Ian

The current concerns about people making recordings of meetings and then editing them to portray the council in a bad light, has led me to go back to a previous life and some long lost friends and acquaintances to put together an easy to use recording package.

In conjunction with [Deleted] we have pulled our many years of experience together, looked at the latest technology available and come up with a budget conscience package for councils who want to pre-empt any possible problems or just feel that maybe they should join the hundreds of councils who already make their meetings available to the public as online audio recordings.

The package that we have put together is designed for small parish councils who meet around a banquet table style. If you use a more formal "courtroom" style we would have to look at your needs and put forward an alternative package.

[Deleted]

What to do with the recordings?

Decide if you're going to record over the top of the previous meeting, archive or make the recordings available online. Even if you decide to record over the top of the previous meeting you are covered in the event of someone else making a recording and puts it out on the internet, because that's likely to happen within 30 days. I recommend that initially you download the recording into a computer. Remember these are solid state recorders so the file will transfer very quickly.

Those of you who are participating in our current Communications Questionnaire will learn from that if there is a requirement for recording in your parish.

There are many facilities available for you to broadcast your audio recordings; some are free. These allow you to upload your recording so that people can listen online or download to their chosen device (podcast). When you've uploaded the file the host will give you a URL (website address) where you can go to listen to the recording. If you send this URL to us, along with your hard copy minutes, we will add the link to your recording on the meetings page at no additional cost.

If you have any questions about the equipment please contact [Deleted]. [Deleted] has a wealth of experience in live recording.

If you have any queries about the principles of recording meetings or if you hold your meeting in a "court style" please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Mike Henson