

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16TH JANUARY 2013

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs S. Bradley (Chair), L. Ames, Mrs R. Barton, Mrs J. Collinge, R. Denton-White, Miss A. Munro, T. Munro, Mrs E. Munro-Price, I. Munro-Price, R. Nowak and R. Wild.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Rev. T. Gomm (Mayor's Chaplain) and Sgt. Ged Want (Dorset Police), together with two members of the public.

2280 – PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain led the meeting in prayer.

2281 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr. Mrs S. West.

2282 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Ian Munro-Price declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 – Council Budget and Precept, 2013/14. The Clerk acknowledged this was true for all Councillors by virtue of the new Government regulations and said dispensations had been given to all members present to debate and vote on the item.

2283 – OPEN FORUM

a) Police Question Time

Sgt. Ged Want briefly introduced himself to the Council and provided some statistics on local crime and anti-social behaviour. As far as the Island was concerned both had reduced in incidence compared with the previous year.

The Police Station lease at Victoria Buildings had come to an end. Consequently it had moved to the Marine Section premises at Osprey Quay, where regrettably there was no public access. A more permanent site was being investigated and it was quite likely that the station would move to share the Fire Station building.

Cllr. Denton-White asked about a New Year incident in Fortuneswell involving about fifty misbehaving youngsters. He conceded that the Police had responded quickly, but felt that they had taken little action to deal with the problem. Sgt. Want replied that the Police were trying to set up a Pub Watch scheme locally and make regular checks at pubs and off-licences. He stressed that it was necessary for the public to call the Police as soon as troublesome incidents occurred.

Cllr. Tim Munro thought the situation in Underhill was being misrepresented and pointed out that the Pub Watch was not compulsory, with licensees able to opt out if they chose. He asked why there had been no PACT meetings in the last two years and was sceptical of the usefulness of street corner meetings. Sgt. Want said PACT was no longer a priority, partly because of falling attendances. The emphasis had shifted to Safe Neighbourhood policing with the priorities in order being (1) the victims, (2) the offenders and (3) the community.

Cllr. Collinge queried the effect of less street lighting at night on crime levels. Sgt. Want referred to a recent spate of car damage and said this was not related to lighting levels.

Cllr. Barton raised the subject of parking on grass verges on the Island. Cllr. Tim Munro said the Borough Council had bye-laws in place regarding this. What emerged in discussion as an unresolved issue was whether responsibility lay with the Borough or the Police to enforce the bye-laws. Sgt. Want said he would need sight of those regulations and also to consult his traffic department colleagues.

Finally Sgt. Want expressed the hope that he would be able to attend Council meetings every two months.

b) Public Half-Hour

There were no questions.

2284 – MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER 2012

Three omissions were mentioned. Those present should have included Cllr. Barton. Minutes 2268 and 2274 should have identified “Cllr. Munro” as Cllr. Tim Munro. With these amendments the minutes were formally agreed and signed as a correct record.

2285 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES Minute 2266 – Town Mayor’s Announcements

Cllr. Tim Munro asked for clarification on what were current arrangements for the use of mobile phones in Council meeting. The Clerk said the minute was intended only as an account of events at the December meeting. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor commented on practice in other councils, but did not make any precise stipulations.

2286 – TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr. Bradley said her Mayoral chain had lost its pendant and had taken it to a jeweller with a view to repairing it. She also reported that twelve applications had been received for the vacancy post of Assistant Clerk.

Cllr. Tim Munro questioned action being taken to fill the vacancy when the Council had not discussed if this should be done at all. Different views were expressed on whether there had been opportunity to discuss the topic at the last meeting. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Barton and **RESOLVED** – that the filling of the Assistant Clerk post be discussed under Agenda Item 10.

2287 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR

There were none.

2288 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

Cllr. Tim Munro queried payment for staff overtime in connection with the Neighbourhood Plan when the Plan had not yet received approval from the Borough

to proceed. The Clerk stated that Council had already agreed in principle to authorise such payments (October).

RESOLVED – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 2822 – 2832) in the sum of £2,103.19 including VAT be authorised for payment.

b) 2012/13 Financial Report to 31st December 2012

RESOLVED – that the report be accepted.

(Cllr. Tim Munro left the meeting at 8.10 pm).

2289 – COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT, 2013/14

The Clerk said he had divided his report on the item into three parts. The first part concerned the effect of localisation of Council Tax benefit, where he had attempted to explain the difference in precept and Band D charge between the old and new financial regimes. Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price thought the systems could only have been adequately explained by means of a proper training session for members.

The Clerk then spoke to the second part of his report, “The Bigger Picture,” where he had recommended that the Council agree an approximate level of precept for 2013/14 before looking at the size of individual budgets. This had been one of the key points gleaned at the DAPTC training course on budgets and precepts. Members seemed to prefer settling first on assessing the new individual budget figures.

In the course of the ensuing discussion Cllr. Wild proposed making additions to the existing salaries budget, £20,000 for a lengthsman and £2,800 to cover an increase in staff hours.

(Cllrs. Amanda Munro, Ian Munro-Price and Elspie Munro-Price left the meeting at 8.35 pm.)

Cllr. Nowak proposed an amendment to Cllr. Wild’s motion, that the £20,000 for a lengthsman be assigned to the projects budget rather than salaries. Cllr. Wild accepted the amendment.

RESOLVED – that £20,000 be added to the 2012/13 projects budget figure for 2013/14 and likewise £2,800 to the salaries figure. Members requested it be noted this resolution was carried unanimously.

Members continued to assess the individual budgets. In the course of the discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the unstarred budgets provisionally be increased by 2.7%. Looking in particular at the salaries budget it was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the Council proceed with the appointment of an Assistant Clerk.

The following budgets were agreed:-

Expenditure	Salaries	25,650
	Advertising	411
	Audit	788
	Civic Expenditure	1,541
	Computer Equipment	0
	IT Support	257
	Contingency	3,500
	Elections	0
	Fair Expenses	0
	Furniture and Equipment	370
	Honorarium	100
	Insurance	1,656
	Mayoral Allowance	700
	Postage	600
	Publications	0
	Stationery	600
	Subscriptions	1,386
	Telephone	822
	Training/Conferences	300
	Travelling and Subsistence	100
	Gifts and Donations	205
	Grants	2,000
	Projects	20,800
	Town Crier	50
	Web Site	500
	Total	62,386
Income	Precept	47,910
	Discount Grant	4,726
	Fairs (sic)	4,000
	Interest	750
	Other	0
	Total	57,386
	Planned Surplus/Deficit (-)	-5,000

The annual charge to a Band D Council Taxpayer was calculated as £14.74.

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the budget for 2013/14 as specified above be accepted with a precept of £47,910.

For: Cllrs. Ames, Barton, Bradley, Collinge, Denton-White, Nowak and Wild.
Against: None

It was further agreed that Cllr. Barton should draft a press release concerning the Council's decisions, to be submitted to the Clerk for onward transmission.

2290 – WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BOROUGH COUNCIL: 2013/2014 BUDGET CONSULTATION

It was proposed by Cllr. Ames and **RESOLVED** – that Councillors should submit individual responses to the consultation if they wished.

2291 – LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the Council approves NALC's response to the Government's changes in Council Tax support and writes to Mr Eric Pickles, local government minister and Mr Richard Drax MP along the lines suggested by NALC.

2292 – FORTUNESWELL POST OFFICE, MOVE TO NEW PREMISES

Members considered the e-mails of Andrew Willshear, Consumer Focus and Simon Thompson, Dorset Community Action. It was proposed by Cllr. Barton and **RESOLVED** – that the Council respond to the Post Office in its consultation using the DCA'S submission as a model and mentioning the suggestion that the trained staff currently employed at Fortuneswell Post Office be re-employed to provide the necessary expertise.

2293 – STANDING ORDERS WORKING GROUP

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor by office be added to the current Working Group members of Cllrs. Denton-White, Tim Munro and Ian Munro-Price.

2294 – MARINE & ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

It was proposed by Cllr. Bradley and **RESOLVED** – that meetings of the Partnership become quarterly from May.

2295 – FINANCE & PROJECTS COMMITTEE

It was proposed by Cllr. Bradley and **RESOLVED** – that the Committee not be reinstated.

2296 – ARCHIVE STORAGE

It was proposed by Cllr. Ames and **RESOLVED** – that the Council use the service offered free of charge by Portland History Study Centre to store its archives.

The Clerk said he would ensure that any confidential or otherwise sensitive records continue to be held at the Council Offices.

2297 – REPORTS FROM BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Ames reported that the County Council is taking over responsibility for public health from the National Health Service.

2298 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS

Nothing further was reported.

2299 – FORWARD PLAN

It was agreed that at the Council's next meeting there be agenda items to hear a verbal annual report by the Town Crier and discuss the appointment of a lengthsman.

2300 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Town Council is due to take place on Wednesday, 20th February 2013, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 10.20 pm.

Signed..... Dated.....
(Chair)