

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 20TH APRIL 2016
AT PETER TRIM HALL, ST. GEORGE'S CENTRE, REFORNE

PRESENT: Councillors R. Nowak (Chairman), Ms J. Atwell, G. Chadwick, Mrs S. Cocking, J. Draper, C. Flack, C. Gover, Ms S. Lees, Mrs S. Reynolds, A. Sergison, D. Symes, Mrs S. West and R. Wild

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Councillors Paul Kimber (Dorset County Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council) and Penny McCartney (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Mr Andy Matthews (Finance Working Group and Portland Community Partnership) and five members of the public.

3135 – CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Cllr. Nowak welcomed all to the meeting and advised of fire precautions at the hall.

3136 – PRAYERS

The Clerk led the meeting in prayer.

3137 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr. D. Thurston, Rev. James Menzies (Mayor's Chaplain) and Cllr. Jason Webb (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council).

3138 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3139 – OPEN FORUM

a) Police Question Time

There was no representative of the Police present.

b) Public Half-Hour

Gordon Knowles, referring to Agenda Item 15 – Youth Work on the Island, warned that the Islanders Club might fold unless additional income was forthcoming and pointed out the need to fund maintenance work at the skate park.

(Cllr. Lees joined the meeting.)

At the suggestion of the Clerk Cllrs. Cocking, Gover, Lees, Sergison, Symes and West declared non-pecuniary interests in youth work on the Island with reference to Agenda Item 15.

Andy Matthews requested permission to speak on Agenda Items 14 – Neighbourhood Plan and 19 – Town Plan. He advised that John Walker of the Rights Respecting Community Group had been asked to look at youth work on the Island. However this task had now been passed to Mr Matthews, who undertook to provide a discussion paper the following week.

c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Cllr. Penny McCartney said she had received a variety of complaints recently, from residents whose roads were being used by climbers to park their vehicles, concerning use of a telephone kiosk for drug dealing and the lack of dog bins.

Cllr. Paul Kimber thanked the Mayor for launching the new community bus service and remarked that it was still in need of publicising. He added that the County Council was going “paperless” the following day and would shortly be holding a debate on the future of local government in Dorset.

Cllr. Nowak reported that Dorset Highways had finally installed a bollard in Gypsy Lane.

3140 – MINUTES

a) – Minutes of the Town Council Meeting, 16th March 2016

Cllr. Cocking requested that the word “assessed” in Minute 3125 be replaced by “discussed.” With this alteration the minutes were formally approved and signed as a correct record.

b) Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting, 6th April 2016

The minutes were formally approved and signed as a correct record.

3141 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Town Council Meeting, 16th March 2016

Minute 3130 – Councillors’ News from the Wards

Cllr. Flack commented that the airborne rust now seemed to be a far greater problem than had first been reported. Cllr. Nowak wondered whether there were any health implications.

b) Annual Town Meeting, 6th April 2016

It was noted that reports had not been appended to Minutes 16/5 and 16/7.

3142 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN

There were none.

3143 – TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr. Wild referred to cars churning up the ground at the top of Incline Road and asked that the registration numbers be notified to the police if known. He also publicised a street party being organised by Tesco on 24th June to celebrate the Queen’s 90th birthday.

3144 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

RESOLVED – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3470 – 3485) in the sum of £13,100.67 including VAT be authorised for payment.

b) 2015/16 Financial Report to 31st March 2016

RESOLVED – that the report be accepted.

3145 – COUNCIL OFFICES

a) Possible Financial Offer from Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

Cllr. Nowak reported verbally on the offer, which had not yet been made in writing. A sum of £50,000 had been recommended to the Management Committee, which did not depend on the sale of the Offices.

As the Council had no formal offer to consider, a decision was postponed.

b) Report on Open Day and Auction

Cllr. Nowak estimated that three hundred people had attended. He presented an interim report on the sale. The proceeds appeared to be nearly £2,500, but with two problems to sort out that figure might have to be reduced.

RESOLVED – (1) that Lot 17: a councillors' bench be given to St. John's Church if not sold, (2) that metal shelving and the Office flag-pole not in the auction be given to St. John's and (3) that two longer flag-poles be given to the Sculpture Trust and All Saints Church.

It was also agreed that spare china and glasses be offered free to community groups on the Island.

RESOLVED – that Jurassic Coast Auctions be authorised to remove and auction the remaining sale items at no cost to the Council, the proceeds to be given to the Council.

Cllr. Chadwick declared a pecuniary interest in Jurassic Coast Auctions at this point.

c) Exit Strategy Working Group

Cllr. Cocking reported that the draft lease was still being reviewed, but it was hoped that the final version could be signed the following week with access to the building by 1st May.

Cllr. Nowak hoped that good second-hand furniture might be available from the Borough to replace some of the existing. He also asked that Councillors help with the tasks of redecorating the new offices and removals.

3146 – WEST WEARES

From the chair Cllr. Nowak said the issues were whether the Council should pay for illuminating the site and add care of the lighting and murals to its insurance policy.

It was agreed to obtain details from the Council's insurer of the likely extra cost and make a final decision at the meeting in May.

3147 – GRANT FUNDING ASSISTANCE

Cllr. Nowak said he and Cllr. Cocking had held a meeting recently with Rachel Barton. They had thought the focus of her assistance should be in providing specific services to residents. The two ideas they had come up with were keeping the Island clean, with specific reference to dog-mess, and holding regular events every month. The latter might well involve markets for traders without shops, but trying to avoid conflict with businesses and charities.

After discussion these two proposals were accepted and it was agreed to add a third, the restoration of bandstands to Victoria and Easton Gardens, the Clerk to notify Mrs Barton of the Council's intentions.

3148 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

RESOLVED – that the Council proceed with an application for further grants.

Cllr. Chadwick asked for details of the total expenditure on the Plan to date.

3149 – YOUTH WORK ON THE ISLAND

Members considered the possibility of providing funding support, but it was agreed that first Andy Matthews should carry out an audit of the existing youth services on the Island.

3150 – MOBILE LIBRARY CONSULTATION

There was a divergence of views among members about the value of the present mobile library service in Underhill. It was therefore **RESOLVED** – that members should reply individually to the consultation.

3151 – COUNCILS' USE OF FACEBOOK

At present Cllrs. Chadwick and Nowak manage the Facebook page and try to limit it to factual content. A number of suggestions were made in the course of discussion, including one that a link be set up to the page on the Council website. Cllr. Nowak mooted a session about Council communications in the summer.

RESOLVED – that the report be accepted.

3152 – CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING

RESOLVED – that a refresher session be organised for October.

3153 – TOWN PLAN

Members were concerned that work on a new Town Plan might conflict with completion of the Neighbourhood Plan.

RESOLVED – that the Council supports in principle the creation of a new Town Plan and requests Andy Matthews to commence background work in developing it.

3154 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS

Cllr. Kimber offered a report on the latest Quarries Liaison Committee meetings. He said one had included a site visit to Stonehills, where the members had been impressed by Albion Stone's work on landscaping the site. The meeting with Stone Firms had helped resolve several issues.

3155 – COUNCILLORS' NEWS FROM THE WARDS

Cllr. Lees reported that the Waste Partnership had now cleared the rubbish in Weston Street.

Cllr. Atwell reported that flooding to some of the houses on Reap Lane had been remedied. The footpath was now closed to motor vehicles. However another cause had not yet been dealt with.

Cllr. Wild advised that the Waste Partnership had been notified and had dealt with some of the rubbish in Fortuneswell.

3156 – ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Cllr. Nowak thought Council should reconsider its use of the News from the Wards item.

3157 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

RESOLVED – 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 24 – Salary Increment by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

3158 – SALARY INCREMENT

RESOLVED – that the officer concerned be awarded one increment on the Spinal Column Scale with effect from 1st April 2016, but without detriment to the officer's current rate of pay.

3159 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meetings of the Town Council are the Annual Meeting (Mayor-Making) on Tuesday, 17th May 2016 at the National Sailing Academy and Adjourned Meeting on Wednesday, 18th May 2016 at the Peter Trim Hall, St. George's Centre, both starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

Signed Dated.....
(Chair)