

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES ON WEDNESDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Susan Cocking (Chairman), Jo Atwell, Jim Draper, Charlie Flack and Ray Nowak (from 10.55 am)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Councillors Lucy Grieve and Rod Wild, together with three members of the public.

148 – CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME

Cllr Cocking welcomed all to the meeting and advised of fire precautions at the Offices.

149 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members of the Committee were present.

150 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Draper declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Portland Community Land Trust.

151 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31ST JANUARY 2018

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

152 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

No issues were raised.

153 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Derek Vincent complained that he had not received a reply to his letter of 8th February about the precept and proposed Brackenbury Community Hub.

Paul Snow expressed concern that some people had not received details of the Community Hub that they had requested and there were very short timescales involved.

154 – BRACKENBURY SCHOOL AND OTHER POSSIBLE ACQUISITIONS

Cllr Grieve updated members on recent events concerning the bid for Brackenbury. Generally it had received a positive response from the County, but one of its councillors had requested further information, which would require further work. The bid would be presented to the Cabinet on 7th March, but this would not be giving a definite decision as had previously been expected.

Cllr Cocking said the Town Council would be looking for other sources of funding to avoid having to increase the precept.

155 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

From the chair Cllr Cocking said there were other confidential aspects to Brackenbury under Agenda Items 7 and 8 that would be dealt with towards the end of the meeting after exclusion of press and public.

156 – PUBLIC WORKS LOAN PROCEDURES

The Clerk was asked to obtain a copy of the application form for a loan.

Continuing the discussion on Brackenbury Cllr Draper explained that the County had requested different options as to how the money for the bid would be raised, including a worst-case scenario which relied on funding from the precept.

(Cllr Nowak joined the meeting.)

Cllr Grieve said that the Town had demonstrated to the County there was a need for the services to be provided at the hub but had not yet shown that there was also a demand for them. Therefore the Town Council would be carrying out a survey of public opinion, online partly but mainly by face-to-face interviews.

157 – CIVIC REGALIA VALUATION

The Clerk advised that the civic regalia had been valued at £49,767. He was asked to inform the insurers to that effect.

158 – NATIONWIDE ACCOUNT

The Clerk reported that he had not taken any further action regarding the signatories.

159 – COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

a) West Weares, January

The Clerk explained that a response from Zurich had been delayed due to the original claim being sent to the wrong e-mail address.

RECOMMENDED – that the Clerk be reimbursed for payment of the Autoglass invoice.

b) General Protocols

Cllr Cocking offered to draft a protocol for insurance claims involving the Council. She also suggested that the Council conduct a risk assessment for every event it undertook.

160 – GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

Cllr Draper reported on a presentation he had attended. He highlighted two areas that could be affected, the keeping of personal information on individuals and marketing, but thought these did not really involve the Council.

It was agreed to hold a Finance Committee meeting to discuss the regulation, in particular the recently published NALC toolkit, on Tuesday, 3rd April at 10.30 am.

161 – OFFICE CATERING

Attention was drawn to the fact that there was no budget provision for refreshments provided at the Offices. A member offered to cover the costs for a while.

162 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman deferred Agenda Item 15 – Electricity Supply Contract until after the exclusion of press and public.

163 – WEST WEARES

Cllr Draper said he was waiting to receive information from the Community Partnership on what was being transferred to the Council. He had not yet been able to discuss electricity charges with Quiddles. Members set 28th February for an on-site risk assessment.

164 – ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

No new signatories had registered.

165 – 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 Items 7, 8 and 15 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

166 – ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CONTRACT

It was agreed not to take any action on the quotation received, but to obtain two more quotations first.

167 – BRACKENBURY SCHOOL AND OTHER POSSIBLE ACQUISITIONS

It was agreed that Cllrs Grieve and Nowak attend County Cabinet meetings in March and April to speak in support of the bid.

Cllr Grieve led members in a discussion of the next project stages for which action was required, in particular obtaining estimates for work required at the site in order to submit grant applications.

The possible need for a caretaker / site manager for the community hub was also considered.

168 – BRACKENBURY AND OTHER PROPERTIES

a) Crowdfunding
b) Opening Hours
Not discussed.

c) Staffing Requirements

RECOMMENDED – (1) that £2,000 be released from reserves to Contingencies in the 2018/19 budget for staffing and other incidental costs and (2) that up to four hours per week overtime be granted for six weeks in March and April at the discretion of the Clerk.

169 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at the Council Offices on Wednesday, 4th April 2018, starting at 10.30 am.

The meeting ended at 1.40 pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)