

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MARINE & ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD IN THE PETER TRIM HALL, ST. GEORGE'S CENTRE, REFORNE ON WEDNESDAY, 3RD JUNE 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs S. Cocking, C. Flack, C. Gover, Ms S. Lees, Mrs S. Reynolds, D. Symes, D. Thurston, Mrs S. West and R. Wild, Cllr. Jason Webb (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Derek Luckhurst (Agincare), Jen Reeves (Agincare and CRAB), Mike Deadman (Heights Hotel Tourist Advice Centre), Andy Matthews (Portland Community Partnership) and Charles Frampton and Hannah Sofaer (both Portland Stone Quarry Trust)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk) and four members of the public.

1060 – CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Cllr. Chadwick and **RESOLVED** – that Cllr. Lees be appointed Chairman. (For: 8 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 2 votes.)

It was proposed by Cllr. Chadwick that Cllr. Reynolds be appointed Deputy Chairman but not seconded. It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that Cllr. West be appointed Deputy Chairman. (11-0-2)

1061 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. J. Draper and R. Hughes, together with Matt Ryan (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Geoff Peters (National Coastwatch Institution), Peter Allam (Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy) and Peter Staddon (Working for a Better Portland).

1062 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Matthews declared an interest as a member of the Portland Community Partnership and Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. Cllr. Lees declared an interest as the owner of a riding school on the Island which made use of its footpaths.

1063 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4TH MARCH 2015

The minutes were formally agreed and signed as a correct record. (4-0-4, though sixteen present).

1064 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Minute 1044 (b) – Review of Safety Barriers and Road Surface on the Esplanade

Cllr. Wild reported that the Esplanade had now been resurfaced. Unfortunately there had been occurrences of vandalism in the vicinity too.

b) Minutes 1044 (c) – Community Sandbag Scheme

Cllr. Wild said we were close to gaining a skip to facilitate the scheme.

c) Minute 1044 (d) – Victoria Gardens

The gates had now been fitted, but as yet there was no ramp to assist disabled access.

d) Minute 1047 – Dry-Stone Walls

Mr Matthews commented that no professional training is currently available locally.

e) Minute 1052 – Broadband on the Island

Cllr. Hughes said additional funding is available to extend broadband provision. Cllr. Chadwick is currently investigating this.

1065 – COMMUNITY SANDBAG SCHEME / FLOOD LIMITATION

The Clerk had no update.

1066 – EAST WEARES

Mr Matthews had no further news.

1067 – DRY-STONE WALLS

Cllr. Lees said she had arranged a dry-stone walling course the previous weekend with 10 – 12 places available and the cost of an instructor £350. One person had offered a wall for repairing and she herself could provide a wall and make a contribution to the costs involved. However after discussions she was unsure of how to proceed with a charging policy for both the volunteers and the wall owners, not least herself as a Council member.

(Cllr. Gover left the meeting at 7.40 pm.)

The Clerk was asked to write to the Crown Estate, asking whether they had any walls in need of repair.

Cllr. Cocking pointed out that the owner of dry-stone walls were required to maintain them by law. Cllr. Chadwick wondered whether the Town Council had the power to frame a bye-law in this respect.

1068 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Mr Matthews said he had supplied an update at the last Planning meeting. He thought the Plan was at a crossroad in deciding at what level it should be progressed, particularly the economic side. The aim was to create an economic vision and recognise the importance of the western Dorset growth corridor. However it was necessary for local businesses to take the lead in framing a vision. The Working Group was starting to put together a discussion document and the hope was that an economic regeneration consultant could help them. The Group also aimed to work in conjunction with the people directly involved in the growth corridor project.

(Hannah Sofaer joined the meeting at 7.55 pm)

1069 – CASTLETOWN DEVELOPMENT

At this point Derek Luckhurst was invited to talk about his plans to develop Castletown, where his company Agincare is based. He explained that he wanted to enhance its existing features and is seeking the co-operation of interested parties, such as the Port and the Borough.

The old Naval bakehouse accommodates his headquarters staff and a training unit. He has bought the local toilet block and intends opening it shortly. He has also bought the former diving shop to reopen it as a convenience store. One difficulty in

achieving the upgrading are the constraints imposed by the local conservation area status.

Mr Luckhurst has space to offer as a small museum, for which he already has numerous artefacts and he went on to detail several other ideas associated with the harbour.

1070 – CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTATION

There were no updates.

1071 – BROADBAND ON THE ISLAND

Mr Matthews said that a working group had been formed, including representatives of IPACA, to obtain better provision.

1072 – TOURISM STRATEGY

Mr Matthews provided a brief introduction to the draft strategy, which he hoped would be adopted by the Council as a working draft. Among its aims were a strategy of dispersing tourist to points of interest around the Island, creating a Portland “brand,” emphasising to local people the value of tourist customer care and providing trained guides at various vantage points.

Cllr. Chadwick asked whether there was a one-stop website for Portland orientated to visitors. Mr Deadman instanced PortlandTourism.co.uk.

Mr Deadman then expanded on recent tourism developments: a new map of the Island, which included bus stops and was colour-coded, a QR code, leaflets for Island wild life and Jurassica, a new Portland mural, discounted tickets for various local attractions and involvement in the Borough’s Tourism Partnership.

1073 – STREET LIGHTING IN CHISWELL

Cllr. Wild said the issue was now concluded.

1074 – CHEYNE WEARES

The Clerk said the fast food / ice cream concession documentation would be progressed when time permitted.

1075 – PORTLAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Mr Matthews reported on some of its current initiatives: wider publicity, documenting the use of Portland stone in London, Destination Portland and lobbying for improvements to path signage.

1076 – MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The following were suggested as new members:

- Peter Staddon
- Sam Hamer, Dorset Wildlife Trust
- Jen Reeves, CRAB
- Derek Luckhurst, Agincare
- Jurassica
- Environment Agency

1077 – STANDARD AGENDA ITEMS (by exception)

d) Footpaths

Cllr. Lees reported on a meeting of the Dorset Access Forum she had attended. Currently it was working on projects to grade footpaths by their accessibility and modify kissing-gates for people with disabilities. She had also issued a request for information about footpath accessibility to users of mobility scooters.

1078 – ISSUES RAISED BY PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

There were none.

1079 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman advised members that the next meeting of the Partnership would take place on Wednesday, 2nd September 2015 at 7 pm.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm.

Signed (Chair) Date