

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MARINE & ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 4TH MARCH 2015

PRESENT: Councillors R. Wild (Chair), R. Denton-White, R. Hughes, Ms S. Lees, A. Matthews (also as Chairman of Portland Community Partnership Board), and Mrs S. Reynolds, together with Cllr. P. Kimber (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Victoria Webbon (Land Trust), Geoff Peters (National Coastwatch Institution), Sandie Wilson (Portland Port), Hannah Sofaer (Portland Stone Quarry Trust, from 7.15 pm), and Mike Deadman (Portland Tourist Advice Centre, from 7.20 pm).

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk)

1041 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Mrs S. Bradley, G. Chadwick and J. Thorner, together with Simon King and Matt Ryan (both Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Ruth Carpenter (Natural England), and Bob Elliott (Quality Time Training).

1042 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Lees declared a non-pecuniary interest in the footpaths on the Island in relation to her Chesil Equestrian Centre interests. Cllr Matthews declared his interest in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1043 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD DECEMBER 2014

They were formally agreed and signed as a true record. (For: 3 votes, Against: 0 votes and Abstentions: 7 votes)

1044 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Minute 1028 – West Weares

Cllr. Matthews said the grass cutter had declined payment and was willing for the money to be donated to Portland Museum.

b) Minutes 1029 and 1030 – Review of Safety Barriers and Road Surface on the Esplanade

The Clerk said no response had been received from the Borough. Cllr. Matthews commented that the depth of irregularities in the road surface were a hazard.

c) Minute 1031 – Community Sandbag Scheme

Cllr. Wild reported that Crooks were not able to help with storage and Bob Naerger was willing to help fulfil the Environment Agency's responsibilities.

d) Minute 1936 – Victoria Garden Gates

Cllr. Wild admitted that he was not happy with the situation because steps had been laid at the entrance, with no disabled access as per the 106 agreement. There had been no response from the Borough on the subject.

e) Minute 1038(d) – Dry-Stone Walls

Cllr. Lees asked whether the Assistant Clerk had informed Geoff Smith about the walling group, but this was not known.

1045 – COMMUNITY SANDBAG SCHEME

Cllr. Matthews said the Lord Clyde toilets were still needed for the scheme at Chiswell. Cllr. Lees proposed obtaining five hundred empty bags from the Environment Agency. Cllr. Hughes spoke about applying for funding from SSE. Cllr. Kimber undertook to find out the cost of acquiring the Lord Clyde toilets.

Victoria Webbon said it was possible to buy disposable sandbags and the contact was Nick Reed at the Environment Agency.

Sandie Wilson suggested getting a 20ft shipping container filled with sand and park it in the Masonic car park. The Clerk was asked to find out the options available.

1046 – EAST WEARES

Sandie Wilson said she had spoken to Lyn Cooch, but no proposal had been put together yet.

1047 – DRY-STONE WALLS

From the Chair Cllr. Wild said that Cllr. Lees would be drafting a letter for the Free Portland News calling for walling volunteers. Cllr. Matthews urged trying to get apprentices working on the scheme and help build businesses. He pointed out the need to create a curriculum of traditional skills and provide community-led training, which will require investment. The Prince's Trust was seen as a possible source of funding.

It was agreed that Cllr. Lees would pursue this from a volunteer point of view and Cllr. Matthews from a professional aspect.

Sandie Wilson asked for what other traditional tasks might be given training. Cllr. Kimber thought this worth taking up with Synergy and intimated that some of his County Councillor's grant could be used to support such a venture.

1048 – EASTON AND VICTORIA GARDENS

The Clerk will check what is the Borough's current view on releasing ownership.

1049 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr. Matthews said there was a widely held view that the Local Plan was deficient in terms of the Island and therefore the Neighbourhood Plan would fulfil a need. It might be appropriate to seek further grant funding in order to secure more professional assistance.

1050 – CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTATION

There were complaints that Wakeham and the Grove had received insufficient provision and no further update had been heard from the Borough since 23rd January. Both Cllrs. Wild and Lees voiced concerns with the current proposals.

1051 – TOUT QUARRY

Hannah Sofaer reported on various facets of work at the quarry. Dorset Wildlife Trust was currently clearing cotoneaster on site. The Sculpture & Quarry Trust is trying to link up with the tourism advice centre at the Heights. More signage is needed to advertise the quarry and improvements to the entrance, for which funding will be necessary.

1052 – BROADBAND ON THE ISLAND

Cllr. Kimber advised that the Dorset for You website should give information on the availability of broadband on the Island. Sandie Wilson said the provision was limited at the Port. Osprey Quay and Southwell also have difficulties. Cllr. Hughes commented that several different companies all trying to send volumes of data from the same area at the same time can cause problems.

Cllr. Kimber thought that an officer from the County might be willing to come and talk about it. He offered to try to find someone and the Clerk was also asked to try to make contact.

1053 – TOURISM STRATEGY

Members considered Cllr. Matthews' draft strategy. He said one aim was to get Islanders to appreciate the tourism value of Portland. Another was to create more sites of interest and spread tourist visits around.

It was proposed by Cllr. Denton-White and **RECOMMENDED** – that the draft strategy be adopted as a working document. (12-0-0)

1054 – STREET LIGHTING IN CHISWELL

It was felt that the lighting was inappropriate for a conservation area and there had been one report of a street light shining directly into someone's house. Cllr. Kimber agreed to contact SSE about the difficulties encountered.

1055 – CHEYNE WEARES

Regarding the entrance Cllr. Hughes reported that the site notice was now in place, but the post had not yet been removed.

With respect to the fast food / ice cream concession Cllr. Matthews wondered whether the highway authority needed to be informed as part of the arrangements. It is with the Clerk to put together the tendering documents as soon as he can manage.

1056 – WALKERS ARE WELCOME

Cllr. Lees advised that she had recently joined the Dorset Access Forum through her involvement with the British Horse Society and would be going to her first meeting shortly.

1057 – STANDARD AGENDA ITEMS (by exception)

b) Litter and Fly-Tipped Material

Members discussed moves to clear up rubbish around the Island. A view was expressed that this should not have to be done free of charge and Cllr. Wild suggested that the Council seek quotations from interested parties. Emptying of the ten dog-bins was also mentioned, which apparently the Dorset Waste Partnership is

unwilling to empty. Cllr. Kimber indicated that he would query this with the Waste Partnership.

c) Run-Down Areas

Cllr. Denton-White asked whether the issue of run-down areas would be addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr. Lees drew attention to the ivy growing back along the road from Cheyne Weares to Southwell.

d) Footpaths

Cllr. Lees reported that the County were looking for a suitable area for a footpaths project and Portland was one possibility. She will try to get more information about this.

1058 – ISSUES RAISED BY PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

Cllr. Matthews reported that the Borough is understood to be working on a walking map of Weymouth & Portland, possibly duplicating a similar effort by the County.

1059 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman advised members that the next meeting of the Partnership would take place on Wednesday, 3rd June 2015 at 7 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.

Signed(Chair) Date