

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER 2015 AT 7.00 PM AT EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL, EASTON

PRESENT: Councillors J. Draper (Chairman), C. Flack, C. Gover, Ms S. Lees, Mrs S. Reynolds and Rod Wild, together with Andy Matthews (Working Group)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk)

244 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Ms J. Atwell, Mrs S. Cocking and D. Thurston

245 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Lees declared an interest as a horse-rider and owner of horses, and Mr Matthews his interests as a trustee of the MEMO project and member of the board of Weymouth College.

246 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2015

The minutes of the meeting were formally agreed and signed as a correct record. (For: 6 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 1 votes)

247 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Minute 241, para 2 – Western Route

The County's reply to the Council's letter was circulated. Mr Matthews said he had a copy of the cabinet document referred to in the letter. This did not have a strong emphasis on the Western Route and the situation needed to be monitored.

b) Minute 241, para 4 – Local Plan

Cllr. Lees said there was a need for bridleways to be upgraded. Cyclists had been mentioned in the Local Plan, but not horse-riders and she hoped they would receive suitable recognition in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mr Matthews said the Local and Neighbourhood Plans could be changed in terms of the priority order for users of footpaths etc. However this needed to be done with care because there might be a local policy associated with a particular user. There was also a difficulty in classifying the different sorts of routes.

Cllr. Lees commented that as a horse-rider she was continually being challenged about her use of paths. Mr Matthews encouraged her to attend the next Economic Vision meeting so that her views could be passed on.

248 – OPEN FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

249 – PLAN UPDATE

Mr Matthews referred to the Action Plan that had resulted from the Economic Vision meetings and emphasised that it was still only a draft document. The main Economic Vision and Plan document was now in version 10 and a separate list showed the changes that had been made as a result of the September workshop.

In particular there was improved referencing in the foreword to demonstrate that it was evidence-based. “Maritime” and “Renewable Energy” had been added to tourism as opportunity sectors to aid economic growth. There was a clearer link between objectives and their basis, and targets had been inserted.

Mr Matthews also looked in detail at the current Action Plan. Strategic Objective 1, for example, highlighted the need for a new master plan to cover the “Northern Arc” employment zone.

He announced another workshop session to take place on 23rd November.

Asked about the current timetable for the Neighbourhood Plan, Mr Matthews thought May 2016 might now be too soon for its completion. 2017 was now probably more realistic and May was favoured for the necessary referendum to coincide with elections and hence attempt to reduce costs.

He also accepted that there was a need to reengage public interest in the Neighbourhood Plan and answered several questions about how this could be achieved.

250 – PLAN BUDGET

Direct expenditure on the Plan this year had been small, said Mr Matthews, and £5,000 of funding remained.

251 – PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Matthews reported on the need and proposed that a named consultant be engaged for one day a month to guide the Working Group through the Plan process. Help would also be forthcoming from a Borough officer.

Cllr. Draper expressed reservations that the emphasis to date had been on the economic side, with other areas not covered in nearly as much detail.

Cllr. Wild thought it important to publish a summary of the Economic Vision in the Free Portland News.

It was proposed by Cllr. Lees and **RESOLVED** – that the named consultant be appointed to work on the Plan for a maximum of five days in the current financial year at a cost of up to £2,700. (6-0-1)

It was further agreed that Cllr. Draper would draft an article on the current state of the Plan for the Free Portland News. Cllr. Flack suggested that a handout be prepared for the Easton Promise event and Mr Matthews undertook to provide a summary of the Economic Vision.

252 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Management Group will take place on Wednesday, 9th December 2015, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm.

Signed: (Chair) Date: