

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

**PLANNING & HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD IN THE PORTLAND COMMUNITY VENUE
ON 22ND JANUARY 2020 AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT: Councillors Charlie Flack (Chair), Cathy Atkins, Paul Kimber, Lesley Saunders, Jim Draper, David Thurston, Giovanna Lewis, Carralyn Parkes, and Bernard Parkes.

IN ATTENDANCE: Andy Matthews (Neighbourhood Plan Working Group) and three members of the public.

2906 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllrs Sandy West, Sara Harpley, Pete Roper, and Sue Cocking (Mayor) – Please see minutes of the meeting of 22 May 2019, item 2048a for more information.

2907 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were given.

2908 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18TH DECEMBER, 2019

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

2909 – CHAIR’S REPORT, MINUTE UPDATE AND OTHER MATTERS ARISING

Minute Item 2898, Safety issues at the former Hardy Block, Castletown

Cllr Kimber reported that he had had some communication with Dorset Council regarding the issues at the former Hardy block. Cllr Kimber had attended a site visit with Mr Sellgren, the Executive Director of Place at Dorset Council. Following the visit, Mr Sellgren wrote to Cllr Kimber to state that he had received a number of emails from concerned residents regarding the possibility of compulsory purchase of the block. Mr Sellgren and his team were in the process of formulating responses to residents.

Mr Sellgren further noted that he had contacted Comer Homes by email but was yet to receive a response.

Mr Sellgren noted in his email to Cllr Kimber that if the route to compulsory purchase were to be taken, Dorset Council must have explored all other options first. It would therefore be necessary to try to organise a meeting with Comer Homes in the first instance.

Cllr Kimber stated that he felt it was necessary for the Committee to keep up the pressure regarding the site. He noted the reports received that children had been climbing up on the site of the derelict building and that this increased the necessity for something to be done.

The Chair noted that the Assistant Town Clerk had also drafted a letter to Dorset Council setting out the Committee’s concerns.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to send the letter detailing the concerns regarding Hardy Block to John Sellgren.

The Chair suggested that it may also be useful for the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) to put his concerns directly to Mr Sellgren.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to contact the (PCSO) suggesting that they contact Dorset Council directly regarding their concerns over safety at Hardy Block.

Cllr Kimber requested that once a response had been received from Mr Sellgren regarding Hardy Block, that this be reported back to Full Council

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk and the Town Clerk to ensure the response is reported at a Full Council meeting once a response has been received.

Minute Item 2899 – Planning application no. 19/794/FUL, Land and garages NW of 105-107 East Weare Road

Cllr Lewis enquired as to whether a response had been received regarding the parking issues in the vicinity of the development at land north west of 105 East Weare Road.

The Assistant Clerk stated that an email had only recently been sent and a response was awaited.

2910 – UPDATE ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Chair provided an update on the current planning applications. For further information please see Dorset For You / Planning / Portland.

2911 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Vincent requested an update on the schedule for drain cleaning.

The Chair stated that the reply from the Highways Officer was that there was no set schedule.

Mr Vincent raised a concern that the drains on Wide Street were again blocked.

The Chair noted that it appeared that the drains had been cleared on Weston Road on the day of the meeting.

Mr Vincent reported that the drain opposite the Lime Kiln on Easton Lane was blocked. He further noted that the drain which was reported as blocked last year outside the household recycling centre was still blocked.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to contact Dorset Highways and request that they attend to the blocked drains.

A resident enquired about the anticipated planning application regarding Powerfuel Portland. The resident asked where the best place to find information on the application was.

The Chair noted that a planning application was anticipated in due course and nothing had been received by Portland Town Council to date. He informed the resident that the best place to find up-to-date information was the Dorset Council Planning portal on the Dorset For You website. He further clarified that the Portland Town Council Planning & Highways

Committee was only an advisory body. The final decision would be made by Dorset Council.

Cllr Kimber provided an update to the Committee regarding the status of the application. He reported that the applicant was now required by Dorset Council to submit a full planning application and could not make an amendment to the extant planning permission.

2912 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED BY DORSET COUNCIL

The advisory committee discussed 5 new planning applications with a detailed list, including decisions made at this meeting, being held at Annex A to these minutes.

For further information please see Dorset For You / Planning / Portland.

2913 – PLANNING CONTRAVENTION ISSUES

The Chair noted that the advertising signage at the Castle Court development was still in place, even though the planning consent stated the condition that the signage should be removed on or before 1st January, 2020.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to inform the enforcement officer at Dorset Council that the signs at Castle Court are still in place.

2914 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

Andy Matthews gave a report on the status of the NP. He informed the Committee that the examiner's final report had now been received. Mr Matthews noted that, following the initial report and subsequent fact check, the examiner had unfortunately asked to strike policies regarding the former Hardy Block and second homes on Portland.

Mr Matthews noted that, even though Portland Town Council had attempted to give sufficient evidence of the negative impact of second homes on the island, the examiner had stated that there was not enough evidence to support the policy on second homes.

Mr Matthews further reported that the examiner had also stated that she could not recommend the policy on the former Hardy Block as this was in contravention of the relevant policy in the Local Plan. Mr Matthews reported that the examiner had not been swayed by Portland Town Council's appraisal that the site only offered provision for only 180 new homes, as opposed to the 550 stated in the Local Plan. The examiner was also not swayed by the identification of other sites suitable for housing on the island by Portland Town Council.

Mr Matthews informed the Committee that all of the other policies had been supported by the examiner with some minor amendments to the wording here and there and that the examiner now recommended that, following her recommendations, the NP be put to public referendum. Further details could be found in the examiner's full report.

Cllr C Parkes stated her extreme personal disappointment that Portland Town Council's representations on the issues of second homes and the former Hardy Block had not been taken into account. She noted that she regularly received comments from residents on these issues. Cllr C Parkes stated that she felt that properties being sold as second homes were a drain on the community and that Portland needed the power to advance this issue.

Several other members also voiced their concerns regarding second homes.

Cllr Draper pointed out that, although there was disappointment regarding these policies not being included in the NP, if Portland does not have a NP, Portland Town Council will have

no sway whatsoever in the decision making process of planning applications. There would be no protection given to the areas detailed in the NP. Furthermore, Portland would not benefit from the increase in CIL monies provided to areas with an adopted NP. Cllr Draper agreed that it was disappointing that the policies on second homes and the former Hardy Block would be struck from the NP but suggested that requests could be made through S106 stating, for example, that houses must be lived in. Cllr Draper stressed that it was important that Portland had a NP and suggested that the Committee accept the report and put the NP forward for referendum.

Cllr C Parkes agreed with Cllr Draper that it was important that the NP be adopted and stated that her desire was not to stand in the way of its adoption. However, she said that she would be failing in her duty if she did not express her disappointment. Cllr C Parkes expressed her appreciation to Mr Matthews and Cllr Draper on their efforts on the plan to date and suggested that the amended plan be approved but that the extreme disappointment of Portland Town Council at the removal of these policies be expressed in Portland Town Council's comments. She also suggested that these issues be reviewed and that Portland Town Council make efforts to collate evidence where appropriate for future representations.

Mr Matthews informed the Committee that the next step would be for the Committee to receive the examiner's report and approve the amended plan. Mr Matthews suggested that the report be circulated by email to the Committee members for them to give approval. The amended plan could then be recommended by the Committee to be formally agreed at the next Full Council meeting.

Cllr Draper moved that the revised NP, having accepted the comments set out in the examiner's final report, be recommended by the Committee to be put forward at the next Full Council meeting for formal approval. This was seconded by Cllr Thurston and unanimously agreed by the committee.

Resolved: the revised NP is to be put forward at the next Full Council meeting on 12th February for formal approval by the Council.

Action on Andy Matthews and the Assistant Town Clerk to circulate the examiner's report to committee members.

2915 – HIGHWAY ISSUES

a. Update on zig zag lines outside the Portland Community Venue (PCV)

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that she had had meetings with both the Highways Officer and the Road Safety officer at Dorset Council and discussed the options for improving safety outside the PCV. While the Highways Officer had said that zig zag lines could be reinstated, the Road Safety Officer suggested that it may actually exacerbate problems with congested parking on Three Yards Close as there would be less spaces available for parking. If zig zag lines were installed, legitimate parking would be taken away, forcing motorists to potentially park across driveways or up on the junction.

The Road Safety Officer suggested that, instead of zig zag lines, it might be better to remove some of the railings, which would enable cars to park closer to the pavement as they would not have to allow space between the barrier and the car door when getting out of the car. This would make access down Three Yards Close easier.

The Assistant Town Clerk advised that she had suggested consulting Allsorts nursery to understand whether they had any objections to this proposal.

The Chair requested that the Assistant Town Clerk speak to Allsorts nursery and report back to the committee.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to speak to Allsorts nursery and report back at the next meeting.

b. Notification of bollards being installed behind Eastville Cottages.

The Chair reported that Dorset Council had sent notification that bollards were to be installed on the verge behind Eastville Cottages. This was to deter motorists which were parking cars on the verge and churning up the mud.

c. Request for information about near misses or incidents at Reap Lane roundabout.

The Chair notified the committee that Dorset Council Road Safety had requested information from members on any near misses or incidents at Reap Lane roundabout. This was due to the fact that there had been a number of incidents reported there recently.

Mr Matthews suggested that this could be due to the poor sightlines.

The Chair agreed and suggested that Portland Town Council write to Dorset Highways and request that they review the sightlines.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to write to Dorset Highways to suggest they review the sightlines at the roundabout.

The Assistant Town Clerk requested that members please contact her with any information about near misses or incidents so that she could pass these on to the road safety officer.

d. Road Closure on Fortuneswell.

The Chair notified the committee of the scheduled road closure on Fortuneswell to allow a crane to access the Coop store safely. The road would be closed on 27th and 28th January, and again on the 5th February. High Street would revert to two way.

The Chair reported that he had requested information about how the busses would be rerouted.

e. Redundant bus stops on Portland.

The Chair noted that Portland Town Council had written to Dorset Highways some time ago regarding the removal of redundant bus stops on Portland. A response was never received.

The Chair requested that the Assistant Town Clerk write to Dorset Highways to request an update on the matter.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to write to Dorset Highways.

f. Stability survey on the wall at New Road.

The Chair reported that he had received a letter from a resident to enquire when the last stability survey had been carried out on the wall at New Road, particularly

opposite the corner where the previous council office building stands. The Chair noted that lots of holes had appeared.

Cllr Lewis noted that a gentleman had recently attended a council meeting and raised the issue of the stability of the wall further up New Road. Cllr Lewis suggested that it would be a good idea to write to Dorset Council regarding this part of the wall as well.

The Chair requested that the Assistant Town Clerk writes to Dorset Highways to ask them to carryout an inspection and produce a report.

g. Abandoned caravan on Castle Road.

Cllr C Parkes raised the issue that had been discussed at previous meetings regarding the abandoned caravan on Castle Road. She reported that the owner of the vehicle had been traced and he had registered that the caravan was his property. The authorities were, last October, in the process of serving legal papers to remove the caravan but nothing had progressed.

Cllr C Parkes reported that she had received complaints from residents that nothing had been done and questioned what the committee could do to assist a resolution.

The Chair noted that similar cases in Dorset had been reported in the Dorset Echo which resulted in prosecutions.

Cllr C Parkes asked the committee to add its weight to the representations that have already been made and make a request to Dorset Council that the process to have the vehicle removed be speeded up.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to write to Legal Services at Dorset Council setting out the committee's concerns.

2916 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee's next meeting is to be held on 19th February, 2020 in Portland Community Venue, Three Yards Close starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm

Signed..... (Chair)