

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING & HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE PORTLAND COMMUNITY VENUE ON 19TH JUNE 2019 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors Charlie Flack (Chairman), Sandy West, Sara Harpley, Paul Kimber, David Thurston, Carralyn Parkes, and Pete Roper.

IN ATTENDANCE: Andy Matthews (Neighbourhood Plan Working Group) and Mr Vincent (member of the public).

2860 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillors Cathy Atkins, Giovanna Lewis, Jim Draper, Susan Cocking, Bernard Parkes, Robert Hughes.

2861 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

2862 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22ND MAY 2019

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

2863 – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT, MINUTE UPDATE AND OTHER MATTERS ARISING

- a. Item 2852a from the meeting of 22nd May – Cllr. Kimber suggested that Portland Town Council take some time to formulate a plan regarding Brown Tail Moth Larvae on Portland, particularly on its own land at Southwell, due to the severity of the issue.

The Chairman confirmed that Portland Town Council had invited David Ackerley, the Senior Ranger at Dorset Council, to the next Marine, Environment and Tourism meeting to seek further advice. It was hoped he will attend.

- b. Cllr. West gave an update on item 2853 from the meeting of 22nd May regarding 85 Harbour View. Cllr. West stated that she had been to visit the property in question and had spoken to the resident.

The Chairman noted that this project was on the agenda for this meeting under agenda item 7 because an amendment had been made to the application. The planning committee would discuss this development further later in the meeting.

- c. Cllr. Kimber requested an update on item 2854 from the meeting of 22nd May regarding drain clearing at Wide Street. The Chairman confirmed that the Highways team at Dorset Council had completed the scheduled work at Wide Street last week. The Chairman stated that Portland Town Council intended to check the schedule for cleaning the drains on the rest of the island. Cllr. Kimber reiterated that this information would be useful so that it could be advertised and Portland Town Council could request that vehicles were not parked over the drains.

The Chairman is to request the drain cleaning schedule from Dorset Council.

- d. Andy Matthews gave an update on item 2857 regarding the Neighbourhood Plan report, which was annexed to the minutes of the meeting of 22nd May. The minerals and waste information had been sent to Cllr. Kimber, who had taken it up with Dorset Council. Cllr. Kimber stated a desire to ensure that the minerals and waste meetings between the main two operators, Albion Stone and Portland Stone, were reinstated. He noted that there was a meeting due to take place soon.

Andy Matthews queried whether there was anything within the current consultation that he had missed in his report. Cllr. Kimber confirmed that he had questioned Dorset Council on this and noted that the response was that the plan was currently more focused on Bournemouth, Poole, and Christchurch and that there was nothing on Portland yet.

- e. Item 2858.f regarding rough sleepers on Portland – Cllr. West confirmed that she had contacted the homeless liaison officer and was awaiting a reply. She also stated her intention to contact the Salvation Army, the Lantern Trust, and the Bus Shelter. She noted that it was difficult to gain a picture of the number of rough sleepers on the island as there were various locations where they appear to be based.

Cllr. West will report back when she has had a response from the various homeless organisations.

- f. Cllr. Thurston drew attention to a matter relating to item 2852.c from the meeting of 22nd May regarding overnighting campervans opposite Portland Castle. He noted that he had recently visited the site and that there were ten camper vans present, which stayed at least for the duration of the weekend and that it appeared the occupants were here on holiday. Cllr. Thurston noted that, at the last meeting, it was suggested that the local residents were advised to take the matter up with Homes England as the land in fact belonged to them. Cllr. Thurston questioned whether Portland Town Council should itself also contact Homes England as he was concerned that the number of campervans appear to be growing and with the summer approaching, the issue may be intensified.

The Chairman is to contact Homes England to notify them of the situation.

In addition to the situation noted at Portland Castle, Cllr. Kimber raised the issue of campervans also overnighting at Cheyne Car Park. Cllr. Roper who lived locally to that area noted that the car park was regularly full at weekends and he had witnessed campervans staying for three consecutive days only recently. Various solutions to the issue of campervans at Cheyne Car Park were discussed but there was no clear resolution.

- g. Agenda Item 4a – Listing of the former Naval underground hospital.

Cllr. C Parkes informed the committee that she had been in touch with the conservation officer at Dorset Council. She had been under the impression that someone from Dorset Council had been into the hospital and stated that

there was nothing there which would qualify the building for listing and that Dorset Council were going to give it what limited protection they could. She was also led to believe that Dorset Council had compiled a report, including photographs, based on this assessment. The individual at Dorset Council that Cllr. C Parkes had been liaising with had however, not been involved with the report and was describing these details anecdotally. It transpired in fact, that a report was not carried out but that there was some email correspondence between Portland Town Council and Dorset Council regarding items which were to be removed from the hospital. This email correspondence culminated in an email sent to Cllr. Nowak stating that there were no plans to do anything with the hospital, that the hospital was in good order, and that the building was to be left vacant for the foreseeable future.

It seemed from the email correspondence that Cllr. Nowak had started the process to list the former hospital with Heritage England. However, Cllr. C Parkes had not been able to find any trace of where or how that process had been started.

The Chairman confirmed that this process was supposed to have been started under the previous Weymouth and Portland Borough Council. Cllr. C Parkes noted that this suggested that the process had in fact, not been started. She recommended that Portland Town Council now instigate this process and have the building properly listed with Heritage England.

Cllr. C Parkes noted that to have the building properly listed, there would be a number of criteria which would have to be fulfilled. She had located various civil defense documents relating to the hospital from the Dorset History Centre Archive, along with civil defense documents relating to the Royal Navy and their custodianship of the whole area during the Second World War.

Cllr. C Parkes noted that anything that happened in the hospital during the Second World War would be archived. However, the documents would be archived at the National Archives in Kew and would not be digitised, which would mean that further research would probably need to be carried out in person due to the high cost of requesting copies of the documents.

Cllr. C Parkes noted that it was likely that there would be considerable documentation relating to the hospital, at Kew. Cllr. C Parkes also said that she felt that just stating that the hospital was of historical interest and should be listed would probably not be enough and more evidence of its historical importance would need to be demonstrated. However, Cllr. C Parkes suggested that Portland Town Council proceed to have the hospital listed with what every means possible at this stage.

The Chairman enquired whether Cllr. C Parkes had been in touch with Steven George at the D-Day museum who had had some involvement with the clearing of the hospital in the early stages. Cllr. C Parkes noted that she had not but intended to do so.

Cllr. West noted that she had been into the hospital and confirmed that at that time, there had been a lot of items of interest in there.

Cllr. Thurston enquired as to who actually owned the hospital. It was confirmed that the NHS Estates owned the hospital. Cllr. Thurston enquired further as to what their intentions were for the hospital. The Chairman noted

that this would be one reason to protect it. Cllr. C Parkes stated that her suggestion would be firstly to put it on Portland Town Council's list of sites of historical interest. Secondly, that Portland Town Council would aim to have the building properly listed under Heritage England, which would give it protection and status.

Cllr. C Parkes noted that, from a wider perspective, Portland had some fantastic military infrastructure and archeology that had the potential to be a big draw for tourists. She emphasised that this was a great opportunity for Portland to take control of some of these assets and generate heritage tourism and jobs for the island. However, Cllr. C Parkes also noted that it would be a huge undertaking and that the research would have to be thorough in order to meet the relevant criteria with Heritage England. Cllr. C Parkes stated her willingness to take on this task but wished to note that her schedule would be very busy until the end of September, after which time, she would be able to dedicate more time to the project.

The Chairman suggested that Cllr. C Parkes contact Stuart Morris, the local historian. Cllr. C Parkes agreed that this was a good idea.

Cllr. Thurston suggested that it would be a good idea for the councillors to themselves go into the hospital to see it in person. Cllr. C Parkes agreed that it would be good for the councillors to see the hospital for themselves.

Cllr. C Parkes also noted that many of the historic military buildings were likely to have been built with asbestos to protect them from bombs. She pointed out that this may prove to be a big cost to Portland Town Council, should the council take the buildings over.

In conclusion, Cllr. C Parkes recommended that Portland Town Council proceed with a lesser burden of evidence, to put the underground hospital on the list of heritage sites on Portland. She noted her aspiration to have sufficient evidence at the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting to proceed with this.

Cllr. C Parkes also recommended that, going forward, Portland Town Council aim to have the building properly listed with Heritage England.

Furthermore, Cllr. C Parkes recommended that all councillors be invited to visit the hospital to give them a clear picture of what was being requested to be listed.

Cllr. C Parkes also gave a report on her research on the former mortuary at Victoria Gardens. Further details of the report can be found at Annex A to these minutes.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. C Parkes for her work and the report on both the former underground hospital and the former mortuary. The Chairman also suggested that Cllr. C Parkes contact Mr David Darby of the Victoria Gardens Bowls Club as Mr Darby had some interesting documentation relating to the history of some of the buildings in question.

Cllr. C Parkes moved a motion to include the former mortuary on the list of heritage sites on Portland. This was agreed by the committee.

Cllr. C Parkes also wished to note her contact with Ms Jane White of the Court Leet. Ms White requested that the Sandholes Crane at Portland Bill be included in the list of heritage sites.

Cllr. C Parkes is to compile a short report on the historical information relating to the crane at Sandholes so that it can be included on the list of heritage sites.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. C Parkes for the extensive work on the project to date. The Committee also wished to express their appreciation for Cllr. C Parkes' efforts.

- h. Agenda item 4b – 17 Weare Close. The Chairman reported that he had been in touch with the planning enforcement officer and that the officer had visited the site but noted that no work had been started. The enforcement officer was now aware and will visit again in due course.
- i. Agenda item 4c – Abandoned caravan on Castle Road. The Chairman reported that he had been in touch with Highways at Dorset Council but was informed that this does not come under their remit and the caravan should in fact be reported to Dorset Waste Partnership. The Chairman noted that the owner had been identified and Highways, Dorset Waste Partnership, and Dorset Police were now working together to have the caravan removed.
- j. Agenda item 4d – Cyclists Dismount sign for the cycle lane at the Masonic car park, Victoria Square end of Portland Beach Road. The Chairman reported that he had contacted Highways at Dorset Council to request a sign and that his request had been passed on to those responsible for cycling. The Chairman was awaiting a response.
- k. Agenda item 4e – Streetlight out at Shepherds Croft. Cllr. Kimber noted that the matter had now been resolved as HMP Portland had admitted that the light was their responsibility and the resident in question had been given contact details for the relevant personnel at HMP Portland so that she could deal with them directly.

2864 – UPDATE ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Chairman provided an update on the current planning applications.

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

2865 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Planning application number WP18/00699/FUL – Site of new Lidl Supermarket – Mr Vincent queried whether any further action had been taken regarding the rerouting of the bus route to serve the new supermarket. He noted that the supermarket was due to open in a few months and many residents would like to be able to take the bus there. The Chairman confirmed that he had written to First Wessex but was yet to receive a response. Cllr. West also noted that the rerouting was recommended by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

The Chairman is to follow up with First Wessex regarding the bus route.

Mr Matthews will report later in the meeting regarding the Neighbourhood Plan.

2866 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED BY DORSET COUNCIL

The advisory committee discussed 8 new planning applications with a detailed list, including decisions made at this meeting, being held at Annex B to these minutes.

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

2867 – PLANNING CONTRAVENTION ISSUES

The Chairman reported that he had received a response from Dorset Council regarding the caravan at Culverwell. The response stated that it was not in the public interest to pursue the matter.

The Chairman also reported that he had received a response from Dorset Council regarding an unauthorised dormer window. This response also stated that it was not in the public interest to pursue.

2868 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

Mr Matthews reported that he had received an appropriate assessment back from the Planning Authority and it had been referred back to Natural England for their final approval. Mr Matthews noted that he had been chasing Natural England for their response so that the plan can be submitted.

Mr Matthews also noted that the Dorset Council cabinet were about to decide the process for formulating the new Local Plan which would cover the recently formed unitary authority. The new Local Plan should be concluded by 2023. Mr Matthews pointed out that, once the Neighbourhood Plan was in place, it would give Portland some degree of influence over speculative planning applications.

Mr Matthews is to email Cllr. Kimber with more details of the new Local Plan.

The Committee thanked Mr Matthews for his tremendous work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

2869 – HIGHWAY ISSUES

- a. Traffic regulation order – revocation of disused disabled parking bays. The Chairman referred to an email which had been received from Highways at Dorset Council requesting comment from the Committee on the revocation of disused disabled parking bays on Portland. This was approved by the Committee.
- b. Dangerous parking in Castletown. The Chairman referred to an email received from Clarkes Boatworks in Castletown suggesting that existing taxi bays be converted to disabled parking spaces, making the area safer for all concerned. The Committee supported this proposal.
- c. Access obstruction in Tillycombe. The Chairman referred to an email received from a resident in Tillycombe regarding parked vehicles obstructing access on Tillycombe Road. The Chairman suggested that the Fire and Rescue Service be contacted to conduct an access assessment with one of their vehicles as this would escalate the issue.

Portland Town Council are to contact the Fire and Rescue Service to request an access assessment and respond to the email from the resident.

- d. Disused bus shelter by the former Southwell Primary School. The Chairman reported that a query from Dorset Council regarding who owns the disused bus shelter on Reap Lane. Residents had complained that pupils from Atlantic Academy were congregating there and there were reports of anti-social behaviour. It was not known who owned the shelter although it was believed to be owned by the former Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

The Chairman is to contact the assets team at Dorset Council to request that they identify who owns the shelter so that a letter can be written to them asking for the shelter to be removed.

- e. The Chairman reported that he had received a message stating that a fence had been erected around the football field by Blacknor Fort Road. The Chairman noted that this was believed to be council land and that access could not be gained to cut the grass.

The Chairman is to contact the assets team at Dorset Council to confirm whether this asset has been transferred to Portland Town Council.

- f. The Chairman referred to an email that had been received from a resident regarding the path from the cemetery to Blacknor Fort Track. A resident had complained about the standard to which the potholes on the path had been repaired. As this path was owned by Dorset Council, this complaint had been passed to David Ackerly at Dorset Council.
- g. The Chairman noted that there had been vandalism at Royal Manor Fields at the multi-use games area. The area had been accessed by vehicles which were carrying out manoeuvres which were destroying the Astroturf. The Chairman noted that the residents themselves were taking action to stop the vandalism and repair the Astroturf.
- h. The Chairman referred to a letter received from Rodney Wild regarding the potential development at 106 Weston Road. Mr Wild had raised concerns regarding the heritage of the site in terms of the demolition of the existing building and of the surrounding green area. The Chairman also noted that there had been a notice in the Dorset Evening Echo requesting information on the owner of the site. The Chairman pointed out that, at this stage, the matter was being raised for information only as we had not yet received a planning application and were therefore unable to comment.
- Mr Matthews noted that the site had been appraised as part of the Neighbourhood Plan and a recommendation had been made about the setting, the conservation area, and the potential for bats to inhabit the area.
- i. Cllr. Thurston reported that he had visited the car park opposite Portland Museum, which had previously been reported as being in bad condition. The car park was rented to Portland Town Council by Betterment Homes for an annual rental of £600. Cllr. Thurston had negotiated with Betterment Homes who had agreed to waive the first year's rental and that this money had now been allocated to be spent to improve the car park. Quotes were being sought to hardcore the surface in order to make it safe to drive in.

2870 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee's next meeting is to be held on 17th July 2019 in Portland Community Venue, Three Yards Close starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 20:45 pm.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....