

**PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016**  
**AT EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL, EASTON**

**PRESENT:** Councillors R. Nowak (Chairman), Ms J. Atwell, G. Chadwick, Mrs S. Cocking, C. Flack, C. Gover, Mrs S. Reynolds, D. Symes, D. Thurston, Mrs S. West and R. Wild

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Cllrs. Paul Kimber and Kate Wheller (both Dorset County Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Mr Andy Matthews (Finance Working Group and Portland Community Partnership) and twelve members of the public.

**3061 – PRAYERS**

The Clerk led the meeting in prayer.

**3062 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr. J. Draper and A. Sergison.

**3063 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**3064 – OPEN FORUM**

**a) Police Question Time**

There was no representative of the Police present.

**b) Public Half-Hour**

Carol Pattison asked for better notification of meeting venues.

Dave Owen said he had become disillusioned with the Town Council in recent year. It had not learned lessons from previous experiences and he queried various items in the budget for the coming year.

In a similar vein June Morley referred to the rise in precept for the Island Caretaker, which had come to nothing.

John Thorner referred to the Portland precept being part of the highest Council Tax in the country. He threatened to contact the monitoring officer over the Town Council paying for legal services.

**c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors**

Cllr. Kimber spoke first about the cuts in the County's youth services. He said a pot of £200,000 had been made available to help alleviate some of the difficulties caused. It would be allocated on a match-funding basis.

Meanwhile discussions continued about the realignment of local government in Dorset. His own view was that a unitary principal council would emerge with town councils being given extra responsibilities.

Cllr. Wheller drew attention to some of the smaller issues that County Councillors deal with, like the struggle to provide bollards to prevent parking on pavements and the installation of railings at the bus stop in Fortuneswell.

On council reorganisation she held similar views to Cllr. Kimber. She referred to the cuts in youth services and adult social care. Some parish and town councils were looking seriously at providing libraries and youth centres.

### **3065 – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS**

#### **a) Town Council Meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

#### **b) Additional Town Council Meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

In both cases the minutes were formally approved and signed as a correct record. (12-0-0)

### **3066 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING**

#### **a) Town Council Meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

#### **b) Additional Town Council Meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

There were no matters arising.

### **3067 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN**

There were none.

### **3068 – TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr. Wild publicised the combined commemoration of the Queen's Accession and Freedom Ceremony for T.S. Penn to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> February. This would include a Freedom march from All Saints to the Drill Hall.

### **3069 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

#### **a) Payments for Authorisation**

**RESOLVED** – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3397 – 3412) in the sum of £4,433.44 including VAT be authorised for payment. (12-0-0)

#### **b) 2015/16 Financial Report to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015**

**RESOLVED** – that the report be accepted.

### **3070 – REDUCING AUDIT COSTS**

Cllr. Cocking said the Finance Working Group would seek to complete this year's risk assessment as a means to reducing audit costs and keep Council informed of progress. **RESOLVED** – that the report be accepted. (12-0-0)

### **3071 – PORTLAND MAPS**

It was agreed that the funding of the maps should come from reserves.

### **3072 – RECORDING OF MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED** – that the report be noted, Mr Matthews be asked to provide a further report and the item come back to Council. (12-0-0)

### **3073 – PAYROLL**

It was proposed by Cllr. Chadwick and **RESOLVED** – that the specified consultant be appointed to provide payroll services for twelve months. (11-1-0)

### **3074 – ADDITIONAL BUDGET PROVISIONS**

#### **a) Legal Costs**

No decision was made.

#### **b) Grant Funding**

No decision was made.

#### **c) Allotments**

Cllr. Nowak will make further enquiries at the Borough.

#### **d) Transfer of Powers from County and Borough Councils**

No decision was made.

#### **e) Youth Services**

No decision was made.

It was **RESOLVED** – that the report covering all five of the above items be received. (12-0-0)

### **3075 – COUNCIL OFFICES**

Cllr. Nowak said that the Council wished to continue discussion with the Borough regarding its offer of the Council Offices and a meeting would take place at the end of the month. The outcome would be reported to the Finance Working Group. Meanwhile enquiries continued to be made about alternative accommodation.

It was **RESOLVED** – that the accompanying report be received. (12-0-0)

### **3076 – BUDGET & PRECEPT, 2016/17**

Cllr. Cocking, as Chairman of the Finance Group, presented the conclusion of her Group, and formally proposed its recommendation, that the Band D charge rise by £7.25 a year, an increase of 50%. After debate this was put to the vote.

For: Cllrs. Atwell and Cocking

Against: Cllrs. Chadwick, Flack, Gover, Nowak, Reynolds, Symes, Thurston, West and Wild

The motion was therefore lost. (2-9-0)

Cllr. Wild proposed an increase in the precept of £21,000, but there was no seconder.

Cllr. Chadwick proposed a zero increase in the precept.

For: Cllrs. Chadwick, Nowak, Reynolds, Symes and West

Against: Cllrs. Atwell, Cocking, Flack, Gover, Thurston and Wild

The motion was lost. (5-6-0)

Cllr. Thurston proposed a 2% increase in the precept.

For: Cllrs. Atwell, Flack, Gover, Nowak and Thurston

Against: Cllrs. Chadwick, Cocking, Reynolds, Symes, West and Wild

The motion was lost. (5-6-0)

It was proposed by Cllr. Gover that the Council set a deficit budget and a zero increase in the precept.

For: Cllrs. Atwell, Chadwick, Gover, Reynolds, Symes and Thurston

Against: Cllrs. Cocking, Flack, Nowak and Wild

Abstention: Cllr. West

The motion was carried. (6-4-1)

[Clerk's Note: The meeting therefore reached this point without the Council having formally agreed a budget for 2016/17. A budget must be agreed before a precept is set (Local Government Finance Act 1992, s.50). The decision on the precept was therefore invalid.]

### **3077 – MARINE & ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP**

It was formally proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that both the title and remit of the Partnership include tourism. (11-0-0)

### **3078 – STATUS OF HUMAN RESOURCES / IT COMMITTEE WORKING GROUPS**

It was proposed by Cllr. Chadwick and **RESOLVED** – that the Human Resources / IT Committee become a Working Group. (11-0-0)

### **3079 – STANDING ORDERS**

Proposals for changes in Standing Orders in respect of:-

a) References to Mayor and Deputy Chairman

b) Recording Numbered Votes,

as detailed in the attached agenda paper for Item 19, were laid on the table.

### **3080 – CHEYNE WEARES REMEDIAL LANDSCAPE WORKS**

The Clerk gave a verbal report on the quotations received for the work. Because the Cheyne Weares Working Group had been given delegated powers to spend the money allocated in the budget this year it was left to the Group to make a final decision on the award of a contract.

### **3081 – REPORTES FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS**

Cllr. Wild reported that he had attended the January meeting of the DAPTC Central Committee. At the meeting they had been shown a talk on the work of the NHS Central Commissioning Group. A video was available on line, but would also be shown on February 18<sup>th</sup> at the C2000 hall along with the 1935 film of "Mr Midshipman Easy," shot on Portland.

### **3082 – APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

#### **a) Coastal Communities Trust**

Cllr. Wild proposed Cllr. Nowak. This was carried. (11-0-0)

#### **b) Dorset Broadcasting Action Group (DORBAG)**

No appointment was made.

### **3083 – FINANCE WORKING GROUP**

A replacement was sought for Cllr. Lees, who had resigned for work-related reasons.

Cllr. Wild proposed Cllr. Chadwick. This was lost. (4-7-0)

Cllr. Chadwick proposed Cllr. Nowak. This was carried. (11-0-0)

### **3084 – COUNCILLORS’ NEWS FROM THE WARDS**

Cllr. Flack had reported flooding outside Lloyds Bank in Easton to Dorset Highways.

Cllr. Thurston said he had received comments from people over memorials with flowers being placed on the hill towards the top of New Road. It was agreed to take no action.

Cllr. Flack raised a resident’s concerns about a footpath off Sweethill Road which had suffered abusive treatment recently. He will inform the County footpaths officer.

Cllr. Atwell reported on flooding in Reap Lane.

Cllr. Wild said that the Minor Injuries Unit on the Island was being included in the Portland Emergency Plan.

### **3085 – ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None were suggested.

### **3086 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** – that pursuant to the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Agenda Items 26 and 27 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. (11-0-0)

### **3087 – GRANT FUNDING ASSISTANCE IN 2015/16**

It was agreed that this should be referred back to the Finance Working Group for consideration in common with the rest of the budget.

### **3088 – STAFFING ISSUES**

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak that certain guidance be given to the Finance Working Group over staffing levels. The motion was lost on the casting vote of the Chairman.

### **3089 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is due to take place on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm.

Signed ..... Dated.....  
(Chair)