

## PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices  
52 Easton Street  
PORTLAND  
Dorset  
DT5 1BT

Tel: 01305 821638

E-mail:- [office@portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:office@portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk)

6<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a **MEETING** of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE**, to be held in the **COUNCIL OFFICES, 52 EASTON STREET, PORTLAND**, on **WEDNESDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017** commencing at **10.30 am**, when the business set out below will be transacted.

It is the Council's intention that all meetings of the Council and its Committees be recorded aurally.

Yours faithfully

Ian Looker  
Town Clerk

Membership: Cllrs. Atwell, Cocking, Draper, Flack and Nowak

# AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence** – to receive
2. **Declarations of Interest** – to receive any declarations from Councillors or Officers of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests regarding matters to be considered at this meeting, together with a statement on the nature of those interest
3. **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017** – to receive
4. **Minute Update and Matters Arising** – to consider (see attached)
5. **Public Participation** – to receive questions and comments from the public on agenda items only
6. **Outstanding Invoices** – to resolve
  - a) SSE – Clerk to give a report
  - b) West Dorset DC – Chairman to comment
7. **Assistant Clerk** – to consider the process of appointment (see confidential attachment)
8. **Payments for Authorisation** (to follow) – to approve
9. **2017/18 Financial Report to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017** (attached) – to approve
10. **Small Claim** – to agree review date (see attached)
11. **Budget and Precept, 2018/19** – to consider further (see attached)
12. **Legal Assistance Regarding Reorganisation** – to consider the Clerk’s written report (attached)
13. **Exclusion of Press & Public** (discretionary)

“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 Item(s) ... by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.”

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018, at the Council Offices starting at 10.30 am.

**PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**HELD IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES**  
**ON WEDNESDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2017**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Susan Cocking (Chairman), Jo Atwell, Jim Draper, Charlie Flack and Ray Nowak

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Looker (Town Clerk) and two members of the public.

**88 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All members were present.

**89 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**90 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2017**

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

**91 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING**

**Minute 79 – Civic Regalia Insurance**

Cllr. Flack thought the regalia would be available after the Remembrance service.

**92 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Andy Matthews spoke with reference to Agenda Item 8 – Council services and Strategy. He was concerned that the Borough Council was allocating a sizeable amount of money for Weymouth Town Council, which was government funding for modernisation. Similarly the Borough was withholding from Portland Town Council the opportunity for gaining income through the transfer of Island car parks.

**93 – 2017/18 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2017**

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

**94 – ARTIST ROW AND LORD CLYDE TOILETS**

**RECOMMENDED** – that the Council accept the Borough Council offer of ownership, Lord Clyde either a store alone or as combined toilets and car park.

The Clerk was asked to request the Borough for a viewing of Lord Clyde. Cllr. Nowak will give Councillors an update on the property at Brandy Row once he has received a report from the Conservation officer.

**95 – REVIEW OF COUNCIL SERVICES AND STRATEGY**

**RECOMMENDED** – that the Council reviews the presentation of budget reports and delegates the Finance Committee to consider and present a report on this.

**96 – BUDGET, 2018/19**

**RECOMMENDED** – (1) that £1,600 be vired from Contingencies to a new category, HR Support in the 2017/18 budget and (2) that £1,600 be transferred from Contingencies to HR Support (new) in the 2018/19 budget.

**97 – ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES**

**a) Unity Trust Bank**

Cllrs. Draper and Nowak still have to register as active signatories.

Cllr. Flack requested presentation cheques in time for the Portland Sparkle event.

**b) Nationwide Building Society**

The change of address form had been signed by one of the account signatories.

With regard to changes of signatories on the account it was agreed that the existing signatories be invited to discuss current arrangements for the account.

**98 – SMALL CLAIM**

**RECOMMENDED** – that, having taken all reasonable steps, the amount owing be written off as a bad debt.

**99 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at the Council Offices on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017, starting at 10.30 am.

The meeting ended at 11.45 am.

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

## MINUTE UPDATE

**a) Minute 91 – Civic Regalia Insurance**

Items of the regalia are currently in active use.

**b) Minute 94 – Artist Row and Lord Clyde Toilets**

We informed the Borough of the Town's willingness to accept the offer of the Artist Row site on 20<sup>th</sup> November. Requests to view the Lord Clyde building have been sent to Borough officers on 1<sup>st</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> November, and 5<sup>th</sup> December. Only an automatic reply has been received to date.

We also queried the Borough's intentions for the Lord Clyde site.

**c) Minute 97 – Account Signatories**

There are still only the minimum three signatories to the Unity Trust Account.

Six presentation cheques have been sent, of which five have to be returned when used.

Enquiries about the availability of the Nationwide signatory have been sent on 1<sup>st</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December.



# Agenda Item 9

## Portland Town Council - Financial Report, 13.12.17

	Budget 2017/18	Expend. 2016/17	Expend. to 30.11.17	Projected 2017/18	Paid / Rec'd to Date (%)
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Salaries	30,500	30,152	21,121	33,500	69.25
Advertising	286	229	168	250	58.74
Audit	1,326	890	651	890	49.10
Bank Charges	70	185	36	70	51.43
Civic Expenditure	2,020 <sup>1</sup>	579	1,828	2,800	90.50
Computer Equipment	306	236	0	0	0.00
Computer Software	367	21	155	270	42.23
IT Support	255	0	210	250	82.35
Contingency	2,400	0	0	0	0.00
Council Offices	12,000	25,019	6,556	12,200	54.63
Elections	4,000	4,209	0	0	0.00
Furniture & Equipment	624	365	325	520	52.08
Hire of Halls	857	990	471	740	54.96
Honorarium	100	100	100	100	100.00
HR Support	1,600 <sup>3</sup>	0	1,549	1,600	96.81
Insurance	1,530	1,250	829	830	54.18
Legal Fees	0	703	0	0	-
Mayoral Allowance	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	100.00
Postage	500	545	228	350	45.60
Publications	20	114	0	20	0.00
Stationery	700	684	419	660	59.86
Subscriptions	1,632	1,638	1,491	1,650	91.36
Telephone / Internet	510	605	439	700	86.08
Training / Conferences	800	285	285	400	35.63
Travelling & Subsistence	102	142	7	100	6.86
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>63,505</b>	<b>69,941</b>	<b>37,868</b>	<b>58,900</b>	<b>59.63</b>
Cheyne Weares	0	236	0	0	-
Gifts and Donations	102	93	140	140	137.25
Grants	1,400 <sup>2</sup>	1,915	490	1,400	35.00
Landscape Maintenance	6,000	1,284	1,082	1,800	18.03
Lottery-Funded Events	500	901	2,565	3,800	513.00
Lottery-Funded Facilities	1,000	0	0	0	0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	3,000	3,923	6,941	10,500	231.37
Office Move	800	4,298	1,220	1,500	152.50
Projects	5,000	1,400	1,000	1,000	20.00
Town Crier	50	35	35	40	70.00
Website	1,224	1,290	146	1,400	11.93
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>19,076</b>	<b>15,375</b>	<b>13,619</b>	<b>21,580</b>	<b>71.39</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82,581</b>	<b>85,316</b>	<b>51,487</b>	<b>80,480</b>	<b>62.35</b>



**INCOME**

Precept	76,132	63,679	76,132	76,132	100.00
Discount Grant	549	2,007	549	549	100.00
Compensation	0	50,000	0	0	-
Council Offices Rent	3,000	0	0	0	0.00
Fair	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	100.00
Hire of Halls Refund	0	1,350	0	0	-
Interest	0	192	1	1	-
Lottery-Funded Events	500	5,800	1,054	1,200	210.80
Lottery-Funded Facilities	1,000	0	0	0	0.00
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	0	3,375	10,500	10,500	-
Sale of Council Furniture	0	1,909	0	0	-
Other	0	231	0	0	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82,181</b>	<b>129,543</b>	<b>89,236</b>	<b>89,382</b>	<b>108.58</b>

**SURPLUS / DEFICIT (-)** -400 44,227 37,749 8,902  
**FOR YEAR**

**RESERVES RELEASED**

Lottery Fund					
Neighbourhood Plan	3,000		0	3,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,000</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>	
<b>Net Total after Reserve Release</b>	<b>2,600</b>		<b>37,749</b>	<b>11,902</b>	

<sup>1</sup> £1,000 vired from Contingencies to Civic Expenditure, 20.9.17

<sup>2</sup> £400 added to budget from Events income, ref RN 9.10.17

<sup>3</sup> £1,600 vired from Contingencies to HR Support, 15.11.17

<b>Council Offices</b>	<b>Expend. to 30.11.17</b>
Council Tax	1,019
Electricity	106
Rent	5,250
Water & Sewerage	65
Building Materials	21
Contractor Payments	75
Equipment	95
Insurance	355
Planning Fee	193
Refund of Contractor Payment	-623
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,556</b>

<b>Lottery Events</b>	<b>Expend. to 30.11.17</b>
Advertising	134
Catering Expenses	618
Equipment (inc Hire)	288
Flags	450
Insurance	78
Licence	71
Materials	120
Performance Fee	450
Pony Rides	85
Printing	82
Prizes	176
Stationery	12
Total Expenditure, 2017/18	2,564
Total Expenditure, 2016/17	901
	<u>3,465</u>
Projected Additional Expenditure	1,435
	<u>4,900</u>
Lottery Grant	-5,800
Projected Refund	-900
Income (less £40 donation)	-909
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,655</b>

<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>Expend. to 30.11.17</b>
Computer Software	403
Consultant's Fee	6,300
Printing	74
Staff Overtime	164
Grant Received	-10,500
Reserves Released	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>-£3,559</b>

## **Small Claim**

At its November meeting Council decided to review the recovery of the debt “on its first anniversary.” As several stages were involved in the creation of the debt from the original sale at the old Council Offices and attempts to recover the proceeds of a second auction, guidance is sought from the Committee as to which date it judges to be most appropriate.

## 2018/19 Budget Working Paper, 13.12.17

	Budget 2016/17	Expend. 2016/17	Budget 2017/18	Expend. to 30.11.17	Projected 2017/18	Notional Budget 2018/19	Fin. Comm. Proposal
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>							
Salaries	29,844	30,152	30,500	21,121	33,500	31,324	35,000
Advertising	280	229	286	168	250	294	300
Audit	1,300	890	1,326	651	890	1,362	1,000
Bank Charges	0	185	70	36	100	72	100
Civic Expenditure	1,000	579	1,020	1,828	2,800	1,048	1,100
Computer Equipment	300	236	306	0	0	314	300
Computer Software	360	21	367	155	270	377	300
IT Support	250	0	255	210	250	262	300
Contingency	0	0	5,000	0	0	5,135	2,400
Council Offices	17,200	25,019	12,000	6,556	12,200	12,324	12,324
Elections	6,000	4,209	2,400	0	0	2,465	4,000
Furniture & Equipment	612	365	624	325	520	641	700
Hire of Halls	840	990	857	471	740	880	900
Honorarium	100	100	100	100	100	103	100
HR Support	0	0	1,600	1,549	1,600	1,643	1,600
Insurance	1,500	1,250	1,530	829	830	1,571	1,000
Legal Fees	0	703	0	0	0	0	600
Mayoral Allowance	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,027	1,000
Postage	790	545	500	228	350	514	400
Publications	20	114	20	0	20	21	-
Stationery	850	684	700	419	660	719	800
Subscriptions	1,600	1,637	1,632	1,491	1,650	1,676	1,700
Telephone / Internet	500	605	510	439	700	524	700
Training / Conferences	1,000	285	800	285	400	822	1,000
Travelling & Subsistence	100	142	102	7	100	105	100
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>65,446</b>	<b>69,940</b>	<b>63,505</b>	<b>37,868</b>	<b>58,930</b>	<b>65,220</b>	<b>67,724</b>
Cheyne Weares	4,800	236	0	0	0	0	-
Gifts and Donations	100	93	102	140	140	105	100
Grants	1,750	1,915	1,000	490	1,400	1,027	2,000
Landscape Maintenance	5,000	1,284	6,000	1,082	1,800	6,162	6,000
Lottery-Funded Events	0	901	500	2,565	3,800	514	-

Lottery-Funded Facilities	0	0	1,000	0	0	1,027	-
Neighbourhood Plan	18,000	3,923	3,000	6,941	10,500	3,081	3,000
Office Move	3,800	4,298	800	1,220	1,500	822	800
<b>Projects &amp; Events</b>	4,150	1,400	5,000	1,000	1,000	5,135	4,000
Town Crier	50	35	50	35	40	51	50
Website	1,200	1,290	1,224	146	1,400	1,257	1,300
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>38,850</b>	<b>15,375</b>	<b>18,676</b>	<b>13,619</b>	<b>21,580</b>	<b>19,180</b>	<b>17,250</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104,296</b>	<b>85,315</b>	<b>82,181</b>	<b>51,487</b>	<b>80,510</b>	<b>84,400</b>	<b>84,974</b>
<b>INCOME</b>							
Precept	63,679	63,679	76,132	76,132	76,132	78,188	80,374
Discount Grant	2,007	2,007	549	549	549	564	-
Compensation	0	50,000	0	0	0	0	-
Council Offices Rent	0	0	3,000	0	1,000	3,081	-
Fair	1,750	1,000	1,000	1,054	1,200	1,027	1,000
Hire of Halls Refund	840	1,350	0	0	0	0	-
Interest	220	192	0	0	0	0	200
Lottery-Funded Events	0	5,800	500	569	570	514	-
Lottery-Funded Facilities	0	0	1,000	0	0	1,027	-
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	15,000	3,375	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,784	3,000
<b>Projects &amp; Events</b>						0	400
Sale of Council Furniture	0	1,909	0	0	0	0	-
Other	0	231	0	0	0	0	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83,496</b>	<b>129,543</b>	<b>92,681</b>	<b>88,804</b>	<b>89,951</b>	<b>95,183</b>	<b>84,974</b>
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT (-) FOR YEAR</b>	<b>-20,800</b>	<b>44,228</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>37,317</b>	<b>9,441</b>	<b>10,784</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>RESERVES RELEASED</b>							
Cheyne Weares	4,800	236					
Council Offices	4,000	4,000					
Grants - Fair	0	0					
Landscape Maintenance	5,000	1,284					
Legal Fees	4,000	703					
Lottery Fund	0	0					
Neighbourhood Plan	3,000	548	3,000	0	3,000		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,800</b>	<b>6,771</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>		
<b>Net Total after Reserve Release</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50,999</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>37,317</b>	<b>12,441</b>		

## **LEGAL ASSISTANCE REGARDING REORGANISATION**

This agenda item is brought in anticipation of the wholesale reorganisation of local government in Dorset over the next two years and the likely demise of Weymouth & Portland Borough Council.

The last major reorganisation to affect Portland was in 1974. This marked the end of Portland Urban District Council and the creation of the Borough Council. Virtually all the assets of the UDC were passed to the Borough, including all its bank deposits and the Council Offices. Unlike other town councils in Dorset Portland Town Council was not given most of the normal parish council responsibilities. These too passed to the Borough.

In 2015 the Town Council was given notice to quit its tenancy of the Council Offices. The Borough offered to sell the building to the Town for a nominal sum, but only provided half of the proceeds were given to the Borough should the building ever be sold. The Town Council refused the offer.

As compensation for the loss of the offices the Borough offered the Town a sum of £50,000. When the Town Council requested alterations to the termination contract suggested by its legal advisor the Borough threatened to withdraw its offer of compensation. With some reluctance the Town withdrew the request and accepted the compensation.

Now negotiations have commenced with the Borough about what it is willing to hand back to the Town rather than be absorbed by the new Dorset Unitary Council. Our experience in this regard has been similar to that of other town councils in Dorset with their respective District Councils. The Borough and Districts seem willing to transfer loss-making assets and responsibilities, but not assets that will generate income, such as car parks.

Interestingly enough from Portland's point of view a new Weymouth Town Council will be created, no doubt with offices of its own in some shape or another and a helping of assets, though probably not a generous helping. Nevertheless some government funding is already being diverted in Weymouth TC's direction. None however is coming to Portland as yet. Having been asset-stripped in 1974 and latterly 2015, poor old Portland is losing out again.

With all this in mind I have contacted our legal adviser again and explained to him the situation in outline. He is a recommended expert in local government law and so is conversant with the generalities of reorganisations, if not all the precise details of our own local case. I have asked whether Portland is entitled legally to make a claim for its share of what is on offer, locally and nationally. His reply was as follows:-

Thank you for your email and keeping me up-to-date with recent developments.

I certainly don't think that the fact that you entered into an agreement with the Borough precludes you from making representations as to your needs now.

This process is likely to involve similar considerations to a Community Governance Review. I'm afraid to say that the process can be exceedingly detailed and very intensive. My usual fee for guiding principal councils through such reviews is [Redacted]. Obviously Portland's concerns will be fewer but the amount of work required will be similar – as it will involve an understanding of the needs of all authorities involved.

If this would be interest of you do please let me know and we can discuss what documents would assist.

Of course accepting his quotation would be something of a gamble on the Council's part. This has to be balanced with the possible financial gains that might be achieved from following his advice. If members require further clarification on any points at this stage, then no doubt we can pursue them with our adviser.