

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & PROJECTS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20TH APRIL 2011

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs E. Munro-Price (Chair), Mrs S. Bradley, Mrs J. Collinge, R. Hughes, I. Munro-Price, D. Thurston and Mrs S. West

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk).

1068 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. N. Charlton, R. Denton-White and T. Munro.

1069 – MRS VALERIE DURSTON

Councillors stood for one minute's silence in honour of the lately deceased Mrs Valerie Durston, former Town Councillor and Town Mayor.

1070 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs. Elspie and Ian Munro-Price declared a prejudicial interest in the agenda item regarding improvements to Fortuneswell. They requested that the item be moved to the end of the agenda, which was agreed.

1071 – PRESENTATION

Mr Matthew Burnett was not in attendance to give a presentation about a Portland bee sanctuary.

1072 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH FEBRUARY 2011 AND SPECIAL MEETING ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2011

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

1073 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING Special Meeting, 23rd February 2011

Minute 1057(b) – Payments for Authorisation

With reference to Minute 707(h) – Review of Purchasing Procedures in the Clerk's report Cllr. Ian Munro-Price sought guidance from other members as to whose approval was needed in respect of purchases. It was concluded that the present rule of thumb should continue to operate, using the guidelines of Financial Regulations, Section 3 and Minute 707(h). In other words the Clerk had sufficient authority within the constraints of the agreed limits, budget provision and common sense. In cases of doubt he should refer them to the Mayor for a final decision. When the Mayor sensed insufficient authority for larger or more special purchases he should seek the wider approval of senior colleagues or full Council / Finance Committee.

1074 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. Collinge and **RESOLVED** – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 2537 – 2550) in the sum of £2,146.69 including VAT be authorised for payment.

b) 2010/11 Financial Report to 31st March 2011

Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price enquired about the likely cost to the Council of the forthcoming elections. The Clerk replied that he had been told it would be about £3,000. It was agreed to review the current financial arrangements for Town Council elections at the next meeting of the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. Bradley and **RESOLVED** – that the report be accepted.

c) Proposed Amalgamation of Bank Accounts

The recommendation of the Clerk, originating with the internal auditor, was that the assets of three of the Council's bank accounts, which had lain dormant for several years, should be moved to its Premier Interest account.

RESOLVED – that the Appeals / Disaster Fund, Golden Jubilee (PTC No 2) and 900 Years accounts should be terminated and the contents transferred to the Premier Interest account.

1075 – 2012 MEDALLIONS

Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price indicated that suitable photographs for the design of the medallions should be available the following week and that a decision could be made at the next Town Council meeting.

Councillor West was assured that the sponsorship arrangements were still in place.

Cllr. Ian Munro-Price suggested that the date on the medallions might be in Roman numerals as a way to circumvent some of the stringent corporate sponsorship arrangements involved in the Games. The Clerk was asked to check via Simon Williams of the Borough whether this would be acceptable to the Olympic authorities.

1076 – PORTLAND FLAG

Members considered the quotations received from four suppliers.

It was proposed by Cllr. Collinge, seconded by Cllr. Thurston and **RESOLVED** – that the Council proceed in the first instance with the existing supplier, Cllr. Ian Munro-Price to negotiate possible reductions in the quoted prices and report back to the Town Council.

The Clerk was given a set of guide prices to pass on to enquirers until the full range of prices had been agreed.

1077 – GRIT BINS

The Clerk was in the process of obtaining a copy of the County's gritting scheme. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. Collinge and **RESOLVED** – that the Council write to the County, stating it was not prepared to buy grit bins but would advise on locating any that were available.

Meanwhile Cllr. Ian Munro-Price would determine the extent of the Borough Council's responsibility in this matter.

1078 – FLAG FLYING

Members formally made a choice of gift to be made, with the detail of the inscription, and secondary gift to be purchased on behalf of the Council by Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price. The presentation would be made at the Annual Town Council meeting.

1079 – HMS PORTLAND VISIT AND FREEDOM MARCH

It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. West and **RESOLVED** – that the Council make a donation of £250 towards the cost of the reception being organised by the Borough Council for HMS Portland's officers and crew.

1080 – DORSET ECHO

Members considered a proposal by Cllr. Charlton that the Council use the Echo website for information instead of buying newspapers.

It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. West and **RESOLVED** – that no action be taken.

1081 – SALE OF RED TELEPHONE BOXES

It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. Hughes and **RESOLVED** – that the Council decline the offer made by BT Payphones, but that the company be referred to other possibly interested organisations on the Island.

1082 – PROJECTS AND OTHER ISSUES (by exception)

No items were raised.

1083 – DISPLAY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION LEAFLETS

Members were asked to consider the adequacy of the current provision given the arrival of various new leaflets from the County Trading Standards department.

It was proposed by Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price, seconded by Cllr. Thurston and **RESOLVED** – that no action be taken.

1084 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **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 the following items, Agenda Items 18 and 19, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

1085 – SALARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

It was proposed by Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price, seconded by Cllr. West and **RESOLVED** – that the postholder progress to the final increment point on her salary grade, Spinal Column Point 9, with effect from 1st April 2011.

1086 – ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOMMODATION AND STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price gave a verbal report on the recommendations of the Working Group, subsequently discussed with the Clerk. These were further debated and voted upon.

a) It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. West and **RESOLVED** – that the Council buy two cordless phones for use by the administration.

b) It was **RESOLVED** – that an IT engineer be authorised to examine the Council’s two office computers and repair them as necessary. A supplier and cost ceiling were stipulated.

Granted that a member of staff was usually at work in the Office from 10.00 am on Mondays and Tuesdays, the Clerk was asked to ensure that this also take place on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

c) It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston, seconded by Cllr. Hughes and **RESOLVED** – that the Clerk be offered appropriate training courses, Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price to provide the details.

The Group had proposed a rota system for staff to be in the Office to avoid the need for additional accommodation. The Clerk responded that such a system could only operate with changes to staff contracts and there would be a reduction in efficiency caused by the diminished ability for staff to communicate with one another.

d) It was therefore agreed that the Council pursue the idea of creating additional administrative accommodation, utilising space in the Council Chamber. Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price proposed, seconded by Cllr. Thurston and it was **RESOLVED** – that the Clerk obtain prices for a new desk and chair and that advice be obtained from a stipulated computer company to create a wireless IT environment in the Chamber.

1087 – FORTUNESWELL FACELIFT

It was proposed by Cllr. Collinge, seconded by Cllr. Thurston and **RESOLVED** – that in the absence of a quorum available to make a decision the item be deferred until the next meeting.

1088 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair advised members that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday, 1st June 2011, commencing at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)