

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 6TH APRIL 2016 AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH HALL, FORTUNESWELL, PORTLAND

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Rev. James Menzies (Mayor's Chaplain), Stuart Cave (Town Crier), Andy Matthews (Finance Working Group) and three members of the public.

16/1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Ms S. Lees.

16/2 – MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, 8TH MAY 2015

The minutes having already been formally agreed, they were noted.

16/3 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 15/3 – Officers' Field Football Pitch

Mr Matthews said this remained an ongoing issue with Mr Darby still expressing concerns about the situation.

16/4 – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, 2015/16

Cllr. Nowak said there was an exciting prospect ahead for the Council in the coming year. Because of the Borough's decision the Council was having to vacate its present Offices, but it was moving to new premises at a central location in Easton with greater accessibility for the public. Finally he thanked Mr Matthews for his help in dealing with the Council's finances this last year.

16/5 – TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT, 2015/16

The text of Cllr. Wild's report is appended.

16/6 – FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2015/16

The report was accepted without comment.

16/7 – TOWN CRIER'S REPORT, 2015/16

Mr Cave's report is appended.

16/8 – ELECTORS' ITEMS

Mr Matthews requested that Town Council consider two particular topics at its next meeting, the ramifications of local government reorganisation in Dorset and, perhaps later, the creation of a new Town Plan utilising information gained from work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mr Wakefield asked what plans the Council has for allocating the £50,000 due to come from the Borough resulting from the disposal of the Council Offices.

Cllr. Nowak said there was nothing decided because the offer had not yet been formally made nor accepted.

Mr Cave asked what would be done with the plaque in the Council Chamber listing Portland Mayors. Cllr. Nowak replied that it would be rehoused and went on to outline the plans for all the various accoutrements at the Office.

In closing the meeting Cllr. Nowak referred to comments received about the accessibility of the meeting venue. He pointed out that it does have disabled access and is used by the Borough as one of its official polling stations.

16/9 – DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

The next Annual Town Meeting is due to take place on Wednesday, 5th April 2017.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.

Signed Dated
(Chairman)

Town Mayor's Report, 2015/16

It has been my privilege to represent Portland in a very full year with over seventy engagements here and throughout the County to date, as well as countless meetings.

2015 was a year of many special anniversaries, including the end of World War II, the sinking of HMS SIDON, the HMS ILLUSTRIOUS pinnacle disaster and Mrs Renee Trim's hundredth birthday, when I was honoured to present her with a greetings message from Her Majesty.

Two new memorials have been laid on the Island, one on Merchant Navy Day "To Remember all Merchant Seafarers Lost at Sea" and the other, a "Peace Stone" to remember VJ Day and the "forgotten forces". I was delighted to be asked to present awards at a World Sailing event, at IPACA, to scouts and St John's cadets and their leaders, with further events still to come.

Once again the Ceremony of the Keys was a great success with a lot of positive feedback. Many people worked hard for this event, which as last year was held in the Island's largest building, All Saints Church. This meant that as well as invited distinguished guests everyone who wished could attend, enjoy some superb performances and be part of an Island tradition.

The Council unanimously decided to award the Freedom of the Island and Royal Manor to the officers and ship's company of TS PENN for their outstanding commitment over many years. The honour, which has only twice been awarded before, to individuals, was presented during the annual Accession Day Service. Her Majesty sent her congratulations and best wishes to all present. Afterwards they exercised their newly awarded right to march through the Island.

During the year a new role, that of Chairman of the Council, was voted in for a trial two-year period. This came about not through any perceived faults in the mayoral role, but to provide more continuity and recognise that there are Councillors who would make an ideal leader of the Council but for divers reasons would or could not take on the ambassadorial duties of Mayor, and of course vice versa. I am delighted that Cllr Ray Nowak has taken on this task.

Portland Town Council is now entering a pivotal period of change. We move into more accessible premises in Easton, having been given notice to quit the lovely art deco building occupied for eighty-odd years. Talks are under way to establish unitary authorities in the County, which will mean extra responsibilities being passed to town and parish councils. If all goes well we will finally break the shackles that have held us back tied to Weymouth since 1974. Ironically when preparing a clear out for the building move we came across a blueprint prepared by the Council in 1991 for this very contingency.

Work proceeds with the Neighbourhood Plan, which will be so vital in shaping our future. I thank all involved in preparing this, as well as all the

organisations that help steer the Marine, Environment and Tourism Partnership.

So many people have worked hard to enable the Town Council to achieve what it has and it would be impossible to name them all. However, in no specific order, I would like to personally thank Sue Thomason the Mayor's Secretary, Rev James Menzies my Chaplain for his support and advice, Catherine Bennett the former Assistant Clerk, Ian Looker the Town Clerk for his dedication and lastly, but by no means least, my daughter Becky for being my Mayor's Escort.

Rod Wild
Town Mayor

[Edited]

Town Crier's Report, 2015/16

Since my last report I have met and welcomed numerous cruise ships in a number of different languages. On one occasion I was able to greet the passengers in English, French, German and Italian. I have also discovered how to say "Good morning and welcome to Portland" in Norwegian and Portuguese.

My wife and I, she having her own costume as my official escort, entered a competition in Arundel.

Cries this year have been for the Ceremony of the Keys and Mayor-Making, the accession of Her Majesty the Queen, memorial ceremonies for the "Forest", D-Day, VJ-Day and the Merchant Navy, MV "Freedom" barrel roll, Easton Christmas Promise and my usual Pancake Race cry in February.

On a sadder note this year we lost a good friend and neighbour who worked at IRC the Verne. His widow has had a memorial stone and three shrubs planted in the grounds of the Jailhouse Cafe, so I was asked to perform a cry for him.

On a more cheerful note while visiting our daughter in Bedfordshire we went for a meal in a local pub where I was approached by a local gentleman. "I know you. You're the Town Crier of Portland." It turned out that we had met him on holiday in Crete!

It is my intention to continue publicising the name of Portland as long as possible.

God Save the Queen!

[Edited]