

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 4TH APRIL 2018 AT PETER TRIM HALL, ST. GEORGES CENTRE, REFORNE

PRESENT: Councillors Ray Nowak (Chairman), Charlie Flack (Town Mayor), Jo Atwell, Jim Draper, Chris Gover, Sandra Reynolds, David Thurston, Sandy West and Rod Wild

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Councillors Katharine Garcia and Kate Wheller (both Dorset County Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Kerry Baker and Paul Kimber (both Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Andy Matthews (Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and Portland Community Partnership), together with six members of the public.

18/1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Sue Cocking, Lucy Grieve and Sue Lees.

18/2 – MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, 5TH APRIL 2017

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

18/3 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 17/3 – Mayors' Plaque

Cllr. Nowak drew the meeting's attention to the fact that the plaque was now in position where the meeting was being held.

18/4 – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, 2017/18

Cllr. Nowak gave a verbal report. He began by mentioning the six plots of land on the Island that the Borough Council intended to dispose of. The Borough had made concessions in response to requests from the Town Council.

A petition against the closure of the Island's last bank had failed, but the action had revealed that very few of the Islanders' accounts were registered against the branch itself. This was a pointer perhaps for other places in the country who might face similar circumstances in the future.

Also in the face of many protests the Search & Rescue service had been withdrawn from the Island. However a large crowd gathered for the civic and community events organised by the Council to commemorate its leaving.

Cllr. Nowak commented on the Council's plans for a community hub and noted that August 2017 marked the first time the possibility was raised of using Brackenbury School as a community facility.

The Council had held a summer fete for the first time besides Portland Sparkle, both of which had been successful and would be repeated.

Cllr. Nowak referred briefly to the health problems in 2017 experienced by Cllr. Thurston the Town Mayor, the Town Crier and himself. Cllr. Flack had been elected to complete the mayoral term.

Currently discussions were taking place with the Borough about the transfer of assets to the Town, including the Olympic area at New Ground.

Finally, Cllr. Nowak was pleased to announce that the County Council had agreed earlier in the day to accept the Town's bid for the BEACH, the community hub at Brackenbury. As a result, the Council would now be applying for both a low-cost loan and a grant to help reduce the burden on the precept.

18/5 – TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT, 2017/18

Cllr. Flack itemised some memorable events of the mayoral year:-

- D-Day anniversary commemoration service
- Visits to HMS Duncan
- The opening of the Memory Stones
- Passchendaele 100th anniversary service
- Civic events attended around Dorset and Somerset
- Merchant Navy Day service
- 140th anniversary of SS Avalanche
- TS Penn annual parade
- HMS Illustrious memorial service
- Annual Portland photography competition
- Armistice commemoration and Remembrance Sunday services
- Seventeen carol services at Christmas!
- Angling Club annual dinner
- Local Sea Cadets presentations and Girl Guides' Thinking Day
- The Ceremony of the Keys at Easton Methodist Church in March
- Tour of the Atlantic Academy

Cllr. Flack closed by giving notice that the Borough Council elections due this year had been postponed until 2019.

18/6 – FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2017/18

The Clerk explained that the accounts presented were not complete to 31st March as they had been drafted a few days prior and one or two small additional payments were expected before the end of the year. There were no questions on the report from those present.

18/7 – TOWN CRIER'S REPORT, 2017/18

The Town Crier was not present.

18/8 – ELECTORS' ITEMS

Paul Snow offered the Council his congratulations on the acceptance of its bid for the BEACH. He also recorded his pleasure that at the Finance Committee that morning he had been promised the Council would hold a public meeting concerning the BEACH and the application for loan funding, the event to be

widely publicised. Cllr. Draper provided more detail and said the meeting would be arranged to take place shortly.

Cllr. West asked what was the current situation on the Comer Homes site. Among the detail Cllr. Nowak gave in his reply was that there would be about four hundred units of accommodation, none of it in the “affordable” category unfortunately. When completed the scheme would provide £1m of infrastructure funding. The constructive disposal of that sum would be pursued by the Town Council.

Andy Matthews said there was the possibility that “growth town” funding might be revived and he stressed the Community Partnership was keen to work with the Town Council in developing services on the Island.

Mrs Snow drew attention to the single road that served as the Island’s link to the mainland. Recently it had been badly affected by road works. She wondered what the Council could do to achieve better transport links.

18/9 – DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

This had yet to be determined.

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.

Signed Dated
(Chairman)