

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH MAY 2014 AT EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL, EASTON, PORTLAND

PRESENT: Councillors L. Ames (Town Mayor), Mrs S. Bradley, G. Chadwick, R. Denton-White, R. Hughes, A. Matthews, R. Nowak, Mrs S. Reynolds, K. Tonkinson-Dutheridge and R. Wild, together with about thirty members of the general public.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk)

Immediately prior to the meeting former Cllr. Jess Nagel offered congratulations to Cllr. Ames and his wife, Jean, in reaching their 70th wedding anniversary. Cllr. Ames briefly responded with a few details of the anniversary party that had been held.

14/1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Miss A. Munro.

14/2 – MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, 8TH MAY 2013

Minute 13/1 – Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Denton-White asked for his name to be added to the list of apologies received. With this amendment the minutes of the meeting were formally agreed and signed as a correct record.

14/3 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a) Minute 13/3(b) – Hambro Car Park

Cllr. Denton-White asked whether there were any further reports concerning a temporary garden or play area there. Cllr. Matthews said the matter had not been pursued due to the Borough's concerns about ownership. Cllr. Kimber undertook to look into the matter to see if attitudes had changed.

b) Minute 13/3(a) – Town Mayor's Report, 2011/12

Paul Snow asked whether a response giving the number of events attended in the year had been provided. The Clerk said it had not, owing to the work necessary in compiling the figures and competing workload priorities.

c) Minute 13/7, para 3 – Officers' Field Football Pitch

A question was asked, whether the public were able to use it.

Cllr. Wild said he had spoken to the school authorities, who had told him it was currently being reseeded, but normally was available for use by the public.

14/4 – TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT, 2013/14

Cllr. Ames said it had been an eventful year for him as Mayor. In giving his report he would concentrate on the chief events and try to speak of them as dispassionately as he could.

He began by referring to the Mayor-Making meeting held at the Masonic Hall and the Ceremony of the Keys celebrated at Portland Castle in the presence of many visitors, with refreshments afterwards again at the Masonic Hall.

Portland Fair in 2013 had been badly affected by the weather and forced to close early on the advice of the Coastguard. As a result the Council had agreed to accept a payment of £1,000 from the operators instead of the £3,000 contract sum.

At the December Town Council meeting an increase of nearly 1,000% had been agreed by a large majority. The public were not consulted on this and so in response to the controversy generated a public meeting was held in late January at All Saints Church, followed by a Town Council meeting at the same venue. There were long discussions at both meetings with many questions from the public about the precept and Council standing orders. Not all the answers were well received. The decision for a large precept increase was rescinded and Council adopted an increase of 1.99% instead.

Two Town Council meetings were also conducted at Easton Methodist Hall, at which both members of the Council and public had put forward a number of ideas concerning the future operation of the Council.

At the meeting on 16th March Cllr. Tim Munro and Rob Hughes were nominated as Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively for the coming year.

14/5 – FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2013/14

A written report on the Council's finances was presented by the Clerk. There were no questions and the report was formally accepted.

14/6 – REPORT BY THE TOWN CRIER

The Crier was absent on holiday, but had prepared a written summary of his activities in the role during the past year.

Cllr. Denton-White drew attention to the Crier being on hand at 6.00 a.m. a few days previously to welcome the first cruise liner of the year, an event that had been televised. He proposed a vote of thanks to Stuart Cave, which was warmly endorsed.

14/7 – ELECTORS' ITEMS

Dave Allen stated his view that it was now time for the Council to have a Chairman instead of a Town Mayor to avoid further controversy affecting the Island.

A long discussion ensued, eventually resulting in a motion that was **RESOLVED** – that this meeting demands that Portland Town Council appoint a Chairman instead of a Town Mayor, to take effect as soon as practically possible. (For: 33, Against: 3, Abstentions: 4)

June Osborne requested that the appointment of an Island Caretaker be made permanent.

Cllr. Margaret Leicester criticised the Council Offices for not offering accessibility to the disabled, as well as having poor parking facilities.

RESOLVED – that all meetings of the full Council should be held in buildings accessible to the disabled. (Unanimous, apart from one abstention)

There was a vote of thanks endorsed by the meeting to Cllr. Ames for his work as Mayor and Chairman of the Town Council.

14/8 – DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

The next Annual Town Meeting is due to take place on Wednesday, 8th May 2015.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

Signed Dated
(Town Mayor)