

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2014

PRESENT: Councillors L. Ames (Chair), Mrs s. Bradley, R. Denton-White (from 7.10 pm), R. Hughes, A. Matthews, Miss A. Munro, T. Munro, Mrs E. Munro-Price, I. Munro-Price, R. Nowak, Mrs S. Reynolds, K. Tonkinson-Dutherford and R. Wild.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk) and Rev. Chris Briggs, together with approximately forty members of the public.

2563 – PRAYERS

Rev. Chris Briggs led the meeting in prayer.

2564 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

2565 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

2566 – OPEN FORUM

a) Police Question Time

No representative of Dorset Police was present.

b) Public Half-Hour

A gentleman expressed the view that the original precept rise proposed was a “bad idea”, not a case of bad public relations on the part of the Town Council. When wide consultation with the public is needed then it takes time to achieve it.

June Morley raised queries about the management of the Island Caretaker and financial provision involved, as well as criticising the behaviour of the Mayor.

(Cllr. Denton-White joined the meeting at 7.10 pm.)

A lady asked concerning the qualifications of the Clerk and urged more businesslike ways of working.

Mr Peter Siddons asked when the new website would be operative.

Another gentleman queried what he thought was the excessive cost of website development. Cllr. Matthews replied to this, pointing out the necessary set-up expenditure.

A lady asked whether the names of ward councillors could be published either at the Library or in the Free Portland News. She also requested that the misbehaviour of members of the public at recent meetings be recorded.

c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Cllr. Ian Munro-Price reported that the Inspector for the Local Plan thought there was insufficient land on the Island for building affordable housing. It was likely that the Borough would settle for a 1.99% Council Tax rise in 2014/15. He also spoke of the necessity of closing the beach road during the recent bad weather, but criticised Wessex Water for creating unnecessary carriageway restrictions along the road where they were carrying out work.

The Clerk read a written report from Cllr. Kate Wheller.

2567 – MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2014

Minute 2545 – Council Budget and Precept, 2014/15

In the second vote those recorded as voting against included Cllr. Barton rather than Cllr. Bradley. In the third vote Cllr. Ames abstained instead of voting for.

With these two amendments the minutes were formally agreed and signed as a correct record.

2568 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2014

No issues were raised.

2569 – TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

2570 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR

There were none.

2571 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

RESOLVED – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3010 and 3016 - 3028) in the sum of £2,730.11 including VAT be approved.

b) 2013/14 Financial Report to 31st January 2014

Cllr. Matthews pointed out that the increase in Neighbourhood Plan expenditure had been covered by the amount of grant received. It was agreed to accept the report.

2572 – RELOCATION OF COUNCIL OFFICES

Cllr. Tim Munro reported on the recent meeting held with Borough officers. They had made it clear that the Borough wanted to dispose of the Town Council Offices. It was therefore necessary for the Town to hold the Borough to its agreement to house the Town Council. The Borough still regarded Brackenbury School as a possible option for accommodation, one that was not welcomed by the Town. Finding a suitable property on Tophill, probably in Easton, let by the Borough to the Town seemed a more favourable option.

After debate Cllr. Wild proposed that the Town Council pursue the option of a reception facility with offices / meeting rooms and a council chamber. This motion was **LOST**.

Cllr. Tim Munro proposed and it was **RESOLVED** – that the Town Council pursue the option of a reception facility with offices / meeting rooms.

2573 – PRESS OFFICER

Cllr. Denton-White spoke to his motion that a member should be appointed as a press officer, providing regular press releases and acting as a regular point of contact with the media.

The Chair requested that the item be deferred to allow time to deal with the rest of the agenda and this was agreed.

2574 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

From the chair Cllr. Ames proposed that Agenda Item 12 – Appointment of Internal Auditor be discussed with the exclusion of press & public. This motion was **LOST**.

It was proposed by Cllr. Tim Munro and **RESOLVED** – that the item be deferred.

2575 – COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Clerk presented a draft complaints policy. Cllr. Tim Munro proposed that the Council adopt a complaints procedure and it go to the Finance & Resources Committee for further consideration.

Cllr. Ian Munro-Price proposed an amendment that the Council adopt the Clerk's draft as a working draft policy. This was **CARRIED**.

The substantive motion, that the Council adopt the Clerk's draft complaints policy as a working draft policy and it go to the Finance & Resources Committee for further consideration, was **RESOLVED**.

2576 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN OVERTIME AND STAFF RESOURCES

The Clerk presented his report. The Council accepted the part of the report concerning Neighbourhood Plan overtime and agreed to reinstate payment of overtime in this respect.

RESOLVED – that in future overtime is managed by the Finance & Resources Committee.

The rest of the report, concerning the wider subject of the administrative task, was referred to the Human Resources and IT Sub-Committee for consideration.

2577 – ISLAND CARETAKER

a) Disposal of Rubbish

It was agreed that this could be discussed in public without mentioning names of contractors or the specific sum of money involved.

At the request of the Council the Island Caretaker, who was present, spoke briefly concerning his role. Cllr. Matthews commended him for the work he had done in his time working for the Council.

Members then considered the practical aspects of disposing of the rubbish generated by the Caretaker. Cllr. Matthews thought there was a need to test the

market in offering disposal facilities. He proposed and it was **RESOLVED** – that on a temporary basis the Council adopt the hire arrangement proposed for the sum quoted. In the near future the Council would seek quotations from other contractors, Cllr. Matthews himself providing advice on the choice of contractors.

b) Management

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the Clerk provide day-to-day management of the Island Caretaker and liaison with the public in related matters.

c) Temporary Contract

It was proposed by Cllr. Matthews and **RESOLVED** – that the Island Caretaker’s contract be extended for a further six months at thirty hours per week, to be reviewed again in August. During that time the Council would actively investigate the possibility of sponsorship and other external funding.

2578 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Town Council is due to take place on Wednesday, 16th April 2014, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)