

**PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2013**

**PRESENT:** Councillors L. Ames (Chair), Mrs S. Bradley, R. Denton-White, K. Dutheridge, R. Hughes, A. Matthews, Miss A. Munro, T. Munro, Mrs E. Munro-Price, I. Munro-Price (from 7.35pm), R. Nowak and R. Wild.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Rev. T. Gomm (Mayor's Chaplain), and Councillor Paul Kimber (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council.)

**2504 – PRAYERS**

The Mayor's Chaplain led the meeting in prayer.

**2505 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Mrs R. Barton and Mrs S. Reynolds.

**2506 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs. Tim Munro, Amanda Munro and Elspie Munro-Price declared a personal interest in agenda items 12 – Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price and 18 – Council Budget, 2014/15.

Cllr. Tim Munro raised the issue of dispensations for members in order to debate and vote on the budget agenda item, pointing out that the three newest members of the Council had not been given and signed dispensation forms, quoting the relevant section from "Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration."

It was proposed by Cllr. Tim Munro and **RESOLVED** – that dispensations be granted to Cllrs. Dutheridge, Matthews and Reynolds to debate and vote on the budget item.

The Clerk accepted that he had been at fault in not supplying the particular members with dispensation forms, but asked it for it to be noted that Cllr. Tim Munro had only raised the issue a few minutes before the start of the meeting, including a request for the information in Arnold-Baker.

For his part Cllr. Tim Munro said that it had not been his intention to trap the Clerk.

**2507 – OPEN FORUM**

**a) Police Question Time**

No representative of Dorset Police was present.

**b) Public Half-Hour**

Mr Gomm asked when the grant applications would be considered and was told at the January Council meeting.

**c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors**

Cllr. Kimber started his report by saying that the County was planning cuts of £48m to £50m over the next three years. Among the measures to achieve this was the proposed integration of health and social care. Meanwhile news about the old

Brackenbury School was expected in January. The County are looking to sell the property or do a deal and it would seem Portland Town Council is being seen as a potential solution.

Answering members' questions, Cllr. Kimber said the resolution on a living wage had been referred to the Staffing Committee. There was no news of the former Brackenbury Nursery, but he would pass on the Town's "interest" in the building. Cllr. Nowak pointed out that it was the Borough's duty to house the Town Council. The County was not directly involved so the Town Council should wait for an approach from the Borough.

## **2508 – MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

### **a) Minute 2491 – Emerging Local Plan**

Following a query from Cllr. Tim Munro it was agreed to add "housing" before "waiting list" in the first bullet point.

### **b) Minute 2500 – Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

Cllr. Tim Munro asked that in the wording of the first resolution the words "be suspended" be replaced by "cease" as this was his original wording. Cllr. Tim Munro and the Clerk differed in their opinion as to whether the change amounted to a difference in meaning. It was agreed to accept the alteration so that the resolution was recorded as "that the agreement to pay staff overtime for work on the Plan cease until an explanation had been provided."

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

## **2509 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **Minute 2499 – Minerals**

The Clerk reported that he had received an e-mail the previous day, copied to members at the meeting from the County's Planning Manager. This noted the County's intention to reinstate a Portland minerals consultation group and hold the group meetings at the Town Council Offices.

**RESOLVED** – that if the County formally invites the Town Council to nominate a representative to the minerals committee the Mayor should attend the inaugural meeting and report back to the Council. Then at the next Adjourned Annual Town Council Meeting an appropriate number of representatives should be elected.

## **2510 – TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

## **2511 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR**

There were none.

## **2512 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **a) Payments for Authorisation**

The Clerk explained that this month's schedule of payments provided two alternative sets of payments for Council approval. One set included payments in respect of overtime worked by staff on the Neighbourhood Plan, the other did not.

It was proposed by Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price and **RESOLVED** – that the agenda item be considered later in the meeting after the issue of staff overtime had been settled.

### **b) 2013/14 Financial Report to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**RESOLVED** – that the report be accepted.

## **2513 – PORTLAND FAIR**

Members considered a verbal report by the Mayor and written report by the Clerk.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that representatives of the Council go back to the Wynns concerning their (the Wynns) proposals and remind them of their contract obligations.

It was agreed that Cllrs. Ames and Nowak represent the Council.

## **2514 – INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Clerk presented a report about replacing the Council's internal auditor. Members accepted the recommendation to take up Dorchester Town Council's offer of help.

It was proposed by Cllr. Ames and **RESOLVED** – that Cllr. Matthews and the Clerk attend Dorchester's series of interviews to help form an opinion.

## **2515 – CLLR. ELSPIE MUNRO-PRICE**

The agenda item was brought because of Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price's absence from the Council for six months.

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price remain on the Council.

Following the decision Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price expressed her regret that she had received no intimation of the six-month rule and also that neither the Clerk nor Assistant Clerk had contacted her during her period of sickness.

## **2516 – ORDER OF BUSINESS**

It was proposed by Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price and **RESOLVED** – that Agenda Item 18 – Council Budget, 2014/15 be taken as the next item of business.

## **2517 – COUNCIL BUDGET, 2014/15**

Cllr. Tim Munro opened the debate by pointing out to members that Government restrictions on council spending might mean that this was the last opportunity for some while to make a significant change in the Council's budget and precept. With a real prospect that it would be taking on extra services it would be necessary to make sufficient provision for their financing.

His vision was for Portland to be a commissioning council, dividing the greater part of its budget between the three wards, perhaps by communities within the wards. A key factor would be to move the money closest to the point where decisions were made.

After further debate it was proposed by Cllr. Tim Munro – that the Town Council set a precept of £150 per annum Band D equivalent so that it can be financially independent.

Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price proposed an amendment – that the Council does not spend more than 10% of the annual precept on administration in the financial year. The Council will, however possible, aim not just to take over existing services, but distribute the money by community groups within the three Council wards.

The amendment was **CARRIED** and the substantive motion **RESOLVED**.

It was then proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that Cllr. Tim Munro draft a press release concerning the budget proposals and e-mail it to members of the Council. If there was disagreement a special meeting of members should be held.

(Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price left the meeting at 9.05pm.)

#### **2518 – ISLAND CARETAKER**

The Clerk drew attention to the continuing problems in finding outlets for the waste gathered by the Caretaker.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and agreed that the Council should write to the Borough briefholder for waste disposal, detailing the difficulties being experienced.

Members also considered the recommendation of the Clerk to pay the Island Caretaker for off-Island mileage he incurred in carrying out his work.

It was proposed by Cllr. Denton-White and **RESOLVED** – that the Island Caretaker be paid for off-Island mileage at a rate of 45p per mile in undertaking his duties.

#### **2519 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN MANAGEMENT AND WORKING GROUP**

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the Council accept the Terms of Reference attached to the agenda for the new Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the Council adopt its own Register of Members' Interests form for members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

It was proposed by Cllr. Matthews and **RESOLVED** – that the signed Register of Members' Interests form from the Working Group be published on the Council's website.

It was proposed by Cllr. Denton-White and **RESOLVED** – that all Working Group members' appointments be ratified by the Council. This would require submission of the Declaration of Interests form together with the member's pen portrait of himself/herself.

It was proposed by Cllr. Matthews and agreed that the submitted draft budget for the Neighbourhood Plan be noted.

### **2520 – MARINE & ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP MEETING, 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2013**

Members debated recommendation (a). Cllr. Tim Munro raised an objection under Standing Order 39 – Resolutions on Expenditure, saying that there was no budget provision for the purchase and the recommendation should stand adjourned without discussion until the next meeting of the Council. It was pointed out that the Standing Order left such action to the discretion of the Chairman. From the chair the Mayor ruled that there was no need to delay a decision.

**RESOLVED** – that the Council buy and store twelve 25 kg bags of grit as a reserve supply for the community grit bins on the Island.

Cllr. Ian Munro-Price queried who paid for community bins in Weymouth to be refilled.

Recommendation (b) was then discussed. **RESOLVED** – that the Council note the availability of Island-specific tourism data for 2011 and 2012 available commercially.

Cllr. Nowak requested the Council to write to Crown Estate for an update on their takeover of Portland Bill Visitor Centre and the provision of tourist information there.

### **2521 – REVIEW OF COUNCIL STRUCTURES**

The Clerk said he had not had sufficient time to provide draft revised Standing Orders for those affected by the decisions agreed as a result of the review. The item was deferred until the next meeting.

### **2522 – TRANSFER OF SERVICES TO THE TOWN COUNCIL**

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that his motion detailed under Agenda Item 7 be left on the table and be deferred to the next Council meeting.

### **2523 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS**

None were presented.

### **2524 – TOPHILL WEST BY-ELECTION**

The Clerk said that members had been kept updated with the sequence of events and Mr Dutheridge had completed the necessary declaration to finalise becoming a Town Councillor.

### **2525 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Cllr. Tim Munro said insufficient time had been provided to digest the written report provided by the Clerk concerning staff overtime worked on the Plan. He therefore proposed and it was agreed that the item be deferred until the next meeting.

**2526 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**a) Payments for Authorisation (Continued)**

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild that the column of payments including staff overtime be approved. The motion was **LOST**. It was proposed by Cllr. Amanda Munro and **RESOLVED** – that the column of payments excluding staff overtime be approved i.e. the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 2957, 2972 – 2989) in the sum of £3,955.70 including VAT.

**2527 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the Town Council is due to take place on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm.

Signed..... Dated.....  
(Chair)