

**PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 18<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2015**  
**AT EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL**

**PRESENT:** Councillors R. Hughes (Chair), Mrs S. Bradley, G. Chadwick, R. Denton-White, Ms S. Lees, A. Matthews, Miss A. Munro, Mrs E. Munro-Price, I. Munro-Price, T. Munro, R. Nowak, Mrs S. Reynolds, J. Thorner and R. Wild.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Cllr. Penny McCartney (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council) and approximately fifty members of the public

**2761 – PRAYERS**

The Clerk led the meeting in prayer.

**2762 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Rev. James Menzies (Mayor's Chaplain).

**2763 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs. Tim Munro, Ian Munro-Price, Elspie Munro-Price and Amanda Munro declared a pecuniary interest as Council Taxpayers in Agenda Item 10 – 2015/16 Budget & Precept, which the Chair applied to all members as having a dispensation to debate and vote on.

Cllr. Munro also said that he would be withdrawing from the meeting for Agenda Item 11 – Ventnor Road.

**2764 – OPEN FORUM**

**a) Police Question Time**

No representative of the Police was present.

**(b) Public Half-Hour**

There was a complaint from one or two of the public present that no microphone was provided to speak into.

Paul Snow congratulated the Finance & Resources Committee on recommending no increase in the Band D charge and looked forward to the full Council endorsing that proposal. He also asked concerning the Neighbourhood Plan, when would it be completed and was the net cost quoted by Cllr. Matthews one-off expenditure? Cllr. Tim Munro said completion was now expected at the end of 2016 and Cllr. Matthews said it was a one-off expenditure.

Jess Nagel said many residents had contacted the Dorset Waste Partnership about the threatened loss of the Island's refuse tip. Was the Council campaigning for its retention? She was concerned that the Island would become a dumping ground for rubbish, as it had been in the past, and the likely effect on flora and fauna.

Dave Owen asked whether the Council was aware of its own dry-stone wall policy with reference to an e-mail had had sent recently. The Clerk was asked to reply.

Mrs Butterworth reported that Grove Road had not been swept since before Christmas and rubbish was blowing about creating an eyesore. The Clerk was asked to write to the Borough and Waste Partnership.

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

Cllr. Kimber said he had already started campaigning to retain the refuse tip. Meanwhile the County had raised its share of the Council tax by 1.9% so that the Band D charge was now about £145. Regarding the Navitus Bay wind farm, the County members were largely against it, but he was in favour, considering it environmentally important and a way of reducing the energy bills of local people.

Cllr. Kimber added the County had embarked on creating a number of arm's length trading companies, which would be able to solicit work from outside bodies.

Cllr. Nowak presented a written report on Borough Council activities.

Cllr. McCartney said she was aware of Waste Partnership problems, especially its budget and looking for more accountability from the Partnership.

Cllr. Denton-White asked why there was only one Portland councillor on the Borough's Management Committee. Cllr. Nowak said the composition depended on what names were put forward by each of the political groups.

Cllr. Denton-White also queried the current situation concerning the Coastal Strip. Cllr. Nowak replied that matters depended on the 1951 Act, which did not require planning permission for stone extraction. An appeal was being lodged. If it was not successful the eastern coastline by Southwell could be ripped out. A high court case at the end of the year could result.

## **2765 – MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015**

The minutes were formally approved and signed as a correct record. (For: 13 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 1 vote)

## **2766 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **a) Minute 2740(c) – Fortuneswell Speed Limit**

Cllr. Elspie Munro-Price enquired whether the County had replied. The Clerk said he was not aware. Cllr. Tim Munro produced a County reply to a similar query in 2007, which he passed to the Chair, who then read it to the meeting.

Cllr. Matthews suggested that the erection of a speed indicator sign be explored.

### **b) Minute 2746 – 2015/16 Budget & Report**

Cllr. Tim Munro asked why "earmarked reserves" had been discussed at the meeting when the subject had never been raised at Finance & Resources. Cllr. Matthews said Finance & Resources had identified an earmarked reserve in the budget at its

last meeting. Cllr. Tim Munro also thought that the draft reserve policy should have been presented as a recommendation.

### **2767 – TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor commented that it was the first time since last year that all members were together at a meeting. He expressed concern that the contents of the staffing review report had been leaked to the press and concluded that a member of the Council had been responsible. Cllr. Hughes then proceeded to ask each member in turn whether it was he or she who had leaked the report. Twelve members replied that they had not and two declined to comment.

The Mayor also referred to a visit to the Council Offices by a Mrs Buchanan, the daughter of a former Town Clerk, Mr Leslie Lee.

### **2768 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR**

There were none.

### **2769 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

#### **Payments for Authorisation**

**RESOLVED** – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3239 – 3246) in the sum of £2,149.09 including VAT be authorised for payment. (11-3-0)

### **2770 – 2015/16 BUDGET & PRECEPT**

Cllr. Chadwick moved the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee at its last meeting.

Cllr. Ian Munro-Price proposed an amendment, “and that in addition the Town Council agrees to revisit the budget headings and adjust them to fit in with 0.00% increase without the need to use general reserves to create a balanced budget.” The voting was (7-7-0) and the amendment was **CARRIED** on the casting vote of the Chair.

The amended motion was then put to the vote.

**RESOLVED** – that there be a nil increase in the present Band D Council Tax charge of £15.02 and that in addition the Town Council agrees to revisit the budget headings and adjust them to fit in with 0.00% increase without the need to use general reserves to create a balanced budget.

For: Cllr. Bradley, Chadwick, Lees, Amanda Munro, Elspie Munro-Price, Ian Munro-Price, Reynolds, Thorner and Wild (9)

Against: Cllrs. Denton-White, Hughes, Matthews, Tim Munro and Nowak (5)

Abstentions: None

(Cllr. Amanda Munro left the meeting at 8.30 pm.)

The Chair called for a five-minute adjournment.

(Cllrs. Elspie and Ian Munro-Price left the meeting at 8.35 pm. On resumption of the meeting Cllr. Tim Munro withdrew.)

### **2771 – VENTNOR ROAD**

Cllr. Chadwick contended that Cllr. Tim Munro had brought the Council into disrepute by condoning the breaking of the law. He proposed and it was **RESOLVED** – that the Council request Cllr. Munro to write formally and explain his stated views which suggested people should break the law. The Council believes that Cllr. Munro has brought the Council into disrepute by his recorded comments. (10-0-0)

### **2772 – FUTURE COUNCIL ACCOMMODATION**

Cllr. Thorner said that the Council needed to consider accessibility for disabled people in making a decision. If the current Offices were sold the receipts should come to the Town Council.

Cllr. Hughes mooted briefly the possibility of retaining the present Offices and developing them.

Cllr. Nowak declared his interest as a Borough Councillor and member of its Asset Management Group. He said that he had been pushing for a speedy resolution of the Town's accommodation problem at the Group. It was an option for the Borough to return the Offices to the Town's ownership, but the cost of restoring the building to a decent level of maintenance was high. The estimated cost merely of making it watertight was £100,000. It did not help that there had been losses of staff recently in the property department. One possibility was adding extra accommodation for the Town Council at the Fire Station.

Cllr. Tim Munro spoke of the undertakings given by the Borough in 2007 when the Offices were being considered for redevelopment. He was not aware that the Borough Management Committee had ever had the opportunity to discuss the issue.

### **2773 – LIAISON MEETING WITH WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Cllr. Wild drew attention to the Borough's support for retaining the Island's recycling centre.

Cllr. Matthews valued the Borough's wish to bring services together, for example parks and gardens with the ranger services, which he saw as an opportunity for the Town.

### **2774 – COUNCILLORS' NEWS FROM THE WARDS**

Cllr. Chadwick said that fly-tipping was becoming a serious issue again on the Island.

Cllr. Wild reported on concerns about the Borough bricking up tunnels on the Merchant's Railway without liaison. He also spoke about updates to the Island Resilience Plan.

Cllr. Lees had visited the sites of all the Council's grit bins to check their state. However the bin for Killick's Hill is still not in place.

Cllr. Thorner reported on a recent traffic incident in Chiswell. He felt the emergency traffic control set up had not been satisfactory. Cllr. Thorner also referred to a problem of builders' rubble being dumped in the bin area of an Aster block of flats at Westcliff. He understood the tenants were being fined while the rubbish remained. Cllr. Nowak had heard that Aster and DWP were in discussion about the problem.

**2775 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS**

None were presented.

**2776 – COMPUTER SYSTEM BACK-UP**

The Clerk presented a written report on measures that had been taken to provide a new back-up system. Retrospective approval was agreed for the new hard drive necessary.

(Cllr. Thorner left the meeting at 9.10 pm.)

**2777 – ADDITIONAL STAFFING PROVISION**

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that a temporary Assistant Clerk be appointed for a period of three months. (8-2-0)

**2778 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Town Council is due to take place on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm.

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