

## **PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**

### **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2016 AT EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL, EASTON**

**PRESENT:** Councillors R. Nowak (Chairman), Ms J. Atwell, G. Chadwick, Mrs S. Cocking, J. Draper, C. Flack, C. Gover, A. Sergison, D. Symes, D. Thurston and R. Wild

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Mr Andy Matthews (Finance Working Group and Portland Community Partnership) and fifteen members of the public.

#### **3090 – CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME**

Cllr. Nowak welcomed all to the meeting and advised of fire precautions at the hall.

#### **3091 – PRAYERS**

The Clerk led the meeting in prayer.

#### **3092 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Ms S. Lees, Mrs S. Reynolds and Mrs S. West, Rev. James Menzies, Cllr. Kate Wheller (Dorset County Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council) and Cllr. Penny McCartney (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council)

#### **3093 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **3094 – OPEN FORUM**

##### **a) Police Question Time**

There was no representative of the Police present.

##### **b) Public Half-Hour**

A lady raised a question about the cost of the current vacancy.

June Morley commented on the cost of moving offices and asked whether the Council had insurance to cover the cost of legal claims.

Mr Matthews asked for permission to speak on financial agenda items.

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

No reports were provided.

#### **3095 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING, 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016**

##### **Minute 3076, page 4, para 1 – Budget and Precept, 2016/17**

“It was proposed by Cllr. Chadwick ...” should have read “... Cllr. Gover ...”

With this amendment the minutes were formally approved and signed as a correct record. (For: 9 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 2 votes)

### **3096 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING**

#### **a) Minute 3076 – Budget and Precept, 2016/17**

Cllr. Thurston asked why the item was being reprised on the meeting agenda. Cllr. Nowak responded, referring to the Clerk's explanation in the minutes.

#### **b) Minute 394, para 1 – Flooding Outside Lloyds Bank**

Cllr. Flack reported that work was to be done this week to rectify the problem.

### **3097 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr. Nowak said he had received an e-mail from the Coastal Communities Team and the Borough proposing the installation of stone seats at West Weares and asking the Town Council to take responsibility for them. This will be discussed at the March Town Council meeting.

### **3098 – TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr. Wild mentioned a request from the Library service for volunteers to assist with a computer programming course.

He advertised a showing of "Mr Midshipman Easy," filmed on Portland, at the C2000 Hall the following evening.

Finally he reported receiving four letter of congratulations on the Accession / Freedom event, including one from the Queen which he read to the meeting.

### **3099 – QUEEN'S ACCESSION AND FREEDOM CEREMONY**

It was proposed by Cllr. Flack and **RESOLVED** – that the Assistant Clerk be awarded a vote of thanks and bouquet of flowers for all her work in organising the event. (11-0-0)

### **3100 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

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

The Clerk drew attention to the fact that the Council is able to reclaim all the VAT paid at the end of the financial year.

**RESOLVED** – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3376, 3413 – 3420 and 3446 - 3455) in the sum of £6,513.42 including VAT be authorised for payment. (11-0-0)

#### **b) 2015/16 Financial Report to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016**

**RESOLVED** – that the report be accepted. (11-0-0)

### **3101 – COUNCIL OFFICES**

a) Members considered the two options before them, moving to new premises at Easton and Underhill. The Clerk ventured an opinion, but was interrupted as the Chairman ruled that he was going beyond his brief.

It was proposed by Cllr. Gover and **RESOLVED** – that Council make a decision on the night, to pursue the option of the property in Easton for the new Council Offices.

For: Cllrs. Atwell, Cocking, Draper, Flack, Gover, Nowak, Sergison, Symes and Thurston

Against: Cllrs. Chadwick and Wild (9-2-0)

b) Cllr. Nowak put forward his motion, explaining what was meant by an “exit strategy.”

**RESOLVED** – (i) that the Council agrees to create an Exit Strategy Working Group to deal with all aspects of preparing to vacate the current Offices by the date required by Weymouth & Portland Borough Council. The Exit Strategy Working Group shall be empowered to take action to meet the deadline, make arrangements to acquire and move to the new chosen Offices and report to full Council on the actions taken, (ii) that Cllrs Cocking, Nowak, Thurston and Wild be the members of the Exit Strategy Working Group. (10-0-1)

### **3102 – STAFFING**

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the advertised vacancy for a part-time Assistant Clerk should be put on hold and reconsidered if required after the coming financial year. (7-4-0)

### **3103 – ADDITIONAL BUDGET PROVISIONS**

There was no discussion.

### **3104 – BUDGET AND PRECEPT, 2016/17**

Following the two previous decisions at the meeting it was agreed to work from the Budget Working Paper, Scenario 3: Two Staff in Easton.

**RESOLVED** – that the budget figures presented in Scenario 3 be accepted as they stood. (9-1-1)

It was further proposed by Cllr Cocking and **RESOLVED** – that the Council set a precept of £63,679, an increase of approximately £4.20 in the Band D charge per year. (10-1-0) For: Cllrs. Atwell, Cocking, Draper, Flack, Gover, Sergison, Symes, Thurston and Wild  
Against: Cllr. Chadwick

### **3105 – STANDING ORDERS**

#### **a) References to Mayor and Deputy Chairman**

Cllr Wild pointed out that the post of Chairman had been instituted on a trial basis for two years.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the following changes be made:-

#### **Standing Order 3(m)**

At the end add the sentence “The Town Mayor shall serve as the Deputy Chairman of the Council.”

#### **Standing Order 5(e)**

After “**the Chairman**” amend the text to read, “**of the Council**, the Town Mayor and **Deputy Chairman of the Council**, and the Deputy Town Mayor.

### **Standing Order 5(g)**

Amend the Words, “**The Deputy Chairman of the Council,**” to read, “**The Town Mayor and Deputy Chairman of the Council,**”

After Standing Order 5(g) add a new paragraph, 5(h) and renumber following.  
Standing Order 5(h) shall read:

- h The Deputy Town Mayor, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified shall hold office immediately after the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council. (9-1-1)

### **b) Recording Numbered Votes**

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the following changes be made:-

### **Standing Order 3(q)**

Amend the second sentence to read, “At the request of a councillor the Clerk shall record the numbers of votes cast for, against and any abstentions.”

Amend the fourth sentence to begin, “Such requests .....

### **3106 – CALENDAR, 2016/17**

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – a) that the June Town Council meeting be deleted from the draft calendar because of the imminent move of Offices and the August and December meetings of the Town Council be made provisional, b) with these amendments that the draft calendar be accepted.

### **3107 – EXTERNAL AUDIT**

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the Council does not opt out of the new arrangements involving Smaller Authorities’ Audit Appointments Ltd.

### **3108 – ARMED FORCES DAY GRANTS**

Cllr. Sergison undertook to pursue this.

### **3109 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS**

The Chairman asked whether someone was willing to act as the representative on DORBAG but no one volunteered.

### **3110 – COUNCILLORS’ NEWS FROM THE WARDS**

Cllr. Symes drew attention to a Youth and Community Partnership meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Cllr. Nowak agreed to attend.

### **3111 – ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None were suggested.

### **3112 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** – that pursuant to the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Agenda Item 23 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**3113 – CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING FORMER MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL**

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the solicitor.

**3114 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is due to take place on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.

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