

**PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014**  
**AT THE PETER TRIM HALL, ST. GEORGE'S CENTRE, REFORNE**

**PRESENT:** Councillors R. Hughes (Chair), Mrs S. Bradley, R. Denton-White, A. Matthews, R. Nowak, Mrs S. Reynolds and R. Wild.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Cllr. Paul Kimber (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council) and ten members of the public.

**2655 – PRAYERS**

The Clerk led the meeting in prayer.

**2656 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Chadwick, Amanda Munro, Tim Munro, Elspie Munro-Price, Ian Munro-Price and Kate Wheller (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and Dorset County Council).

**2657 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**2658 – OPEN FORUM**

**a) No representative of the Police was present.**

**b) Public Half-Hour**

Paul Snow asked a question about overgrown hedges on Easton Lane. Cllr. Wild responded, detailing which hedges had been trimmed, which were being dealt with and where there had been no response from the owner. He also said that the County spraying teams would be making Easton Lane a priority.

Other individuals requested that overgrown hedges be dealt with at Weston Street and Tradecroft.

Jess Nagel asked why the Island Caretaker had resigned. Cllr. Wild replied that it was due partly to an industrial injury and partly to abuse received from the public.

She also asked a question about the Council's projected use of Facebook. She was concerned about how it might be misused and wondered how other councils had experienced it.

Carole Pattison queried the lack of reports in the Echo about crime on the Island. Cllr. Bradley though this reflected the limited amount of crime on Portland at present. Cllr. Hughes from the Chair advised that he would soon be meeting the Deputy Chief Constable for discussions. Dave Owen reported fires being lit at Coombefield Quarry.

Sue Lees reiterated a past query about the lack of agenda attachments on the website. The Mayor referred to the current workload problems experienced by the staff.

Cllr. Kimber sought reassurance about the future of the Council's "900 Years" tapestries, which he was given.

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

Cllr. Kimber reported an item of good news from the Borough – a bus shelter would be provided by the stop near Weymouth harbour for people travelling to the Island.

Cllr. Nowak spoke concerning Stone Firms' quarrying of the coastal strip and its likely adverse effects on Southwell. He suggested Stone Firms be invited to give a presentation to the Council on the subject and the Marine & Environment Partnership meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> September was suggested.

Referring to the issue Cllr. Kimber admitted that he could not say very much on the subject because there was a legal case involved. However he hoped the Quarries Liaison Committee which he chairs would be able to assist.

Cllr. Denton-White asked about the future of Condor Services in Weymouth. Cllr. Nowak replied that the Borough was still in discussions with Condor, but was looking at the possibility of using other ferry providers. It was intent on maintaining services to Jersey and Guernsey and to that end was financing £10m alterations to the harbour.

Cllr. Kimber spoke about his allocation of a £5,000 project budget for Tophill from the County. Invitations would be sent out shortly to relevant organisations who might benefit and he made a fresh public appeal for people to get in touch with him.

## **2659 – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY AND 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014**

### **a) Additional Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

The minutes were formally agreed and signed as a correct record. (For: 7 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 0 votes)

### **b) Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

Minute 2652 – Complaints Against Councillor Richard Denton-White

Cllr. Nowak said that he had not made the remark about a five-month suspension. It was agreed to delete his name from the record. With this amendment the minutes were formally agreed and signed as a correct record. (7-0-0)

## **2660 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING**

### **Additional Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

#### **a) Minute 2623 – Apologies for Absence**

Asked by Cllr. Denton-White, the Clerk confirmed that Cllr. Tonkinson-Dutherford had resigned from the Council due to ill health.

**b) Minute 2643(b) – Internal Auditor’s Report, 2013/14**

Responding to Cllr. Matthews, the Clerk reported that the Finance & Resources Committee had passed the report on to the Budget & Investment Sub-Committee for detailed consideration.

**c) Minute 2647 – Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Matthews reported that he had agreed with the Clerk for the staff to provide a small amount of paid overtime help in sending out consultation documents.

**2661 – TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr. Hughes said it was his intention to change the date and place of this year’s Ceremony of the Keys, the date because of delays in preparation caused around Mayor-Making, the place because Portland Castle now limited attendance to sixty people at any one time. So in 2014 it would be held at a previous venue, All Saints’ Church, on 28<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm.

He planned on holding other events through the year and would be taking charity buckets to the forthcoming Jurassic Rocks festival.

**2662 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR**

Cllr. Hughes referred to letters he had received from members of the public about issues of confidentiality and data protection. He had replied to them personally and the Clerk had responded officially on behalf of the Council, having been passed copies.

**2663 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**a) Payments for Authorisation**

Cllr. Nowak proposed and it was **RESOLVED** – that the Council disaffiliate from the Open Spaces Society. (4-2-1)

**RESOLVED** – that the remaining schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3124 – 3134) in the sum of £3,056.72 including VAT be authorised for payment. (7-0-0)

**b) 2014/15 Financial Report to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**RESOLVED** – that the report be accepted. (7-0-0)

**2664 – PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 28<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014**

Cllr. Bradley moved the tabled recommendations and it was **RESOLVED** – (i) that the Borough Council be requested to serve a Discontinuance Notice for the advertising hoarding in Victoria Square and (ii) that a similar Notice be requested in respect of the hoarding in Fortuneswell. (7-0-0)

**2665 – FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING, 2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2014**

**a) Terms of Reference**

It was proposed by Cllr. Denton-White and **RESOLVED** – that the Council adopt the following Terms of Reference for the Committee:-

**(I) Full Council** meeting six times a year plus Mayor Making, is the primary decision making body of the Town Council.

It will agree membership of all Committees.  
It can request Finance & Resources to consider in detail any proposal.  
It can task Finance & Resources to produce a report on any issue with recommendations to Full Council.

**(ii) Finance & Resources** will meet a minimum six times a year.

F&R should meet in the months that there are no Full Council meetings and any other times as required.

F&R will have up to seven members and two ex officio.

F&R has the power to approve bills for payment.

F&R will prepare a draft budget to present to Full Council.

F&R can be tasked by Full Council to consider any proposal and to report to Full Council its findings and make recommendations.

Full Council approval. (7-0-0)

**b) Sub-Committees**

It was also proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that Council adopt the following terms regarding sub-committees:-

**(iii) Sub-Committees** – There will be four Sub-Committees: Budget & Investment, Events & Tourism, Grants, Human Resources & IT, each to have at least one member of Finance & Resources.

These Sub-Committees are primarily advisory committees to focus on specific issues.

Sub-Committees will report directly to F&R.

Sub-Committees will be tasked by F&R.

Sub-Committees could undertake specific 'new ideas' but they should seek approval from F&R before work is commenced.

Sub-Committees may co-opt external specific 'expert' members subject to Full Council approval.

**(iv) HR & IT Sub-Committee**

Minimum of 3 members.

Functional sub-committee to consider all aspects of staff and IT.

Advisory capacity to assist staff with updating of website and social media.

Prepare and monitor 'self-appraisal' of all staff, and make recommendations to F&R of any staff training required etc. and report annually to F&R the outcome of the appraisals.

F&R may request the Committee to consider any aspect relating to Staff or IT issues.

**(v) Events Sub-Committee**

Minimum of 3 members

Main objectives:-

Monitor PTC events and make recommendations for improvement.

Consider new events as either income generating or enhancing the local community, reporting to F&R any recommendations.

**(vi) Grants Sub-Committee**

Minimum of 3 members

Main objectives:-

Review the process of annual grants and recommend any changes required to process.

Investigate potential grants that PTC might apply for, recommending action to F&R.

**(vii) Budget & Investment Sub-Committee**

Minimum of 3 members

Main objectives:-

Oversee options for any investment, recommending actions to F&R.

Look in detail at Budget proposal that F&R are considering.

Ensure that all accounting methods are updated and easily understood, advising F&R if changes are required. (7-0-0)

It was further proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that negotiations over Portland Fair with the Fair operators become the responsibility of the Finance & Resources Committee. (6-1-0)

**c) IT Needs**

It was proposed by Cllr. Denton-White and **RESOLVED** – that Council proceed with the purchase of a new computer, following the advice of Cllr. Matthews and the Clerk subject to the final approval of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

**2666 – STAFFING**

Cllr. Denton-White warned of the expense of employing consultants. Cllr. Matthews judged the Council to be at a crossroads regarding its future, needing to address the procedural issues raised in the internal auditor's report. Cllr. Nowak advised that the Council needed to understand what were the significant staffing issues and the need for the Council to operate efficiently.

Cllr. Wild suggested a third option for the choice of consultant in a staffing review, which was accepted. He prepared and it was **RESOLVED** – that the Council approve the appointment of a human resources consultant from a short list to carry out a staff review. (5-2-0)

It was agreed that the scope of the review would cover both present and perceived future needs. The HR & IT Group would continue to pursue the appointment process under the authority of the Committee.

**2667 – BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

There had been requests from the public that the recent decision be published officially and the Clerk was seeking guidance from Council on how to respond.

It was agreed that in this particular case no further action need be taken.

### **2668 – FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

a) It was proposed by Cllr. Reynolds and **RESOLVED** – that Cllr. Chadwick be appointed to the Committee. (7-0-0) (Membership now comprises Cllrs. Bradley, Chadwick, Matthews, Tim Munro, Ian Munro-Price, Nowak and Reynolds, Mayor and Deputy Mayor ex officio.)

b) It was proposed by Cllr. Denton-White and **RESOLVED** – that the appointment of a new Chair and, possibly Deputy Chair be referred back to the Finance & Resources Committee. (7-0-0)

### **2669 – ISLAND CARETAKER**

Cllr. Nowak said there was a problem over having sufficient money to fund a new Caretaker for the rest of the year. He therefore proposed and it was **RESOLVED** – that the issue be referred back to Finance & Resources for general consideration, but including the funding problem. (7-0-0)

Cllr. Denton-White suggested a debriefing session with the former Caretaker.

### **2669 – CHEYNE WEARES**

Cllr. Hughes referred briefly to an insurance claim currently being dealt with regarding the gate to the site. He also reported on a visit he had made, taking photographs of the damaged gate and noting the amount of rubbish dumped there. Cllr. Bradley and Wild both made suggestions of who might fill in the existing pot-holes. It was agreed that in the meantime the Council should pursue a counter-claim for damage caused to the gate.

### **2670 – CROSSING PATROL WARDENS**

The Clerk reported verbally on the situation, in particular referring to the lack of a warden at Osprey Quay. At Cllr. Nowak's suggestion it was agreed to return to the subject in September.

### **2671 – RECORDING MEETINGS**

It was noted that at present recordings were being made on Cllr. Chadwick's own recorder. In discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should be responsible for keeping the master copy of all meetings.

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that, as far as practical, all Council and Committee meetings now be recorded. (7-0-0)

### **2672 – FACEBOOK**

Cllr. Denton-White expressed concerns about the misuse of Facebook and the Council being brought into disrepute as a result.

Cllr. Hughes from the Chair explained that Cllr. Chadwick had set up a Council account to forestall anyone else from doing it. He also said that some councils at least have set up procedures on how it should be managed.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the Council request Cllr. Chadwick to continue as its Facebook administrator. It also asked him to provide

training for all the staff in the use of Facebook, with a view to the staff taking over responsibility and setting up suitable protocols. (6-1-0)

**2673 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS**

Cllr. Wild reported on the last DAPTC meeting he had attended. This had laid a heavy emphasis on dementia awareness in the County, with such facilities as “slow” check-outs in supermarkets for those affected by the illness.

Cllr. Hughes said he had received an invitation to attend meetings of the Wreck to Reef and Jurassica projects.

**2674 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the Town Council is due to take place on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in the Easton Methodist Church Hall starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm.

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