

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER 2016 IN PETER TRIM HALL, ST. GEORGE'S CENTRE

PRESENT: Councillors R. Nowak (Chairman), Mrs S. Cocking, C. Flack, C. Gover, Ms S. Lees, Mrs S. Reynolds, D. Thurston and R. Wild.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Rev. Chris Briggs (Mayor's Chaplain), Cllr. Paul Kimber (Dorset County Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Andy Matthews (Finance & Staffing Working Group and Neighbourhood Plan Working Group) and nine members of the public.

3247 – CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

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

3248 – PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain led the meeting in prayer.

3249 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Ms J. Atwell, J. Draper, A. Sergison and Mrs S. West.

3250 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs. Cocking and Wild both declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 12 – West Weares: Portland Community Partnership Agreement with Dorset Wildlife Trust.

3251 – OPEN FORUM

a) Police Question Time

No representative of the Police was present.

b) Public Half-Hour

Andy Matthews spoke concerning the minutes of the Town Council meeting of 17th August. He requested that minute 3230 reflect the request made from the floor that the principal authorities involved in the reorganisation are supportive of any request by the Town Council for modernisation funding in order to move the Council forward, also that in any submission made concerning reorganisation the Council consider formally lodging a copy of the staffing review report undertaken in 2014.

Carrie Dalby expressed concern that the Council's grant from the Big Lottery might affect other applications involving the Gardens.

From the chair Cllr. Nowak advised that the Council had requested a change in the terms of its grant to substitute public open spaces for specific references to the Gardens.

June Morley requested a change to minute 3234(b) for the second sentence to read, "She thought some of the article ...". She also asked for confirmation in writing of the change to the Lottery bid.

Regarding Agenda Item 17 Richard Denton-White supported the division of roles between Chairman and Mayor.

Roger Luther asked why the lights to the toilets in Easton Gardens were still switched on late in the evening. The Chairman said the responsibility lay with the Borough and he would raise the matter there.

Rachel Barton said she had heard a recording of the August meeting and was concerned about remarks that had been made then about her. She wanted to place the following facts before the Council:-

- 1) The Town Council approached Barton Consultancy to research funding options. The areas chosen for the bid were based on previous consultations, including one by the Borough Parks Department. More events in the gardens had been among the suggestions received.
- 2) The use of professionals by local authorities to source funding is not uncommon and she had been employed in such a role on numerous occasions.
- 3) It was not helpful that people were allowed to question her probity and motives in a public forum.

c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Cllr. Kimber publicised a coffee morning at the Library. He is hoping a Friends of the Library Group can be formed as a means to providing more facilities there for young people. The community bus scheme is now developing into a success and he had received a recent complaint that the bus was too full!

His main emphasis was on grass-cutting. He had complained to Dorset Highways that the amount of cutting on the Island this year was "completely unacceptable." The manager responsible was willing to provide details of the current schedule and provide extra cuts if other organisations were willing to pay. He suggested the Town Council invite the Highways officer to speak at a meeting. There followed a prolonged discussion of the issues involved.

3252 – MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING, 17TH AUGUST 2016

Council agreed to amend minute 3234(b), second sentence to begin, "She thought some of the article ...". With this change the minutes were formally agreed and signed as a correct record.

3253 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a) Minute 3216(c) (Meeting, 13th July 2016) – Internet Banking

Cllr. Cocking said that Lloyds would make a charge for the service. The Clerk differed. The Chairman requested this be resolved subsequently outside the meeting.

b) Minute 3236(b) – Jubilee Pillars Site

Cllr. Thurston asked if the grass would be cut there prior to this year's Fair.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that the Council write to the Land Trust again, expressing its concern about the situation and willingness to discuss it.

c) Minute 3236(c) – Mayors’ Plaques, Existing and Future

Cllr. Reynolds asked the whereabouts of the Council’s stone plaque. Cllr. Nowak confirmed it was still in the keeping of Albion Stone.

d) Minute 3240 – Council Offices: Auctions

Cllr. Thurston asked whether the final payment had been received. Cllr. Nowak said there was still a sum of £430 outstanding.

It was proposed by Cllr. Nowak and **RESOLVED** – that letters be sent requesting payment within fourteen days.

3254 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN

There were none.

3255 – TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the absence of the Mayor, who was expected to arrive later, the Chairman postponed the item till further in the meeting, but the Mayor did not subsequently attend.

3256 – REPORT FROM FINANCE & STAFFING WORKING GROUP (not itemised on the agenda)

The Chairman of the Group, Cllr. Cocking said that at future meetings the Group’s recommendations from its last meeting would be included on the agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cocking and **RESOLVED** – that responsibility for ongoing facilities work at the Offices should be delegated to the Finance & Staffing Working Group, which would then bring its recommendations to Council.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cocking and **RESOLVED** – that the £50,000 compensation sum received from the Borough be invested with Lloyds Bank in a six-month fixed interest account.

Other issues discussed by the Group were mentioned by Cllr. Cocking. There would be a slight delay in letting the flat. A fire risk assessment had identified some actions that needed to be taken to comply with fire regulations. The Group had suggested that the staff clean the Offices to save costs. It would bring a risk assessment on West Weares to the Town Council meeting in October as well as recommendations regarding security, damp and heating. **RESOLVED** – that the report be received.

3257 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

RESOLVED – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3532, 3568 – 3592) in the sum of £7,389.87 including VAT be authorised for payment.

b) 2016/17 Financial Report to 31st August 2016

RESOLVED – that the report be accepted.

3258 – BIG LOTTERY GRANT

Cllr. Nowak explained that he had discussed the matter of altering the application wording with the Lottery people over the phone and they were happy to accept the change without any future detriment to the Council. He therefore felt there was no need to take his motion any further and no one dissented.

3259 – WEST WEARES: PORTLAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH DORSET WILDLIFE TRUST

RESOLVED – that the Council hold an exploratory meeting with Dorset Wildlife Trust and Portland Community Partnership to discuss the extent and financing of grass cutting at West Weares.

3260 – PROPOSED DORSET AND EAST DEVON NATIONAL PARK

RESOLVED – that the Council write to Natural England, copies to the County, Borough and Richard Drax, supporting the creation of a National Park locally as a good deal for Dorset and requesting Portland's inclusion.

3261 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IN DORSET

The Chairman advised members that a public consultation was being held on the Island on 5th October. The Clerk was asked to arrange a separate meeting to take place after for Councillors to produce a corporate response to the consultation.

3262 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

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 15 – Fire Safety Risk Assessment by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

3263 – WASTE CARRIER REGISTRATION

RESOLVED – that registration not be renewed.

3264 – COUNCIL CHAIRMAN AND TOWN MAYOR

It was proposed by Cllr. Gover and **RESOLVED** – that the Council continues its present arrangement of separate Chairman and Town Mayor and seeks further advice on the subject.

3265 – DAPTC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 2016

RESOLVED – that a motion be submitted to the meeting from the Council that the Local Government Act 1972 be amended to allow town councils to have a separate Chairman and Town Mayor if they so wish.

3266 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS

There were none.

3267 – FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

It was reported that two quotations had been received for the installation of fire alarms and emergency lighting. Cllr. Cocking proposed and it was **RESOLVED** – that the quotation from Turrells at £2,832.00 plus VAT be accepted.

It was also agreed that the Finance & Staffing Working Group would continue to deal with the remaining issues.

3268 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Town Council is due to take place on Wednesday, 19th October 2016, at Easton Methodist Church Hall, Easton starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm.

Signed Dated.....
(Chair)