

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER 2014 AT EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs S. Bradley (Chair), G. Chadwick, R. Hughes, A. Matthews, T. Munro, R. Nowak, and R. Wild.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk) and Cllr. Ms S. Lees, together with three members of the public.

39 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. I. Munro-Price and Mrs S. Reynolds, together with Cllrs. R. Denton-White and Kate Wheller (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and Dorset County Council).

40 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Munro declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 – Budget & Investment Sub-Committee Meeting, 8th October 2014 as a Council taxpayer. This was taken by the Chair as applicable to all the other members present.

41 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

Cllr. Munro criticised the agenda for not including a public half-hour item. The Clerk said he had followed normal procedure in compiling the agenda.

42 – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 20TH AUGUST AND 9TH SEPTEMBER 2014 (ADDITIONAL)

a) Meeting, 20th August 2014

The words “Deputy Mayor” in Minute 21 were amended to read “Deputy Chair.” With this amendment the minutes of the meeting were formally agreed and signed as an accurate record. (For: 7 vote, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 0 votes)

b) Additional Meeting, 9th September 2014

The minutes of the meeting were formally agreed and signed as an accurate record. (7-0-0)

43 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Meeting, 20th August 2014

i) Minute 25(b) – 2014/15 Financial Report to 31st July 2014

The Clerk explained that the Borough’s change to paying the Council’s precept in two instalments was to follow the same procedure observed by West Dorset District in funding its parishes. He had also been told by the Borough that the Town would be unlikely to receive all of its Discount Grant allocation in the coming financial year.

ii) Minute 26 – Council Communications

Cllr Chadwick reported that he had set up a Facebook account for the Council. He had given the Clerk and Assistant Clerk training in operating it, but more was needed.

iii) Minute 29 – West Weares

The Clerk reported that that the Environment Agency had not yet been consulted about grass-cutting. Cllr. Wild said he had asked Launchkeen the cost of their own grass-cutting. However meanwhile the work had actually been carried out for a charge of £200. Should the Council pay?

Cllr Nowak thought the bill should be paid as a matter of good will, but it needed to be made clear that an instruction was necessary first.

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the bill for grass-cutting be paid. (5-0-2)

It was left as outstanding that the Clerk contact the Environment Agency about grass-cutting on the site.

iv) Minute 30 – Council Budget and Precept, 2015/16

Cllr Nowak emphasised that the paper trail in compiling the budget needs to be clear to all members.

b) Additional Meeting, 9th September 2014

i) Minute 35 – Civic Carol Service

Cllr. Hughes said the service would probably now take place on 19th December.

ii) Bonfire Night and Fireworks Event

Cllr. Munro noted that the event had subsequently cancelled, which should have been recorded in the Minute Update.

44 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

In reviewing the payments Cllr. Hughes asked the Clerk if he could look at providing direct debit payments to BT.

Cllr. Wild raised the issue of West Dorset parishes paying for their elections in arrears at the end of the financial year. Cllr. Nowak agreed to discuss the possibility with the Borough.

RESOLVED – that a donation of £50.00 be made to Portland Parish PCC for supplying refreshments at the Ceremony of the Keys. (7-0-0)

RESOLVED – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3167 - 3186) in the sum of £10,966.25 including VAT be approved. (7-0-0)

b) 2014/15 Financial Report to 30th September 2014

The Clerk also offered a verbal explanation of the changes that had occurred.

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

45 – 2014/15 BUDGET

Cllr. Munro said there needed to be more accuracy in compiling the budget and / or greater stringency in managing the budget and spending money. Cllr. Matthews suggested adding an extra column for a revised budget.

It was agreed that Cllr. Matthews and the Clerk would review and revise the budget figures as necessary for the next meeting of the Town Council.

46 – BUDGET & INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING, 8TH OCTOBER 2014

Cllr. Matthews reported on the deliberations at the meeting in forming a core budget for next year, which he amplified with a working paper.

Further information was sought on the following:-

- Photocopying – HR / IT Sub-Committee to review
- Subscriptions – Clerk to report
- Training – Clerk to report

The Clerk pointed out that the progress of the budget was falling behind the agreed timetable.

Cllr. Nowak wanted the budget item brought to the attention of Council, so that the core budget aspect could be brought into the public arena. Councillors needed to know what additional items to suggest.

The public consultation was discussed. It was agreed that a working group should decide on a format for consultation and bring its recommendation to Finance & Resources. The membership of the working group was agreed as Cllrs. Chadwick, Hughes, Lees and Matthews and that it should meet within seven days.

It was further agreed that the core budget be determined by the end of November and an additional meeting of Finance & Resources be held about that time.

47 – EVENTS & TOURISM SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING, 1ST OCTOBER 2014

Next business was moved and agreed.

48 – CHEYNE WEARES

Members considered the Clerk's report. It was proposed by Cllr. Munro and **RESOLVED** – that regular monthly inspections of the site are carried out at the start of the month and that Cllr Matthews carry them out. (7-0-0)

49 – TOURISM PUBLICITY

Cllr. Munro said that as the Island was part of the Borough's responsibility the Town should not have to contribute to the proposed new tourist literature. This was agreed.

50 – RECORDING EQUIPMENT

Cllr Chadwick estimated that the cost of buying good equipment was likely to be in the region of £150. He undertook to provide a report for the next meeting of the Council.

(Cllr. Matthews left the meeting at 9.55 pm.)

51 – DELEGATION OF BUSINESS

It was suggested that the cheques for Council grant awards might be presented at the next Mayor-Making. There was also a query whether interviews were necessary for the grant applicants.

Cllr Nowak proposed that the Grants Sub-Committee consider these ideas at a meeting in mid-November, when it would also review the present grant documents and procedures.

52 – TOWN COUNCILS INVESTMENT GROUP

The Clerk gave a verbal report on the group. The Committee thought more information was required, but endorsed his action in involving the Council in the group.

53 – SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL, OSPREY QUAY

The Clerk presented the report of the County Road Safety Officer on school and other traffic at Osprey Quay. The Committee had no comment to make on the report, but asked the Clerk to make the report available on the Council's website.

54 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 17th December 2014, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)