

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE PORTLAND COMMUNITY VENUE ON WEDNESDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2018 at 10.30 AM

PRESENT: Councillors Susan Cocking (Chairman), Jim Draper, Charlie Flack, Ray Nowak¹, and Rob Hughes

IN ATTENDANCE: Two members of the public

284. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Atwell

285. Declarations of Interests

None were declared

286. Minutes of the Finance Meeting Held on 28th November 2018

These were agreed as a true record of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

287. Minute Update and Matters Arising

a. An email has been received from the planning department to confirm that they have received the request for advice as to whether planning permission to erect a sign for the Portland Community Venue has been received.

b. Additional keys for the building are currently being procured and will be available mid-week.

c. The Community Hall kitchen is nearing completion and will be finished by the end of the week.

d. Item 281 – Events budgeting. It had been hoped that the meeting would be able to review historic costs relating to previous events. Regrettably, other priorities, primarily LGR, has taken precedence and this action is deferred until the January meeting; at which point the figures from the Sparkle should be available.

288. Public Participation

Mr Vincent commented that he would like to see greater distribution of the meeting notices. The Chairman acknowledged that not everyone on Portland has access to the internet and with the recent move, notices in the window of the Council Offices did not achieve the same level of visibility. It was agreed that in future the notices would continue to be published in the Free Portland News, but in addition the Town Clerk would seek to have them displayed in the public Library and Tesco's who have a public notice board.

The Town Clerk to approach the Library and Tesco's and see if it would be possible to display Council notices on their public notice board.

¹ For personal reasons Councillor Nowak left the room shortly after the meeting started.

289. Portland Community Venue matters for approval or authorisation

a) The Chairman provided an update stating that the Community Hall kitchen would be complete by the end of the week.

b) Whilst there had been a few teething problems with the heating these had now been sorted. The Chairman noted that all of the Contractors had been more than helpful and had provided an excellent service when required to attend for a fault.

c) The Chairman confirmed that income for the PCV continued to be generated with the Youth Drop In centre settling in to their new permanent site and with the Lighthouse Church regular hirers on a Sunday morning. All Sorts nursery have moved much of their equipment in and would start in force in January 2019.

290. Payments for Approval

Payments for approval were presented totalling £34,225.55 as detailed below;

Comms UK	DD	3.48
BNP Paribus (Copier)	DD	367.63
Damers Blinds Ltd	BACS	1,616.00
Hump 'An' Dump (Dorset)	BACS	195.00
mh-p internet ltd	BACS	108.00
Karon McFarlane	BACS	33.06
PA Weston (NP Support)	BACS	2,362.50
DCC (Salt)	BACS	72.00
C&N Electrical	BACS	165.60
VOIP Unlimited	DD	152.83
Royal Mail	Chq	490.00
Redlynch	BACS	10,086.00
Staff Salaries	BACS	3,709.30
HRMC	BACS	1,345.60
DCC (Pensions)	BACS	1,520.26
Star Building Services	BACS	4,598.80
Star Building Services	BACS	4,229.45
Isle of Portland Heritage Trust	Chq	500.00
Royal Manor Theatre Co.	Chq	400.00
Grove Prison Museum	Chq	200.00
Portland Museum Trust	Chq	325.00
Portland YMCA	Chq	485.00
Zen Internet	BACS	50.40
Star Building Services	BACS	535.20
C&N Electrical	BACS	650.44
GEA Smith (keys)	BACS	24.00

The following was noted:

- i. The Clerk pointed out that the payment for £33.06 was being claimed back after buying supplies for the cleaner and postage (the forms to the Post Office for re-direction of mail were sent registered post).
- ii. Two invoices were raised by Star Building Services, one for work carried out under the Leader Grant and one for additional work.

- iii. The payment to Redlynch was for the rubberisation of the play-ground.

291. Mr Vincent raised a question regarding the cheque payments for the Grants to be awarded. He asked whether the recipients had been required to provide invoices to support the request prior to the Grants being awarded. The Chairman stated that it was a requirement under para 7 of the rules of the Council Grant Scheme, that either an invoice had been raised or 'upon production of other equivalent evidence to the satisfaction of the Town Clerk. The Chairman further confirmed that all of applicants were from local reputable charities. The Town Clerk commented that all of the applicants had provided a copy of their financial accounts and that a review of these accounts had been undertaken to ensure that it was appropriate to award the cheques. In addition, each recipient was required to notify Portland Town Council once the projects had been completed so that a review of the project could be undertaken.

292. Assistant Town Clerk Vacancy

The Town Clerk explained that the Assistant Town Clerk had tendered her resignation and would be leaving at the end of December 2018. Following careful consideration, she believed that, given the challenges that were being faced due to LGR it would be more beneficial at this point to employ (on a temporary basis) a Finance Officer. She felt that once LGR had been implemented then it could be determined what resource/functions would better suit the Councils requirement going forward. Recognising that funding was an issue it was intended to ensure that the employment of a Finance Officer should be cost neutral, which although this meant that the offer of contract would only be for 13 hours a week rather than the 15 hours currently undertaken by the Assistant Town Clerk, this would be sufficient to undertake the role required. She proposed that an interim contract be offered to Wayne Lewin (who had previously been the Interim Town Clerk) as he had current experience and knowledge of Portland and LGR.

Approval was given for the Town Clerk to proceed with offering a six-month temporary contract to Mr Wayne Lewin to undertake the duties of the Finance Officer.

293. Precept Discussion

The Town Clerk stated that the figures shown on the current precept document had not changed since the previous finance meeting and that she was not proposing any further changes at this point; but stated that, it was not to say that the figures would not change and admitted that there was still a little uncertainty about the global figure shown, adding that this figure could not be fixed until such time that meetings with the Dorset County Financial director had been held. She stated that the total figures quoted were understood but what was missing was an understanding of how those figures had been arrived at. Once this information had been provided then it would be possible to determine whether the global figure would be sufficient to cover the delivery of those services required post 1st April 2019 or whether an uplift in the global figure would need to be sought. In addition, meetings were being held with members of W&PBC and DCC responsible for Green Spaces to understand what equipment and manpower would be transferred and the best option for PTC to deliver the services. Further meetings with the Property Services representative were also scheduled.

294. The Committee's next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday January 9th, 2019 at the Council Offices, Portland Community Venue, Fortuneswell starting at 10.30 am.

The meeting closed at 10.50 am hours.

Signed Dated
(Chairman)