

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

MARINE, ENVIRONMENTAL & TOURISM PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD AT THE PORTLAND COMMUNITY VENUE ON WEDNESDAY 6TH MARCH 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Rob Hughes (Vice Chairman), Nowak, Draper and Wild; Mr Andy Matthews (Neighbourhood Plan Working Group)

IN ATTENDANCE: 5 members of the public.

1263 – CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Cllr. Hughes explained that in the absence of Cllr. Lees (the Chairman) he would Chair this evenings meeting.

1264 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from; Cllr. Lees, Cllr. Flack, Cllr. Atwell, Mr. Mike Deadman, Ms. Ruth Carpenter and Mr. Peter Allam.

1265 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

1266 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH DECEMBER 2018

The minutes were formally agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the vice Chairman.

1267 – MATTERS ARISING

Item 1248 – Portland Underground Hospital. No further news had been received about this to date.

Item 1250 – Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – Mr. Matthews wished to make it clear that even though the NP had been passed to the Planning Authority there would still be an opportunity for the public to make comments.

Item 1252 – Installation of a Defibrillator at the Council Offices – Cllr. Hughes informed the meeting that he had attended a Council meeting at Weymouth when the Chairman had suffered a heart attack and luckily there had been an auto defibrillator on site.

Cllr. Wild noted that no events diary had been included for discussion on the agenda and stated that there were two events that should be noted;

- a. The Portland Community Venue Open Day – to take place on 30th March 2019, and
- b. 1st April 2019 – Lighting of the Beacon to commemorate the demarcation of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council to become Weymouth Town Council and Portland Town Council.

1268 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a. Cllr. Kimber advised the meeting that he had, for a number of years, been the Chair of the Weymouth Port Health Committee. Due to the re-organisation of the Councils this committee was being wound up. He believed that there remained the need for

Portland Town Council (PTC) to be kept informed of issues which had previously been dealt with under the Port Health Committee, and he had put this in place. He further explained that under normal circumstances there would be nothing to be done but on occasion it may be necessary to act. He cited an instance where fishermen had been stopped from landing a catch as they were infected, and it was this type of extraordinary situation that PTC needed to be kept informed about. In addition, he believed that it would be prudent to ensure that a member of PTC be appointed as liaison for this advisory committee and available in the event that there was a requirement to provide a member to support any future Port Health Officers/Committee.

- b. Geoff Peters – Manager of Coast Watch. Told the meeting that he had been informed that there were a number of sink holes and a black substance around the cliffs. Mr. Peters advised that they had sent a drone up but had not been able to find any of the sink holes or substance that had been reported. Mr. Peters felt that it was not appropriate to simply dismiss the issues but felt that there was little more that could be done at Coast Watch. He stated that he had invited her to the look out (twice) to try and allay her fears but was now seeking advice and support from other organisations to understand what could be done to resolve the issue. Jane White stated that a member of the Court Leet was a geologist and had undertaken an investigation and had reported that there was nothing to be concerned about. She felt that it was a feature of Google Earth (shadowing) that might lead to a misinterpretation of the information being presented and that the general consensus was that the lady should be thanked for her concern, but that no further action should be taken. She further added that she was not aware of how often the coastline was monitored on official basis, but certainly on an unofficial basis it was very regularly monitored. Whilst it was agreed that no further action was required to investigate the issue, if further advice or support was required then the Ranger at DCC, a Mr. Bran Akers would be good point of contact.

1269. PORTLAND HOSPITAL

The Chairman informed the meeting that it had been the intention to have an update from Helen Persey (Dorset Health Care) on the situation regarding Portland Hospital. Unfortunately, because of the up coming elections and purdah Ms. Persey had been advised that it would not be appropriate for her to attend the meeting in person. She did, however, send an email and this was read out by the Chairman. A copy of this is attached at Annex A. It was agreed that Ms. Persey be invited to attend a meeting at a later date.

A discussion ensued regarding the enormous amount of support on the Island for the return of beds at the hospital and the emotional effects on Islanders of having to travel to receive medical support that required a stay in hospital. Ms Lewis pointed out that the email elicited a response and that this was a good opportunity to do just that. It was agreed that a response should be sent, and an action was put on the Clerk to generate an email to Ms. Persey to this effect.

Action on the Clerk to respond to Ms. Persey's email (see Annex A to these minutes)

1270. Neighbourhood Plan

Mr. Matthews informed the meeting that the plan had been approved by the Council to go forward to the local planning authority and that the action was with ACOM to complete the Habitat Regulation Plan. He was hopeful that the plan could be submitted to the local planning authority prior to the local government reorganisation as there was some concern that to delay would mean it getting lost in the process. He further advised that he was

currently working with the Authority to update the maps as there was a growing emphasis on green infrastructure. Following the completion of the Habitat Regulation Plan it would need to be submitted to Natural England but he remained hopeful that as they had previously submitted comments on an earlier draft there would be little to hold it up. Following this the Plan would go into a Regulation 16 consultation which would afford the public a further opportunity to comment.

1271 – Public Rights of Way

Mr. Matthews introduced the Port Compliance Officer from Portland Port, he went on to explain that there was still a desire to open what is referred to as the ‘missing link’ in part of the coast path recognizing that there were issues with erecting a fence that would provide security to Portland Port and the estimated cost of £180K, but explained that the economic cost would be more than offset by the extra tourism generated. The Portland Port Compliance Officer stated that it was the Company’s attitude was that, in principle they were supportive of the aspiration they felt that there needed to be a good deal more discussion on how it could be achieved before they were able to commit to the project. Whilst security was the main issue there were also concerns over retained liability as the landowner. The Chairman asked how this project could now be taken forward, and was told that the Port needed to have discussions with whomever was driving the Project, and proposed that the next step would be to undertake a feasibility study to a) understand where the route would go and b) the level of security required to satisfy Portland Port. Mr. Matthews felt that an initial step would be to secure funding to undertake the feasibility study. It was suggested that Portland Port could consider opening the route up for one day of the year to allow a few members of the public through, this request was not discounted and informed the meeting that it was being considered for historical purposes. Cllr Draper suggested that there was an amount of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money available and that this might be a Project that would benefit from this money. He suggested that the Council be approached, together with other organisations to donate money to this Project.

A vote was taken to submit, to Full Council, a requirement to support a feasibility study and a commitment to allocate some of the CIL money to this Project. A unanimous vote in support of this action was returned.

1272 - Portland Resilience Plan

A review of the Portland Resilience Plan was undertaken, the Chairman noted that several changes had been made. Cllr Wild suggested that in addition to the information contained that it should also include an emergency contact number for the Council. He reiterated that this was intended to be for the use of residents in the event that services provided by the Council needed urgent rectification. There was a debate regarding an emergency number for the Portland Community Venue. The Clerk advised that there was a plan to buy a mobile phone and for each Councillor to hold the duty mobile phone for one month of the year; in essence to be the emergency point of contact. When available the phone number for the emergency phone number is to be advertised outside of the PCV and recorded in the Resilience Plan. With regard to the resilience plan it was proposed that a copy be added to PTC website, as a working document, and that the document be formally distributed once the new Mayor is in office.

A vote was taken, and unanimously agreed that the revised resilience plan be accepted and that the plan to be distributed as per the distribution list once the new Mayor had taken office.

1273 - Future Direction of the Partnership

A discussion was held on how up to date the current distribution list was with amendments being made to update the contact details where known.

1274 – Standard Agenda Items

- a. Disused Quarries – Andy Matthews advised that when he was doing the mapping he noticed that Jordan’s Mine and Inmothsay had been noted as aspirational areas for the quarry and nature park.
- b. Litter and Fly Tipped Material – In conjunction with fly tipping, Cllr. Draper asked whether there were any groups that were taking part in the Great British Spring Clean? He recognised that PTC had not felt able to take part but were willing to support any other groups that were. The Chairman stated that he had not heard of any groups taking part but advised that he was likely to be involved in a beach clean.
- c. Run Down Areas – The Chairman noted that the run-down house in High Street had been sold and that it was to be transferred to the Land Trust. Andy Matthews stated that whilst the final paperwork was still to be finalised he remained confident that the sale would be completed. Cllr Draper mentioned the Victoria Lodge which continued to deteriorate and the Jolly Sailor in Castletown which was a listed building was still for sale. It was agreed that it would be prudent to start lobbying new Councillors from day one on action on run-down buildings.
- d. Open Spaces, Hedgerows, Footpaths and Dry-Stone Walls – The Chairman thanked Jane White (Crown Estates) for the splendid job that had been undertaken in repairing the dry-stone walls on the road out to Portland Bill.

The Chairman asked what was happening regarding a strategy for removing caterpillars. Cllr. Wild explained that the strategy was for nothing to be done until the Autumn when the nests should be cut out by hand and burnt.

- e. Cycle Paths – No issues were raised.

Ms Lewis asked whether there was any further information available on the underground hospital? Andy Matthews stated that there was a website update and that he had spoken to Ashley Smith but that he was not aware of any current news. The Chairman stated that the Council had long held the view that they would like to see it become a museum and still supported that view.

1275 – Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Marine, Environmental and Tourism Partnership will be held on 5th June 2019 starting at 7:00pm at the Portland Community Venue.

Note: The meeting due to be held on 5th June 2019 was re-scheduled for 3rd July 2019; the venue and time remain unchanged.

Signed..... Date.....

(Chairman)