

Public Consultation Statement and Questions – Portland Town Council – 20 August 2018

Local Government is changing next April – Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC) and Dorset County Council (DCC) will come to an end and be replaced by the new Dorset Council (DC) who will provide all **statutory services**, such as Social Care, Children's Service, Education and Highways.

Currently WPBC provides Portland with **non-essential services** such as maintaining Easton and Victoria Gardens, children's play areas like The Grove and Sweethill, public toilets, free car parking such as Hambro, New Ground, Easton, and Fortuneswell, and allotments and graveyards. However, the new Dorset Council have no commitment to provide non-essential services such as these in the future.

Also, Dorset Council want to charge everyone in their new area the same Council Tax (which is bad news for people from West and North Dorset, because they will have to catch up with the Council tax level in WPBC). So when considering the harmonisation of Council Tax, the **Shadow Dorset Council has agreed that both Portland and Weymouth are special cases**. That an amount has to be identified for Town services paid within the current council tax.

So that PTC can bid to provide these local non-essential services, WPBC have indicated the current costs. If a bid is successful then that amount of Council tax will be transferred to the Precept and **the amount you pay will initially stay the same (see 4 below) as the money will be transferred to the Town Council to provide these non-essential services**.

This is an opportunity for Portland to decide to manage local assets and decide locally about keeping free car parks, managing gardens and keeping public toilets open. The alternative is that Dorset Council might decide that either they will not provide these or that they may increase charges for things like car parks and toilets.

So PTC is beginning the conversation by having a **Public Meeting** to get people's views about how these local services should be managed in future.

These views will be fed into further discussions to help PTC to decide if it wishes to bid for any of these local services or not. Then an outline budget will have to be made available in September and discussed in public and finally voted on in January.

To help us with this, can you please answer the questions which arise as this stage:

1	Do you think that PTC should bid for local delivery of non-essential services if it will not increase the Precept or Council Tax?	YES / NO
2	If Yes, do you think PTC should bid for ALL local services – allotments, car-parking, gardens, graveyards, public toilets, play areas	YES / NO / ONLY SOME
3	If only some, which ones do you think should be managed locally?	
4	PTC have received the outline figures for providing these services now, but there might be higher costs because we will operate on a smaller scale and may need to buy new equipment, for example a grass cutting machine. Would you be agreeable to an additional £5 a year increase on the Precept to cover these costs?	YES / NO
5	Some Town Councils make an allowance to Councillors of about £500 to £1,000 per year. Currently PTC Councillors receive NO payments. Would you support, from next year's elections, Councillors receiving an allowance to offset printing and other costs?	YES / NO
6	If Yes to 5 above – how much per year?	£
7	Town Councils will not run services in competition with Dorset Council. Above are examples of some of the services that could be considered for provision by PTC. Are there any other services which you would like PTC to manage?	YES / NO
8	If Yes to 7 above – please say what they are	
9	Portland Museum is currently owned by WPBC but self-managed and financed for day to day costs and repairs by The Portland Museum Trust. However, WPBC pay for the property rates, about £5,000 per year . Who do you think the Museum should be owned by ?	DC / PTC / Museum Trust
10	This is an opportunity for the people of Portland to decide if its best to devolve local services so these are retained . Who should decide about future local services , Portland people or Dorset Council ?	Local People/ Dorset Council

Name Mr / Mrs/ Ms Post Code

Please return this form to PTC 52 Easton Street , Portland , DT5 1BT

Or email ; office@portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk