PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT 7PM ON WEDNESDAY 11th MARCH 2020
AT PORTLAND COMMUNITY VENUE

PRESENT:
Councillors: Cllr Cocking (Acting Chair), J Draper, C Parkes, C Atkins, R Hughes, G Lewis, P Roper, P Kimber, S West, D Thurston and L Saunders

IN ATTENDANCE: 6 members of the public

4043. Chair's Welcome
The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and advised that there was no planned fire alarm testing and indicated to those present the various fire exits.

4044. Prayers
The Mayor's Chaplain Mrs Paula Brown sent her apologies, in her absence the Chair led the meeting in a moment of reflection and prayer.

4045. Presentation by Jo Morland – Hedgehog Friendly Portland
Jo Morland provided a presentation on the Hedgehogs of Portland advising that there was a steep decline in the hedgehog population. She added that her presentation would be focused on raising awareness of hedgehogs and how they could be helped. She was pleased that having given the same presentation to the pupils at St Georges school the children had chosen this as their charity of the year. She warned of the dangers of using slug pellets and netting and of leaving litter.

Post meeting note: Jo has asked that, as she currently has use of a thermal camera, before the area around the PCV is cleared that she be allowed to scan the area to ensure that there are no hibernating hedgehogs within the vegetation.

4046. Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Flack, B Parkes and S Harpley.

4047. Declarations of Interest
Cllr Hughes declared a non–pecuniary interest in item 16 – Community Garden at the PCV. Cllr West declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 13 – The b-side request to use Church Ope viewing area.

4048. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting Held on
The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

4049. Minute Update and Matters Arising

No matters arising

4050. Democratic Public Half Hour Open Forum

a. Ms Lee, in support of Item 16 – Community Garden at the PCV, wished to elaborate on the positive aspects of having a garden and in particular, a community garden.

b. Mr Vincent asked whether it was the Councils intention that Councillors would be remaining in their current brief holder positions? The Chair responded that all positions would be reviewed in May and changed where appropriate.

4051. Chair's Update

The Chair reported that:

a. She had received a statement from Portland Port re the Corona Virus which she read out, see Annex A to these minutes. She added that any questions should be directed to either herself or the Clerk. She reiterated that PTC were not acting on behalf of Portland Port but were merely seeking to be able to provide information in support of questions asked.

b. Following an issue of anti-social at Woolacombe Road, she advised that Aster Housing had been made aware and this was now being dealt with by the Company's antisocial behaviour team.

c. As Cllr Flack was currently unwell, Cllr Draper would produce the article for April's Free Portland News. Cllr Draper requested that anything for inclusion be with him by close of play Monday 16th March 2020.

4052. Town Mayor's Announcements

a. The Mayor advised that she would provide updates at Item 23 – Portland Youth Council and Item 24 – Isle of Portland Tours.

4053. Receive written reports from and County Councillors

The Chair advised that one report from County Councillors had been received and had been circulated with the Agenda. Cllr Kimber expanded on the report stating that he had attended an interesting workshop relating to the application of health in all decisions.

It was resolved to accept this report without further discussion.

4054. Financial Matters

Payments for Authorisation - Only one item was submitted for approval and payment; £600 on deposit for legal fees to draw up the lease for Haylands. A vote was taken to approve this payment with a unanimous vote being returned.

Authorisation of the payments was unanimously approved.

4055. B-Side request to use Church Ope Viewing Area

Consideration was given to the request submitted by b-side to use the viewing area at the top of Church Ope Cove in support of their b-side festival to be held in September 2020. Following discussion which centred around the requirement to tidy up the area before the summer, it was resolved that the request be supported. A unanimous vote was returned in support of this request.

Resolved that b-side be allowed use of the viewing area at the top of Church Ope Cove during the b-side festival in September.

4056. A&E Local

In expanding the motion issued as Annexes D & E to the Agenda, Cllr Lewis explained that the Independent Review Panel had recommended the consideration of an A+E Local (open 16 hrs a day and closed overnight) to be sited at Poole; believing this would alleviate risk caused by people in parts of Dorset having to travel further for A+E at Bournemouth through heavily congested traffic. Importantly for Portland and West Dorset, this would, without doubt, ensure less future pressure on Dorchester A+E, which is already operating at twice the capacity it was planned for.
A unanimous vote was returned in support of this motion.

Resolved that three letters be sent to Dorset CCG, Dorset Council and the CMA.

4057. Friendship Visit with Holzwickede

Further to Annex F to the Agenda, the Chair explained that, following the agreement at the January Full Council Meeting that Twinning with Holzwickede be pursued, a request had been received from Holzwickede that a Friendship document be signed by both towns on 28th April 2020 when four visiting dignitaries would be visiting Portland. Questions were raised regarding visibility of the Friendship document prior to signature and whether or not the date proposed was fixed. It was felt that given the numbers of people that would need to be invited there was little time to make the necessary arrangements. It was agreed that the Chair would discuss the issues with the Assistant Town Clerk (who was the officer co-ordinating the project) prior to progressing. However, it was agreed in principal by a majority vote, that Twinning with Holzwickede and signature of a Friendship document should be pursued.

Resolved that signature of a Friendship document should be pursued with Holzwickede and that the Chair should discuss this progression with the Assistant Town Clerk.

4058. Community Garden at Portland Community Venue

Cllr Hughes explained that he had been approached by the Pay Back team who were currently looking for more work on Portland – see Annex G to the Agenda. He was, he said seeking approval for the pay back team to be allowed to clear an area within the PCV. He felt that clearing this area would allow for a Community Garden to be developed. Cllr Kimber reported that he had received an email from a resident of Highstreet objecting to the community garden in this area having concerns of increased activity and possible vandalism.

Whilst Cllr Draper considered that in principal the idea should be supported, he proposed that the motion should be deferred and passed to the green spaces working group who already had plans for this area. Cllr Thurston added that the nursery should be approached, and that the resident should be consulted before proceeding. Cllr Lewis further proposed that this motion be amended and referred back to the Brief Holders responsible for these areas; that is Cllr Thurston as Brief Holder for the PCV and Cllr Roper as Brief Holder for Green Spaces. A vote was taken on the amended motion, with a majority response being returned.

Resolved that this motion (as amended) be referred to the Brief Holders responsible; Cllr Thurston for the PCV and Cllr Roper for Green Spaces.

4059. Return to Annual Appointment for Office of Chair

A motion was presented (see Annex H to the Agenda) that proposed that the current arrangement whereby the Chair of the Council is elected for a two-year period be rescinded and a return to an annual appointment be adopted.

Cllr Thurston stated that the job of Chair of the Council was a very difficult job, and that there was the risk of a lack of continuity in returning to an annual election for the position. Cllr Kimber reminded the meeting that in general all Councils elect their Chairs for one year with a good back up team providing the continuity. Cllr Draper added that should the Council consider that continuity was imperative then re-election of the Chair was an available option. A vote was taken, and a majority decision was returned to accept the motion.

Resolved that the position of Chair be returned to an annual appointment.

4060. Calendar of Meetings for 2020/2021

Annex I to the Agenda proposed the draft calendar of meetings for the year 2020/2021. There being no questions a vote was taken, and the calendar of dates accepted unanimously.

Resolved that the calendar of meeting dates as proposed be implemented for the year 2020/2021.

4061. Portland Town Council Risk Strategy and Risk Register

The Clerk presented the risk strategy and risk register for consideration (see Annexes J and K to the Agenda). There being no questions a vote was taken, and both agreed unanimously for acceptance.

Resolved that the risk strategy and the risk register be accepted as an accurate record of current risks and their proposed mitigation actions for PTC.

4062. Call for nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor

The Clerk called for nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor to be submitted to her by close of play on Friday 27th March 2020. Noting that as Deputy Mayor Cllr West would automatically be nominated. She added that a confidential unnamed ballot would be undertaken at the next Full Council to elect to these positions.

Cllr Lewis proposed an amendment to the motion, that was to change the confidential unnamed ballot to a show of hands. A vote was taken which returned a majority decision to accept the amendment.

Resolved that the vote at the April Full Council, to elect the next Mayor and Deputy Mayor would be taken by a show of hands.

4063. Call for nominations for Chair

The Clerk called for nominations for the position of Chair of Portland Town Council to be submitted to her by close of play on Friday 27th March 2020. She added that a confidential unnamed ballot would be undertaken at the next Full Council to elect to these positions.

Cllr Lewis proposed an amendment to the motion, to change the confidential unnamed ballot to a show of hands. A vote was taken which returned a majority decision to accept the amendment.

Resolved that the vote at the April Full Council, to elect the next Chair of Portland Town Council would be taken by a show of hands.

4064. Bi-Monthly Meetings with Portland Port

The Chair advised the meeting that following a successful meeting with Portland Port, Mr Reeves had proposed that regular meetings with PTC Councillors be held and was proposing that these take place on a bi-monthly basis. In addition, she proposed that the meetings should consist of four Councillors on a rota basis. Cllr Lewis questioned who had proposed four Councillors per meeting. The Chair explained that the meetings needed to be sustainable and this was thought to be the optimum number to ensure this. Cllr Lewis asked what the protocol would be in the event that a Councillor was unable to make the meeting? The Chair explained that final details still needed to be sorted out but that she was looking for an agreement in principal to allow the project to be progressed. Cllr Kimber considered that the proposal was an excellent project and one to be commended. A vote was undertaken with a unanimous agreement being returned.

Resolved that Mr Reeve's offer of bi-monthly meetings be pursued with a rota of Councillors being generated.

4065. Update on the progress of Portland Youth Council

The Chair provided an update on the progress of the Youth Council – see Annex B to these minutes.

4066. Update on the progress of the Isle of Portland Tours

The Chair reported that the Isle of Portland Tours, currently being discussed and developed was moving forward and real progress was being made in generating a tour of Portland that could be offered to passengers on cruise ships docking at Portland Port.

4067. Exclusion of Press & Public (discretionary)

There were no matters to discuss.

4068. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 15th April at the Portland Community Venue at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 21.00 hours.

Signed …………………………………… Dated.…………………………......
Chairman