

**MEETING OF PORTISHEAD & NORTH WESTON TOWN COUNCIL  
RECREATION & WORKS COMMITTEE  
24 MARCH 2010 7.30PM**

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs Cruse – Chairman of Committee

Councillors Cruse, Hazelton, Howells, Mrs Lord, Mrs Mason, McMurray, Miers, Parker, Pasley, and Walters.

Mr M Dolton - Town Clerk

**APOLOGIES** Councillors Mrs Knight, Miss Stanley, and Mrs Way.

**RW 928      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Pasley and McMurray stated that any views they expressed on matters to also be considered at North Somerset Council would be provisional and based on the facts currently known. They would be exercising their rights to reconsider the matter afresh when the matter went before North Somerset Council.

Councillors Mrs Cruse and Hazelton :-

- Personal Interest in Minute No. RW931 (Youth Centre)  
Reason – Town Council representatives on the Youth Club management committee.

Councillor Mrs Cruse :-

- Personal Interest in Minute No RW930 (Redcliffe Bay Fuel Tanks)  
Reason – association with representative present at this meeting and author of letters seeking Town Council action.

Councillors Mrs Mason and Miers :-

- Personal interest in Minute No. RW935 and RW 936 (Redcliffe Bay Hall)  
Reason - Town Council representatives on the Redcliffe Bay Hall management committee.

- *Clerk's Note* : Mr Dolton, The Clerk, reminded members that he was not subject to the Code of Conduct for councillors, but in the interests of openness he declared an interest in item RW933 (Footpath – Watch House Place)  
Reason – resident at the address of the elector who had brought the matter to attention of Councillor Parker. Mr Dolton agreed to have no part in the discussion of the item.

## **RW 929 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were 2 members of the public present, Mrs Koops and Mrs Weekes, residents of Redcliffe Bay Portishead, who had been invited to attend to address members on Item RW 930 (Redcliffe Bay Fuel Tanks).

## **RW930 REDCLIFFE BAY FUEL TANKS**

*Clerk's Note : Due to the personal Interest declared by Councillor Mrs Cruse, Councillor Walters took the Chair for this item.*

By invitation of Councillor Walters, Mrs Koops addressed members.

Mrs Koops provided a summary of the history and purpose of the Redcliffe Bay Petroleum Storage Depot and the route of the Government Pipeline system that runs through Portishead run by the Oil and Pipeline Agency (OPA) for the Ministry of Defence.

The site was effectively 'mothballed' in the 1980s, but re-commissioning began again in 2001, and the site and pipeline are now in use providing fuel for a number of airports.

In 2006, Crown Immunity ceased, and North Somerset Council were in receipt of a flawed Deemed Consent Application, which had to provide details of operations in the previous year. The present consent enable use of all the 13 tanks on site, rather than the intended and agreed 5 tanks.

It is known that the operators are now applying to reopen a further 3 tanks on the site, and such an application should be by 'Express Consent', requiring notification on the site gates and in the press. The location of the three tanks subject of the application is within 50 metres from existing Park Home dwellings. The Health and Safety Executive have expressed concern about the proximity of the tanks to dwellings.

Mrs Koops also explained that the pipeline itself did not have valves fitted in this area, and may be subject to a higher than usual degradation due to the rise in water table levels putting some of the pipeline under water.

It is feared that with the application to increase the permitted fuel storage capacity this will inevitably lead to an increase in volumes pumped through the pipeline. There is also a feasible link from the proposed Bristol Airport Expansion Plan tanks, into the pipeline system, which would increase volumes even further.

There are considerable concerns from local residents about the safety of the storage depot and the pipeline. The offsite emergency plan is the responsibility of North Somerset Council and has now been in formulation for some three years. Mrs Koops stated that local residents

have been provided with little information on emergency procedures to date, with particular concern for the elderly and less able, and this is thought to be in contravention of the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH).

On behalf of local residents, Mrs Koops asked members of the Council to consider offering support to the challenging of further extension of operations on the site.

Members asked questions of Mrs Koops and Mrs Weekes, who in response confirmed that they had been liaising with Councillor Felicity Baker of North Somerset Council, who had been assisting with putting pressure on the OPA. They also confirmed that there remained concerns over the level of security at the site.

Discussion then took place amongst members with some members agreeing that communication between residents and the OPA seemed core to the future operation of the site. Members agreed that the Town Council should express support for the concerns raised over this issue.

Members unanimously agreed to make the following recommendations to the Town Council:-

RECOMMENDED that

Portishead and North Weston Town Council write to North Somerset Council and include the following content in the letter :-

- (i) That this Town Council be notified of any request that is made by OPA / MOD for Express Consent to open further tanks on the site, in order that the Town Council may comment and any appropriate action be taken.
- (ii) That, when considering the Bristol Airport Expansion Plans, do North Somerset Council have sufficient detail of how an increased volume of aviation fuel will be stored and transported?, and to communicate that information when it is available to this Town Council.
- (iii) That this Town Council is provided with an immediate update on the progress and current status of the off-site safety report and arrangements, as required within the COMAH regulations.
- (iv) That North Somerset Council consider, in accordance with COMAH regulations, convening a quarterly meeting between the site operators and local residents, together with nominated members of the Town Council, to be held in the Redcliffe Bay Ward.

**RW 931 PORTISHEAD YOUTH CENTRE - UPDATE**

*Clerk's Note : Due to the personal Interest declared by Councillor Mrs Cruse, Councillor Walters took the Chair for this item.*

Councillor Mrs Lord informed the meeting that, as previously resolved by the Town Council, herself, Councillor Walters, and the Clerk had met with Councillor C Francis-Pester (Executive Member - asset management - North Somerset Council) and Mr P Hall (Director of Finance and acting Director of Education - North Somerset Council) to discuss the plans and proposals by North Somerset Council for the future leasing arrangements of the Portishead Youth Centre. Mrs Lord summarised the progress at the meetings as follows.

Members had previously been made aware that North Somerset Council, in agreeing to lead a major refurbishment project at the Youth Centre building, seek to relinquish their responsibility for the maintenance of the actual building, and cease the lease as tenant that they currently hold with this Town Council which has over 50 years to run.

There are clearly considerable ongoing financial implications for the Town Council in agreeing to such an arrangement to take over the responsibility for the building.

The representatives from North Somerset Council had offered to reimburse this Town Council the financial costs of such an arrangement for a fixed period. The representatives of the Town Council feel that the period of time proposed is inadequate.

There are also difficulties being experienced in ascertaining the most accurate possible figures of the likely annual costs of such a commitment. The costs provided so far by North Somerset Council are based on models for the future and have no base in real historic costs. This matter is being addressed in order to achieve the best possible accuracy.

The representatives of North Somerset Council stressed that these matters related purely to the actual building maintenance, and in no way to the provision of the Youth Service at the centre. A verbal commitment was given by the North Somerset Council representatives to continue to provide and fund the Youth Service provision for the foreseeable future, although no commitment could be given as to how long that foreseeable future would be.

Mr Hall indicated that he would be unable to recommend to his members that the redevelopment project could commence at present, and until such time as agreement had been reached.

At this time the representatives from this Town Council have not established a convincing reason why this Council, and therefore the residents as precept payers of Portishead, should take on this burden. Very recent telephone conversations between the Clerk and the North Somerset Council representatives have indicated that continued discussions, to include representatives of the Youth Centre Management Committee, are able to continue in attempts to resolve the situation.

Councillor Mrs Cruse informed the meeting that the Youth Centre Management Committee were now actively considering the formation of a Company Limited By Guarantee. They had received a letter from Mr Hall indicating that he felt unable to recommend immediate commencement of the redevelopment work, and inviting representatives of the Committee to join in future discussions.

Members discussed the update given and considered these latest developments in the issue. The representatives from this Town Council were thanked for their considerable effort and it was unanimously agreed that the period of time so far offered by North Somerset Council to continue to fund the maintenance of the building, was indeed inadequate.

Members unanimously agreed to ask the Town Council representatives to continue meeting with North Somerset Council and the Youth Centre Management Committee and report back to Recreation and Works Committee as appropriate.

**RECOMMENDED that**

Portishead and North Weston Town Council note the update on the discussions concerning the future leasing arrangements for the Portishead Youth Centre. The Council thank the representatives of this Council for their considerable time and effort to date, and agree that they should continue to meet with North Somerset Council and the Youth Centre Management Committee, reporting back to a future Recreation and Works Committee meeting as appropriate.

## **RW 932 ALLOTMENT PROVISION - UPDATE**

The Clerk provided a verbal update to members on progress in his efforts to acquire further land for allotment provision.

Two plots of land were now under further consideration. The vendor of one of the plots had been informally contacted and he had now indicated that he was not willing to lease the land (as originally indicated) it was now to be considered only for purchase. Initial enquiries with the development control department at North Somerset Council had indicated that planning permission would not be required to change the current use from grazing to allotments, however, planning permission would be required for the access from the road which at the moment was under further consideration as highways may object to the proposed access. The Clerk will continue to liaise with planners over these issues and report to members at a Recreation and Works Committee meeting accordingly.

The second plot of land is owned by North Somerset Council. Again, initial enquiries with the development control department at North Somerset Council had indicated that planning permission would not be required to change the use to allotments. Officers at North Somerset Council are approaching members of that Council to establish whether

or not they would be willing to lease the land to this Town Council. There had been a delay in that decision due to further planning queries raised by the officer concerned, but it is hoped that a clear indication of likely outcome can be given prior to the next Recreation and Works Committee meeting.

The Clerk summarised by stating that he hoped to be able to put options forward for member decision at one of the next two Recreation and Works Committee meetings.

RECOMMENDED that.

Portishead and North Weston Town Council note the progress being made in relation to potential land acquisition for allotment provision, and look forward to further reports from the Clerk at future Recreation and Works Committee meetings.

### **RW 933 FOOTPATH : WATCH HOUSE PLACE, PORTISHEAD**

Members had received the written report of Councillor Parker.

The report outlined what appeared to be a planning anomaly, in that the public footpath at the rear of Watch House Place passed through the parking bay of a resident. The resident had suffered considerable and unpleasant damage to his car, clearly by people who thought he was parking inconsiderately, when he had in fact parked it on what his deeds show to be his own land. The matter could be resolved relatively simply by making adjustments to the shape and size of a brick built bin store alongside the parking bay.

Whilst the area has not yet been fully adopted by North Somerset Council, Councillor Parker asked that the Town Council consider writing to them, as they would inevitably eventually be responsible for the right of way, asking that they take corrective action.

Members discussed the matter briefly, with some expressing the view that as the footpath was a well used route to Portishead Primary School from the Marina development it may be more appropriate to take the matter up with a North Somerset Councillor.

Following a vote, it was agreed that this Town Council will write to North Somerset Council asking them to consider the matter and indicate the prescribed safe route to the primary school along the rear of Watch House Place.

RECOMMENDED that

The Portishead and North Weston Town Council write to North Somerset Council asking them to comment on the apparent anomaly of the footpath at the rear of Watch House Place Portishead passing through the parking bay of a resident, and ask North Somerset Council to indicate the prescribed safe route for children going to school along that footpath.

**RW 934      PARKING RESTRICTIONS REVIEW**

Members had received a written report by Councillor Parker which outlined that North Somerset Council undertake periodic town wide reviews of waiting restrictions.

This review can be to remove, amend or install new waiting restrictions. Portishead is due for a review in the financial year 2010/2011, the officer dealing with these reviews is Adrian O'Keefe at North Somerset Council.

Members are asked to consider any issues they may wish to bring to the attention of the review officer, and pass them to the Clerk, who will collate them and forward them on.

RECOMMENDED that

The members of Portishead and North Weston Town Council consider the current waiting restrictions in the town, and communicate any considerations for the upcoming review of parking restrictions to the Clerk for forwarding to North Somerset Council.

**RW935      REDCLIFFE BAY HALL : REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE OF SUBSIDY**

Members had received the letter from the administrator of Redcliffe Bay Hall written on behalf of the Management Committee, requesting that the current arrangement of the Town Council paying a monthly subsidy of £250 to the Management Committee continue for a further financial year.

Members agreed that the subsidy should continue.

Councillors Mrs Mason and Miers, having declared a personal interest in this item, abstained from voting and asked that this be recorded.

RECOMMENDED that

The Portishead and North Weston Town Council continue to pay a subsidy of £250 per month to the Redcliffe Bay Hall Management Committee for a further financial year, to be reviewed in April 2011.

**RW936      REDCLIFFE BAY HALL : POTENTIAL CHARGES INCREASE**

Members had received the circulated letter in which the Redcliffe Bay Hall Management Committee had indicated their intention to raise hire charges at the hall with effect from September 2010, and sought

ratification by the Town Council as required within the constitution agreement.

Members briefly discussed the request, with minor queries relating to percentage increase in charges being spread in an equal manner.

Members voted to agree the requested increase, with the vote being 8 for, 1 against, and 2 abstentions.

Councillors Mrs Mason and Miers, having declared a personal interest in this item, abstained from voting and asked that this be recorded.

RECOMMENDED that

The Portishead and North Weston Town Council approve the increase in charges at the Redcliffe Bay Hall as set out in the letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2010, to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010.

## **RW937 ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TASK GROUP**

Members had received the written report of the Clerk, written on behalf of the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Pasley.

Councillor Pasley informed members that the report resulted from a request he had received from Sergeant Robinson, of Portishead Police, asking that a member of the Town Council be nominated to join an anti social behaviour task group that it is intended to form in the near future.

Members discussed the matter, and whilst agreeing in principle to the need to do all that is possible to address the anti social behaviour issues within the town, some members were concerned that a further talking group was going to be formed without an action based activity from the police and others.

Members were in agreement that whilst they would by no means rule out the nomination of a member of this Council to take part in such a group, it would be useful to firstly invite the local police sergeant and inspector to discuss the issues around anti social behaviour with members. It was felt that such an invitation should not be to a formal committee or full Council meeting as the time pressures at such occasions often prevented in depth discussion and consideration. It was agreed that a separate date would be agreed, and that the Councillor Pasley and the Clerk would liaise with the police officers concerned to set a convenient time and date.

RECOMMENDED that

The Portishead and North Weston Town Council will invite the local Police Inspector and Sergeant to speak to, and discuss with, members the issues of anti social behaviour within the town. The Chairman of the Council and the Clerk will liaise with the police to agree a mutually convenient date and agreed agenda.

**RW938 GRANT APPLICATION : AIR TRAINING CORPS**

Members had received a grant application from the Portishead Air Training Corps, requesting a grant of £1,000 towards the cost of a replacement minibus.

Members unanimously agreed that the grant should be awarded.

RECOMMENDED that

Portishead and North Weston Town Council grant the sum of £1000 (One Thousand Pounds) to the Portishead Air training Corps. It is recorded that, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, Portishead and North Weston Town Council approves this expenditure as in their opinion, it is in the interests of the area and will benefit the residents of the Town in a manner commensurate with the expenditure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00 pm.