

**209th ORDINARY MEETING OF
PORTISHEAD & NORTH WESTON TOWN COUNCIL
08 SEPTEMBER 2010**

PRESENT Councillor Mrs Knight – in the Chair

Councillors Cameron, Mrs Cruse, Cruse, Hazelton, Mrs Lord, Mrs Mason, Pasley, Miss Stanley, Terry (Vice Chairman), Mrs Way and Walters.

Mr M Dolton – Clerk of the Council

APOLOGIES Councillor Howells, Miers, Parker.

There were 13 members of the public and press present at the meeting.

1828 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Mrs Knight and Pasley 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.

Councillor Cruse

- Personal Interest in Planning Committee Report : Minute No. PL013 – Portishead High Street 20mph scheme proposals
Reason – Owner of property on the High Street.

Councillor Mrs Cruse :-

- Personal Interest in Planning Committee Report : Minute No. PL013 – Portishead High Street 20mph scheme proposals
Reason – Owner of property adjacent to and with visibility of, the High Street.

1829 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 6 members of the public wishing to address the meeting. The Chairman reminded speakers that the meeting was for Town Council matters only and that any issues concerning North Somerset Council or its members should be addressed at another place, and that councillors may respond

through the Chairman to any issue raised if they so wish, but that no full debate was appropriate.

- (i) Mr John Clark, a resident of Portishead and panel member of the Portishead PACT group addressed members. Mr Clark informed the meeting that the two other panel committee members had now left the panel with the Chairman having resigned, and he hoped to be able to continue the panel's work in the future. He also reiterated that the current PACT process was set out in legislation with the purpose of supporting the public's confidence in the police service, and engaging with the public at all levels. Mr Clark held the view that PACT could also be seen to fit in to the publicised wider political agenda of the Prime Minister, the 'Big Society', involving the local community in governance by ensuring they had a better say. He expressed concerns about the timing and regularity of the meetings and hoped that the future PACT meetings would address those issues. Mr Clark informed all present that the next meeting would be held at 6.45pm on the 22nd of September at the Avon Way Hall and asked everyone to make efforts to attend if possible.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor Mrs Cruse asked Mr Clark to also ask the PACT panel to bear in mind that Councillors are committed on three Wednesdays every month with Council meetings.

- (ii) Charlotte Waterson and Asa Goldsworthy, residents of Portishead, addressed members about the young persons survey they are conducting.

Charlotte and Asa informed the meeting that she and her friends felt it was very important to make sure that the views of the younger people in Portishead were made known, and those views considered in all future youth provision. Charlotte and her friends were now starting the survey with the final draft documents being completed this week, and the printing etc being provided by the Youth Centre. The survey would be widely distributed and three collection points at Gordano School, McColls newsagents, and the Youth Centre had been arranged. They hoped that the Council would allow them to come and present the results of the survey at a future meeting of the Council.

The Chairman responded to Charlotte and Asa expressing her sincere gratitude that they had attended the meeting and provided the Council with this information. The Chairman said that she very much hoped that they would bring the results of the survey to the Council, and felt sure that the other councillors, like herself, looked forward to hearing further from them in future.

Many other members echoed the Chairman's sentiments, and expressed thanks to Charlotte and Asa.

- (iii) Mrs Annette Hennessy then addressed the meeting. Mrs Hennessy referred to comments that were made at the last full council meeting on Wednesday 11th August, and quoted the minutes dated 12th May of this year which state, "Town Council members always had, and always will, act as individuals and in the best interests of the community".

She said that despite acting as individuals Councillors are representing the electorate and matters they raise or concerns they express should be based on fact and not their personal assumptions or misconceptions about a given issue, particularly as comments are often made in the presence of the media which, if printed, can mislead residents into believing such incorrect comments are the true picture. At the meeting on the 11th August a councillor made known his own personal feelings about PACT without providing any evidence to substantiate his comments which she felt were inaccurate.

Mrs Hennessy felt that the councillor involved had had many opportunities over the last year to raise any queries with the police and certainly in the last six months, the Chairman of PACT would have been happy to discuss with the councillor any concerns. This could have been done at any of the meetings or privately by telephone. She said that instead the councillor chose to do so when the PACT Chairman was unable to respond because public participation had finished. Despite reassurances from the Police Sergeant on the evening, she felt that the councillor appeared reluctant to listen and accept the information being given to him.

She said that the councillor had also raised his concerns about ordinary members of the public who have not been elected as councillors being participants in the PACT initiative and that often non-elected residents outnumber councillors in many local community groups. Furthermore, the Police Authority of which the councillor concerned is a member and with whom he could have consulted, is an independent body made up of councillors and people from the local community. The PACT process is an extension of this and is supported by the Police Authority because it directly engages with people in the community. Other factors contribute to priority setting and at no time do the police neglect their regular duties as was inferred at the last meeting.

Contrary to what has been stated by the councillor she wished to stress that nobody has to attend PACT meetings to raise concerns. Those who do attend are listened to and their comments contribute to priority setting. There is no hierarchy that dictates to the Chairman what should be the named priority. The public are not favoured over Councillors.

Mrs Hennessy wished to remind the councillor that residents in Portishead did not create PACT. It was a government led initiative and residents engaged with it in the best interests of their town. Now it would appear that residents are being criticised by a councillor for their active involvement in something that has recently achieved so much. Certainly the comments that were made last month, regrettably led to

the resignation of the PACT Chairman who felt the councillor's criticism was unfair. He was not alone.

Mrs Hennessy believed that this situation could have been prevented if the councillor had addressed them in the beginning to the relevant representatives involved in PACT.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor Terry responded to Mrs Hennessy. Councillor Terry stated that the new Home Secretary had made it plain on her recent appointment that the PACT process would be removed from legislative requirement in future, but that the Chief Constable of Avon & Somerset Police had decided to continue the process at present. It was therefore no longer to be 'set in law'. Councillor Terry further stated that he had no difficulty with local residents meeting with the police, and indeed, encouraged that. He again stated however, that he felt the PACT process was not the best means of achieving such communication and was not necessarily the best forum for police priority setting, and utilised considerable police resources. Councillor Terry stated that he did not feel he had challenged an individual at the last meeting, rather, that he challenged a statement made by a police officer relating to the PACT meetings setting priorities. He said that he had no issue with the Chairman of PACT and that if the Chairman had been insulted by his comments he regretted that.

Mrs Hennessy expressed that her recollection of what the police officer had said differed from the recollection of Councillor Terry, and that Councillor Terry was driving a wider political agenda from a Police Authority standpoint which she felt should not be expressed at Town Council level.

- (iii) Mrs Sandy Tebbutt, Chairman of the Portishead In Bloom group, addressed the meeting. Mrs Tebbutt updated members on the activities of the group in the past month providing information on their new notice board facility, and reminding all present of the group's 'sponsor a hanging basket' scheme. Mrs Tebbutt stated that litter remained an issue within the area, with a Pride In Portishead litter picking group having been active the previous Sunday at the Lake Grounds and collecting several bags of litter. There had also been working groups at the Millennium Gardens and the Swimming Pool Lions bed. A sponsor for the £100 prize that accompanies the John Dawes Cup had now been established, and Mrs Tebbutt asked for nominations for receipt of the award to her as soon as possible. Important dates in the Group's calendar are 16th September – South West In Bloom results and awards at Bath, 29th September – Britain in Bloom results and awards at Birmingham, and the Annual General Meeting of the group to be held on the 29th of October. Rather than just provide the number of hours worked by the volunteers of the group in the past month, Mrs Tebbutt explained that by liaising with North

Somerset Council officers it had now been calculated that over the past 11 months the volunteer hours had been equivalent to a £21,000 contribution.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Tebbutt for the update and stated that the Council were ever grateful for the tremendous effort by the group on behalf of the community. She wished Mrs Tebbutt and the members of the group the very best for the coming upcoming competition results, hoping that the effort would be recognised and duly rewarded by those concerned.

- (v) Mr Kenneth Smith a resident of Down Road Portishead addressed the meeting. Mr Smith asked all present to stop the current expressions of differences of opinion over the PACT matters and thereby ensure that there was no alienation of the local police. Mr Smith agreed with others that it was good and healthy that local people met with local police, and the Police Authority be left to consider higher more strategic issues. He stressed the need for police and community to work together.

The Chairman then addressed the meeting informing members of the death of Mr Alan Pickering who had been a long serving member of this Town Council in the past. Mr Pickering was the Chairman of the Council for the years 1995-96, and 2002-3, and had recently died in Denbighshire. A standing one minute silence was observed in memory of Mr Pickering.

1830 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the 208th Ordinary Meeting of Portishead and North Weston Town Council held on 11 August 2010 were presented to the meeting.

RESOLVED that

The Minutes of the 208th Ordinary Meeting of Portishead and North Weston Town Council held on 11 August 2010 be confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

1831 SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATION / CASH STATEMENT FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2010

Members considered the report of the Clerk.

Councillor Pasley expressed that whilst he had no queries or issues with the report of the Clerk that had been laid before members, he felt that members may benefit from ascertaining the total cost to this Council of vandalism /

unlawful acts over the past three year period. Other members agreed that this would be useful information, and it was therefore proposed, duly seconded and agreed by unanimous vote that the Clerk would be asked to collate such information and present it to members at a future meeting of the Recreation and Works committee.

RESOLVED that

The schedule of payments and bank reconciliation / cash statement for the month of July 2010 is approved. The Clerk is to collate information over the past three year period, of the costs of all acts of vandalism to assets of the council, and present the findings to a future meeting of the Recreation and Works committee.

The schedule is attached to and forms part of these minutes

1832 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor Walters presented the report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st September 2010.

The only matter in Section 1 of the report (for consideration by members) was Item PL 013 – High Street 20mph zone scheme.

Councillor Walters summarised the deliberations of the Planning committee on this matter and moved that the recommendation now before members be approved by resolution, and that Sections 2 and 3 of the report be noted.

Councillor Terry stated that he felt there was a need to ensure that the drainage difficulties in the High Street were taken into account and any necessary remedial work was conducted prior to the resurfacing and other major works due to take place this autumn. In a short discussion members voiced agreement with the importance of this, and it was proposed, duly seconded, and approved by unanimous vote that the recommendation from the Planning committee be approved, with an amendment to the effect that a letter will also be sent to North Somerset Highways Department stressing the need to ensure that any remedial work on the High Street drainage system is conducted prior to the other major works and resurfacing.

RESOLVED that

Section 1 of the report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st September 2010 is approved, subject to the following amendment :-

PL 013 – High Street 20mph Scheme – to now read:-

- (i) A response letter to be sent to North Somerset Council with the following content :-

'Portishead and North Weston Town Council do not consider that adequate time has been given by North Somerset Council for this important consultation.

The Council has major concerns with the current drainage in the High Street area. The High Street regularly floods following rain. These problems should be rectified before the proposed scheme is implemented.

The Town Council would also make the following comments -

- **Disabled Car Parking** – The proposal to replace disabled parking in lieu of ordinary parking is not acceptable. There is already a shortage of parking in the High Street area. Disabled persons can park on double yellow lines and do not need special bays.
- **Removal of parking spaces (outside Lloyds Pharmacy)** - This is not acceptable. This will further reduce the number of parking spaces in the High Street. These spaces have been in existence for many years.
- **Zebra Crossings** – The proposal to raise the crossings in the High Street will have major implications and cause ponding if the drainage problems are not resolved. There are also many residents living above the retail shops and the increased noise of vehicles travelling over the humps will be unacceptable.
- **Raised Humps at the start of the 20 MPH Zone** – increased noise for residents.
- **20 MPH Zone** - increased clutter with signage on all roads with junctions with High Street area and the speed limit is pointless unless it can be enforced.
- **Brampton Way Junction** – There is currently poor visibility at this point and there have been car accidents. Visibility should be improved for vehicles exiting Brampton Way on to High Street.
- **Zebra Crossing Combe Road** - This crossing is very close to the bus stop outside HSBC Bank. This bus stop is used as a terminus and drivers regularly switch off engines and remain stationary at this point. These buses will block vision of the crossing. This will need to be investigated.
- The suggested up lift on the proposed crossing at the bottom of Avon Way is not acceptable. A huge quantity of water flows down over the hill. Retail properties in the area have removed steps to comply with disability regulations and these properties will be more susceptible to flooding.

- (ii) The Clerk to send a further letter to North Somerset Council expressing that this Town Council wishes to have reassurance that any remedial work required to the High Street drainage system will be undertaken and completed prior to the finalising of the other major works and resurfacing due to take place this autumn, and wish to have a North Somerset officer personally reassure members on this issue.

Sections 2 and 3 of the report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st September 2010 are noted.

The report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st September 2010 is attached to and forms part of these Minutes.

1833 MATTERS THE CHAIRMAN WISHES TO PUT BEFORE THE COUNCIL

The Chairman reminded members of the Portishead Activities and Council Open Day that will take place at The Somerset Hall on Saturday the 18th of September 2010. The Chairman updated members that over 50 local organisations and groups had now accepted places in the display hall and publicity was now taking place.

- **Representations by Chairman on behalf of the Council :-**

- 14 August Presented prizes at Redcliffe Bay Horticultural Society Show
- 25 August 'Walk For Sight' Macular Disease Society at Weston Super Mare
- 1 September Attended welcome service for Rev. Sharon Lovelock and her family at the Methodist Church.

- **Correspondence Received :-**

- **Consultation on North Somerset Council's Licensing Policy** Letter received from North Somerset Council which can be viewed on the Council's website. Any comments to be received by 8 October 2010.
- **Road Closure**
Notification received from North Somerset Council of road closure – Hillcrest Road – from King's Road to Kingsway; and Kings Road- whole length.
Order required to enable carriageway resurfacing and will become operative on 11th October 2010.

- **Publications and Reports –** The following items have been received and are available in the Town Council Office –

- Natural World – Summer 2010
- National Youth Agency – Issue 29
- Police News – Summer 2010 Issue 3
- Severn Tidings – Summer 2010 Issue 12

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.12pm

Chairman

13th October 2010