

**MINUTES OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FOR  
PORTISHEAD & NORTH WESTON HELD AT THE  
FOLK HALL, HIGH STREET, PORTISHEAD  
ON WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2010**

**PRESENT** Councillor Pasley, Chairman of the Town Council –  
Presiding

Councillors Cameron, M Cruse, Mrs Cruse, Hazelton, Howells,  
Mrs Knight, Mrs Lord, McMurray, Mrs Mason, Miers, Parker,  
Miss Stanley, Terry, Walters, Mrs Way

Mr M Dolton, Clerk of the Council  
Mrs R Tranter, Deputy Clerk of the Council.

**APOLOGIES** Councillor Wright

**1. MINUTES OF 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TOWN MEETING : 6 MAY 2009**

The minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2009 had been circulated and presented to the meeting.

Mrs A Hennessy had requested amendments to those minutes, a written copy of the amendments having been supplied to the Clerk. Mrs Hennessy read the requested amendments.

It was agreed that the minutes be approved including the amendments by Mrs Hennessy.

*RESOLVED that :-*

The Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting for Portishead and North Weston held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2009, copies of which have been circulated, be confirmed as correct including the written amendments requested by Mrs Hennessy.

**2. CHAIRMANS ANNUAL REPORT AND REVIEW OF THE BUSINESS UNDERTAKEN BY THE COUNCIL IN THE 2009/2010 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Councillor Pasley, the Chairman of the Town Council presented his annual report to all present.

Councillor Palsey referred to many aspects of the year including;-

- the appointment of the new Town Clerk,
- the decision that the Town Council could not continue to agree to take on a lease at the Trinity School Community Hall,
- musical events that had been held at the Lake Grounds,
- the success of the Portishead Open Air Pool Trust and the support given to them by the Town Council

- the success of the Town Council Open Day held in October 2009 at which some 100 residents attended and he hoped other Chairmen would repeat,
- the tremendous achievements of the Portishead In Bloom Group by being awarded Gold awards in this years' 'In Bloom' contests,
- the switch on of the Christmas lights being broadcast live on national BBC news with some 6 million viewers
- Portishead Carnival being again so well supported and the exceptional organisation and effort by Jemma Cooper and Wendy,
- The annual horticultural show again being a very popular event with even higher attendance,
- The recent planning applications by large supermarkets, Sainsburys and Lidl, being an indication of investment and confidence in the town,
- The efforts of the Town Council to preserve Court Farm now being sold by Bristol City Council,
- The success of the turning off of the Cabstand traffic lights,
- The new cemetery / North Weston village hall car park project led by this Council now successfully completed on time and within budget,
- The local precept by the Town Council on the Council Tax being the reduced for the third year running,
- The achievements and commitment of both Councillors and the staff of the Council,

Councillor Pasley then presented the Clerk with a photograph of the members of the Council for the year to be displayed within the building.

The notes of Councillor Pasley's report are attached to these minutes.

### **3. DATE AND FORMAT FOR NEXT YEAR'S MEETING**

The Chairman explained to the meeting that this matter had been included in the agenda as the issue had been raised at the last meeting, as to whether the Annual Town Meeting should continue to be held on the same evening as the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, or should be separated out and be held on another evening in May.

Some residents spoke expressing their view that the meetings should be separated in future. Others held the view that it was more logical for the meetings to continue to be held on the same evening.

The Chairman called a vote of all present, which resulted in an equality of votes, with 20 residents voting to separate the meetings, and 20 voting to continue to hold them on the same evening. Due to a challenge by a resident, the votes were recounted by the Clerk and a resident and there remained an equality of votes.

As provided within the legislation concerning the Annual Town Meeting, the Chairman then cast his deciding vote which was for the meetings remaining on the same evening in future.

***Resolved that :-***

The Annual meeting and Annual Town Council will continue to be held on the same evening in May of each year.

**4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr John Dixon, a resident of 21 Roath Road, raised a number of issues –

- Councillor Walters – Mr Dixon pointed out that Councillor Walters should be referred to as Alderman and congratulated him on his title awarded by North Somerset Council.
- Portishead Railway – Mr Dixon urged councillors to not forget the Railway. Upgrading the road for bendy-buses is not a good idea and the money should be spent on the railway.
- Overhead Power Lines – The proposal by National Grid to put power lines through the valley should be opposed. Mr Dixon made reference to purpose built tunnels which existed in London.
- Cabstand junction – Mr Dixon had suggested last year that a bridge should be built across the junction. Following the successful switching off of the lights at this junction he now withdrew his suggestion.

Mr Paul Maltby, a resident of 22 South Road raised a number of issues –

- Regular Meeting Attendance - Mr Maltby pointed out that he regularly attended the Town Council Meetings and the comment made by the Chairman that only criticism was given at meetings was incorrect. At some meetings he was totally ignored and at the last meeting had been shown a display of unnecessary aggression. He thanked those members who made residents welcome.
- Cremated remains at Cemetery – Mr Maltby thanked the Council, in particular Councillor McMurray, for moving the cemetery car park project forward enabling the area designated for cremated remains to be completed.
- The New Clerk was congratulated on his approachable manner and his knowledge. He had brought a breath of fresh air to the Council and the council is lucky to have him.
- Portishead-in-Bloom. Since the regular updates at Town Council Meetings by the group he now appreciated the amount of work which is done throughout the year to make the town look so good. He thanked the group on behalf of residents for all their hard work and commitment.
- Youth Centre Dymanic Week. He had listened to the Radio Dymanic on a number of occasions during the Easter holidays and there is no doubt of the fun that was had by many youngsters in the town. It kept the youngsters occupied, off the street and entertained the young in Portishead.
- Town Council – Mr Maltby would like the Council to show the town that they are working for the town and not as a political enterprise. A good way, in his opinion, would be to ensure the Chairman of the Council is of a different

political party. This would restore faith that this council is working in the best interest of the town and not self gratification.

- Chairman – He thought that the Chairman, Councillor Pasley, in the main part had had a successful year and had raised the profile of the council and the town. However the year had been marred by the way in which members of the council voted, in the face of what residents wanted, when the planning application for the skatepark was considered at North Somerset Council. He added that he hoped the Skatepark Group were successful in their appeal and that members were proud that they were forcing money to be spent which had been raised by the children and donated by children. When the group are successful, as he is sure they will be, maybe this council will consider giving them a grant that will be sufficient to reimburse the unnecessary expense.

Mr L Davis, 5 The Deans, spoke about the recent incident at the Youth Centre when the Police had taken 25 minutes to attend. He cited his experience 30 years ago when a little girl had been assaulted and the Police took 25 minutes to attend. He was dismayed that with advances in communications the call-out time for 999 calls had not improved. He urged residents to write to the Chair of the Regulatory Body of the Police Authority, rather than the Chief Constable. He pointed out that his complaint was with the current policy not the local officers.

PC Matt Christie advised the meeting that he was aware that a complaint had been logged and was in the process of being looked at. He had not been on duty on the evening in question and he could not add anything further.

Mrs S Hayson, Purbeck Lodge, Beach Road West spoke about the Lake Grounds area of the town –

- Firstly she thanked the Police and all those others involved in the huge improvement in the area.
- Cultural Working Party – Mrs Haysom was concerned that the Lake Grounds was becoming a memorial garden with an ever increasing number of plaques on trees and benches in the area. She made reference to one particular seat with the plaque “Life is a bitch and then you go and die”. She considered that there are too many seats, particularly on Battery Point, where they have been located with little thought as to the repercussions of their siting.
- Café Contract/Concession – Mrs Haysom pointed out that the contract for the Café made interesting reading. No permission had been granted for takeaway food, flying of flags, external noise and the trampoline, which moves around the play area. The District Council should look at the wording of their documents. She asked the Town Council to keep an eye on the contracts being agreed, and pointed out that other users of the Lake Grounds eg the Cricket Club were not allowed to advertise in the area.

Mr Noel Brailsford, Windrush, Battery Lane, spoke about the need for a larger bus shelter outside the old Post Office (Sorting Office). He had mentioned this last year and nothing had been done. Frequently people are standing in all weathers as the shelter was not long enough.

Mr David FitzPatrick, a resident of 18 Station Road, Portishead spoke about the rubbish at the Mirage end of the Marina. The bins had been vandalized and those which were present were too small. This area was visited by many visitors and residents and was disgraceful - something should be done about it. He suggested that vandal proof bins should be installed by the Council. Also bins in the play area adjacent to the Leisure Centre where regularly members of staff had to clear litter.

Mr Tony Mosely, 7 Hillside Road spoke about the possibility of an additional Post Office Counter in the proposed Sainsbury's store. It was much needed in the town and there is currently such an arrangement in the Devizes Store. He suggested that a formal approach should be made to the supermarket from the Town Council.

Mr Bernard Charles, 362 Nore Road suggested there was nothing wrong with the current Post Office.

Councillor Knight replied that in the past there had been 3 Post Offices in the town when it was half the size of the town today. The current Post Office was not capable of dealing with the volume, particularly at Christmas when people are sending lots of parcels.

Mrs J Brailsford, Windrush, Battery Lane, agreed that the facility was inadequate, especially in view of the large distance over which the town is spread and the number of elderly. People are squeezed in between shop isles. The members of staff are cramped and at busy times the queues intrude into the shop space. When the mail is collected sacks are dragged through the shop. In addition when the Post Office is closed there is no door to close off the area giving staff problems particularly at Christmas time. She pointed out that she was not complaining about the staff who were doing their best within the current building. In Nailsea a town of the same size there is a purpose built Post Office with modern facilities. Mrs Brailsford asked the Town Council to write to the Post Office expressing these views and asking for a Post Office sufficient for the needs of the Town.

Councillor Mrs Lord pointed out that the Town Council had objected to Post Watch as part of the consultation when the Post Offices were shut at Redcliffe Bay and West Hill but were totally ignored.

Councillor Terry suggested that if residents were in agreement that a letter could be sent by the Chairman on behalf of residents to the appropriate bodies.

Following a vote it was agreed that the Chairman of the Town Council would write to the Post Office on behalf of residents, requesting that they give consideration to Post Office facilities within the town.

Annette Hennessy explained that she had written to McColls and that they had agreed to change the layout of the shop. This will be reviewed within 8 weeks. She pointed out that people were not unhappy with the service given by staff and praised the efforts of Martin McColl. Mrs Hennessy added that people need to be aware the Post Office Ltd is not Royal Mail.

Councillor Mason added that she still considered that the letter should be sent with a copy to Post Watch.

Mrs Marion Dann, 46 St Peters Lodge spoke about the removal of the public seat on the corner of Battery Road and Cabstand. The seat had been removed following the upgrading of the bus shelters, one of which is adjacent to the seat. She asked that this be reinstated as soon as possible.

Mrs B Broad, a resident of Victoria Square, suggested that the current Post Office could contravene Fire Regulations because of the limited access in and out of the building.

Mrs A Hennessy, a resident of 18 Albert Road, spoke at some length on a number of issues including :-

- Thanking Councillor Pasley for his work in his year as Chairman
- Complementing the new Clerk on his work and commenting on the positive work of Penny Wrendle, the past Clerk,
- The work done by residents in the town who are not members of the Council,
- The lack of consistency shown by some Councillors, including the Chairman, on their voting on the issues surrounding the proposed skate park,
- The need to ensure that Trusts remain accountable to the public, particularly the operation of the Open Air Pool Trust,
- The decision to turn off the Cabstand lights whilst other cost effective options were available, and the need in light of that decision to ensure safe provision for pedestrians at that junction,
- The apparent neglect of the road surfaces within the town with many potholes remaining unattended to,
- The amending of the name of the fund originally intended for the Trinity Community Hall and the potential use of that fund for bidding to purchase Court Farm would appear to not be the best use of amenity funds,
- The lack of signage and state of the footpaths in the village quarter,
- The need to make provision, possibly a youth shelter, for the youth of the town, and the need for the Town Council to support that provision.

Mrs Hennessy's speech is attached to and forms part of these minutes.

The Chairman, Councillor Pasley thanked Mrs Hennessy for her speech and pointed out the following –

- that the Town Council has no involvement whatsoever in the outside Pool and that it is a private enterprise.
- With regard to the Youth Shelter a lot of the youth of the town were asked about a shelter and Sergeant Scoble was involved when he was stationed in the town. The youngsters confirmed that they did want a youth shelter.
- The decision made by the district council to refuse the application for a skatepark was made in part because of a damning report written by the police. However Councillor Pasley did not consider this meeting an appropriate place to go into any further detail.

Mr Ken Smith, a resident of 57 Down Road, said that this meeting was the first time that members were participating with residents and they should consider doing this at every meeting. If members were not going to participate then do not bother to have

public participation. If residents wish to speak it is for the good of Portishead. Members should answer truthfully and keep residents in the picture even if the answer is not the one they would wish to hear. The residents only ask that members do their best.

Councillor Pasley clarified the point that public participation at a normal Town Council Meeting is limited to 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting. The Town Clerk promised to discuss the legalities of public participation with the new Chairman after the meeting.

Mr John H Clark, 3 Glenwood Rise, spoke about Councillor Pasley's response to Mrs Hennessy's remark about the refusal of the Open Air Pool Trust to allow her a copy of their accounts. Mr Clark pointed out that the Trust was a charity, registered with the Charity Commission and to whom the Town Council had given a grant and would have in their possession a copy of the accounts.

Councillor Pasley acknowledged that Mr Clark was correct and added he was not trying to mislead. What he was trying to say was that the Town Council had no control over the Pool.

John Sleight, 31 Fedden Village wanted to raise a road warning for pedestrians concerning the junction of Slade Road/Combe Road. The junction has been extended and intrudes into Combe Road, where there is a bollard. Mr Sleight had witnessed two accidents where vehicles had crashed across the pavement. For the last 2 - 3 months this bollard has been at a 45% angle, more recently with a traffic cone on top of it. Mr Sleight asked what the history was behind this extension to the junction? In his former career as a senior fire officer he would suggest a revision to avoid a series accident and he wondered who then the liability would fall on.

Councillor Terry answered the question of the bollard and explained that his understanding was that it had been installed following the Cabstand lights, to deter traffic from turning into Slade Road. Following the success of the light switch off at Cabstand the bollard was no longer necessary. The Town Council should raise this issue with the district council and ask for the junction to be reviewed.

Councillor Mrs Knight agreed with Councillor Terry and added that the problem at the junction was the speed at which vehicles come down over Avon Way.

Mr Bernard Charles said there was no need for anyone in the town to drive at more than 20mph. He suggested that 20mph signs should be erected by the Co-op, halfway up Combe Road, and at the other end of the town so that people understand the whole area has a speed limit. The police should enforce these speed restrictions.

Councillor Miss Stanley spoke about the comments made earlier about the damning report of the Police against the Skatepark planning application. Although the Police had raised concerns, following a meeting between them and the Skatepark Group these objections were withdrawn.

Councillor McMurray spoke about the recent purchase by the Police of a new speed camera for which the Town Council had given funding. Although Councillor McMurray stated he was not in Portishead 24 hours a day he had not seen any use

of the speed gun and would like to see more high visibility use. He asked PCSO Christie to take back his comments to the Police station. He asked the question would it make a difference to people's speed? Maybe. Seeing the camera out and about for example on Avon Way may make motorists think about their speed.

Sandy Green, a new resident to the town spoke about a number of issues. She explained that they were a mixture of huge praise and criticism -

- Cabstand - is hugely improved since the removal of the lights.
- Portishead in Bloom – praised the splendid work and the improvements made at the top of the town with the heather beds.
- Groups and organisations – praised the number within the town, some of which she hoped to join.
- Post Office problems – explained that she went back to the Midlands to her do her post at Christmas because of the delays in Portishead's office and suggested that if Sainsbury were to come to the town could we not apply pressure to get another counter opened in that store.
- PACT Meetings – the meetings are very short and a waste of time, she came away extremely frustrated because noting constructive could be arranged in such a short meeting.
- Free Swimming – very much welcomed and hoped that with a change of government this would not be taken away.
- Free Bus Pass – welcomed this. Although she was surprised she could not use her existing pass from the Midlands, which had her photo etc and considered the issue of a new pass a waste of money.
- Conservation Area - Mrs Green had attended a fund raising event at Trinity School with her grandchildren where a frog had been rescued by a young lad who had taken her to the nearby conservation area. She was amazed at the lack of signage for this area.
- Combe Road junction – agreed that this junction was an accident waiting to happen.
- Court Farm – asked for clarification on whether this was a listed building. Councillor Pasley explained the current position with this site.

Mrs Green added that she hoped to end her days in Portishead and therefore had a vested interest in the cemetery! She also would like a list of the wards in Portishead at this meeting for her to take home.

Councillor Mrs Mason pointed out that with regard to a previous comment made the speed camera had been in use the Wednesday before on Avon Way. Councillor Howells and McMurray had witnessed this.

Councillor Terry wished to draw to the attention of the meeting that there seemed to be an assumption that Sainsbury's planning application would be welcomed in the town. He pointed out that when dealing with a planning application, as had been the case with the Skateboard application, there are a considerable number of issues that councillors have to take into account in making a decision. Clearly in the case of Sainsbury's store there are some major issues that will have to be considered before final decision. He did not want people to think that the Sainsbury application decision was cut and dried because the town council had a pre-application meeting with

Sainsbury. The outcome of this application could potentially have a major impact on the retail sector of Portishead.

Councillor Terry commented that he listened to a whole range of people in the town and when he has to make a decision he tries to make that decision on the range of views expressed to him not simply because certain people have actually been prepared to support a particular project. He added that there are a lot of people who will speak to a councillor in private and express concerns about an issue and who are very reluctant to stand up and announce this publicly.

Councillor Terry made it clear that he would account, as both a town councillor and district councillor, to the electorate who had elected him and in due course next year would account to that electorate, he will explain what he had done and invite them to vote for him again or somebody else. He gets a little fed up when there are quotes in the press and people come along to town council meetings actually saying they know what the people of Portishead think.

Mr Tim Konewko, Cherry Tree Cottage, Battery Lane, raised concerns about the “bullies lane” on the stretch of road going out of the town by McDonalds. He was sure that most residents would have experienced the bullies travelling at high speed on that stretch of the road, pushing in dangerously in front of other users before the bridge. Currently pedestrians also cross at this point when going from Leos across to Homebase (and through the bushes on the central reservation). Without throwing vast amounts of money at it could he suggest that perhaps consideration be given to taking out the lights and replace them with a large traffic island.

Mr Dixon then raised two further points with matters raised by other speakers –

- Junction Combe Road/Avon Way – the technology exists to replace the existing is to have traffic lights. Not ordinary traffic lights. They should normally be red and only turn to green with traffic coming down the hill at reduced speed.
- Councillors – He agreed with a lot of what a previous speaker (Ken Smith) had said. But he did not agree with the part about councillors being unwelcoming, did not listen and were not helpful. This was not the case. When he came along to meetings he took part in public participation they all listened to what he had to say.

Colin of Mar, 48 Gallingle Way, spoke about his neighbour who had seen a VW Golf go careering out of control. He did not know the speed of the vehicle. The car had done a vast amount of damage, some of which is still visible. Something needed to be done to reduce the speed of the traffic in the area of Quay’s Avenue and as the previous speaker had said on Wyndham Way. Again we are waiting for something to happen before we take action. He considered that speed cameras would not overcome the problem as motorists get to know when they are present.

One other point he wished to raise was about Sainsbury and the strength of the company. Where he had lived before a similar development was proposed and the local people fought all they could to prevent Sainsbury, as they did not want the superstore. He agreed with what Councillor Terry had said.

Councillor Miss Stanley explained that she was co-ordinating the travel to school plan for Portishead Primary School and would be looking at the Quays Avenue area. She suggested that a chicane may be more appropriate than speed bumps.

Councillor Pasley explained that speed watch had taken place on Quays Avenue. Speed was recognised as being an issue in this area and a report is being discussed with the Executive Member at North Somerset Council.

Councillor Knight added that in Sweden the locations are regularly published in the local newspapers. As a result motorists take note of the locations and do actually slow down as they are not sure when the checks will take place. She suggested that this might be an option to disclose when a Speed Watch was to take place.

Councillor Stanley advised the meeting that the PACE Car Scheme was shortly to be re-launched. The Scheme is designed to make neighbourhoods a safer place to walk, drive and cycle.

Phil Benn, 17 Mulberry Ave spoke about the Post Office. He was at a loss to understand and suggested that perhaps people were causing the problems as these days there is no need to go the Post Office. Most bills could be paid by direct debit, and for example car tax could be renewed on line.

The Chairman commented that the meeting had been a long one at 2 hours but suggested that it had been successful as so many people had spoken.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm.