



PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 321st ORDINARY MEETING OF PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCIL held on 12th FEBRUARY 2020 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Gardner **Councillors:** Charles, Davey, Goddard, Mason, Slatter and Sterndale.

Councillor Charles joined the meeting at 8.20pm.

IN ATTENDANCE: M Salisbury (Town Clerk). 18 members of the public were present.

A video recording of the public session of the meeting is available on the Town Councils website and Facebook page.

PTC20.186 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (*Agenda Item 1*)

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors Aldridge, Bull, Cartwright, Goddard, Shepperdson, Snaden and Temple.

PTC20.187 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS (*Item 2*)

Cllr Slatter declared a personal interest in relation to item **PTC20.204**

PTC20.188 CHANGE TO ORDER OF AGENDA

The order of the agenda was changed to deal with item 6 before other items.

PTC20.189 TO RECEIVE PRESENTATION/REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS (*Item 6*)

Fairtrade Portishead – Pat Thurston from Fairtrade Portishead, explained it was a relatively new group led by representatives from local shops and faith communities. She explained that Fairtrade is about ensuring that growers and producers in developing countries get a fair price for the goods they produce. The ultimate object of Fairtrade Portishead is to work with local businesses and shops to achieve certification of Portishead as a Fairtrade Town, from the UK Fairtrade Foundation. The group have a new website and Facebook page that explains its goals and objectives. In support of Fairtrade Fortnight (Monday 24 February to Sunday 8 March) it is holding an event on Sunday 1 March at the Waitrose Café with a Nicaraguan coffee farmer as a guest speaker.

She asked for the Council to formally support Fairtrade in Portishead and the Fairtrade Fortnight and requested that a councillor join the steering group. Councillor Sue Mason volunteered to be the nominated councillor for the group.

Resolved – The council supports Fairtrade Portishead and Fairtrade Fortnight. Councillor Mason is the nominated councillor for Fairtrade Portishead. All councillors in favour.

Police Local Beat team – 5 members of the Portishead Beat Team were present. Tony Hussey local beat manager explained the make-up of the Beat team had changed recently and introduced PC Emma Devaney, PCSO Claire Woodland, PCSO Ellie Hicks and PCSO Dan Boulter with apologies from PC Kylie Howard. He explained that overall crime figures for the area had not changed greatly although locations of crime had moved, he provided some security advice and encouraged residents to use local neighbourhood watch schemes.

As a trial for the next 3 months the Beat team will be based in the local community using the Folk hall, library and shops in town as a base, rather than HQ. The locations of the team will be publicised via social media and the Avon and Somerset Police website. The Beat team will put out a monthly newsletter that will be distributed to local groups (including the council and library) and is available to anyone interested. On 15 February a Beat Surgery will be held at Sainsburys between 1pm and 1.30pm to address and local community issues.

It was offered that if the Beat Team wanted to provide any publicity material this could be included on the council website and Facebook page.

NSC Cycle Routes presentation – Ben Searle made a presentation in respect of the North Somerset Council sustainable travel and road safety scheme. The DFT objective is to formulate a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan (LCWIP) across the SW of England and prioritise routes that will most increase walking and cycling. He explained the model being used (DFT propensity to cycle tool www.pct.bike and travel census data) and the potential routes identified in Portishead, for which funding may be available. The presentation shows the routes identified, one route of interest being from Gordano school via the High Street to the new station area with an alternative via Brampton Way, the Vale and Phoenix Way. Noting the possible use of the High Street as a potentially contentious point, as to get the space required some of the road space may need to become one way; which would require a more detailed study. The initial assessment favours a route via Quays Avenue rather than The Vale.

Further information on the survey and consultation is available from the consultations page of the Travelwest website at <https://travelwest.info/projects/transport-consultations> to which there is also a link on the PTC website.

It was noted that PTC is supportive of the general strategy but have some issues with the routes proposed and how these may align with the Neighbourhood Plan that is being formulated. PTC would wish to meet with NSC to discuss and see how plans can be aligned. Ben explained that the consultation is open until 15 March and NSC is looking to finalise proposals in May.

It was agreed to organise a meeting with a couple of PTC councillors (probably Cllr Bull and Aldridge) to discuss further. The public were also encouraged to participate in the consultation.

Public comment was made that consultation questions relative to environment factors were flawed as questions concerning environmental factors between cycling and walking did not link up and so might not give a true impression of what people feel, depending on their perspective as a walker, cyclist or wheel chair user. The uncertainty of plans concerning the railway was also noted.

A copy of the NSC presentation on this item is available on the Portishead Town Council Minutes page

PTC20.190 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Item 3)

Annette Hennessy – Asked if it was planned to reapply for Town Green status at the Lake Grounds. Cllr Gardner confirmed PTC would not be applying for Town Green status at the Lake Grounds.

Annette Hennessy – questioned why the Staffing & Finance Committee minutes could not be found on the website. It was explained that a problem with the website meant that documents could not be posted to that page and as a work around the minutes had been added to the Town Council Minutes page. Work has been initiated to try and resolve some of the website limitations and it was agreed in the interim a note would be added to the Staffing & Finance Committee page to explain the location of the minutes of that committee.

Annette Hennessy – noted she had not had a full response to the questions posed in the last Staffing and Finance Committee minutes concerning the extension of the Development Manager role and what benefits Portishead had seen from that post to obtain finance for the council. She requested that details such as staff budgets and job specifications be put on the website as they were already in the public domain and questioned various aspects, requirements and salary levels for the role in the context of a £100,000 increase in the staff cost budget and precept increase. In respect of the proposal on the agenda to make the role permanent she asked if the position would be re-advertised and why this was being proposed against the background of previous councillor comments that it would not be extended?

Lesley Cottrell – questioned a comment in the minutes of the last meeting at PTC 20.179 that the Neighbourhood Plan survey had been delivered to every family in Portishead, as she had not received a copy. It was explained that the survey (which is now closed) had been distributed via the PTC website/Facebook and a paper copy had been distributed with the NS Times. Lesley identified the problem is that the NS Times is only infrequently delivered to Nore Road. This shortcoming was noted but the council had used the NS Times as a cost-effective delivery method and probably the only solution is to complain to the newspaper, but copies also freely available in the Folk Hall, The Windmill, Co-op and other locations. The survey was also reported in The Resident and there were articles in the local paper. Accordingly, the council had tried to make it widely available to residents with spending a fortune.

Lesley Cottrell – also pointed out that the list of staff on the website needs to be updated and asked what is happening with the drinking water fountain?

Paul Maltby – pointed out the correct date for the next meeting was Wednesday 11th March not the 12th as stated in the Agenda. This correction was acknowledged.

Paul Maltby – asked if it was necessary to exclude the public from item 18 (staff extension of contract). Cllr Gardner explain that matters concerning staff needed to be discussed in private and the reason was for the privacy and protection of council staff. Paul also asked if the permanent position would be re-advertised as a fair and transparent recruitment process, it was again noted that as this was a staffing matter it needed to be considered in private.

Ken Smith – noted that council meetings should be to discuss council business rather than wider issues.

PTC20.191 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES *(item 4)*

It was noted that an email had been received requesting an amendment to the minutes by Mr Earle, to clarify his public participation comments concerning rewilding.

Resolved – the amendment requested by Mr Earle is accepted and with that change the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2020 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

PTC20.192 TO RECEIVE THE CHAIRMANS REPORT *(Item 5)*

Richard Blows, the NSC liaison officer for Portishead (in his free time) presented on a package of consultations that North Somerset Council are undertaking. The process begins on 13th February and opens a 3-month consultation process on five neighbourhood services:

- the future of library services
- garden waste services (collection and composting)
- leisure services
- street cleaning
- parks and open spaces.

It is a significant consultation process to find out the future demands across those 5 services. The main platform for the consultation is the NSC E-consult site, which can be accessed from the NSC website, links will be send out to town councils and paper copies will be available in local libraries. One day consultation events will also be held in libraries across North Somerset. Portishead library will host an event on 12 March. The public can go to events at any location.

Feedback from the consultation will be send back to local organisations and may feed into Neighbourhood Plans. It was noted that there is also a consultation meeting for Portishead in the Somerset Hall on 12 March, which the Town Council will publicise and is happy to co-host and support.

PTC20.193 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM NORTH SOMERSET COUNCILLORS *(item7)*

Cllr Holland – the rewilding consultation responses have been very positive with overall 78% in favour and 71% in favour in specific areas. In Portishead two areas have been removed because of negative response and meetings will be held with residents to discuss alternatives, such as community orchards.

NSC Tree planting events are also being held in Portishead this weekend with over 500 trees (whips) donated by the Woodland Trust being planted. Over the whole of the North Somerset area 5,000 whips will be planted and volunteers are needed to nurture and maintain them over the coming years.

There are also plans to organise a residents' visit to the anaerobic digestion plant.

On a personal level she would like to organise a Portishead Arts Event and would be keen to hear from all artists that would like to support it.

PTC20.194 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCILLORS
(item8)

Cllr Sterndale – the Neighbourhood Plan survey is now closed, we had 509 responses, 173 paper, 280 online, and 56 from Gordano School. Each working group will now look at the responses for their respective areas. The Neighbourhood Plan website <https://www.portisheadplan.uk/> will now be expanded to include more information on the project with a dedicated Facebook and email address being established. The preparation of an application for grant funding has also been started and a steering group has been established to set out the plan objectives.

Cllr Davey – the drinking fountain project is progressing with quotations received. Due to health and safety requirements a water bottle filler is now proposed for outside the Somerset Hall. Local companies have quoted for the filler and installation and so the project continues to move forward.

PTC20.195 CANS (CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU) – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
(item 9)

It was updated that an SLA for one year is now being considered which will enable a review of arrangements to be conducted with a view to entering a 3-year agreement for 2021 to 2023. It proposed that the SLA will be presented to the March meeting.

PTC20.196 NORTH SOMERSET CAR PARKING CONSULTATION (item 10)

Cllr Gardner – presented some slides to update on the NSC car parking consultation explaining that the matter was not so much about car parking as the need to save £150,000 from the NSC budget this year and £220,000 next year. The main proposal affecting Portishead being the introduction of charges at the Roath Road car park and roads around the High Street. Our consultations have shown that 90% are against the proposals and we have made representations to NSC to that effect. The public consultation will start on Monday 17 February and run to 4 March, the delay being due to representations made facilitating a change in the consultation process to consider alternative proposals and solutions.

It may be expected that revised proposals will be produced from the consultation which will then be subject to a statutory consultation period, needed to impose charges. The final package will be debated at the June NSC meeting, with a free vote on the final proposals.

Feedback, so far, from the public meeting, social media and other sources are that a significant majority of people are dissatisfied with the proposals. Various comments received from residents were summarised. The view of Chamber of Commerce being that it would be detrimental to the High Street business and current parking rules need enforcing. A 2012 Chamber survey also showing 93% to 95% were against similar charges at the time.

The business case also appears to present a high level of risk and does not consider the needs of high street users and Neighbourhood Plans for integrated transport. This message has been communicated to NSC and the PTC approach is to reject the proposals. Possible alternatives are that more could be done with enforcement, time limits, yellow lines, zoning car parks for different users or passing back ownership of car parks to Town Councils. PTC also has money in the budget to fund a NSC parking officer.

Questions from the floor:

Q: Will the vote consider towns separately?

A: No, it will be voted on as a package across North Somerset.

Q: Yellow lines around the marina have done good job but the issue is enforcement, and should penalties be higher?

A: We support a parking enforcement officer dedicated to Portishead, but car parking penalties are limited by regulation.

Q: As PTC is against the proposals will all 6 of our district councillors vote against it?

A: The 6 district councillors have written an open letter opposing the charges.

Q: Is ANPR enforcement in use in Portishead at moment?

A: Not at present but that may be an efficient alternative solution.

Q: What is being done with the other towns affected?

A: There is communication with other councils and people are encouraged to talk to other town councillors.

Q: Not all high street businesses are Chamber of Commerce members, several high street traders are not aware of the proposals?

A: There has been no specific notification to business by NSC but the chamber is actively working to address the issue. It was noted that businesses do need to be kept informed.

Q: There have not been answers to all the questions posed at the public meeting?

A: The consultation has not yet started, and its refined scope means that alternatives are being considered. If the points raised at the public meeting remain relevant, they will be collated and included in the consultation response.

It was proposed that the action of PTC will be to respond to the consultation expressing its opposition and setting out alternative proposals. A copy of Cllr Gardner's presentation will be included with the Minutes on the website. The public are also encouraged to participate in the NSC official consultation that starts on Monday.

Resolved – to reject the NSC car parking charges scheme proposed for Portishead and request that North Somerset works with PTC to review and access alternative proposals to assist in achieving the NSC budget shortfall.

A copy of the presentation given by Cllr Gardner on this item is available on the Portishead Town Council Minutes page.

PTC20.197 BT CONSULTATION (item 11)

It was updated that modern style phone boxes that had previous been proposed for purchase can only be used for deliberators and so if was is to go ahead it will need to be done in conjunction with the Lions. The action proposed is to contact the Lions to see if they are interested in taking over the boxes.

PTC20.198 FIRST BUS CONSULTATION (item 12)

It was updated the FirstBus consultation has ended with over 2000 responses. The results of the consultation process are expected to be announced next Tuesday the 18th February. FirstBus will then be running a public discussion session and a separate session with Waverley Court residents.

PTC20.199 NEW TOWN CLERK AS AUTHORISED SIGNATORY (item 13)

To approve the new Town Clerk, Martin Salisbury, as an authorised signatory on the Councils bank accounts as the appointed Proper Officer/Responsible Finance Officer of the Council and to approve the new Clerk as the authorised signatory of the Council in its dealings with HMRC.

Resolved – motion approved. All councillors in favour.

PTC20.200 FINANCES (Month 10 January 2020) (item 14)

To receive and approve the attached schedule of payments and bank reconciliation for January 2020.

Resolved – motion approved. All councillors in favour.

PTC20.201 TERMS OF REFERENCE (item 15)

To approve the attached draft Terms of Reference for all the Council committees.

A proposal to amend the title of the “Recreation and Works” Committee to “Community Matters” and to remove the specific reference to Marina Gardens in the Planning Advisory Group Terms of Reference was moved and seconded.

Resolved – the motion as amended was approved. All councillors in favour.

PTC20.202 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING (item 16)

It was noted the next Town Council meeting is to be held on Wednesday 11 March 2020 at 7.30pm

Public Meeting Closed: 21.34 pm

PTC20.203 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (item 17)

Resolved – pursuant to the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item by reason of the confidential nature of the matter relating to staff members. All councillors in favour.

Cllr Slatter left the meeting.

PTC20.204 STAFF EXTENSION OF CONTRACT (item 18)

The proposal that the post of Development Manager is made permanent was discussed.

Resolved – To make the Development Manager post permanent. All councillors in favour.

Meeting Closed: 10.00 pm

Signed:.....Chairman. Portishead Town Council

Date:.....