



PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 323rd ORDINARY MEETING OF PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCIL held on 27th MAY 2020 at 7.30pm

The meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams with all councillors and public being invited to attend. An audio and video recording published with these minutes and is available on the Town Councils website.

[Vimeo Video Link](#)

PRESENT: Chairman: Gardner **Councillors:** Aldridge, Bull, Charles, Davey, Goddard (joined at 19:37), Holland, Mason, Shepperdson, Slatter, Snaden, and Temple. 12 in total.

IN ATTENDANCE: M Salisbury (Town Clerk). 4 members of the public were present.

PTC20.230 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (*Agenda Item 1*)

Apologises for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Sterndale.

PTC20.231 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS (*Item 2*)

There were none.

PTC20.232 THE CHAIRMANS REPORT (*Item 5*)

A verbal report was received from the Chairman as follows:

- **Coronavirus activities, support, and costs**

It is worth everyone reminding ourselves why we are meeting online and not face to face. We are amid a crisis. There are currently 419 Covid cases in North Somerset and 94 people have died as of 15th May, including of course Portishead residents. We have also had a large spike in cases at Weston General. So, let us take a few seconds to remember those who have died or are still suffering and to wish them a speedy recovery.

On a more positive note, Community spirit is strong in Portishead and the town continues to pull together to weather the Covid-19 pandemic. PTC and North Somerset Together have been working in collaboration with the Portishead Covid support group that has around 50 active volunteers, many of whom are balancing family life and their own lockdown experiences with volunteering, and who have been working tirelessly to help those who cannot leave their homes.

The group has:

- Dealt with circa 750 people on the vulnerable list notified locally, by relatives or via NSC and Central Government
- Carried out 650 shopping and prescription deliveries
- Organised dog walking and phone buddying
- Set up a new phone payment system to allow for volunteers to get reimbursed and people to pay for their shopping
- Liaised with surgeries, dentists, Banks, the post office and local supermarkets
- Worked with Gordano School to distribute visors, Sewing Bee to distribute masks and other items and with Portishead Youth Centre, Food Bank and Local Churches
- For care homes we are continuing to provide ongoing shopping "days", with the Enjoy Church supporting 2 of these with their own volunteer base
- Emergency food box coordination and coordinating needs of donated articles from the likes of Waitrose, donation collection runs for the food bank, as well collections from the food bank to residents that can't get out
- The "What's Open Map" - that's had over 2500 hits now, it hopefully will be less relevant in the coming weeks when things start to reopen in full but has been useful for our local businesses during lock down.
- From the Sewing Bee we have distributed stock items to over 35 care homes and care providers including into the NHS and hospitals in Bristol, that amounted to over 600 individual items! (Not including the visors)

On behalf of the Town Council I would like to say a heartfelt thanks to all the registered volunteers, of course to our key workers, front line staff of all occupations and of course to those who have been quietly looking after their friends or neighbours or just staying safe by following the rules despite the major impact on their lives.

The Covid response has of course had a major impact on staffing and budget with additional costs incurred to date of c£10,700. This is in addition to the normal cost of staff now working on the Covid response of c£11,600. Accordingly, the total cost of the response to date is around £22,300, which does not include lost hall hire revenues of c£3,500 per month.

We have been successful with a grant application for £30,000 which will cover some of the lost hall revenues but were unfortunately unsuccessful with a grant application to a fund for the South West created by Western Power to cover Covid support costs.

Over the weekend, HMG released High Street Regeneration funds. NSC Officers are working on a plan of how to deal with this. We have asked to be included in plans and are happy to support an across North Somerset Approach.

Finally, we are not out of the woods yet, as the recent spike at Weston shows, but we look forward to working with all of you to make sure Portishead recovers as quickly as possible. We will be coming to discuss ideas about recovery shortly.

On a positive note I would like to mention Ken Smith, one of our regular contributors at the Town Council, Ken has had a nasty bout of pneumonia but is now recovering. We wish him a speedy recovery.

- **NSC Local Plan and PTC Neighbourhood Plans**

The Government has imposed a target on North Somerset of building 20,000 houses over the years 2023-38. To be blunt, it is an impossible target to meet in a district with the sea on one side, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), several SSI's, a large floodplain and significant green belt land. To meet the target, we would need to build 1350 houses a year, a number only achieved once in the last 40 years NSC has now lobbied both MP's and central government asking for the target to be reassessed.

Cllr Holland and I also attended an interesting meeting where we learned that NSC only needs circa 7000 houses to meet projected local population growth. We learned how biased the market is in favour of big developers and the Government target is about as much about creating economic growth as providing houses to live in. An initial consultation is coming out soon to ask for people's hopes and thoughts for the future. There will be many new things to consider post Covid – building homes with inbuilt space for home working, local production units, the consideration of the vital importance of our urban and local green spaces, the impact of the collapse in the need for office space, the acceleration of retail online etc. Plenty to consider so watch out for the consultation.

Our Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is progressing slowly during lockdown. All workstreams have reached a point where they have a bunch of issues and ideas provided by residents and the working groups but, because none of us have actually produced a NP Plan before, we now need to get some external help to put together some options for people to consider. We have spoken to three external planning companies to see how they can best help us through the journey. We are currently evaluating responses. – it has been a very useful process and we have learned a lot and have found 3 companies that could potentially help us. These firms specialise in NP production (21 and 30 respectively NP's for two of them) as well as High Street regeneration projects.

- **Deferral of Annual Town Council and Annual Residents Meetings**

In common with many other local authorities we have deferred the Annual Residents Meeting as although regulations have been made for other Town Council meetings to be held remotely the Annual Residents Meeting must still be held in physically and that is not possible at the current time. It is planned, conditions permitting to hold the meeting in September.

We are not holding an Annual Town Council (TC) meeting. This an internal meeting that deals with the election of chairs and committees. Given the crisis it not a priority and we are keeping chairs and committees the same for the time being. The obligation to hold an annual TC meeting was removed by recent Covid legislation until May 2021.

Cllr Mason mentioned that normally as part of the Annual TC Meeting it is confirmed who will represent the Council on external groups and will provide a list so this can be confirmed. It was considered that representatives would remain unchanged unless there was a reason to appoint different Councillors.

- **Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's)**

NSC are reviewing district wide Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) that cover anti-social behaviours in certain defined areas such as public amenity land and play areas. The use and scope of PSPO's are currently being reviewed and public consultation is expected during the summer (July to September).

NSC have produced an interactive map of PSPOs that can be viewed at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/community-safety-crime/public-space-protection-orders/public-space-protection-orders/>

It has been confirmed that over the past 3 years there have been 15 PSPO incidents reported in Portishead (13 relating to dogs mainly in the Marina area and 2 for general littering).

PTC20.233 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION *(Item 3)*

Annette Hennessy – was concerned about the closure of the Esplanade at the Lake Grounds and particularly the lack of emergency vehicle access caused by the installation of posts and the lack of disabled parking. She had been in contact with NSC and was pleased to report that posts had now been removed to enable emergency access but that adequate, accessible, and level disabled parking was still lacking. Furthermore, in her opinion the rationale for closure of the Esplanade for safety and social distancing reasons was not necessary as there is adequate space for all users. The closure has moved congestion and created parking and social distancing problems in other areas of the Lake Grounds and so the rationale should be reconsidered.

She was also concerned about the lack of consultation and poor communication around the closure of the Esplanade that was not helped by the Town Council and that lessons could be learnt. She felt that various statements implied all the onus for decisions was on NSC with no PTC involvement were inaccurate and that they did not make clear that PTC had discussed the matter with an NSC Executive Member. PTC statements that closure was likely to be permanent and there would be a consultation were also inaccurate as the NSC Executive has said there were no moves to make it permanent or have a consultation. The only permanent change may be to install gates to restrict access at certain times such as for high tides and storms. The inaccurate and confusing statements were not corrected by those Councillors involved in discussion with NSC and other Councillors, who also commented, were not well informed.

Communication and comments made about NSC not being a mature organisation were also not conducive to a good working relationship. District councillors should have been better informed and able to communicate more quickly.

The questions she had posted on Face Book and would still like answers too being:

- Who are the members of the PTC Transport Working group?
- How many meetings informal or formal did the Town Council, the Transport Working Group or members of PTC have with NSC Executive and Officers on the bollard decision before it was implemented?
- How many meetings did PTC have on the subject separately to NSC and how was a resolution made on approval for the works to go ahead?
- How many meetings did Cllrs Charles and Gardner have as District Councillors on the subject?

Cllr Gardner said he would take the question away and get back to Annette. He apologised for any inaccurate information or inconvenience caused at this time of heightened stress.

Cllr Bull confirmed he was one of the four town councillors who met at the Lake Grounds with the NSC Executive Member and that the emergency services were there, asked and confirmed there was no access issue. PTC had asked and NSC had agreed to put in extra disabled places, they have just taken a long time to do it. There was also discussion at that

time about whether it was a good idea to make it permanent. The actual changes were done differently to those that had been discussed and the reference to maturity of communication between the Councils highlights that changes to plans were not fully communicated. PTC had suggested that consultation should occur before any changes were made permanent and that is still PTC's view if permanent closure is proposed.

PTC20.234 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES *(item 4)*

Resolved – the minutes of the Ordinary Town Council meeting held on 11th March 2020 are confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman. All councillors present in favour.

Resolved – the minutes of the remote Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 2nd April 2020 are confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.235 REPORTS FROM NORTH SOMERSET COUNCILLORS *(item7)*

Cllr James - provided a verbal report that he had been working with Cllr Don Davis to save the X5 bus, in response to the public petition. The route from Weston Super Mare to Portishead having gone out to tender. Cllr Shepperdson questioned the speed of the service and he confirmed that an express service is being recommended but ultimately that will be a commercial decision for the operator.

He is also trying to improve Youth engagement and is writing an article to encourage them to engage in the consultation and he will be in contact with PTC to discuss how this can be included as part of Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plan work.

WECA is also working on the economic recovery plan that will be important post Covid for our area and he will feedback of that in future, and it is encouraging that Portishead businesses such as Viper are engaged as well as Portishead Together and PTC officers in responding to the crisis.

In connection with communication he was pleased that PTC is reviewing its social media policy and it is important that public pages are used by the Council without any political input to the Council website and Facebook pages. A recommendation is that responsibility for publication should rest with a Council Officer and a social media protocol should be implemented. He also considered the website statement concerning lessons learnt from the Esplanade changes was inflammatory and that NSC and PTC need to work together in respect of such issues and emergency planning. The statement made around the Esplanade should be amended or removed to constructively engage with NSC.

Cllr Gardner informed that was not the intention of the statement and apologised if it had caused concern, it was intended to highlight the need for a 'hand shake' between the two councils on visible public issues such as the Esplanade.

Cllr Goddard considered there had been an error in the communications and that an apology should be made so that we can all move on. Cllr Temple considered that in hindsight it was an internal communication issue for PTC, rather than an issue with NSC. Cllr Gardner confirmed the statement would be removed. Cllr Shepperdson noted that there had been big strides forward in working between the two Councils but that it was the job of PTC to collaborate with NSC to represent the interests of Portishead residents. She agreed with the removal of the statement.

PTC20.236 REPORTS FROM PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCILLORS (item8)

Cllr Davey – updated on the Folk Hall works, with two of the displays in the heritage area cabinet having been completed. There is a proposal to put a Portishead history timeline around the hall with heritage material at the back of the hall which could be accessible to heritage groups on Sundays. Redecoration of the hall (last done in 1981) will also shortly take place. Cllr Mason asked what will happen to items already on the walls. Cllr Davey confirmed they would be included in the timeline or displayed at the back of the hall and that nothing would be displaced. The objective being to make this a special place for the heritage of the town. It was agreed that Cllr Mason would be consulted with respect to the plan of where items will be displayed.

PTC20.237 FINANCES (Month 12 2019-20) MARCH 2020 (Item 9)

Resolved – the schedule of payments and the bank reconciliation for March 2020 is approved. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.238 FINANCES (Month 1 2020-21) APRIL 2020 (item 10)

Resolved – the schedule of payments and the bank reconciliation for April 2020 is approved. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.239 APPROVAL OF ASSET REGISTER at 31 March 2020 (item 11)

Resolved – the asset register at 31 March 2020 is approved. All councillors present in favour.

Cllr Mason considered it would be useful to know the locations of bus shelters and public seats and add those to the register. It was noted the register had been updated for assets purchased in the last two years and that a project was underway to confirm the location of all assets as various location details were held that were not always accurate.

In response to a public question it was also confirmed that the asset register will be published on the website with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) in due course.

PTC20.240 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20 (item 12)

Resolved – Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2020 being section 1 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.241 APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2019/20 (item 13)

Resolved – the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020 and the Accounting Statement being section 2 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) as prepared and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer is approved and signed by the Chairman. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.242 COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2020-21 (item 14)

Resolved – the proposed meeting schedule for 2020-21 is approved and will be published. *All councillors present in favour.*

Cllr Mason noted that normally there is a councillor internal budget meeting in November/December. It was confirmed that budget working meetings would take place, but these are not on the list of public meetings, the budget will however be presented at a Town Council meeting in December or January for approval.

Resolved – the proposed changes to staff and committee delegated authorities as set out in the report are approved. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.243 NEW GRANT CONSIDERATION AND AWARD PROCESS *(item 15)*

Resolved – the recommendations set out in the report and summarised in the Agenda for management of the PTC grant application and approved process are approved. *All councillors present in favour.*

Resolved – the Community Matters Grants Working Party, comprising Cllr Aldridge, Bull and Mason is formed and will consider and approve grant application forms and guidance. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.244 AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE *(item 16)*

Resolved – the changes to the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference as set out in the schedule presented to the meeting be approved. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.245 SUPPLEMENTAL STANDING ORDERS re Covid-19 MEASURES *(item 17)*

Resolved – the Supplemental Standing Orders be adopted and added to the Council Standing Orders. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.246 APPROVAL OF TOWN COUNCIL INSURANCE *(item 18)*

Resolved – the termination of the long-term agreement (LTA) with Zurich and entry into a new LTA with BHIB is approved. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.247 APPROVAL OF HALL LED LIGHTING *(item 19)*

Resolved – the quotation of supplier B and proceeding with this work is approved. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.248 APPROVAL OF FOLK HALL REDECORATION AND REPAIRS *(item 20)*

Resolved – the quotation of supplier A and proceeding with this work is approved. Paint and consumables to be purchased by PTC at cost, in addition to the quotation. *All councillors present in favour.*

PTC20.249 HALLS LEGIONELLA SAFETY INSPECTIONS *(item 21)*

Resolved – the quotation of supplier B and proceeding with this work is approved. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.250 NALC/ALCA & OTHER ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS (item 22)

Resolved – to approve the continued membership of NALC/ALCA at a cost of £2,446.94 and other associations as listed in the report for the 2020/21 year. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.251 GAS AND ELECTRIC SUPPLY CONTACTS (item 23)

Resolved – to approve the entry into new supply contracts as set out in the Agenda. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.252 APPROVAL OF Covid-19 DELEGATED AUTHORITY DECISIONS (item 24)

Resolved – to approve the delegated authority decisions taken as set out in the presented list of expenditures. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.253 TENNIS CLUB ‘Pay & Play’ GRANT APPLICATION (item 25)

The Pay & Play proposal set out in the report was discussed and amongst a number of comments some views were expressed that the amount of money involved was not commensurate with the likely expected benefit to community.

Resolved – not to approve the proposal as presented in the report. Cllrs Gardner, Slatter, Shepperdson, Holland, Snaden, Charles, Goddard, Aldridge being against the proposal and Cllr Davey, Mason, Temple, Bull being for the proposal as presented.

Resolved – to form a working party of Cllr Shepperdson, Mason, Goddard and Temple to hold further discussion with the Tennis Club to consider a revised proposal. All councillors present in favour.

PTC20.254 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING (item 26)

It was noted the next Ordinary Town Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 17th June 2020 at 7.30pm

Meeting Closed: 9.40pm

Signed:.....

Chairman. Portishead Town Council

Date:.....