

## Porlock High Street Support Group

### INFORMAL MEETING MINUTES

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7PM

Remote Virtual Informal Meeting via Zoom

*The Meeting was digitally recorded and is available at*

*<https://porlockparishcouncil.org/phssg/>*

**Group Members Present:** Cllr D McCanlis (Porlock Parish Council and PHSSG Chair)  
T Davies (Porlock High Street Traders representing Bramdowns)  
S Shorten & M Tesouro (Representing Stacked Wonky)  
L Thornton (PHSSG Administrator, Minute Taker and representing The Bagatelle)  
Cllr W Rayner (Porlock Parish Council)

**Members of Public Present:** None

#### 1. APOLOGIES

J Dyer (Porlock High Street Traders representing Jana Henrie)  
R White (Porlock High Street Trader representing Churchgate Gallery)

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST DISPENSATION

None.

#### 3. TO RECEIVE ANY COMMUNICATION OR ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Duncan McCanlis explained that we had received an email from Terry Gable regarding taking the flags down which Lesley Thornton would discuss in her A&F report, and correspondence as circulated to the Group from the PVTa about Late Night Shopping which Lesley Thornton would discuss as an A&F proposal. Duncan also explained that SWT were proposing to extend the contract for the ETCRFund which the PHSSG were delivering to the end of March 2022 which would give more time for projects like Signage to be completed. Any new contract would have to be signed off by PPC.

#### 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Duncan McCanlis noted that Elke Winzer, our Events Manager, had given her apologies and that William Collier, our contact at SWT, had suggested he might join the meeting but had not managed to make it.

#### 5. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM L THORNTON REGARDING PROGRESS SO FAR

Lesley Thornton asked if everyone had received and read the paperwork emailed to the Group last week, including her report to PPC, the budget analysis and the original IP showing what the Group intended to deliver at the start. Lesley confirmed that the budget analysis showed that most of the projects were either delivered, well under way or were planned to start soon. She also felt that much of what was on the original IP had or would be delivered on time. Sanitising stations as included on the IP for A&F had been dropped due to a lack of interest from traders, and P&P and E&A had not benefited from the engagement

they had hoped from the Visitor Centre/PVTA so were unable to deliver everything on the IP. It was acknowledged that P&P had therefore used their funds to manage the newly created website developed to support High Street Traders.

Duncan McCanlis and Lesley Thornton explained that they had hoped to ask William Collier for clarity about how budgets on the IP could be moved if he had attended the meeting. Duncan agreed to send an email asking for this clarity after the meeting.

Lesley Thornton explained that some questions had been asked about progress and spending by PPC and that the PPC Chair seemed to be using the percentage already spent on a project to suggest the percentage to which a project had been delivered. She felt this was unhelpful as this would suggest that the Village Hall flower display was not finished as not all the invoices for the work had been received and paid, when in fact it was finished. Lesley also explained that, whilst only 7% of the Signage budget had been spent, probably 85% of the work required had been completed but until signs were ordered and paid for, expenditure would not reflect this.

Will Rayner asked whether the PHSSG could decide how the budgets were spent without further 'sign off' from PPC. Duncan McCanlis agreed to raise this question with William Collier as well.

*Duncan McCanlis suggested items 6 & 7 could be dealt with together for each Project Group.*

## **6. & 7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT AND DISCUSS AND APPROVE ANY PROPOSAL FROM EACH PROJECT GROUP**

- **Appearance & Functionality of the High Street**

Lesley Thornton confirmed that there had been excellent feedback on FB and from the Village Hall Committee regarding the statement floral display and the platform built by Michael Limb. Lesley added that the stone worker she had hoped would complete the stonework had been too busy so she had collected stone with her husband and Michael Limb had done the stonework himself. This may have taken him slightly longer and may increase the cost a little but the end result was excellent.

Lesley Thornton confirmed that due to all the hard work of Anita Lovell and her team of volunteers, supported by Jackie Jago, 30 flags had been put up throughout the High Street by Lesley, her husband, Danny and Maurice & Pat Ward.

Lesley Thornton explained that she had received an email from Terry Gable who suggested that the flags should now be taken down as the season had finished and normally the bunting, etc. put up for the Carnival would be taken down at this time. Lesley confirmed that she had suggested that, as so much effort had gone into making the flags and getting them up and they had only been on display for a couple of weeks, she was not keen to take them down so soon but would raise this at the meeting.

Lesley Thornton confirmed that Denise Sage's team were putting the trees up the weekend of the Christmas Fayre on 27<sup>th</sup> November and she felt it would be sensible to combine efforts and take the flags down as the trees went up.

Tim Davies agreed, adding that as so much time had been invested by Anita Lovell in making the flags and she was still sewing flags that were still being ordered by other shops and premises, they should definitely be left in place until the trees went up. He added that we were trying to extend the season.

Sarah Shorten agreed, adding that taking the flags down now might suggest Porlock was then closed for business. Will Rayner and Mel agreed. It was felt the decision may be one for the High Street Traders as well.

**It was, therefore, unanimously agreed that the flags should stay up until the Xmas trees replaced them and that the TOP WhatsApp group would be used to get the views of the traders.**

Lesley Thornton explained that at the last meeting the Group had approved a budget of £1200 to buy the lights, etc. suggested by Malcolm McCoy and the rechargeable batteries, chargers and supports requested by Denise Sage. Lesley explained that she had now received an email from Denise Sage explaining that rechargeable batteries were not suitable and that Denise had her own funds to pay for the trees, so would no longer require the PHSSG to purchase the trees or batteries. Lesley added that Denise Sage had suggested we could fund some additional LED mains lights but Denise did not yet have permission from any high street traders to supply the electricity, so that was on hold.

Lesley Thornton explained that she had suggested to Duncan McCanlis that the PHSSG should approach the PVTA to ask if we could be involved and help fund Late Night Shopping. She confirmed that Duncan had written to Clare Gladstone, the PVTA Chair, and Clare's reply had been received and this correspondence had been forwarded on to the Group. Lesley explained that the PVTA indicated that the event normally cost about £1000 but that £200 was left in the kitty from 2019 due to a cancellation, so they needed £800 to fund the event. The PVTA were due to write to traders to request £30 to cover the cost of staging Late Night Shopping and if the PHSSG could fund £400 of that cost, they would only ask for £15 from each trader, or, if the PHSSG could fund £800 of the cost, they would not have to ask any trader to pay anything. Lesley Thornton, therefore, wanted to propose that £800 from the budget of £1200 set aside for Christmas be used to fund Late Night Shopping.

Will Rayner agreed that Traders should not be asked to pay for the event and it should be funded by the PHSSG to support the Traders.

Sarah Shorten questioned if the PHSSG should fund an event that they did not have input into, adding that the Events PG had worked hard to build a relationship with the traders and would they be able to engage with the event if organised by the PVTA. Sarah also felt £800 was too large a sum.

Lesley Thornton confirmed that a total spend of £1000 for Late Night Shopping was comparable with the last pop-up event and that we were funding other community group projects through A&F even though we did not necessarily have a say in how the funding was spent. Lesley confirmed, however, that the PHSSG could not just give the money and that we would have to pay performers directly by invoice. It was noted that in the past cash contributions from traders were used to pay performers by cash but that cash transactions would not be appropriate if the event was funded by the PHSSG and this was understood by the PVTA.

Duncan McCanlis explained that his letter to the PVTA had committed the Group to input but that this could demonstrate that the PHSSG is not into fighting battles with people. He added that this would specifically support the Traders and, if approved, would offer an olive branch to village organisations demonstrating co-operative work as best for Porlock. Duncan appreciated the concerns raised about funding to an event/project that we have very little say over but confirmed that would have been the case with Denise's group/Light Up Porlock.

Will Rayner and Sarah Shorten suggested we should ask what the PVTA plans were and to ask to be part of the decision-making process. Sarah also suggested we should ask how many traders normally paid and how the budget is set and would want the PHSSG to support individual traders.

Duncan McCanlis offered to write to Clare Gladstone, if the funding is approved, to ask what are the PVTA plans for Late Night Shopping so the PHSSG can do something else to complement. Sarah Shorten re-emphasised the need for consultation between the Traders and the PVTA about what they want for Late Night Shopping. Sarah also felt we should ask how much they normally receive from Traders and cover that cost rather than simply offer a set amount.

Tim Davies suggested we could invest more in the event to make it more of a Christmas Festival. Tim added that we needed to have that conversation with the PVTA and Traders to make it a bigger festival given we have the funds available.

Duncan McCanlis explained that he felt TOP would be able to have input into events like Late Night Shopping in future but this year the event was held by the PVTA. Mel Tesouro was asked to comment and she suggested we could help initiate that input this year and empower the Traders if we explained to the PVTA the need to communicate, to continue the collaborative work we had started with our events.

Duncan McCanlis suggested a middle ground offering £400 to fund the PVTA activity, leaving funds for the PHSSG to fund other activities but in full agreement with what the PVTA were planning, confirming that Late Night Shopping is the PVTA's event. Sarah Shorten did not feel Events could complement Late Night Shopping in that way and preferred to cover Traders cost's once they were clarified by the PVTA.

Sarah Shorten suggested the funding be approved on the basis that the PHSSG funded Late Night Shopping on behalf of the Trader capped to a maximum figure to be decided, that the PVTA clarified the maths for their spending budget for due diligence, that the message that the PHSSG are funding the event is made clear, and to encourage Traders to engage with the PVTA as they have with the PHSSG through our events and that we can add more for individual Traders where necessary. Will Rayner added that the entertainment had to be on the whole High Street and not just centred on the Visitor Centre. Lesley Thornton advised that the PVTA had already given the PHSSG an assurance that they would make Traders aware that the PHSSG had funded the event so no trader had to pay.

***Will Rayner proposed that the PHSSG offer to fund the PVTA's Late Night Shopping event to £800, asking the PVTA to explain what they are planning to spend the money on, with the proviso that the PHSSG may wish to fund more if felt necessary. Duncan McCanlis added that in addition the PHSSG are giving the money on the understanding that the traders are not asked to contribute.***

Duncan confirmed that the proposal passed to the PVTA would be, 'we offer 800 pounds. We ask them to let us know what's happening. They will invoice us for whatever it is that they want us to pay for, and that we're giving this money on the understanding that the traders will not be asked to contribute to late night shopping.

**The Group unanimously agreed to the proposal.**

Sarah then asked that the proposal should include that the PVTA tell the Traders that we are funding their contribution but Lesley advises that the PVTA have already given us their assurance in writing that they will do that from the circulated correspondence from Clare Gladstone.

Duncan advises that he will work out the exact wording with Lesley of an email proposing what we would like to offer the PVTA which everyone will have the chance to confirm is correct before it is sent to the PVTA on Friday.

*Sarah Shorten explained that she needed to leave soon so Lesley Thornton asked if item 9 could be discussed before she left.*

Lesley explained that the PPC Clerk had advised that, in order to ratify and legalise the decisions taken since 7<sup>th</sup> May, the PHSSG needed to have a full public meeting in person (not via Zoom).

It was agreed with Sarah Shorten that the next meeting should be a face-to-face meeting on a Wednesday evening, the exact date to be confirmed with Mel Tesouro on Sarah's behalf in item 9.

- **Events & Activities**

Sarah Shorten thanked everyone for helping to put on the September pop-up event adding that the family atmosphere had been well appreciated by residents and visitors.

Sarah Shorten confirmed that Elke would be managing the next two pop-up events with her help, themed as 'Wellbeing' on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October and 'Retail' in November.

*Sarah Shorten left the meeting at 8.24pm.*

- **Outdoor Seating PG**

Duncan McCanlis explained that 5 benches had been ordered through the EU Welcome Back fund and a further 3 were being discussed with St Dubricius Church having suggested the same oak benches rather than the park benches originally agreed. The benches for St Dubricius Church would be funded from the ETCRFund.

Duncan explained he had met with Michael Limb about the restructuring of the Doverhay car park walls to create two seats and they had completed the required risk assessment paperwork. Duncan confirmed that Michael Limb had provided proper quotes fully researched and the cost had risen from the original suggested budget of £400 to £580. Lesley Thornton confirmed that the original budget of £400 was held by A&F.

***Duncan McCanlis proposed a budget of £580 with £400 funded by A&F and £180 funded by Outdoor Seating to create the two seats on the walls at Doverhay car park, seconded by Lesley Thornton and unanimously agreed.***

- **Promotion & Publicity PG and Porlock Traders Group**

Will Rayner explained that the contracted website manager, James Pravato, was continuing to develop the website to provide a high SEO structure and that the main aim of the website was to support High Street Traders. He confirmed that James Pravato was planning to contact traders and help them set up on Google Business and to set up a TOP meeting next month. Tim Davies suggested Bramdowns could host this if in the evening.

Will acknowledged that the launch was running late but was confident the extra time would deliver a very high quality product. Will asked if anyone else would like to be sent the ten page report on the website which had been shared with Duncan McCanlis and Lesley Thornton. There were no requests.

- **Signage PG**

Lesley Thornton confirmed that she had sent requests for quotes for the road signs to SCC Traffic Management and Active Signs, copied to Mel Tesouro, and they were awaiting replies. Her & Mel were also researching other online suppliers to compare prices. Lesley explained that she was concerned that the budget set for signage, based on the quotes originally provided by David Hancock, may not be enough and that she would like the Group to consider agreeing to transfer unused funds from A&F to Signage if necessary. Lesley added that Signage was very much related to the Functionality of the High Street so this would seem appropriate. She would be seeking approval to do this from SWT as well.

Lesley Thornton explained that she had received concerns via email regarding people being directed via the Drang to and from the Recreation Ground as the person concerned felt the lanes in the Drang too narrow.

Duncan McCanlis confirmed he had also been approached about this in person. Both Duncan and Lesley had suggested directing pedestrians via Parsons Street with no pavement may not be preferred on safety

grounds. Duncan added that he had spoken to the Recreation Ground about funding a ramp to one side of the steps to improve access for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

- **Events & Activities**

Mel Tesouro confirmed that another Events meeting was needed asap to discuss the October pop-up as the previous one on the 31<sup>st</sup> August had been somewhat overtaken by the September event.

Will Rayner confirmed that Louise was happy to help with the poster but, as they were currently very busy, could they provide more detailed information of what was required from the start.

Duncan added that the Church has stipulated that any banner to go on the railings must not exceed 4ft in width and should be 2ft or preferably less in height and that this may affect the design of the banner.

- **Porlock Traders Group**

Duncan McCanlis confirmed that he and Elke Winzer would be going round on Friday talking to traders about ideas for the upcoming events, adding them live to the TOP WhatsApp group, and would mention the TOP meeting with James.

- **Admin**

Lesley Thornton explained that Zoom costs may diminish if they moved to face-to-face meetings but there would then be the cost of hiring a hall. Lesley also suggested that the Admin budget may have to be adjusted if there was an extension until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

## **8. OTHER MATTERS ARISING FOR DISCUSSION**

There were no other matters raised

## **9. TO AGREE TO MEET FACE TO FACE PUBLICLY TO RATIFY DECISIONS MADE SINCE MAY 2021**

It was agreed to meet Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm in the Small Hall at the Village Hall if available, having agreed that 6<sup>th</sup> October was too close to the next event and 13<sup>th</sup> October clashed with the PPC meeting.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS**

It was agreed that the next full PHSSG meeting would be the public meeting Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm in the Small Hall at the Village Hall if available. Lesley Thornton would check with the Village Hall, book and email the Group to confirm.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm