

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the  
**CARAVAN PARK COMMITTEE** held at  
the **TOWN HALL** on **MONDAY, 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**SEPTEMBER 2005** at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor G.M. Suttle – Chairman.  
Councillor C.R. Bright  
Councillor Mrs. J.A. Farrow  
Councillor Mrs. C. Gainsborough  
Councillor A.H. Miller (Town Mayor)  
Councillor Mrs. J.D. Wheeldon

Also in attendance:- Mr. A. Leeson – Town Clerk  
Mr. A. O’Niel - Acting Restaurant Manager  
Mrs M. Watson - Waitress

1. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for his inability to attend the Meeting was received from Councillor Trite.

2. **RESTAURANT BUSINESS PLAN**

The Chairman introduced Mr A. O’Niel, acting restaurant manager, and Mrs M. Watson, waitress. Mr O’Niel then updated members on the decision to close the restaurant from Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September, until further notice. He explained that this decision was taken for a number of reasons, most important of which was a shortage of properly trained staff. A number of procedural problems had also been identified since the departure of the Facility Manager.

Councillors then questioned Mr O’Niel about his background, experience, references and recent work at the restaurant. The details of the closure notice and the number of cancellations at the restaurant were discussed. Mr O’Niel also presented details of the vending machine contracts that had been re-negotiated.

Mr O’Niel raised the issue of design faults at the restaurant and discussions that he had had with a representative from Leisure Concepts. Councillor Bright questioned whether this conflicted with the Committee’s existing approach to the snagging list. The Town Clerk clarified the matter, stating that Mr O’Niel was identifying new items to be added to the existing list.

A proposed advertising campaign was introduced by Mr O’Niel, including the preparation of a direct mailing to be distributed in the local newspaper. Details were given of a proposed re-opening night in early November, by which time he anticipated that he would have a full compliment of staff.

Finally, Mr O’Niel raised the issue of his salary and set-out his wish for a three-member management team, designed to ensure that a manager was on duty whenever the restaurant was open.

Mr O’Niel and Mrs Watson left the meeting at 5.30 p.m.

The Committee then discussed Mr O’Niel’s business plan in depth. Concern was expressed that decisions about re-opening had already been taken, without first consulting the Committee. The importance of acquiring full

references for any new restaurant manager, prior to their appointment, was also stressed. The amount of pressure placed on the Town Clerk and Town Hall staff by the current management structure was also noted with concern.

The financial implications of keeping the restaurant open over the winter period were debated and two principle options were identified. These were either to keep the restaurant open on a 5-day a week basis and a limited number of staff, or to keep the restaurant closed until the start of the 2006/07 summer season.

After further discussion Councillor Bright PROPOSED, Councillor Wheeldon SECONDED and it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to recommend:

That, on economic grounds, and as a result of ongoing staffing issues, the Swanage Bay View Restaurant is to remain closed until the beginning of the 2006/07 summer season.

It was further agreed that the Town Clerk attempt to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Town Council later that evening in order to discuss the above resolution.

The meeting closed at 6.55 p.m.

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