

Minutes of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the Swanage
Town Council held at the Town Hall, Swanage on
MONDAY, 14th DECEMBER 2009 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M.W. Pratt (Town Mayor) – Chairman

Councillor C.R. Bright

Councillor L. Gloyn-Cox

Councillor Mrs. G.A. Marsh

Councillor Mrs. A. Patrick

Councillor S. Poultney

Councillor G.M. Suttle

(until 12.15 p.m.)

Councillor M. Whitwam

Public Participation Time

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, 3 members of the public attended the Meeting.

MRS. L. HAINES referred to the proposals to install additional facilities at the Skate Park, and highlighted the need to complete the ground works so that bids for funding could be progressed. It was noted that the sum of £11,000 towards the cost of these works had been included in the Council's Capital Programme which was due to be considered later in the Meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Audley, Hadley and Trite.

2. **BEACH GARDENS – OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

(a) **Grant of Leases**

Further to Minute No. 137 of the Council Meeting held on 27th April 2009, consideration was again given to the granting of leases at Beach Gardens. Business plans had been submitted from the Swanage Tennis Club and the Swanage Bowls Club and these were discussed in detail.

During the lengthy debate, concerns were raised regarding the pavilion, public access to the toilet facilities, and general maintenance of the grounds, hedges and trees.

It was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Bright, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the matter be deferred for consideration later
in the Meeting after the Estimates had been considered.

3. **ANNUAL ESTIMATES REPORT**

(a) **Grants and Donations**

Before consideration of the grants and donations, the Town Clerk explained that, in many instances, although a direct financial contribution is not made, the Council supports local organisations by the provision of facilities and services.

Having regard to the need for prudence, it was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Bright, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That consideration of the requests for funding, as contained in Appendix C of the Estimates Report, be deferred until later in the Meeting after the main Estimates had been considered.

(b) **Scale of Charges 2010/11**

A brief update on the Scale of Charges 2010/11 was presented for information. Some charges had been determined by the appropriate Committees, and some issues were in need of further consideration. It was noted that a report on the scale of charges would be presented to the Estimates Meeting to be held on 25th January 2010.

(c) **Draft Estimates 2010/11**

The Clerk presented the Draft Estimates for 2010/11, together with a comprehensive Report covering the following issues (copies had been circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting).

1. Overview and Summary of Major Issues.
2. Budget Monitoring and Financial Control.
3. Income and Expenditure.
4. Accounting Policies and Pricing.
5. Section 137, Grants and Donations.
6. Scale of Charges.
7. Capital Works Programme.

In presenting the Report, the Clerk emphasised the importance for Members to consider the Council's overall financial position, namely a projected Net Surplus for 2009/10 of £14,465 which when added to a brought forward deficit balance of £76,850 gave rise to an overall Revenue Reserve deficit balance of £62,385.

Members were aware that monies received from the disposal of the Holiday Park were ring fenced as capital and could not be used for revenue purposes. Discussion ensued regarding the initial projected deficit and the influence that the actions of the District Auditor had had on the Council's overall financial position i.e. reduced income from caravan sales, and increased expenditure on legal and audit fees.

This deficit balance would be reflected in the level of precept to be levied for the forthcoming year. The urgent need to give detailed consideration to the services provided by the Council, and the cost of delivering these services, was acknowledged.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the matter be deferred for consideration by the Working Group i.e. Town Mayor and Councillors Gloyn-Cox, Poultney and Suttle and report to the Estimates Meeting to be held on 25th January 2010.

4. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11**

A schedule of the Council's unapproved capital programme had been circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting. The schedule listed all anticipated future capital projects, and from this schedule a list of priority schemes had been drawn up.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Gloyn-Cox and seconded by the Town Mayor:-

That the Priority List identified from the Capital Programme for 2010/11 amounting to £256,800 be approved.

Upon being put to the Meeting SIX Members voted IN FAVOUR, of the Proposition, ONE Member voted AGAINST and there was ONE ABSTENTION, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

Consideration was then given to the priority list of repairs and maintenance for 2010/11, (to be funded from the "Repairs and Renewals" account), amounting to £42,500.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Marsh, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Priority List of Repairs and Maintenance for 2010/11, amounting to £42,500, be approved and that officers be authorised to prepare detailed options and costings for the works, as appropriate.

A Monitoring Statement for Capital Expenditure 2009/10 was submitted. It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by the Town Mayor, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Monitoring Statement of Capital Expenditure 2009/10 be approved.

5. **BEACH GARDENS**

Further to Minute No. 2 (a) of the Meeting, consideration was again given to the proposed lease options for the facilities at Beach Gardens. Concern was expressed regarding the viability of entering into three separate leases for the tennis courts, pavilion and bowling green. It was proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by Councillor Mrs Patrick:-

That the Town Council agrees to lease the tennis courts to Swanage Tennis Club, provided that assurance is given that a joint lease with Swanage Bowls Club will be entered into in respect of the pavilion as soon as practicable.

Upon being put to the Meeting, THREE Members voted IN FAVOUR, THREE AGAINST and there was ONE ABSTENTION. Having reconsidered the matter the Town Mayor used his casting vote AGAINST the Proposition, whereupon the Proposition was declared NOT CARRIED.

It was AGREED:-

That an urgent meeting be convened in the first instance between the Beach Gardens working party and Swanage Bowls Club to discuss the club's business plan.

6. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Marsh, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, under Standing Order Nos. 67 and 68, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following legal issues.

7. **LEGAL ISSUES**

(a) **Holiday Park Disposal**

The Clerk updated Members on outstanding issues relating to the disposal of the Holiday Park.

(b) **Cow Lane**

The Clerk updated Members on matters relating to Cow Lane.

A letter from the Council's surveyor dated 11th December 2009 had been circulated to all Members, and, following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Poultney, seconded by Councillor Bright, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council does not agree the terms offered (Option 1 contained in the letter dated 11th December 2009 from the Council's surveyor).

The meeting concluded at 1.10 pm.
