

Minutes of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the Swanage
Town Council held at the Town Hall, Swanage on
MONDAY, 25th JANUARY 2010 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

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

Councillor B. Audley

Councillor C.R. Bright

Councillor L. Gloyn-Cox

Councillor M. Hadley

Councillor Mrs. G.A. Marsh

Councillor Mrs. A. Patrick

Councillor S. Poultney

Councillor G.M. Suttle

(until 11.45 am)

Councillor W.S. Trite

Councillor M. Whitwam

Councillor A. Wiggins

Public Participation Time

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, 2 members of the public attended the Meeting.

MRS. W. CLARK referred to the Council's previous decision regarding the grant of a lease to the Swanage Tennis Club (Minute No. 5 - 14/12/2009 and Minute No. 105 (b) – 11/1/2010). She highlighted the urgent need for the refurbishment of tennis courts nos. 1, 2 and 3, and requested that the Council gives consideration to a request from the Swanage Tennis Club to retain its full membership fees and to grant a lease for the tennis courts to enable additional floodlighting to be installed. She explained that the Lawn Tennis Association would not provide financial support for the Club's development programme unless the Club is self-funding. Retention of the membership fees would greatly assist in achieving this aim.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies to report for inability to attend the Meeting.

2. **ANNUAL ESTIMATES REPORT**

(a) **Review of Draft Estimates 2010/11**

i) **Re-introduction of 4-hour charge**

Further to Minute No. 3 of the Transport Committee Meeting held on 14th October 2009, consideration was given to the potential impact of the re-introduction of a 4-hour charge in the Council's long-stay car parks.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Mrs. Marsh and seconded by the Town Mayor:-

That the Council retains its existing charging structure.

An AMENDMENT was moved by Councillor Suttle and seconded by Councillor Mrs. Patrick:-

That the Council applies a single summer scale of charges (April-September) and re-introduces a 4-hour charge in the long-stay car parks: the charges to be £1.70 for 1hour; £3.20 for 2 hours; £6 for 4 hours and £8 for 24 hours.

Upon being put to the Meeting, TEN Members voted IN FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and NONE AGAINST.

The Amendment was then put as a SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and declared CARRIED with TEN Members voting IN FAVOUR and NONE AGAINST.

During discussion reference was made to the possibility of placing signs near to the ticket machines detailing to visitors how their contribution is used to finance the town's facilities.

ii) **Residents' Parking**

Consideration was then given to extending the use of the residents' parking permits for evening parking, and it was proposed by Councillor Gloyn-Cox, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To permit extended use of the residents' parking permits in all Town Council operated car parks for evenings during the winter period i.e. 7 pm to 8 am (extended to 10 am in short stay car parks) with immediate effect.

iii) **Pension Costs**

Further to Minute No. 11 of the Council Meeting held on 21st December 2009, Members re-affirmed that pension costs relating to the early retirement of the Town Clerk be met over a three year period.

iv) **Beach Gardens**

Further to Minute No. 105 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 11th January 2010, detailed consideration was given to the proposals for the tennis facilities at Beach Gardens.

During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that the Swanage Tennis Club were anxious to upgrade the tennis courts before the commencement of the summer season and had suggested that, subject to retention of fees by the Club, they would arrange refurbishment of courts nos. 1, 2 and 3. Members acknowledged the urgent need for the refurbishment of the courts, and also the floodlighting of courts nos. 4, 5 and 6.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Suttle and seconded by the Town Mayor:-

That the Town Council undertakes to refurbish tennis courts nos. 1, 2 and 3 with immediate effect (up to a maximum estimated cost of £25,500 - £9,000 already pledged from the De Moulham Trust).

The Swanage Tennis Club retains the fees, and pays an annual rental to the Town Council for the use of the facilities.

The cost of floodlighting courts nos. 4, 5 and 6 to be investigated. "Swanage Tennis Club" to be a standing Agenda item until matters are concluded.

Further discussion ensued, during which a question was posed regarding the total sum of the fees that would be retained by the Tennis Club.

The Chairman invoked Standing Order No.69 and suspended the Meeting to enable participation by a member of the audience.

Mrs. W. Clark, of the Swanage Tennis Club, informed the Meeting that the total of the fees amounted to £11,000 approximately.

The meeting reconvened.

It was then proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Gloyn-Cox, and RESOLVED:-

- i) That the Town Council undertakes to refurbish tennis courts nos. 1, 2 and 3 (a contribution of £9,000 to be made by the De Moulham Trust).
 - ii) The Swanage Tennis Club pays an annual rental (to be agreed) for the use of the courts.
 - iii) The cost of floodlighting courts nos. 4, 5 and 6 be investigated.
 - iv) “Swanage Tennis Club” be a standing Agenda item until matters are concluded.
- (v) **Boat Park**
It was agreed that manning levels associated with retention of the operation of the Boat Park remain unchanged from 2009/10.
- (vi) **Capital Funding**
It was noted that the cost of floodlighting at Beach Gardens was an additional expense that may impact on the Council’s Capital Works Programme.

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

i) **Weekly Parking Permits**

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a weekly ticket be made available at a fee of £32.00 to be valid in Main Beach, North Beach and Broad Road car parks (all three long-stay car parks).

ii) **Permits for Accommodation Providers**

Consideration was given to a request received from a local bed and breakfast provider requesting a permit for guests to park in Town Council car parks. Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Poultney, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED:-

That the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Transport Committee to enable detailed consideration to be given to the matter.

iii) **Fees for “Event Car Parking”**

Further to Minute No. 3 of the Transport Committee held on 14th October 2009, consideration was given to the fee to be charged for event car parking at Main Beach Car Park/King George’s Field and North Beach Car Park/Journey’s End. It was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the fee for all-day parking remains unchanged at £5.00 and that this be advertised in the annual notification of the Council’s scale of charges.

iv) **Taxi Fees**

Before consideration of this item, Councillors Mrs. Patrick and Suttle declared their interest under the Model Code of Conduct by reason of a business association with the taxi operators. As their interest was prejudicial, they left the Meeting during the debate.

Proposed by Councillor Trite, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the taxi permit fees be increased by 3.5%
to £564.00 per annum.

v) **TIC – Advertising Boards**

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, having regard to the difficulty in obtaining
the second 6-monthly instalment in a number of
cases for the advertising boards outside the Tourist
Information Centre, the facility of paying by two
instalments be withdrawn.

vi) **Boat Park – Introduction of a Sliding Scale of Charges**

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Council's internal auditor for the introduction of a sliding scale of charges for boat park grid spaces for new occupants. A sliding scale reduction in charges on a monthly basis was mooted, but this was not considered necessary whilst there is a waiting list for spaces.

Proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and
RESOLVED:-

That no action be taken in the matter.

vii) **Beach Huts – Beach Gardens Offer**

Consideration was given to a suggestion that, in order to increase the number of putting customers at Beach Gardens, an offer of a free ticket for children (when accompanied by a full-paying adult) be made to those booking a beach hut.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED:-

That no action be taken in the matter.

viii) **Sundry Rents and Leases**

Consideration was given to the level of income received in respect of the Wessex Telescopes agreement, the Angling Club lease and the Isle of Purbeck Arts Club lease.

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

That no increase be levied in respect of the lease agreement
for the Isle of Purbeck Arts Club Hut and Swanage Angling
Club.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED:-

That matters relating to the Wessex Telescopes agreement
be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the
Finance and Performance Management Committee to enable
further information to be obtained.

Proposed Scale of Charges 2010/11

The full schedule of proposed Scale of Fees and Charges 2010/2011 was submitted. It was noted that sections of the scale of charges had previously

been considered by the appropriate Committees, and the recommendations of the General Operations Committee had been approved by the Council at its meeting on 7th December 2009.

Approval was sought in respect of the following sections:-

1. **Car Parks** – Considered by the Transport Committee on 14th October 2009.
It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and RESOLVED:-
That the recommendations of the Transport Committee Meeting be approved and adopted.

Boat Park.
It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED:-
That the proposed scale of fees and charges for Peveril Boat Park be approved and adopted.
2. **Beach Gardens.**
It was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Bright, and RESOLVED:-
That the proposed scale of fees and charges for Beach Gardens be approved and adopted (excluding the Tennis Club membership fees).
3. **Beach Bungalows** – Scale of charges approved – Minute 7 of Policy and Planning Meeting held on 9th April 2009.
4. **Tourist Information Centre and Monkey Beach Rings** – Considered by the Tourism Committee on 12th October 2009.
It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and RESOLVED:-
That the recommendations of the Tourism Committee be approved and adopted.
5. **Allotments** – Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
6. **Peveril Point** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
7. **Beach Concessions.**
Before consideration of this item, Councillor Mrs. Marsh declared a personal interest under the Model Code of Conduct and as her interest was prejudicial, left the Meeting during the debate.
It was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Bright, and RESOLVED:-
That the proposed scale of fees and charges for Beach Concessions be approved and adopted.
8. **Town Hall Lettings** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.

9. **King George V Field** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
10. **Forres Sports Field** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
11. **Day's Park** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
12. **Lower Grammar School Sports Field** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
13. **Journey's End** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
14. **Sundry**
 Before consideration of this item, Councillor Wiggins declared a personal interest under the Model Code of Conduct, and as his interest was prejudicial, left the Meeting during consideration of the Beach Chair and Pedalcraft Rights and the Storage Hut.
 It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED:-
 That the proposed fees and charges listed under this heading, with the exception of the Punch and Judy concession, be approved and adopted.

 It was then proposed by Councillor Hadley, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, and RESOLVED:-
 That the fees for the Punch and Judy Concession remain at £370.00 (plus VAT) for the 2010 season.
15. **Godlingston Cemetery** - Considered by the General Operations Committee and recommendations approved and adopted at Council Meeting held on 7th December 2009.

The scale of fees and charges, incorporating the above amendments, are attached at the end of these Minutes.

(c) **Grants and Donations**

A schedule of applications for grants and donations for 2010/11 was submitted for consideration.

Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by the Town Mayor, and RESOLVED:-

 That a budget of £10,000 for Section 137 and other donations be approved for 2010/11.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED:-

That the allocation of the budget be deferred for consideration at a future meeting of the Council to enable full evaluation of a number of late requests.

Arising from the above, consideration was given to the level of contribution paid towards the expenses of bands performing in Swanage. Councillor Bright declared a personal interest under the Model Code of Conduct by reason of his affiliation to a band, but as his interest was non-prejudicial, he remained in the meeting during the debate.

It was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the contribution towards the expenses for band performances be increased to £75.00.

Consideration was given to a request from the Lions Club of Swanage for a concessionary charge for the hire of a beach bungalow for the period 5th June to 16th July 2010.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a concessionary charge of £230 be approved for the hire of a beach bungalow for the period 5th June to 16th July 2010.

(d) **Precept 2010/11**

Following detailed and lengthy discussion of the Draft Estimates and Scale of Charges for 2010/11, consideration was then given to the amount of precept to be levied for 2010/11.

During the ensuing discussion, the Clerk highlighted the fact that the Council's main income streams i.e. car parks and seasonal activities, were subject to fluctuation, and that these variances should be taken into consideration when determining the precept. Some efficiency savings had been identified, and the overall delivery and provision of the Council's services would continue to be reviewed.

It was proposed by Councillor Suttle:

That the level of precept to be levied for 2010/11 be reduced by 1% to £564,300.

Further discussion ensued, following which it was proposed by Councillor Trite and seconded by Councillor Mrs. Patrick:-

That the level of precept to be levied for 2010/11 remain the same at £570,000.

Councillor Suttle left the Meeting at 11.45 am.

An AMENDMENT was moved by Councillor Poultney:-

That the level of precept to be levied for 2010/11 be increased by 4.5% to £597,000.

Following further discussion, Councillor Poultney withdrew his first amendment and proposed the following AMENDMENT:-

That the level of precept to be levied for 2010/11 be increased by 2.9% to £588,000, and that a standing item be added to the Council's

Agenda – “Monitoring of efficiency savings”.

This AMENDMENT was seconded by Councillor Hadley.

Before voting took place, Councillor Mrs. Patrick requested that a named vote be recorded.

In favour of the Amendment:- The Town Mayor and Councillors Audley, Gloyn-Cox, Hadley, Mrs. Marsh, Poultney and Wiggins.

Against the Amendment:- Councillors Bright, Mrs. Patrick, Trite and Whitwam.

The AMENDMENT was then put as a SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and DECLARED CARRIED, with SEVEN Members voting IN FAVOUR and FOUR AGAINST.

IN FAVOUR of the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION:- The Town Mayor and Councillors Audley, Gloyn-Cox, Hadley, Mrs. Marsh, Poultney and Wiggins.

AGAINST the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION:- Councillors Bright, Mrs. Patrick, Trite and Whitwam.

3. **SWANAGE MAINLINE RAILWAY CONNECTION – REQUEST FOR FUNDING**

Before consideration of this item, Councillor Whitwam declared a personal interest under the Model Code of Conduct by reason of being a director of the Swanage Railway Company. As his interest was prejudicial, he left the Meeting during the debate.

Councillor Trite declared a personal interest under the Model Code of Conduct by reason of being a director of the Swanage Railway Trust. As his interest was prejudicial, he also left the Meeting during the debate.

Further to Minute No. 6 of the Council Meeting held on 18th January 2010, and the request to identify funding for the signalling work required to enable the connection of the Swanage Railway to the mainline, information relating to the Town Council’s legal powers in this regard was submitted.

Following advice from the DAPTC, the Clerk had determined that the legal position was sufficiently unclear so as to conclude that the Town Council does not have the appropriate legal powers to loan monies for the purposes of the Swanage Mainline Railway Connection.

During the ensuing discussion, some concern was expressed regarding clarification of the legal advice received and it was suggested that further advice be obtained from NALC.

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

That the matter be deferred for consideration at a future Meeting of the Council to enable clarification on the Town Council’s legal powers to be obtained.

The meeting concluded at 12.40 pm.