

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held to discuss **POLICY** matters at the Town Hall, Swanage on
FRIDAY, 26th JUNE 2009 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M. Pratt (Town Mayor) – Chairman

Councillor C.R. Bright

Councillor Mrs. C. Gainsborough

Councillor L. Gloyn-Cox

Councillor Mrs. A. Patrick (until 12 noon)

Councillor W.S. Trite

Councillor M. Whitwam

Public Participation Time

There were no members of the public present at the Meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from
Councillors Audley, Hadley, Mrs. Marsh, Poultney and Suttle.

2. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2008/09**

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 15th
June 2009, consideration was given to the draft of the Annual Governance Statement
2008/09.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the Council's
contribution to the Swanage Town and Community Partnership (page 21 of the
Statement of Accounts 2008/09 and Section 2, paragraph 2.5 of the Annual
Governance Statement 2008/09). Members were of the opinion that there should be a
more robust mechanism for communication between the Partnership and the Town
Council, and expressed concern that the Swanage Town and Community Partnership
was potentially failing to deliver its vision and objectives as part of the district and
regional strategic planning process.

It was AGREED:-

That this matter be referred for consideration at a
future meeting of the Council.

After detailed consideration, the following amendments to the Annual
Governance Statement 2008/09 were proposed:-

Paragraph 2.19 – Insert the words “but will be reviewed” after the word
“place”.

Paragraph 2.22, line 3 – Insert the words “and routinely” after the word
“clearly”.

Page 51 – Action Plan – Asset Management Plan – Anticipated
Implementation Date be amended to 31st August 2009.

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

That, subject to the above amendments, the Annual Governance
Statement 2008/09 be approved and incorporated within the
Statement of Accounts 2008/09.

3. **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2008/09**

The Town Clerk presented the Statement of Accounts for 2008/09, which now included an index and glossary of terms.

The Clerk explained the 2008 SORP requirements and the different format of the Council's Management Accounts. He presented an analysis statement which provided the link between the Management Accounts and the formal Annual Accounts.

In summarising the accounts, the Clerk drew attention to the Explanatory Foreword, and the section headed "Caravan Park – Sales". This was the most significant item affecting the Council's overall financial position, as the legal challenge by the District Auditor had impacted on the revenue from caravan sales and considerable additional expenditure on audit and legal fees. The Clerk also referred to the "Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance", and highlighted the difficulties in setting an annual budget to bring the balance into a surplus position, bearing in mind the myriad of legal costs, rent reviews, caravan sales and other factors that had been impossible to predict. Attention was then given to the "Financial Instruments" section, which identified the financial business activities and the Council's exposure to any associated risks. It was noted that the position would change significantly in 2009/10 with any disposal of the Holiday Park.

Arising from the Accounts, the following matters were raised:-

- a) It was requested that an explanatory note (and cross reference) be incorporated relating to the Audit Fees referred to on Pages 5 and 23, and that this be amended to emphasise that the Council i.e. Council tax payers, were required to meet this cost incurred by the Audit Commission in respect of their challenge and any other matter raised by an elector.
- b) Page 5, paragraph 2, line 4 – VAT refund be amended to VAT retention.

Following detailed consideration of the Accounts, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Gainsborough, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Statement of Accounts 2008/09 be approved,
subject to incorporation of the above amendments.

4. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**

- (a) **Employment Tribunal** – Hearing to be held on Monday, 20th July 2009 at Southampton, requiring the attendance of the Clerk.
- (b) **PACT Panel** – Representatives of the PACT Panel would be "meeting and greeting" visitors to the Swanage market on 7th July, 4th August and 1st September 2009.
- (c) **Website** – Amended Schedule of Meetings to be displayed on the website.

5. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

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.

6. **LEGAL ISSUES**

(a) **Holiday Park Disposal**

The Clerk updated Members on matters relating to the disposal of the Holiday Park. In accordance with Minute No. 3 of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 29th May 2009, it was noted that the Council had now entered into an exclusivity agreement and a period of due diligence with the preferred bidder, and matters were proceeding satisfactorily.

Councillor Mrs. Patrick left the meeting at 12 noon.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 p.m.
