# Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOURISM COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall on **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008** at **2.15 p.m**.

Chairman: -

Councillor Mrs A Patrick Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor Mrs C Gainsborough
Councillor L Gloyn-Cox
Councillor Mrs G Marsh
Councillor M Pratt
Swanage Town Council
Swanage Town Council
Swanage Town Council

Councillor W Trite Swanage Town Council (from 2.25 p.m.)

Also Present: -

Mr A Leeson Town Clerk

Dr M Ayres Assistant Town Clerk

Mrs C Hooper Tourist Information Centre Supervisor

Mr M Dean Swanage Railway (until 3.05 p.m.)
Mr H Murray Durlston Country Park (until 3.55 p.m.)

Mr R Johnson Swanage Pier

Revd J Wood Churches Together in Swanage

(until 3.35 p.m.)

# **Public Participation Time**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

#### 1) Apologies

Apologies for his inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Hadley.

# 2) <u>Matters arising from the Minutes of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on</u> 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008

Detailed consideration was given to the Draft Purbeck Tourism Strategy for 2008-13. Overall, it was felt that a more analytical approach was required, focussing on an examination of trends, market segments, and a consideration of constraints, such as the limited transport infrastructure. Attention was particularly drawn to the need for greater analysis of market segments e.g. walkers, sailors, divers, and those on family holidays. A stronger evidence base was also required and it was noted that the Town Council could offer information on visitor numbers from the Tourist Information Centre and car park usage. It was also felt that the strategy lacked an overall aim or single 'big idea'.

Specific points were raised in respect of the following:

Section 1:

- The table listing strengths and weaknesses should be broadened into a full SWOT analysis, incorporating opportunities and threats.
- No reference is made to the need for an integrated public transport strategy.

- No reference is made to the sea as an attraction and water-borne modes of transport.
- Swanage Railway and Swanage Pier should be added to the list of Purbeck Strengths.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site.
- Consideration should be given to developing a Purbeck brand.
- Dependency on Swanage should not be listed as a 'weakness'.

#### Section 2:

- Section 2.2 should be amended to read 'Together with Swanage Town Council it funds a full-time Tourism Officer role, Tourist Information facilities and staff'.
- Within Section 2.4, headed 'Partnership/Tourism Bodies', greater mention should be made of Swanage Town Council, local businesses and produce providers.
- Reference should also be made to Swanage Town and Community Partnership and its 20-year strategic plan.
- The stated objectives and strategies in Section 6 should be limited to those achievable by the District Council.
- In relation to Section 2.5 the evidence for assuming static volumes of UK tourists to the district for the duration of this plan was questioned and the need for greater research highlighted.

#### Section 3:

- The target groups highlighted in Section 3.1 should focus on market segments, rather than age-based sectors.
- It was noted that features such as Durlston Country Park appealed to all age ranges.
- Attention was drawn to the need to explore opportunities in the run-up to the Olympics and not focus solely on the post-Games period.
- 'New domain name by August 2008' should be removed from the list of Headline Projects as it has already been implemented.
- Under Section 3.2 Infrastructure/Public Realm, it was questioned whether luxury hotels and forest chalets were among the main opportunities for new developments most appropriate to Purbeck.
- In discussing the need to develop an 'iconic attraction' the current development of Durlston Country Park was highlighted as an existing icon.
- It was noted that Studland beach does not have a Blue Flag and that it was entirely due to the Town Council that Swanage Beach was maintained to the standard necessary to retain this award, at a cost of almost £74,000 in 2007/08 to its taxpayers.
- Headline Projects b) and c) should be removed as they are not determined by Purbeck District Council.
- Headline Project d) should refer to Durlston Country Park.
- Under Section 3.3 'Transport', reference should be made to water craft.
- Amend statement to read 'Further investigate possibility of Jurassic Coast bus calling into Swanage'.
- Reference should be made to funding a Durlston shuttle bus.

#### Appendix 1:

- Include Swanage Pier, Arne RSPB reserve, Farmer Palmers and Putlake in the list of 'visitor icons' in Purbeck.
- Under 'General Tourism Trends', it was questioned whether the South West region hosted 90.8 million day visits in 2005.
- It was noted that additional evidence for the strategy could be gleaned from local organisations e.g. number of divers visiting the pier, use of motor homes of Town Council car parks, occupancy of local caravan parks.

## 3) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

#### a) Swanage In Bloom

Councillor Mrs Gainsborough announced that Swanage had won the Small Coastal Town section of South and South East In Bloom and recorded her thanks to the Council's staff.

## b) Swanage Bay Management

Attention was drawn to the need to research the options for the future management of Swanage Bay.

# 4) <u>Date of Next Meeting</u>

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 9.30 a.m. on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

The Mee	eting closed a	4.20 p.m.		