

Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall on **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004** at **10.00a.m.**

Chairman:- Councillor Mrs C Gainsborough JP	Swanage Town Council
Present:- Councillor C Bright Councillor Mrs J Farrow Councillor A Miller Councillor M Pratt Councillor M Tyrer Mr A Leeson Town Clerk Mr A Marriott	Swanage Town Council Swanage Town Council (until 12.30p.m.) Town Mayor Swanage Town Council Swanage Town Council Swanage & Purbeck Holiday Accommodation Association Swanage Pier Trust
Mr R Johnson Mrs J Scott Swanage Museum (until 12.50p.m.) Mr P Brown Swanage Chamber of Trade Mr M Whitwam Miss A Stockley Miss N Elston Mr T Williams Rev. J Wood	Swanage Railway Co. Ltd. Tourist Information Centre Purbeck Tourism Officer Purbeck Tourism Association of Churches Together in Swanage (until 12.00p.m.) Licensed Victuallers Association
Mr G Willey	

1) **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Mrs J Scadden & Mr C Ferguson.

2) **Matter Arising from Minutes of Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003.

3) **Current Issues & Updates**

**World Heritage Site – Jurassic Coast**

The Clerk reported upon a meeting between East Devon and Dorset County Council, which looked at the Gateway Towns. The concept of developing the scheme at Panorama Road and the quarry site in partnership with Suttle Quarries was well received.

The Clerk commented upon developments at other towns and highlighted the unsatisfactory servicing of boat trips along the coastline from Swanage. The Clerk also reported that a Geo-Needle would be positioned at Studland and with one already being in place at Exmouth it would represent the start and finish of the World Heritage Site. The similarities between Exmouth and Swanage were noted: the need to encourage sustainable tourism, inadequate signage, the need to increase the range of the X53 bus and targeting out of season tourism.

The definition of a 'Gateway Town' was clarified as being a place that is passed through in order to reach the coast. The further distinction between primary and secondary Gateway Towns was highlighted. The approved artwork which would be adopted by the Partnership and utilised by the Ministry of Transport was distributed with the UNESCO branding being incorporated into signage. The need to establish a gateway into Swanage was noted, with approval being sought from Dorset County Council.

Mrs Scott raised her concerns over signage at points of interest within Swanage. Mrs Scott's concerns were noted with the need to improve the standard of signage due to World Heritage Site status and the expected increase in international visitors. The need for interpretive signs within the town was discussed at great length and the need for this issue to be looked at as a whole and not to be

fragmented was noted.

After further discussion regarding the need to establish a dedicated working party to look at these issues it was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Mrs Farrow and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Tourism & Environmental Committee set up a Working Party to consider the branding and signage of Swanage. The Working group would include outside representatives and would have the power to co-opt members at its discretion.

It was further proposed by Councillor Pratt and AGREED:

That Councillor Bright be installed as the Chairman of the Working Group.

After further discussion as to the inclusion of members of the Working Group it was AGREED:

That the Working Group would comprise of Councillor Bright, Councillor Mrs J Farrow, Councillor Mrs C Bartlett, Mr Marriott, Mr Willey, Ms Clarke (Purbeck Heritage Committee), Miss Elston and Miss Stockley.

b) **Beach Recharge**

The Clerk reported that the Town Council had not yet received a response from Halcrow Consultants with regard to concerns that were raised over the health & safety implications of the installation of the rock groynes. The Clerk informed the Committee that until this issue was clarified, the Town Council would be unable to agree a formal response or future policy.

c) **Burlington Chine Toilets**

The Clerk reported on developments at Burlington Chine. The refurbishment was being undertaken in conjunction with the construction of the beach chalets in the area and the Council were working jointly with the adjacent landowner to ensure that the new development would provide long term cliff stability.

d) **Seafront Enhancement Scheme**

The Clerk informed the Committee that a working group had been established to look at the issue of the stabilisation of the seafront, following on from a report in October 2000. The Clerk reported that the matter would be going

out to public consultation once a scheme had been drafted. It was noted that some remedial work had been undertaken in the meantime.

e) **Town Market**

The Clerk reported that the Town Council had approved to continue with the market for the next twelve months and the effects would be monitored. The Council had agreed that the market had been successful in its original objective to bring in and retain visitors.

f) **Jet Ski – Regulations**

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Council had agreed to allow the launching of personal watercraft from the Boat Park. The Clerk highlighted the point that the Council could only control the launching of personal watercraft and informed the Committee of the measures to be taken by the Council. The Clerk also informed the Committee that the Council were working closely with other launch sites in the area. The need for the regulation of speed boats was recognised.

g) **Festive Lights**

The Clerk informed the Committee that the lamp columns on the seafront had now been installed and the lights would be erected in the near future by a small number of volunteers. Councillor Bright stated that the Light Up Swanage Together competition would be taking place again this year, there would however be a small registration fee.

## **CCTV**

The Clerk detailed the Council's plan to invest in upgrading CCTV within the town. Funding for £5,000 had been received through the South Purbeck Task Group's Crime and Reduction Partnership. A pan-tilt and zoom camera is to be installed at the junction of Shore Road and Victoria Avenue with the whole system being upgraded from analogue to digital. The Fisherman's Association had also pledged £1,500 towards the cost of installation of CCTV at the Boat Park.

## 4) **Tourism Report**

Miss Elston reported on the Marketing Responses to advertisements that have been placed and the number of brochures that have been requested as a result. At present the cost equates to £1.06 per response.

The Committee were informed that as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 Purbeck will be aligned to South West Tourism. Miss Elston outlined South West Tourism's 10 year plan and the need for Destination Management Partnerships. The concept of brand marketing had been put forward by South West Tourism and Miss Elston suggested that this concept be utilised in the next edition of the holiday guide.

The need to strongly market the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site (JCWHS) was highlighted and Miss Elston outlined the marketing strategy as put forward by the JCWHS Marketing Committee.

Miss Stockley reported that the footfall for March had increased on previous years and that the leaflet advertising Council amenities had been published and distributed. Miss Stockley further reported that the Tourist Information Centre had received the "Partners in Success" accreditation from Tourism South East, which recognised health & safety procedures, the awareness of new requirements for the disabled and the high standard of customer services offered.

## 5) **Reports from Outside Organisations** **Swanage Chamber of Trade**

Mr Brown reported that the Chamber of Trade website was now up and running and that it was hoped that this would have a link from the Town Council's website. A campaign was currently underway to get more members and four more shops were trialling the Radiolink system.

## **Purbeck Tourism**

Mr Williams informed the Committee that the Purbeck Eating Out guide had been printed and would be distributed for the Easter period.

## **Hoteliers**

Mr Marriott stated that early bookings were strong.

## **Licensed Victuallers Association**

Mr Willey informed the Committee that the new legislation for licences to be issued by Local Authorities was now in force. An Act to allow for 24 hour opening will come into effect in April 2005.

## **Swanage Pier Trust**

Mr Johnson stated that the kiosk at the entrance to the Pier which had been damaged had been taken away to be repaired. It was noted that the Pier Trust's maintenance expenditure for the Pier had increased from £50,000 to £100,000 per annum. It was further noted that the Pier held a 99 year lease on Marine Villas.

## **Swanage Railway**

Mr Whitwoom reported that the open days which took place on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February had been very successful and would probably be repeated in the future.

Mr Whitwoom outlined the two phases for connection to the mainline, over a 3 year period. The first phase was the completion of signalling between Swanage and Wareham which allows for two charter trains per year. This should be completed in the autumn. The second phase is the completion of signalling at Wareham at a cost of £2.5 million. Funding from the Strategic Rail Authority had been applied for to complete this phase. Dorset County Council had also invested in rolling stock.

g) **Durlston Castle**

The Clerk reported that a grant of £400,000 had been secured by the Regional Development Agency to buy back the lease on Durlston Castle and that Dorset County Council had granted further funds of £400,000 to upgrade and carry out repairs on the Castle.

h) **Swanage In Bloom**

The Town Mayor informed the Committee that Swanage In Bloom would not be entering a regional competition this year as they were not permitted by virtue of winning for two consecutive years.

The Meeting closed at 12.50 p.m.

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