

Minutes of a Meeting of the **BEACH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE** held at the Swanage Tourist Information Centre, Shore Road, Swanage, on **WEDNESDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2017** at **3.00 p.m.**

In Attendance: Councillor M Bonfield – Chairman
Councillor G Green
Councillor G Marsh

Mr A Ainsworth - RNLI
Mr I Brown – Maritime Coastguard Agency
Mr K Bragg – Private Beach Huts Representative
Ms R Compton – Ocean Bay Watersports
Mr J Deare – North Beach Representative
Mr T Greasty – Craft Free Zone Representative
Mr S Hill – Swanage Boat Hire
Mr B Hollyoak – Wessex Water
Mr M Jones - Coastwatch
Mr G King – Swanage Angling Club
Mr R Marsh – Quay Representative
Mr D Picksley – Environment Agency
Mr S Pinkard - RNLI
Mr G Richardson – RNLI Community Sea Safety Team
Mr A Stoodley – Wessex Water
Mr J Taylor – Pierhead Watersports
Mr B Tolley – Durlston Country Park
Mr D Turnbull – Swanage RNLI
Ms E Wright – National Trust

Councillor M Whitwam
Dr M Ayres – Town Clerk
Miss N Clark – Management Support Office
Mr C Milmer – Visitor Services Manager & Business
Development Officer

Other Attendees: Mr S Goldsack – Litter Free Purbeck
Miss M Manley, Litter Free Coast & Sea and Litter Free Dorset
Mr M Turnbull, Swanage Coastal Change Forum

There were two members of the public present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised.

1) **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Mr A Allison (Swanage Angling Club), Miss L Bruce & Mr C Hornsby (RNLI Lifeguards), Mr R Martin (Swanage Sailing Club), Mr N Watson (Environment Agency), and Mr C Wiggins (Beach Concession Operators' Representative).

2) **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Advisory Committee held on 22nd February 2017**

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Green and AGREED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Advisory Committee held on 22nd February 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

3) **Matters arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Advisory Committee held on 22nd February 2017**

There were no matters raised.

4) **Future management of Coastal Change in Swanage – presentation by Mr Dave Picksley of the Environment Agency**

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Mr Dave Picksley to the meeting.

A presentation was given by Mr Picksley which included details of the current status of coastal erosion along the Swanage coastline, concerns regarding rising sea levels and flood risk to the town, and future options for coastal management.

Mr Picksley explained that the existing Beach Management Plan for Swanage needed to be updated, and studies/predictions regarding erosion rates, and options for the future, were currently being explored. Regular coastal monitoring and beach profiling was also being undertaken. Implementation of the updated plan was considered to be a priority before 2030.

Details were also given about the Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan, which covered the length of coast between Hurst Spit and Durlston Head, and the harbours of Poole and Christchurch, and set out policies to assist decision-making on flooding from the sea and coastal erosion risk management over the next 20, 50 and 100 years.

It was reported that an application had been made to SSE for funding of £15,000 towards the employment by Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust of a consultant to draw up a project brief/proposals for a coastal defence solution for the area between the Stone Quay and the Victoria Avenue outfall jetty.

Committee Members asked a number of questions following the presentation, and the Chairman thanked Mr Picksley for the informative presentation.

5) **Water quality in Swanage Bay – update from Wessex Water**

An update was given by Mr Adrian Stoodley, Wastewater Regulation Manager, Wessex Water, on the recent sewage treatment plant discharge issues that had been experienced, and an overview of plant operations was given, which also included details on the background of the treatment plant, and the £40m investment that had been made in improving the plant.

Committee Members asked a number of questions, and a discussion was held regarding previous concerns raised about water quality in Swanage Bay. It was explained that testing had shown no/little impact on bathing water quality, and it was reported that Swanage bathing water quality had, in fact, been classified as ‘excellent’ for the past fifteen years.

It was reported that Town Councillors had recently undertaken a visit to the Swanage Sewage Treatment Works, which the Chairman reported had been worthwhile and very informative.

Thanks were given to Mr Stoodley for attending the meeting, for his input to discussions, and for the updates provided, which had been appreciated.

6) **Litter Free Purbeck (LFP) – proposals for Swanage beach cleans during the winter – presentation by Mr Simon Goldsack**

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Mr Simon Goldsack to the meeting.

A Briefing Note entitled ‘Litter-free Purbeck – Swanage Beach Volunteers Report 2017’ had been provided detailing the background to LFP’s Swanage beach cleans (North and Main Beaches), which complemented the Town Council’s beach cleaning activities. Volunteers encouraged members of the public to pick up litter, and helped to discourage littering on the beach and in and around the Shore Road area. The Report also gave details of volunteers’ activity from August 2016 to date, LFP’s Litter Awareness Campaign 2017, and future plans.

A question was raised as to whether LFP could make use of a Shore Road beach hut over the winter months, and the Visitor Services Manager agreed to make contact with LFP to discuss requirements. A further query was raised regarding disposal of litter collected, and the possible recycling of some of the items collected, and it was suggested that contact was made with DCC to arrange ‘pick up points’.

Committee Members asked a number of questions following the presentation, and the Chairman asked Mr Goldsack to pass on the Town Council’s thanks and appreciation to LFP’s volunteers for the sterling work undertaken.

7) **Lifeguards and sea safety**

a) **Review of 2017 season and plans for 2018**

An update was given on the 2017 season, and it was reported that positive feedback had been received from the Swanage Lifeguards, the new site and craft free zone had been considered a success, with good visibility of the patrolled area from the platform, and no changes were planned for the 2018 season, other than the need for new signage.

A decrease in incidents on the previous season was reported, and details were given regarding a ‘meet the lifeguards’ programme undertaken with local schools, which provided education on beach safety and lifeguard operations.

A discussion was held regarding plans for 2018. Concerns were raised regarding the location of the safe bathing area, which was not in line with the closed section of Shore Road. It was explained, that an annual review of the lifeguard service was undertaken, which included a safety risk assessment, and a full review of the service plan/risk assessment would be undertaken after five years.

A discussion was then held regarding the Council’s upcoming budget setting proposals for 2018/19, and the views of Committee Members were sought regarding what other seafront/beach services were required. It was noted that the TIC Team had been involved in providing members of the public with advice/guidance on byelaws and seafront/beach regulations during the 2017 season. Comments were made that a more regular ‘enforcement’ presence was required along the seafront and on the beach, and that this could possibly be undertaken on a part-time basis e.g. four to six hours per day during the main season, and that the role could also be used to promote tourism in the town. It was felt that the previous beach wardens had been a valuable asset to the Council, although the difficulties of employing and retaining staff to undertake this type of role were noted.

The position, number and condition of litter bins along the seafront was discussed. It was reported that discussions had been held with Dorset Waste Partnership regarding the same, and a small budget may be made available to install solid tops/casings to the improve the appearance of the bins.

b) Five knot speed limit enforcement in the bay – update

It had been two years since there had been any enforcement by the District Council of the Pleasure Boat Byelaws, and difficulties had been experienced in sourcing cover for the role of enforcement officer. Concerns were again raised regarding safety in the bay, and the District Council, having responsibility for the byelaws, had a small budget available and would be approached to explore options for the 2018 season. Further concerns were raised regarding the incorrect positioning of the five knot buoys, which had drifted during the season, and which were also felt to be inadequate, and a suggestion made that they should be replaced with larger buoys/flags for better visibility.

It was reported that the RNLI Lifeguards kept a daily log of any incidents reported/attended to, and had assisted the Town Council in educating beach users on beach safety. Only two incidents which had occurred close to the craft free area had been logged. The RNLI Area Lifesaving Manager confirmed that he would provide contact details of the Dorset Marine Police Team which could be approached for further advice.

c) RNLI lifejacket lockers

Further to Minute No. 4 c) of the Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 22nd February 2018, it was reported that a manufacturer had been sourced to make the frame for the nine lockers, which were planned to be installed at the Stone Quay prior to commencement of the 2018 season.

A draft Licence Agreement for the lockers had now been received from the RNLI's Community Safety Product Coordinator which had yet to be reviewed, completed, and signed off by the Town Council.

8) Updates from representatives/organisations

Craft Free Zone Representative

It was reported that there had been some weed growth in the bay, and new buoys would be trialled next season.

Ocean Bay Watersports

It was reported that the new grille at Ulwell Stream was working well, and had only required clearing on a couple of occasions during the season.

Pierhead Watersports

It had been a quiet season, and comments were made about the incorrect positioning of the buoys in the bay. A question was raised as to whether the Town Council could take control of the placing of the buoys. The Swanage RNLI representative had previously agreed to plot the positions on a chart and was willing to revisit and include on the nautical chart.

Swanage Angling Club

Thanks were given to the TIC Team, in particular during the Julia's House Beach Open Competition in October. Despite the poor weather conditions the event had raised the sum of £350 for the charity.

Swanage Boat Hire

It had been a quiet season, and comments were made regarding issues experienced with jetskis using the slipway.

Swanage RNLI

A busy season was reported for the first year of operations from the new lifeboat station, with a total of 68 callouts. Lifeboat Week had raised £30k+, and next year's event would be held from 10th to 19th August 2018.

Coastwatch

A good year was reported, there were now over 60 Watchkeepers, who had been in situ from 9.00 a.m. until 9.00 p.m. each day during the high season, which had worked well, and would be repeated again in 2018.

National Trust

The same issues with buoys were reported on in Studland Bay during 2017. Details were given regarding jetski incidents, which had been filmed and reported to PDC, beach erosion issues which had involved the moving of beach huts, and remedial works were ongoing. Studland Beach's Dog Policy was also discussed.

Litter Free Purbeck

Details were given regarding the #2 Minute Beach Cleans. Photographs of cleans undertaken could be uploaded to Instagram. It was reported that any recyclable items were taken to the Swanage Household Recycling Centre.

Quay Representative

A query was raised as to when the Stone Quay refurbishment would be undertaken, and it was noted that this would be discussed during the budget setting process for 2018/19.

RNLI Sea Safety Officer

It was reported that work was being undertaken to produce a new Swanage Lifesaving Plan, and the Sea Safety Officer would present the new Plan at a future Committee Meeting.

Swanage Information Centre

The Visitor Services Manager reported on a great season, beach hut bookings had been successful, and good feedback had been received from visitors and local residents alike.

The Chairman gave thanks and appreciation to the TIC Team for hosting the Committee Meeting in the TIC building, and for the hospitality extended to attendees.

9) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

- a) Shore Road – consideration of guidelines for authorised vehicles using closed section**
– this matter would be placed on the agenda of the next Committee Meeting.
- b) Wessex Water – ‘Stop the block in Swanage’** – details of this initiative had been sent to the local media to raise awareness of a spate of drain/sewer blockages in Swanage. The press release gave tips for avoiding blockages in the kitchen and bathroom. Wessex Water had also handed out ‘gunk pots’ for collecting fat at the Co-op Supermarket in Swanage on 14th October 2017.

10) Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be advised in due course.

The meeting closed at 4.45 p.m.
