

5. Allotment Matters

a) Frequency of inspections

Consideration was given to a letter received from a plot holder requesting that the frequency of allotment inspections be increased. Attention was drawn to the system of inspection agreed by the Allotments Committee on 15th November 2006 (see minute 4(v)) and the Committee confirmed that the system as described in those minutes (four site inspections with interim monthly checks for allotments requiring improvement) should remain in force.

b) Plot markers – consideration of recommendation from audit report

Further to a recommendation in a recent internal audit report, the Operations Manager reported that previous attempts to mark every plot had proved unsuccessful due to the markers being removed. It was suggested that this be referred to the Allotment Association for further consideration.

c) Theft at the allotments

The allotment association representative reported acts of theft at the allotments. It was noted that this was not a matter for Council regulation and that the police should be informed. It was stated that these incidents had been reported to the police, but that no action had been taken.

Arising from the above, the possibility of the Allotment Association taking over the management of the site was raised. Although this had been discussed between the parties some years ago, and rejected, it was felt that this decision should be re-visited. It was agreed that the Town Council and Allotment Association should work together to explore the options and that a meeting should be arranged in coming months. It was noted that advice could be available from the National Allotment Society.

d) Other matters raised

The allotment representative firstly discussed difficulties arising from the overgrowth on the blind corner of the allotment road. The Operations Manager agreed to deal with this. Secondly, he reported the problem of the overgrown trees on the eastern boundary which is causing a lack of natural daylight on plots which are in the shadow of the trees. The Operations Manager agreed to look into the matter.

6. Cemetery Matters

a) Children's section – artificial turf proposal.

The Operations Manager reported the difficulties experienced when cutting the grass in the children's section at Godlingston Cemetery, and that the laying down of chippings and re-turfing had not resolved the issue. The installation of artificial turf was suggested as a potential solution to the problem. The Committee welcomed the proposal, although it was felt that the grave owners should be written to in order to seek their views prior to the installation taking place.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Poultney and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the proposed installation of artificial turf in the children's section at Godlingston Cemetery be approved, subject to no significant objections being raised by the grave owners.

b) Other matters raised

Consideration was given to information regarding the Fair Funerals Campaign, which sought to scrap burial fees for children. The representative of James Smith Funeral Directors noted that they made no charge for funerals for those under the age of 16. The Committee supported the scheme, although it was noted that there may be a requirement to charge a nominal sum for the purchase of

exclusive rights. It was agreed that this matter should be clarified and that the waiving of fees should be considered further by the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee during the 2018/19 budget setting process.

7. Fishermen's Huts and Jetties

a) Dorset & East Devon FLAG – Swanage slipway proposal

The Committee considered correspondence received from the Dorset and East Devon FLAG coordinator, sent on behalf of the Swanage Fishermen's Association, regarding a potential funding application for improvements to the facilities for launching and recovery at Peveril Point. Attention was drawn to the fact that only 25% match funding was required if the Town Council made the application. The estimated maximum cost of the project at the current time was £250,000.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Green and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That a recommendation to include a 25% contribution towards this project (up to a maximum of £62,500) in the capital programme for 2018/19 be taken forward to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee.

Mr Alan Lander reported that after many years of representing Swanage Fishermen's Association at Council Committee meetings this would be his last. The Committee wished to record their sincere thanks to Mr Lander for his valuable contribution to their discussions over the years.

Mr M Jones, Mr R Marsh and Mr A Lander left the meeting at 5.25 p.m.

8. Memorial Benches

This matter was brought before the Committee at the request of the Operations Manager, in order to clarify the Council's policy in respect of the supply of memorial benches. It was reported that the waiting list was extensive and that no additional seating was currently being provided. It was noted that the refurbished bandstand may prove to be a suitable location in the future.

Consideration was given to the Council's existing policy and application form for memorial benches, as agreed at the General Operations Committee meeting held on 15th July 2009. This included a commitment on behalf of the Council to maintain the benches for a period of 5 years. It was proposed by Councillor Green, seconded by the Chairman and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Memorial Bench policy and guidelines approved on 15th July 2009 remain unchanged, but that the waiting list be closed at the current time.

9. Dog Fouling

a) Control of dogs on Swanage beach

Consideration was given to a letter received from a concerned visitor regarding the presence of dogs, and evidence of dog fouling, on Swanage beach during October. The visitor proposed an extension of the dog ban on the main beach until 31st October.

It was noted that most dog owners acted responsibly and that local dog owners enjoyed the relaxation of the regulations in October. It was also felt that any extension of the dog ban would be difficult to enforce. Furthermore, evidence from the website www.thebeachguide.co.uk suggested that most beaches in Dorset have

similar restrictions in place as in Swanage. It was agreed that this information should be contained in the Council's reply to the visitor's letter.

10. Street litter collection and provision of public waste bins

Further to a meeting of the Waste Management Working Party held on 27th September 2017, the Town Clerk provided an update on Dorset Waste Partnership's (DWP's) plans for street cleansing in the town during 2018. It was anticipated that changes would be implemented to deliver improved coverage at weekends and peak times. It had been confirmed in writing that DWP would not be seeking a financial contribution from the Town Council in order to deliver these improvements.

At the Working Party meeting DWP raised the possibility of installing a small number of additional street litter bins in the town. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Green and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

To request DWP to install an additional street litter bin on High Street, opposite the library. It was noted that if, after a trial period, this bin was abused then it should be removed.

11. Recycling banks at North Beach car park

At the Waste Management Working Party meeting held on 27th September 2017 there had also been discussion regarding the possible removal of the remaining recycling banks at North Beach Car Park. The Operations Manager reported that the area was often untidy and that their presence resulted in the loss of a number of car parking spaces. It was felt that it would be more convenient for local residents if the recycling banks were re-located to the Household Recycling Centre.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Poultney and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That DWP be requested to relocate the recycling banks at North Beach car park to the Household Recycling Centre.

12. The Parade railings – how to fund refurbishment / improvements

Further to Minute 9 of the General Operations Committee meeting held on 9th August 2017, consideration was again given to approaching the relevant authorities regarding the repainting and/or replacement of The Parade railings. The Operations Manager reported that he is not in favour of re-painting due to the poor condition of the railings, and that the estimated cost of replacement was likely to be in the region of £80,000. It was noted that none of the three tiers of local government accepted responsibility for this matter.

After lengthy discussion it was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Poultney and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That consideration of this issue be deferred until budget setting for 2019/20.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED:-**

That a letter be sent to Dorset County Council in their capacity as the footpath authority to draw their attention to the poor condition of the railings, seeking their assurance that they remain safe.

13. Budget setting

a) Revenue budget 2018/19 – One off items of expenditure

A list of one-off items of expenditure proposed for inclusion in the 2018/19 budgets was submitted for consideration, largely relating to plant & machinery and repairs & maintenance of Council facilities. Attention was drawn to the inclusion of £15,000 for the replacement and maintenance of festive lights.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the draft list of items of one-off expenditure for 2018/19 be taken forward to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee for further consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2018/19.

Councillor Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following matter, in respect of the setting of cemetery fees and charges, by reason of her husband being the manager of James Smith Funeral Directors.

b) Scale of Charges 2018/19

A draft Scale of Charges for 2018/19 was submitted for consideration. The representative of James Smith Funeral Directors raised concern at the statement in the cemetery section that the Christmas closedown would end on the 2nd January. It was suggested that it would be best to extend this to allow time for a grave to be dug following the notification of a funeral after the Christmas holiday. It was agreed that the draft scale of charges would be amended to state that the closedown would cease on the third working day after the New Year's Day public holiday.

In light of Councillor Green's declaration of interest, the meeting was short of the three voting members required to remain quorate, therefore no vote was taken on the scale of charges. It was noted that they would be considered further at the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee.

c) Capital Programme Monitoring and Plans for 2018/19

Consideration was given to the Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2017/18 and the proposed capital programme for 2018/19. Whilst only two capital projects had been included in the draft programme, it was noted that further to Minute 7)a) above, the Fishermen's Slipway would be added for consideration at the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Poultney and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the draft capital programme for 2018/19 be taken forward to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee for further consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2018/19.

14. Operations Manager's report

• Health & Safety report

The Operations Manager provided an update on health and safety at work and was pleased to report that during the last quarter there had been no reported incidents of slips and trips causing injury, nor for RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences). There were three reported minor incidents at the depot with none requiring medical attention. There was one incident at the Tourist Information Centre.

- **Festive Lighting**
Two meetings have taken place with the Christmas lights committee to date. A proposal was put forward by the lights committee that the Council would need to consider taking over the ongoing maintenance, refurbishment and extension of the current lighting systems in place, commencing in 2018. This would be considered at a forthcoming Council meeting.
- **Boat Park**
The tender for the stabilisation and resurfacing of the Boat Park was currently in progress.
- **Public Toilet upgrade schemes**
A tender has been awarded for upgrades to King George's & Mermond Place public toilets and improvements to facilities at the Town Hall and Beach Gardens. The Operations Manager has a meeting with the appointed contractor on 16th November to discuss contractual matters and a programme of works. It is anticipated that works will be completed by Easter 2018.
- **Public Toilet on-going maintenance and refurbishment programme**
 - Shore Road toilets have been repainted, deep cleaned and drainage problems resolved.
 - Heritage toilets have been repainted, deep cleaned and the installation of new roller doors and hand wash facilities have been completed.
 - Battlegate toilets will have a new hand wash machine installed, which is due at the end of November. Redecoration will take place in 2018.
- **Seawall defences**
Prior to the onset of winter, the resetting and bedding of the coping stones at the parish slipway at the Heritage Square will commence in the first week in December.
- **Beach Hut Repairs (Spa)**
Works to refurbish the beach huts have commenced and will continue for six weeks.
- **Electrical safety checks / portable appliance testing**
Electrical checks on council owned property have all been tested and five-yearly safety checks are ongoing.
- **Emergency Tree Works**
Trees at Godlingston Cemetery and Days Park have been cut down due to inclement weather which had caused the trees to split at the base and were in danger of falling.
- **Beach Works**
The container for the RNLI lifeguards has been removed, as has the craft free zone.
- **Fencing repairs at Beach Gardens**
A contractor has been appointed for fencing works at Beach Gardens and work is due to start week commencing 20th November 2017.
- **Dog Fouling**
Dog mess continues to be a problem, particularly in Northbrook Cemetery and at King George's Playing Field. Signage at Godlingston Cemetery has been inappropriately removed. It was suggested that the possibility of banning dogs at Godlingston Cemetery should be considered at a future meeting.

- **Vandalism**

Fires have been started in the toilets at Kings George's and Mermond Place. Broken door latches and broken glass have been seen on a daily basis at King George's and Shore Road toilets. There has been damaged signage at King George's Field, and the Stone Quay has suffered damage to seating areas. The white shelter on Sandpit Field suffers constant graffiti attacks and is currently under review with a local artistic painting scheme. Graffiti has appeared at both Shore Road and King George's toilets and the shelter at the Mowlem has damaged signage. The railings at the wetlands area of King George's has been damaged. It was suggested that this report of incidents of graffiti and vandalism should be posted online.

Congratulations were given to the council workforce for their sterling work during carnival week.

Mr M Green left the meeting at 6.15 p.m.

15. Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

There were no items to report.

Exclusion of Press and Public

Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Green, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda item 16 for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

16. Procurement of fleet vehicles

The Committee gave consideration to a briefing note prepared by the Council's Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, regarding the replacement of a number of the Council's fleet vehicles. It was noted that the replacement of two flatbed vans and a panel van had been included in the 2017/18 capital programme at a budget of £45,000, and that the Council's Vehicle & Plant Replacement Reserve contains the sum of £48,475. The Committee was also asked to consider the acquisition of a replacement car for the Council's enforcement officers, although as the existing car was four years' old and in relatively good condition it was ultimately concluded that this purchase was not essential at the current time.

The possibility of acquiring electric vehicles was discussed, but it was noted that suitable electric alternatives were not yet available for the vans, although this would be a possibility for a future replacement of the enforcement officers' car.

Following discussions with Poole Borough Council, the procurement was being carried out through the Crown Commercial Services framework agreement, and this meant that the prices quoted may vary a small amount prior to the order being placed.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Poultney and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND

That the Town Council proceeds with the purchase of two Nissan Cabstar dropside vans and one Nissan Acenta van auto at an estimated cost of £54,700.

The vehicles to be disposed will be sent to auction, providing disposal at market value and thereby reducing the Council's net outlay on the new purchases.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting had been scheduled for 4.30 p.m. on Wednesday 4th April 2018.

The Meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.
