

Minutes of the Meeting of the **GENERAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY 6th APRIL 2016 at 4.30 p.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor J Bishop

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Finch

Swanage Town Council

Councillor G Green

Swanage Town Council

Councillor A Harris

Swanage Town Council

Councillor G Marsh

Swanage Town Council

Also present: -

Councillor M Whitwam

Swanage Town Council

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Mr G Brookes

Operations Manager

Miss N Clark

Management Support Officer

Miss C Johnston

Operations Department Administration Officer

Mr M Green

James Smith Funeral Directors

Mr M Jones

Prospect Allotment Association

(until 5.45 p.m.)

Mr A Lander

Fishermen's Association

(until 6.00 p.m.)

Public Participation Time

There was one member of the public present at the meeting.

The following matter was raised during Public Participation Time:-

- Concerns were raised regarding street cleansing and overflowing bins during the Easter holidays. The Chairman confirmed that Dorset Waste Partnership had promised that improved bins would be back in place in the near future, following a meeting of the Waste Management Working Party held on 4th April 2016. It was felt that the on-going problem of residents placing household refuse in public waste bins was also an issue that needed to be addressed.

1. Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from the Town Mayor and Councillors Lejeune and Morris.

2. Declarations Of Interest

Members were invited to declare their interest under the Code of Conduct as defined by regulations made under section 30 (3) of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

The dispensation granted to Councillor Green in respect of Cemetery Matters was noted.

3. Matters Arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the General Operations Committee held on 25th November 2015

4. a) iii Mr Jones confirmed that the letter had been provided and had now been circulated.

6. a) Jetties update to be given under agenda item 6a.

4. Allotment Matters

a) Polytunnels

Consideration was given to a letter received requesting permission for the construction of a polytunnel on an allotment plot.

During the ensuing debate concerns were raised regarding allotments that are not kept in good condition, and it was suggested that a disclaimer be written into the tenancy agreement. It was noted that the proposed polytunnel would not affect neighbouring allotment plots, but it was felt that a size restriction should be placed on the structure.

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Marsh, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That polytunnels be permitted, subject to the following regulations:-

- i) The polytunnels must be kept in good repair and be removed at the end of their useful life.
- ii) The polytunnel must be no higher than two metres.
- iii) The polytunnel would remain the sole responsibility of the allotment holder and must be removed if the plot is given up.

b) Payment for part-year occupation

Consideration was given to the levy of a six months fee for part-year occupation of an allotment.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Finch and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To adhere to the Council's existing policy whereby if an allotment is occupied part way through the year the full annual charge is applied and no refund is given if a plot holder vacates the allotment during the year.

c) Matters raised by Prospect Allotment Association

i) Bee-keeping on Prospect Allotments

Further to Minute No. 4 of the General Operations Committee held on 15th July 2015, an update regarding bee-keeping on the allotments was requested by the Prospect Allotment Association.

It was noted that, to date, the matter had not been progressed as the Allotment Association had yet to inform the Council of a suitable location on which to site the hives.

ii) Swanage Local Plan

Concerns were again raised regarding the possible redevelopment of the allotment site.

It was confirmed that this was an option to be explored as part of the SLP process, but there were no further matters to report.

iii) **Event – Allotment vegetable/flower show on Rabling Green**

Consideration was given to a request received for permission to hold the Allotment Vegetable/Flower Show on Rabling Green on 7th August 2016. The Committee raised no objection to the request, subject to adherence to the Council's standard requirements for event organisers.

5. Cemetery Matters

a) Cemetery Regulations

i) Photo plaques on memorials

Consideration was given to a request received for permission to instal a ceramic photo plaque on a memorial.

Following discussion, during which an appropriate size for the plaque was mooted, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Marsh:-

To allow the inclusion of ceramic photo plaques on memorials (one portrait for each person commemorated) up to a maximum size of 12 cm x 9 cm, subject to approval of the photograph of the person to be commemorated to be supplied with the memorial application form.

Upon being put to the Meeting, FIVE Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition and there was ONE ABSTENTION, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

ii) Out of parish fees – request to amend draft regulations

Further to Minute No. 5 a) of General Operations Committee meeting held on 2nd July 2014, consideration was given to the policy on 'Out of Parish Fees'. A copy of the draft regulations and application form for waiving of double fees was submitted for approval.

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Finch, and RESOLVED:-

That the draft policy on 'Out of Parish Fees' be approved and adopted, as appended to these Minutes.

iii) Policy on timeframe for erecting headstones

The Operations Manager reported on difficulties experienced at Godlingston Cemetery when headstones are erected due to the varied soil make up and subsequent ground movement. Photographic evidence was provided for information.

During the ensuing discussion, safety issues were highlighted and concerns expressed regarding possible damage to the memorial should the headstone become dislodged.

Consideration was then given to an appropriate timescale for the erection of headstones in order to minimise the risks. Following further debate, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Marsh, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Godlingston Cemetery Regulation 3.2 be amended to a minimum 9 months period

before memorial installation.

b) Matters raised by James Smith Funeral Directors

Mr M Green of James Smith Funeral Directors wished to record his appreciation of the sterling work carried out by the Operations Department in dealing with the number of interments within a short space of time.

6. Fishermens Huts and Jetties

a) Matters raised by Swanage Fishermen's Association

i) Boat park / RNLI Development – update

Further to Minute No. 210 of the Council meeting held on 25th January 2016, the Clerk updated those present on matters relating to the RNLI boathouse development, and reported that it had been agreed that the Council should retain the operation of the Boat Park in-house, subject to further consideration of improved facilities i.e. greater security measures. It was noted that the extension of the western jetty was also going ahead.

b) Matters raised by Swanage Fishermen's Association

Information was provided regarding the possible establishment of a Fisheries Local Action Group along the Dorset coast. Two proposals are currently under consideration, one for Dorset and East Devon and another for Poole and Purbeck. Six FLAGS will be awarded within England and the MMO will announce which applications were successful to take through to the next stage and create a Local Development Strategy on the 22nd April 2016.

If finally successful then £800,000 of European Marine Fisheries Fund money will become available for the area covered. The money can be spent on facilities for the fishing industry and it is possible that individual fishermen can also apply.

Mr M Jones left the meeting at 5.45 p.m.

7. Public Conveniences

The Clerk explained the role of the Public Conveniences Working Party and summarised the costs incurred in providing/maintaining the toilet facilities.

The Town Council currently provides eleven toilet blocks, some of which require major upgrading/refurbishing works, and consideration was given to a future long-term plan which may involve the reduction in the number of facilities and improvements to the remainder. The majority of those present felt that the existing facilities should be retained.

It was agreed that the matter should be given further consideration by the Public Conveniences Working Party, who were asked to report to a future meeting of the Operations Committee.

Mr A Lander left the meeting at 6.00 p.m

8. Street Cleansing

In light of comments and complaints received over the Easter holiday period, the Clerk reported on a recent meeting with representatives of Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) regarding street litter collections in the town. An assurance had been given by DWP that efforts were being made to address the problems, and that the level of service provided during the 2015 summer season would be reinstated before the start of

the main holiday season 2016. This would include the provision of larger bins in the Town Square and along the seafront.

Consideration was also given to a programme of education and enforcement and it was noted that information could be published in Swanage Matters and on the Council's website. Members also noted that Purbeck District Council had produced a useful incident report leaflet which would be made available at the Town Council's information desks.

9. Water Matters

a) Wessex Water – The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

It was reported that under the above regulations taps and valves etc. would be due for an inspection. If the Council is legally obliged to upgrade the taps and valves, the estimated cost of the work would be approximately £3,000 and it was noted that although unbudgeted, the Town Clerk could authorise such expenditure as emergency works.

b) Prince Albert Gardens

Consideration was given to the installation of a water supply at Prince Albert Gardens at an estimated cost of £822 plus VAT for the supply and £1,113 plus VAT for the installation of the pipework.

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Finch, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND:

That the Town Council approves the installation
of a water supply at Prince Albert Gardens at an
estimated cost of £2,000.

10. Operations Manager's Report

The Operations Manager gave an introduction to Miss C Johnston, Operations Administration Officer and thanks were given to Miss N Clark for her participation in these meetings over the last two years.

a) Seafront Stabilisation Scheme - The 'snagging list' has twenty two items and a site visit is to be arranged in the near future.

b) Pines Hotel Works - An extension for works has been granted until 15th May 2016. The site currently remains under the control of Raymond Brown Construction Ltd and a decision needs to be made about deployment of the designated bathing zone for the 2016 summer season.

c) RNLI/Lifeguards – a risk assessment is being prepared by the RNLI and this document is awaited. This is likely to determine the dates that the lifeguards are deployed.

Plans and photographs were distributed of the proposed new RNLI lifeguard station for Councillors to consider and review. It was noted that the RNLI will install and remove the existing building free of charge. No objections were raised to this proposal.

d) Wessex Water – Sandpit Field is to have the water supply adjusted.

e) Allotment track – Some improvements had been made but the road is still to be finalised and will be finished by the year end.

f) Vandalism – unfortunately there has been vandalism at the shelter in Sandpit Field and the skate park. Vandalism had generally been decreasing but sadly the new toilets at Shore Road have been subject to graffiti.

- g) **Tennis court tender** – expressions of interest have been invited for the re-surfacing of tennis courts 4 & 5 and the closing date for receipt of estimates is 27th April 2016.
- h) **War memorial tender** – expressions of interest have been invited for the installation of railing and paving around the war memorial and the construction of a commemorative plinth and pathway on the Recreation Ground. The closing date for receipt of tenders is 29th April 2016.
- i) **Staff** - Seasonal staff will shortly commence work and there are no health & safety issues to report, no injuries or accidents in the last month. New starters shortly will be four ground maintenance general operatives and two beach cleaners.

11. Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

There were no additional matters to report.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 13th July 2016 at 4.30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.
