

Minutes of the Meeting of the **GENERAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY 4th APRIL 2018 at 2.30 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 S Poultney

Swanage Town Council

Also present: -

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Miss C Johnston

Operations Department Administration Officer

Mr A Bennett

Prospect Allotment Association
(Until 3.05 p.m.)

Mr R Marsh

Swanage Fishermen's Association
(Until 3.20 p.m.)

Public Participation Time

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Lejeune and Mr M Green (James Smith Funeral Directors). It was noted that the Operations Manager, Geoff Brookes was also unable to attend.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 – 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 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 (with the exception of agreeing the cemetery fees and charges) was noted.

Further to Standing Order No. 12) a) viii, it was proposed by the Chairman and AGREED:-

That Item 5 on the agenda be brought forward
to Item 3 and Item 3 on the agenda be moved
to Item 10.

3. Cemetery Matters

a) Review of policy on memorial benches at Godlingston Cemetery

The Town Clerk provided information on the current policy not to allow memorial benches at Godlingston Cemetery and explained that a request had been received for the Council to review this policy. It was noted that the bereaved had the option of placing memorial plaques beside trees in the cemetery as a means of commemorating their loved ones, and that it would be

difficult to manage the demand for memorial benches if they were to be allowed. It was also noted that if there were too many benches, particularly along the pathways, it would be difficult for grass cutting machinery to pass.

The desirability of increasing the number of seats was recognised, given that many cemetery visitors are elderly. A discussion then ensued with regard to placing a certain amount of benches in the older section of the cemetery, where seating is currently very limited.

After lengthy consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Marsh and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

TO RECOMMEND:

That, subject to information regarding budget implications, the Council purchase a number of benches to be placed in the older section of Godlingston Cemetery.

b) Proposal for dog ban in Godlingston Cemetery

Attention was drawn to the ongoing problem of dogs running loose in Godlingston Cemetery and also the constant problem of dog fouling.

Consideration was given to the prohibition of dogs in Godlingston Cemetery, to bring it in line with Queens Road burial ground and Northbrook Cemetery.

Despite the significant concerns around dog fouling, members also noted that many of the bereaved brought their dogs to the cemetery to accompany them to the graves of deceased relatives, and it was widely felt that the Council should be sympathetic towards people in this position.

Having carefully considered a number of options it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Marsh and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

TO RECOMMEND:

That the cemetery regulations be amended to state that dogs are only allowed within Godlingston Cemetery if they are kept on a lead, and that appropriate signage be erected accordingly.

It was noted that the effectiveness of this new regulation would be monitored and that the question of a dog ban at Godlingston Cemetery would be reconsidered by the Committee if dog fouling remained a significant issue.

c) Arrangements for cemetery extension – update

It was reported by the Town Clerk that the extension of Godlingston Cemetery into the grazing field to the west of the existing meadowland burial ground was becoming an urgent priority. It would be necessary to appoint professional advisers to take this matter forward and a report would be made to a forthcoming Council meeting.

Councillor Green left the meeting at 2.55 p.m.

4. Allotment Matters

a) Matters raised by the Allotment Association

The representative of the Allotment Association raised the following matters:

- Theft continued to be a problem and a request was made for the Council's enforcement officer to patrol the allotments. It was noted that this already took place on an ad-hoc basis.

- The blind corner at the entrance to the allotments is still overgrown, and it was agreed that this would be reported to the Operations Department for action.
- It was advised that the Allotment Association Committee would not be prepared to take on the management of the allotments at the current time.

Mr A Bennett left the meeting at 3.05 p.m.

5. Fishermen's Huts and Jetties

a) Dorset & East Devon FLAG – Fishermen's slipway proposal update

The Town Clerk provided an update following a recent meeting of the project team. Indications were that the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund were likely to make a 75% grant towards the project costs. A final decision would be made on 13th June 2018. If successful, it was anticipated that the works would commence mid-September. Some concerns were raised about the requirement to provide a compound for the contractors in the boat park, given that it was about to be re-opened. It had been agreed that a second consultation meeting with the tenants of the fishermen's huts would take place on Wednesday 18th May at Swanage Angling Club.

The Fishermen's Association representative raised concerns about the lack of facilities for refuse collection. It was agreed that the matter would be raised with the Operations Manager to discuss possibilities.

Mr R Marsh left the meeting at 3.20 p.m.

6. Public Conveniences Working Party

It was agreed that this item would be postponed in the absence of the Operations Manager. In respect of the Public Convenience refurbishment programme that had been undertaken this winter it was reported that all works had been completed on time with the exception of the Beach Gardens disabled toilet building. Difficulties had been encountered regarding the drainage and ground levels, but it was nevertheless anticipated that the facility would be open prior to the end of April.

7. Waste Management Issues

a) Street litter bins

Copy correspondence addressed to Dorset Waste Partnership proposing improvements to the street litter bins along Shore Road was discussed. After some debate it was agreed that although the current system of waste collection was not without fault, it was on the whole performing satisfactorily and therefore whilst the Committee noted the content of the letter, it could not support the proposed changes.

b) Replacement of litterbin near Costcutter, High Street, Herston

This matter was deferred for discussion at a later date.

8. Operations Manager's report

In the absence of the Operations Manager the Town Clerk provided updates on the following:

- **Boat Park**

The Boat Park stabilisation works had been completed and signage would be installed later in the month. The anticipated re-opening date was 23rd May 2018.

- **Skate Park**
The installation of the new skate park ramps had nearly been completed, although progress was frustratingly slow. It was agreed that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor would work with the Town Clerk and Operations Manager to resolve any remaining problems. It was agreed that a progress report on this item should be placed on the agenda for the next Committee meeting.
- **Shore Road Beach Huts**
It was reported that there was a water leak that had led to the loss of supply to the standpipes serving the Beach Huts along Shore Road. Although the Council was working with Wessex Water to resolve the issue, this was proving to be an intractable problem, and as yet it was impossible to report a date by which the problem would be resolved.
- **Health & Safety report**
The Town Clerk provided an update on health and safety at work and was pleased to report that during the last quarter there had been no reportable accidents under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

9. Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

- a) **Beach Gardens Trees** – Further to the recent meeting of the Beach Gardens Working Party it was noted that some urgent work was required to remove dead wood and that this would be undertaken as soon as possible. The Working Party would be reporting its recommendation to fell two trees to the April Council Meeting. It was approved that work was likely to be carried out in the autumn.

10. Matters Arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the General Operations Committee held on 15th November 2017

2. Apologies for Absence - it was requested by Councillor Marsh that it be noted that her apologies for inability to attend the meeting of the General Operations Committee Meeting held on 15th November 2017 had been omitted.

6. a) Cemetery Matters – Children’s section – artificial turf proposal - it was reported that there had not been any objections to the proposal to install artificial turf in the children’s section at Godlingston Cemetery. The deadline for responses was 13th April.

10. Street litter collection and provision of public waste bins - an update was requested from Dorset Waste Partnership regarding the installation of a litter bin opposite the library.

11. Recycling banks at North Beach car park - an update was requested as to whether the recycling banks in North Beach car park had been removed.

12. The Parade railings – how to fund refurbishment/improvements - it was noted that a letter to Dorset County Council to draw their attention to the poor condition of the railings remained outstanding.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for July 2018, the date to be confirmed at the Annual Council Meeting to be held on 23rd May 2018.

The Meeting closed at 3.50 p.m.