

Minutes of the **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** of the Parish of Swanage, held at The Centre, Swanage on **MONDAY, 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2017** at 7.00 p.m.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Steve Poultney, assumed the Chair, and in addition to members of the Council and officials, approximately 39 persons were present.

Chairman – Councillor Steve Poultney (Town Mayor)

In attendance:-

Councillor John Bishop  
Councillor Mike Bonfield  
Councillor Caroline Finch  
Councillor Gail Green  
Councillor Alex Lejeune  
Councillor Gloria Marsh  
Councillor Tim Morris  
Councillor Bill Trite

Sergeant Barry Gosling	Dorset Police
Inspector Andy Keel	Dorset Police
Mrs Mo Andrews	Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community
Mrs Jean Gibbs	Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community
Mr Bob Foster	Swanage Town & Community Partnership/ Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust
Mrs Kim Gallagher	Swanage Town & Community Partnership/ Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust
Mr Andy Lang	Swanage Piermaster
Mr Mark Watson	Swanage & Herston Football Club
Ms Charlie Dooley	Durlston Country Park
Mr Ali Tuckey	Durlston Country Park
Mr Ian Brown	Defibrillator Project/Swanage Coastguards
Mrs Maggie Hardy	Defibrillator Project/Rotary

Before the commencement of the Meeting, the Chairman explained that, with a view to attracting a wider audience, local organisations had been invited to make a short presentation on local issues and/or matters relating to their organisation, and he introduced the representatives that were present.

The Town Clerk then outlined the procedure that would be followed during the Meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Harris and Whitwam.

2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed. (Copies of the Minutes were circulated to those present at the Meeting).

3. **ROAD SAFETY**

(a) **To consider petition (signed by 9 residents) as follows:-**

‘We, the undersigned, have observed traffic travelling in the wrong direction on the one-way roundabout Ulwell Road/Redcliffe Road, Swanage. We ask for steps to be taken to improve the awareness of motorists when they are travelling the wrong way. The situation is potentially very dangerous, particularly at holiday times.’

Concerns had been raised regarding vehicles observed travelling in the wrong direction around the one-way system/roundabout in Ulwell Road, at the junctions with Ballard Road and Redcliffe Road, and a request made for improved signage to be installed. It was reported that the existing one-way sign was almost hidden by a hedge.

A discussion ensued, and suggestions for improvements were made, which included lowering the existing one-way sign for better visibility, the painting of one-way directional arrows/‘no entry’ wording on the road, and the installation of additional ‘no entry’ and ‘one-way’ signs, at appropriate locations.

(b) **Junction of Northbrook Road/Washpond Lane**

(c) **Junction of Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road**

Concerns had been raised regarding pedestrian safety in Washpond Lane, near to the junctions with Northbrook Road and Ulwell Road, which included:

- Overgrown hedgerows and poor visibility for motorists at the junctions.
- Speed limit of 60mph, and speed of vehicles using the lane.
- No footpaths for pedestrians, and particular concerns raised regarding children walking along the lane to St Mary’s Catholic Primary School.

Requests were made for consideration to be given to a new footpath along the edge of the field to the south of Washpond Lane, to improve pedestrian access to Northbrook Road and the school, and for the hedgerows to be cut back to improve visibility.

It was therefore proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Tim Morris and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the concerns and requests made under Items 3 (a), (b) and (c), be placed on a future agenda of the Town Council’s Transport Committee for further consideration.

It was noted that Councillor Bill Trite, as County Councillor, would also lobby Dorset County Council regarding the above concerns.

4. **SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Chairman gave a brief summary of matters affecting the Town Council during the past year.

a) **Tourist Information Centre**

Further to Minute No. 3 c) of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016, the Chairman was pleased to report that the refurbishment of the TIC building had taken place over the winter months. The White House had been completely gutted and transformed at a cost of £100,000, and the interior was now bright and spacious.

Not only had the building changed, but so had the TIC Team. A new Visitor Services Manager and Business Development Officer, Mr Culvin Milmer,

had been recruited to manage the TIC, together with the Boat Park, Beach Gardens, and the Beach Huts, and would be exploring other opportunities to generate income to support the Council's activities. The Council had also welcomed Mrs Sarah Lovett as Culvin's Assistant Manager. The Team were settling in well, and everyone was encouraged to visit the TIC to see the improvements, and view the range of gifts and services now on offer.

b) **Beach Gardens**

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 saw the official opening of new Astroturf tennis courts, funded jointly by the Tennis Club and Town Council, and it was hoped that these would attract more people to play at Beach Gardens. Attendees of the open day had enjoyed a free round of putting.

The kiosk had been repainted/updated, with new tables, chairs and umbrellas, and had been renamed 'Tea on the Green'. A new range of coffees and an enhanced range of snacks and ice creams were now available.

c) **Shore Road Beach Huts – 'Pop up' Shops**

The winter had seen the return of the 'pop-up' shops for the second year in a row, and a wide range of local arts and crafts had been on offer. Interest was growing year on year, and planning was already underway for this year.

d) **Punch and Judy**

The Council had welcomed the return of a Punch and Judy Show on Main Beach in summer 2016, operated by the young Professor, Joe Burns. Joe provided a very entertaining show, with a nice line in political jokes to entertain the adults, and would be returning for a second season this summer.

e) **RNLI Lifeguard Service**

The RNLI Lifeguards would be returning this summer, after a very successful first season in 2016. The service had been well received by visitors and local residents alike. This year the service would be operated from the northern side of the Banjo Jetty, in line with the designated bathing zone, to enable a very clear sea safety message to be given. Together with the Blue Flag, which the Council had been awarded once again for 2017, it would ensure that Swanage beach retained its excellent reputation, which underpinned the local tourist economy.

f) **War Memorial**

The final improvements to the War Memorial had been made during the autumn, which had seen the construction of a low railing, similar to that in place in the 1920s, new paths, and a plinth to carry the memorial to D-Day troops stationed in the town and casualties from modern conflicts. A plaque to commemorate the civilian casualties as a result of bombing raids in the town would be unveiled in the summer, 75 years since their deaths.

g) **Town Hall**

Refurbishment of the Town Hall windows and clock had been undertaken during the winter, to help to preserve this historic building for future generations.

h) **Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust**

The last year had seen the growth of a strong working relationship with the Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust, chaired by Mr Bob Foster and

with Mrs Kim Gallagher as secretary. During the year, the Trust had refurbished and improved The Centre, which was to be congratulated. The Council had committed an average of £17,500 p.a. for three years to support this initiative.

The Council and the Trust were also working together with the Swanage & Herston Football Club to develop facilities at Day's Park, including a community sports facility and a hub for youth football. This followed the decision not to proceed with new changing facilities at Forres Field, but to focus resources on Day's Park.

In the longer term the Council would be working with the Trust and Swanage Museum to explore the possibility of building a new joint facility on the former shelter site to bring the TIC and Museum together under one roof, however, this potential project was in its early feasibility stages.

i) **Swanage Local Plan**

Over the year work had continued to finalise the Swanage Local Plan, and an examination had taken place in the autumn. Following some revisions, the planning inspectorate had now found the plan sound, and it was anticipated that it would be adopted by the District Council, as the planning authority, in June.

j) **Consultations**

The Council had made representations to a number of important consultations over the past year which included:

- Future Dorset - Local Government Reorganisation proposals, which would see the abolition of Purbeck District and Dorset County Councils, in order to create a new Dorset-wide unitary authority. The Council expressed serious concern at the prospect of power moving further away from local people.
- NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group – Clinical Services Review – the Council welcomed the commitment to the future development of both Swanage Hospital and the Health Centre as a community hub. However, serious concerns were expressed regarding the proposed removal of A&E and maternity services from Poole General Hospital to the Royal Bournemouth Hospital.

The Council had also been made aware of a limited consultation by Dorset County Council, as minerals planning authority, as to whether any new proposals for exploratory gas or oil exploration at California Quarry should be the subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment. Whilst the Town Council had not been invited to take part, a letter had nonetheless been written to DCC strongly requesting that an EIA should be undertaken.

The Town Council believed that local voices should be heard, and the Council's Planning and Consultation Committee had discussed 24 different consultations on a wide range of subjects, from the removal of BT telephone boxes to the government's housing policy.

k) **Storm Angus**

A special tribute was paid to Mr Geoff Brookes, Operations Manager, and his team for co-ordinating the immediate response to Storm Angus in November 2016, which saw damage to the sea wall and flooding in the lower High Street. Although not in the Council's statutory remit, if it had not been for such a quick locally-co-ordinated response, the clean-up would have taken much

longer and been less effective.

l) **Other matters**

The last year had also seen:-

- An upgrade to the Council's CCTV camera network;
- Discussions with Dorset County Council regarding works to improve pedestrian safety along Institute Road, and proposals for traffic flow along Shore Road;
- The launch of a Town Council Facebook page to help share information about its activities;
- A decision to introduce electric car charging points into at least one of the Council's car parks; and
- Completion of the RNLI boathouse works, and opening of the new Angling Club building.

m) **Looking to the Future**

- Tomorrow night would see a public meeting about the bandstand to help formulate a plan for the future and, in the coming weeks, there would be another public meeting to discuss the future of the former school playing field off of Jubilee Road in Herston;
- The weekend of 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> June would be an important one for the town with Armed Forces Day being marked by the naming of a locomotive at Swanage Railway Station, and a ceremony at the War Memorial, followed the next day with the annual Civic Sunday service at St Mary's Church, to which everyone was invited;
- The final instalment for the new skate park equipment was due to be in place within the next few weeks;
- August would see an event to commemorate the centenary of Swanage resident Ernest Pitcher being awarded the Victoria Cross, and also the unveiling of the plaque at the War Memorial;
- The Council was working with the Bowling Club to install an all-weather artificial bowling green at Beach Gardens;
- A refurbishment and upgrade of a number of the Council's public toilet blocks was planned during the winter, including those at King George's car park and Mermond Place;
- The Council would be making a final decision on the relocation of its Depot from Kings Road West to one of the industrial estates off of Victoria Avenue;
- And the Council would also continue to explore options for establishing a Community Land Trust to deliver truly affordable housing for local residents.

n) **Voluntary Groups and Charitable Organisations**

The Town Council acknowledged the positive and integral role played by many voluntary groups and charitable organisations in the community, and was pleased to support them in their work. This included:-

- The Council had made grants to support the Citizens Advice Bureau, Dorset Blind Association, Swanage Pier and Swanage Coastal Change Forum. In support of local events donations were made to the Blues Festivals, Regatta and Carnival, and the Film Festival.
- During the coming year grants would also be made to Purbeck Outdoor Weekend, Purbeck Art Weeks, and Swanage Gymnastics, and the

Council would continue to support many other organisations with assistance in kind, such as free use of facilities.

- This year's Volunteer of the Year was Frank Roberts for his outstanding work in keeping the town's verges clear of litter, and helping to establish the voluntary group Litter Free Purbeck.
- The Council was also pleased to have been able to support the tireless efforts of Mo Andrews and Jean Gibbs, Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community, to ensure that Swanage would soon have a specialist Admiral Nurse to support those suffering from dementia and their families.
- The recent opening of the excellent new boathouse facilities for the RNLI, on Council-owned land, also reminded everyone of the important work of the town's lifeboat crew.

In concluding the report, the Chairman reported that the Town Council was proud to play its part in helping the town's community thrive, and expressed his appreciation of the sterling work and dedication of all members of the Town Council's staff.

## 5. **PRESENTATIONS**

The Chairman welcomed representatives from various organisations, and invited them to make presentations on behalf of the following groups:-

### (a) **Dorset Police**

PS Barry Gosling and Inspector Andy Keel introduced themselves to the meeting and gave a presentation on the structure/role of the Purbeck North and Purbeck South Neighbourhood Policing Teams, headed up by PS Gosling. PC Simon Colvin was dedicated to the Swanage team, which also had three PCSOs. The team was keen to attend local community events and meetings. Updates were given on the most common types of crime committed in the town. Instances of vehicle crime/theft from vehicles in rural car parks, shoplifting, and dwelling burglaries were discussed, and it was noted that patrols had been increased in the most vulnerable areas. However, it was reported that Swanage was considered to be a safe place to live with very low crime rates, and had, in fact, experienced significantly less crimes this year, compared to last year. An overview was given of 'street corner meetings' held by the PCSOs in Swanage, which had proved successful. Details of upcoming community engagement events would be advertised on the Dorset Police Facebook page, and in the Town Hall Reception. Members of the public were encouraged to report any incidents or concerns to the team, by calling 101 or via the police website [www.dorset.police.uk/contact-us/](http://www.dorset.police.uk/contact-us/), to sign up to Dorset Police's 'community messaging service', and to support the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

### (b) **Swanage Pier**

Mr Andy Lang, Piermaster, was pleased to report that the Pier's Heritage Lottery Fund application for £2.2m towards the Pier's major restoration and renovation project had been successful. It was noted that the proposed works included the replacement of 41 wooden piles at a cost of £40,000 each. The project would be undertaken in three stages and included new café/outside dining facilities, a new visitor centre to encourage more schools to visit, and the possible re-opening of the Victorian baths for viewing. It was reported that the Pier had attracted over 80,000 visitors during the past

year, 35,000 had been City Cruises Poole passengers, and 18,000 of which had visited during the weekend of the inaugural Pirate Festival. Plans were underway for the festival to be held again in July 2017. 7,500 vehicles had also made use of the Pier's parking facilities.

(c) **Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community**

Mrs Jean Gibbs and Mrs Mo Andrews were pleased to report that the group had reached its fundraising target of £50,000 and was now undertaking the recruitment process for a new Admiral Nurse. Interviews would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017, and it was anticipated that Purbeck would have its first community Admiral Nurse by September 2017. Congratulations were extended to Mrs Gibbs and Mrs Andrews for their tireless and successful fundraising efforts.

Details were given of three dementia 'safe havens' in Swanage, and a new 'home safely' bracelet scheme had been launched, which would help people with dementia return safely to their home.

(d) **Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust**

Mr Bob Foster and Mrs Kim Gallagher welcomed everyone to the newly refurbished Centre. 'Phase I' of the refurbishment programme had been completed, 'Phase II' would include extensive roof repairs and a new heating system in the hall, and a grant application had been submitted to Talbot Village Trust to assist with the cost of these works. 'Phase III' included proposals for a possible extension for a community café and meeting room.

It was reported that Explorers Childcare was now operating Ofsted approved full time/wraparound childcare facilities at The Centre for children 0-5 years old, and also after-school and holiday clubs for children up to 11 years old, five days per week. Purbeck Runners continued to meet at The Centre on Wednesday evenings, SINC (Swanage Individual Needs Club – Learning Disability Group) on Thursday evenings, and Tuesday and Friday evenings were reserved for use by a rejuvenated Youth Club in the near future. Planning was also in progress for use of the building on Monday evenings and at weekends, and improvements had been made to make the hall acoustically suitable as a potential performance space, for meetings and conferences, music events, parties and exhibitions.

It was noted that the Trust was continuing to work with the Swanage & Herston Football Club on a draft business plan setting out proposals for the club's future development.

(e) **Swanage and Herston Football Club**

Mr Mark Watson was pleased to report that the Club's first team had won the Dorset Premier Football League for 2016/17. Congratulations were extended to the Club.

It was reported that a development/business plan was being put together for a possible new 'multi function' centre, which would see the existing sports hall demolished and replaced by a new building. Proposals included a new sports and social centre, which could also be used as entertainment/performance space, and conference facilities. Regular meetings were being held with the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust and the Town Council.

Short-term proposals included a new stand, and new changing and catering facilities, and the youth teams would be moving to Days Park. A new 100-year lease was also being negotiated with the Town Council.

A reminder was given that short tennis, badminton, and keep fit classes were held in the sports hall on a weekly basis. All welcome.

- (f) **Durlston Country Park**  
Ms Charlie Dooley and Mr Ali Tuckey provided an update on the Durlston Pleasure Grounds 'Parks for People' Project, and the Park's bid of £1m to the Heritage Lottery Fund, which had passed 'Round 1', and was now in 'Round 2'. If successful, the funds would be used towards the revitalisation, renovation, and improvement of the historic landscape at Durlston for the local community, and for heritage. It was hoped that the proposed enhancement/improvement works would commence in early 2018.  
The Park would be hosting a variety of events during 2017, and a new leaflet was available detailing events and dates. It was reported that the Durlston Bus service would be running again this year, and details were given about a possible 'lift-sharing' scheme. The Park was also developing plans to become a dementia friendly site.
- (g) **Swanage Rotary**  
Mrs Maggie Hardy provided an update and reported on the successes of the Rotary's summer fete, Christmas Market, Christmas mail service, and Christmas Day breakfast. It was noted that Rotary's official motto was 'service above self'. Mrs Hardy had also thoroughly enjoyed working with the Wave Youth & Children's Ministry.
- (h) **Defibrillator Project**  
Mr Ian Brown and Mrs Maggie Hardy provided an update on progress of the project. The original plan had been for four defibrillators to be installed in the town, however, due to generous donations being received from members of the community, and the Town Council, there were now seventeen. A flyer showing the locations of the units was available. It was noted that there were two mobile devices available for use at events, one was held in the Swanage Coastguard Station, and one in Corbens Estate Agents.  
Defibrillator awareness workshops had so far been undertaken with over 200 people, which had provided attendees with advice and guidance on what to do in an emergency, and showed them how to use the devices.  
Mrs Hardy gave special thanks to Mr Brown for all his hard work and dedication to the project, which has helped make the project such a success.
- (i) **Swanage Coastguard Team**  
Mr Ian Brown provided an overview of operations over the past year, which had seen a very busy time, from administering minor first aid, to cliff rescue. The service was currently being run with a team of nine volunteers, instead of a team of twelve, and the difficulties of attracting new volunteers were discussed. A national audit had also been undertaken during the year.
- (j) **Dorset County Council**  
County Councillor Bill Trite reported on matters relating to Dorset County Council, which included:
- Proposals for improvements to Institute Road and Shore Road.
  - Details of a planning application for temporary planning permission to construct a wellsite to explore for oil and gas on Land South of Panorama Road, and recommendation for an Environmental Impact Assessment.
  - Concerns regarding the potential loss of Poole Hospital's accident & emergency and maternity services, and a discussion held as to whether an ambulance service could be based in Purbeck again.

- A new leader was to be elected for the County Council, Rebecca Knox, and it was likely that the new Chairman would be Hilary Cox.
- The County Council's revenue support grant from central government had so far decreased by £58m, and would decrease by a further £30m over the next three years. It was reported that 60% of resources was utilised in providing adult social care. Dorset was a popular retirement destination.
- An update was given on the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation, and concerns regarding the potential impact on the local community were reiterated.

6. **GENERAL ISSUES**

The Mayor then opened the Meeting for general discussion, and invited questions and comments from the audience.

Matters raised included:-

- The new Swanage Volunteer Bureau, which had been set up to promote volunteering opportunities in Swanage (under the umbrella of the S&PDT), had been launched on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017. A database of volunteering 'vacancies' would now be created, and SVB's aim would be to increase the number of volunteers in Swanage by providing a weekly face-to-face drop-in session at Swanage Library every Friday from 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017, from 10.30am to 12.30pm.
- A question as to whether some of the Monthly Council Meetings could be held in The Centre, as the building had good disabled access.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was provisionally agreed that the next Parish Meeting be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

In conclusion, the Mayor thanked those present for their attendance, and closed the meeting at 9.10 p.m.

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