

Minutes of a Meeting of the **TOURISM COMMITTEE**
held at the Town Hall on **THURSDAY 10th JULY 2014**
at **10.00 a.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor I Brown

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor Mrs C Bartlett

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Whitwam

Swanage Town Council

Outside Representatives:-

Ms K Black

Durlston Country Park

Mrs K Delahay

Swanage & Purbeck Hospitality Association

Mrs C Drayson

Swanage & Purbeck Hospitality Association

Mrs C Finch

Swanage & District Chamber of Trade &
Commerce

Mr S Hanney

Swanage Railway Co. Ltd.

PC Kyle Hickman

Dorset Police

Mr A Power

Swanage & Purbeck Hospitality Association

Mr P Sykes

Swanage Railway Co. Ltd.

Also Present: -

Mrs L Burgess

Senior Administration & Finance Officer

Miss N Clark

Management Support Officer

Mrs C Hooper

Tourist Information Centre Supervisor

Ms H Lagden

Purbeck Tourism Officer

Mr N Fowler

Swanage Tennis Club

Mrs S Tindale

Swanage Tennis Club

Public Participation Time

There were three members of the public present.

The following matter was raised during Public Participation Time:-

- Swanage Bowling Club – request for consideration to a reduction in Bowling Green fees.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Mrs Marsh, Mrs Patrick and Wiggins and Dr M Ayres, Town Clerk.

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.

3) Matters arising from Minutes of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on 4th November 2013

There were no matters raised.

4) Matters arising from Minutes of the Beach Management Sub-Committee Meeting held on 2nd July 2014

- a) **5 knot speed limit enforcement in the bay** – It was reported that Purbeck District Council had confirmed that the marker buoys were in the incorrect position and a request has been submitted to correct this error. A meeting with Purbeck District Council was being arranged as a matter of urgency to discuss the re-positioning of the buoys and to publicise this issue.
- b) **North Beach, Burlington Chine & foreshore – Dogs/dog fouling issues and request for extension of Dogs on Beach Byelaws** - Consideration was given at the meeting to a request for an extension of Dogs on Beach Byelaws and clarification of foreshore regulations for the above stretch of private beach. The general consensus of the Sub-Committee was that any change in the Byelaws could have an adverse effect on the town's tourism trade and give the incorrect impression that Swanage was not a dog-friendly town. It was therefore agreed that the Sub-Committee could not support a request to Purbeck District Council to extend these Byelaws. The wording on the Council's website regarding dogs on the beach regulations would also be reviewed and would include a paragraph regarding the private beach areas to ensure that the guidelines were clear and fair. The private beach and beach hut owners in attendance also agreed that their signage needed to be improved.
- c) **Enforcement Officer (on the water)** – concerns were raised regarding the budget available for this service in future years. An update was required from Purbeck District Council and requested as an Agenda item for the next Sub-Committee Meeting.
- d) **Seagull Posters** - concerns were expressed regarding seagulls and the increasingly aggressive behaviour displayed by them and it was agreed that advisory posters would be put up at a number of seafront locations.

5) Presentation from Mr Nathan Fowler, Swanage Tennis Club Coach

A short presentation was given by Nathan Fowler, Head Coach of the Swanage Tennis Club. Nathan has been in situ at the Club for just over a year and is keen to continue to build/grow the youth programme and membership thereof. He had also undertaken a four-week tennis programme with local schools which 110 children attended. He currently has circa 40 regulars attending his youth coaching club. His presentation included a request for consideration to waive Court Fees for 12 months for coaching sessions for the under 18's to improve youth services, increase footfall and encourage young players into the sport and to become members of Swanage Tennis Club. The ultimate goal of the Club is to achieve LTA Club status which would then enable them to apply for local sponsorship and grants.

6) Beach Gardens

a) Tennis Coach Court Fees – request for consideration to waive Court Fees for 12 months

Following a brief discussion regarding Mr Fowler's presentation and request, and taking into account the fact that a significant proportion of the main tennis season had already passed, it was felt that a pilot should be considered for a period of 12 months, after which time Mr Fowler would be expected to report back to the Committee with a review of the youth club, including attendance numbers. It was therefore proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

**TO RECOMMEND:
That Tennis Court Fees for the coaching of
under 18 year-olds be waived for a 12-
month pilot period.**

b) Bowling Fees – request received from Swanage Bowling Club for consideration to a reduction in Bowling Green fees

Further to the presentation given in Public Participation time, and a brief outline given of the letter that had been received from Swanage Bowling Club with their request for consideration to a reduction in the seasonal Bowling Green fees, it was RESOLVED:-

That the request and proposals for reduced fees for the Bowling Club would be discussed in depth at a future meeting, to be arranged between representatives of the Town Council and Bowling Club.

7) Litter bins – provision of bins for summer season 2014

An update was given regarding the bins now in situ and it was reported that an improvement had been seen in services. Additional wheelie bins were now in place along the seafront and along to the Stone Quay and are being monitored. The bin numbers will be doubled for Carnival week at no cost to the Town Council. The numbers will be reduced back down to a minimum again during the winter months. Dorset Waste Partnership will be reviewing this year's trial to assess what is required in 2015/16. Thanks were given to the bin collectors for their sterling work in improving services. It was suggested that the Dorset Waste Partnership telephone number should be displayed by the bins and it will also be circulated with the Minutes should issues arise in the future.

PC Kyle Hickman left the meeting at 10.30 a.m.

8) Swanage Value of Tourism 2013 Data

Consideration was given to an email received regarding tourism data reports and a discussion ensued as to whether this type of data would add value to the town and its businesses. The general consensus was that insufficient data was currently held to accurately follow business trends, and it was also felt that this type of data may attract businesses to the area in the future and could be included in Business Plans. Comments were made that this type of data could also be reported through the Swanage Matters Newsletter. It was therefore agreed that a review would be undertaken by the Tourist Information Centre in conjunction with Purbeck District Council to see what data would need to be collated, who would input the data and what types of report would be available. The findings will be reported at a future meeting.

9) Shop maps – request for consideration to two new signs

Consideration was given to a letter received requesting new shop map signage. The new Chamber of Trade shop map was discussed and it was reported that it had been well received, particularly at the Tourist Information Centre and also when handed out on the Swanage Railway platform to visitors arriving by train as a 'welcome to Swanage'. The general consensus was that the Chamber of Trade map would be more effective if displayed in the town's car parks near to the pay machines, along with details of events being held in the town. At Main Beach car park potential locations were identified at the entrance and near to the cemetery. It was therefore agreed that the Chamber of Trade would liaise with the Tourist Information Centre Supervisor.

10) Art and Erosion Project – Purbeck’s exclusion

The Art and Erosion Project display recently held in Bridport was discussed. It was reported that the display, which uses art as an educational tool and aims to increase public awareness of the Jurassic Coast and erosion, had been well received. It was further reported that the display is now at Durlston Country Park and the Park is keen to promote increased arts activity in Purbeck in partnership with Dorset Arts Trust.

The revival of an arts leaflet was discussed and a number of Committee representatives indicated their willingness to meet to discuss the promotion of art and local artists, and to identify events and locations for such activity. An update will be given at the next meeting.

11) Tourism Reports

Ms H Lagden, Purbeck Tourism Officer, reported on the following matters:-

a) Visit Dorset Website

A Social Media Campaign is currently running including a Visit Dorset Facebook Competition, with prizes to be won throughout July. Everybody was encouraged to log on to the site and enter.

b) Local Enterprise Partnership

Funding has been agreed for a consultation to discuss plans and projects.

c) Swanage & Purbeck Holiday Guide

This has been well received. Marketing campaigns have worked well and demand was high in 2014. Work is now underway on the 2015 edition.

d) Swanage & Purbeck Group Travel Pack

Please see the Visit Dorset website for details.

e) The BBC One Show

Footage has been shown recently on the One Show of quarrying in the Purbeck area, featuring the surrounding countryside. It was also reported that Harbour Lives is being filmed in the local area again and this was considered good promotion for Dorset. Previously the Broadchurch TV filming had given the Visit Dorset website figures a boost.

Mrs C Hooper, Tourist Information Centre Supervisor, reported on the following matters:-

a) Shore Road Stabilisation Scheme

It was reported that it had been a challenging start to the season with the building works, however, thanks were given to the staff who had remained positive throughout.

b) First Aid & Defibrillator Training

First Aid refresher training and defibrillator training had been given to the TIC staff and Beach Wardens.

c) Beach Wardens

The Beach Wardens had now been recruited for the coming season and are eager to give talks and undertake sea and beach awareness activities. The next event is planned for Thursday 24th July 2014 and will include information as well as fun activities. This year’s Beach Clean activity had been cancelled by the school taking part, however, planning is already underway for next year’s event. This has been opened up to all local schools and the Tourist Information Centre will be seeking a new school to lead the activities.

d) Twitter

Visit England have been encouraging more use of Twitter and this had been useful in getting important messages and information out to the public quickly. For more information please see the Visit England website.

e) **Beach Huts**

Beach Hut bookings had been extremely busy with the reduced numbers currently on offer for hire. Winter bookings have also been made and enquiries are increasing for these.

f) **Green Tourism Awards**

The Swanage Tourist Information Centre has been entered into these awards. An update will be given to a future meeting.

g) **New Patrol Sergeant**

Sgt Barry Gosling is the new Patrol Sergeant for Purbeck. Sgt Gosling makes use of Twitter and Facebook and has assisted the TIC in getting the message across regarding no cycling permitted along the closed part of Shore Road.

h) **Jurassic Coast Quality Business Scheme**

The above Scheme would like to use the TIC as a model for other visitor centres and the matter is currently under discussion. Please see the Jurassic Coast Quality Business Scheme website for full details of the Scheme.

Mr A Power left the meeting at 11.05 a.m.

12) **Events 2014 – update**

Dorset Wildlife Trust – Wild About Swanage Event held 21st June 2014

Wild About Swanage was a free event open to all ages to celebrate everything that is wild in the Purbeck area, with wildlife games and activities for children, plant stalls, free refreshments and a raffle. This was well attended and it is hoped this will return in 2015.

South Coast Rowing Championships Regatta - 13th & 14th September 2014 and The Purbeck Marathon – 14th September 2014

The above major events are happening on the same weekend in September, however, it was reported that both organisations have managed this situation and have regularly spoken/met with each other to discuss and attend Safety Advisory Group meetings and have ‘blended’ the events well. It was also reported that after only two years the Purbeck Marathon has been rated the best in the UK in 2013 by Runners World Magazine Readers.

The Tourist Information Centre requests/encourages event planners to ‘think ahead’ and to put their requests in to the Centre in writing at the earliest opportunity. Assistance can also be given regarding safety awareness and with accommodation bookings.

13) **Updates from Outside Representatives**

Swanage Railway

A review of 2013 was provided. The 210,984 passengers carried was second only to 2009 with 212,095. It saw the best-ever December with 11,124 passengers during the month, 8631 of which were ‘Santa Special’ passengers and the Christmas Luncheon trains were fully booked. Passenger numbers for the year to date have exceeded 77,000 with the peak season still to come. Special services have been scheduled during Carnival week and a further 50,000 passengers are expected during August. Events have proved successful this year and there is the Swanage 35 Gala being held this weekend which is a celebration of 35 years of operating trains. Trial services to Wareham will commence from September 2015. A full report and update has been provided and will be circulated with the Minutes.

Thanks were also given to the staff and volunteers of Swanage Railway for providing such an excellent service.

Swanage Youth Centre

A music event is being held in King George's Playing Fields on Friday 15th August 2014 from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and will feature young local musicians and bands. There will be a barbecue and stalls and it is hoped that the event will also attract footfall from the Friday market. Everybody welcome. Posters are available.

Switch on Swanage

A music event is being held in Prince Albert Gardens on 22nd and 23rd August 2014. There will be a bar, barbecue, stalls and children's attractions. Everybody welcome.

Swanage & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce

An update was given regarding the new Chamber of Trade shop maps which have been well received. It was also mentioned that the Chamber welcomes all members of the public to their meetings. It was reported that the Chamber felt that the Purbeck area could be promoted more effectively/proactively and a discussion ensued regarding leaflets used to promote towns and attractions in other areas. It was agreed that representatives from the Chamber of Trade, Purbeck District Council and the Tourist Information Centre would meet to discuss this matter and a report provided as an agenda item at the next Committee Meeting.

Durlston Country Park & National Nature Reserve

It was reported that the centre had been very busy and is currently hosting the Art and Erosion Project. Charley's War, an exhibition of works by the late comic book illustrator, Joe Colquhoun, is also in situ and has benefited from De Moulham Trust funding. These events have been well attended. A project called Parks for People was discussed which will improve the area of woodland from Durlston to the Zig Zag and restore and enhance the National Nature Reserve. Thanks were given for the provision of the Durlston Bus Service again this year and everyone was invited to promote the use of this valuable service. The coast path leading up to Durlston Country Park has now been reopened, a new studio has opened in the visitor centre and the new Volunteer accommodation is nearing completion. There is a full events programme arranged, leaflets are available and the details can also be found on the Durlston Country Park website.

Swanage & Purbeck Hospitality Association

The Swanage Art Trail leaflet was discussed. This will be commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the First World War and will include copies of posters from that era. Details will be available on the Visit Dorset website. There will also be a small Green Festival held in September which will promote green issues, tourism and food. Details can be obtained from the Hospitality Association.

14) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

- a) **Consideration of a new leaflet to promote the Purbeck area, detailing towns and attractions therein** – Representatives from the Tourist Information Centre, Purbeck District Council and Chamber of Trade will meet to discuss this matter and a report back will be included on the agenda for the next Committee Meeting.
- b) **UNESCO World Heritage website** – consideration as to how this could be used as a tool to promote tourism to be included on the agenda for the next Committee Meeting.

15) Provisional Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting has been scheduled for Monday 3rd November 2014 at 10.00 a.m.

The Meeting closed at 11.30 a.m.