

Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall on **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2005** at **10.00 a.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor Mrs C Gainsborough                      Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor Mrs C Bartlett	Swanage Town Council
Councillor C R Bright	Swanage Town Council
Councillor Mrs J Farrow	Swanage Town Council
Councillor M Pratt	Swanage Town Council
Councillor M Tyrer	Swanage Town Council
Mr A Leeson	Town Clerk
Mrs C Hooper	Tourist Information Centre
Ms J Bowry	Purbeck Tourism Officer
Mr N Brown	Swanage Railway Co. Ltd.
Mr R Johnson	Swanage Pier
Rev J Wood	Association of Churches Together in Swanage

1) **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Mr A Marriott of the Swanage and Purbeck Holiday Accommodation Association, and from the Swanage Museum representative.

2) **Matters arising from Minutes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2005**

Councillor Tyrer enquired about progress in respect of inviting a representative from the police force to a Council meeting to discuss licensing matters, further to minute 4)a) of the meeting of the Tourism and Environmental Committee, held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005. The Town Clerk reported that, as Purbeck District Council had since issued a statement clarifying the proposed new powers in respect of the consumption of alcohol in public places, the urgency for a meeting had passed.

Further to minute 5)b) Councillor Mrs Gainsborough proudly announced that Swanage had won the Small Seaside Resorts category in the South and South East in Bloom Competition. Durlston Country Park had also been awarded the judge's discretionary award. It was requested that Swanage's success be featured in the 2006 Holiday Guide.

3) **Tourism Reports**

Ms Bowry, who is providing maternity cover for Ms Elston, reported on the following matters:-

a) **Holiday Guide 2006**

The Holiday Guide is in its final stages of proofing. It is due to go to press on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October, and will be delivered on 8<sup>th</sup> December.

b) **Marketing**

The media campaign for the 2006 guide is to begin in January and will continue through to the autumn, as part of a drive to extend the season. Advertisements have been placed in a number of tourism-related publications, The Daily Mail and Radio Times. A search engine placement has also been arranged for the Purbeck Holiday website.

c) **Map and Guide**

Work has begun on the new Swanage and Purbeck map and guide.

d) **Heritage Centre & Museum**

The museum and heritage centre project is progressing. The layout for the centre has been decided and discussions on two interactive exhibits are ongoing.

e) **Dorset DMO**

Talks are still progressing relating to the formation of the Dorset DMO, building on widespread agreement that all districts and towns, along with the County Council, should work more closely together.

f) **Newsletter**

It is anticipated that the next edition of the newsletter will go out in mid-October. It will contain information on the guide advertising, training courses, fair trade etc.

g) **Creative Coast**

An arts strategy for the Jurassic coast is currently being developed.

h) **Carrying Capacity**

Purbeck will be piloting a carrying capacity study for the Jurassic Coast, in order to assess the appropriate balance between visitor numbers and the impact on the environment.

Councillor Bright enquired about the space available to the museum at the Heritage Centre building. Ms Bowry acknowledged that the area was smaller than that at the Tithe Barn, but that there would be rotating exhibitions to ensure that most of the collection was displayed. Councillor Mrs Gainsborough expressed her wish to see the existing film show retained, and was assured that this would be so.

Mrs Hooper, deputising for Mrs A Holmes, reported on the following matters:-

a) **Footfall**

Footfall at the TIC during August was 2000 up on the same period last year.

b) **Folk Festival**

The Folk Festival had been very successful and accommodation heavily booked for that weekend.

c) **Waverley Bookings**

A large number of bookings for the Waverley paddle steamer had been made over the past three weeks.

d) **Cards for Good Causes**

The Cards for Good Causes charity Christmas cards will be on sale at the TIC from 30<sup>th</sup> September.

e) **Purbeck Film Festival**

The ninth Purbeck Film Festival will run between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October. The Lookout at Durlston is being used as the Swanage venue and tickets will be available from the TIC.

4) **Reports from Outside Organisations**

a) **Association of Churches Together in Swanage**

Revd Wood reported that there had been a very successful series of organ recitals over the summer and that a large number of visitors had attended the parish church. Work to improve disabled access to the church was also ongoing.

b) **Swanage Railway**

Mr Brown stated that business was down on last year, and that premium price products had suffered the greatest drop in demand. However, figures remained roughly in line with the average for the preceding five years.

The Town Clerk enquired about the main line link-up and Mr Brown remarked that progress had been slow, primarily due to changes emanating from central government. Councillor Bright confirmed this and updated the meeting about the most recent Purbeck Rail Partnership meeting.

c) **Swanage Pier**

Mr Johnson reported that visitor numbers were up on last year and that the number of Waverley bookings had almost doubled since 2004. The shuttle bus operating from the pier was also well-used. Useful publicity had been gained by a film featuring the pier currently showing on Freeview television.

Unfortunately, the pier had been unsuccessful in its £48,000 bid for funding from the People's Millions, due to a lack of approval from the planning department at Purbeck District Council. It was agreed to re-apply next year, the bid to incorporate a marine interpretation centre.

It was reported that Swanage Museum was hoping to use the upstairs of Marine Villas to house microfiche and other historical material.

Mr Johnson also updated the meeting concerning two recent cases of damage to the pier, caused by the SS Balmoral and an army landing craft.

Councillor Mrs Gainsborough enquired whether the proposed planning application would see the removal of the portakabins from the pier, and Mr Johnson confirmed that this was the case. Mr Johnson also clarified the relationship between the Pier Company and the Pier Trust in terms of ownership and management of the pier.

5) **Any Other Matters**

a) **Beach Recharge**

Councillor Bright updated the meeting on the Beach Recharge scheme. A public meeting had been held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September. There had been some confusion over the level of funding from central government, but the latest news was that DEFRA would fund the total cost of the work. The importance of getting the work underway this year was stressed, due to the availability of sand from dredging in Poole Harbour.

b) **Coach Parking**

Councillor Tyrer raised the issue of coaches parking illegally outside of the Mowlem, and in Gilbert Road. The Town Clerk reported that he would raise this issue at a meeting with a representative from Dorset County Council, tomorrow afternoon.

c) **Christmas Lights**

Councillor Mrs Bartlett announced that the Christmas Lights would be switched on on November 26<sup>th</sup>.

6) **Dates of Next Meetings**

The scheduled dates for the next meetings were confirmed as 28<sup>th</sup> November 2005, 27<sup>th</sup> March and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

The meeting closed at 11.00 a.m.

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