

Minutes of the Meeting of the **CARAVAN PARK COMMITTEE** held at the **TOWN HALL, SWANAGE** on **WEDNESDAY, 16<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2008** at 2.15 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs. A. Patrick – Chairman  
Councillor C.R. Bright  
Councillor Mrs. C. Gainsborough  
Councillor M. Whitwam

**Public Participation Time**

There were four members of the public present, but they did not wish to raise any matters at the current time.

Before the commencement of the Meeting, the Chairman read a statement from the Mayor stating that he is very willing to have a meeting with the Owners' Association, together with other senior councillors and officers, but apologises that he cannot make this evening's suggested time. He requested that Mr. Scudamore contact him to re-arrange the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

2. **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

The General Manager reported on the following matters:-

- (a) There had been a marked improvement on the use of the recycling facilities by caravan owners and an overall reduction in general waste.
- (b) There had been a downturn in caravan sales, partly attributable to the economic slowdown and the uncertainty regarding the future operation of the Holiday Park. Four new caravans and seven secondhand caravans had been sold during the period November 2007 to March 2008. There was currently 21 secondhand caravans for sale, together with three demonstration models, the latter being without any contractual obligation to the Town Council.
- (c) Caravan lettings had increased compared with 2007. The number of caravans available for letting had increased from 23 in 2007 to 28 in 2008, and the number of weeks that the vans were available for letting had also increased.
- (d) The maintenance, cleaning and decoration of the swimming pool area had now been completed, and it was anticipated that the new cubicles would be installed by the beginning of May.
- (e) Replacement of the electricity boxes had been completed, and regular periodic checks were to be undertaken to ensure that the "trip switches" were functioning correctly.

- (f) The utility service in respect of the metered gas supply to the Rehearsal Room was currently being investigated.
- (g) Information and speed restriction signage would shortly be installed on the Holiday Park. A sample was presented and endorsed by the Committee.
- (h) Difficulties had been experienced in securing contractors to undertake refurbishment/maintenance works to the launderette. Assistance from the Operations Department was currently pending.
- (i) It was considered that solar power lighting would not be appropriate for installation at the Holiday Park, but that low power lighting would be more efficient. Accordingly, 45 low power lighting units had been ordered (at a fitted cost of £85.00 each) and would be installed within the next four weeks. It was noted that ground works would be undertaken by the Grounds staff.
- (j) Improvements i.e. new ceiling, decoration and blinds, at the Quarryman had been completed.
- (k) The new till system had been installed and had been operational in respect of the bars and restaurant during the Easter period. Training was still to be undertaken by the Reception staff.
- (l) The provision of alternative caravan insurance arrangements was currently being reviewed.
- (m) The supply/delivery of calor gas to the caravans was being reviewed, together with the charges for the supply/delivery of this service, particularly out-of-hours.
- (n) The shortage of staff at the Holiday Park was highlighted, and it was agreed that recruitment should be undertaken, as a matter of urgency, within the existing budget provisions.

The General Manager outlined a proposal to convert the existing Skittle Alley into a Fitness Centre at an estimated cost of approximately £33,000. He reported that there was very little demand for the use of the Skittle Alley and felt that the area could be better utilised to provide additional fitness facilities.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the cost implications and viability of such a facility, and it was proposed by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, seconded by Councillor Bright, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That a Business Plan for a proposed Fitness Suite be prepared by the General Manager and referred for consideration at a future meeting of the Finance and Performance Management Committee.

A member of the audience requested permission to address the Meeting under Standing Order No. 69.

The Chairman adhered to the right to refuse the request by virtue of the business having been transacted and with regard to the need to continue with the business of the Meeting.

3. **CAPITAL SCHEMES – REVIEW AND UPDATE**

The General Manager updated Members on the following matters relating to the capital programme of works at the Holiday Park.

- (a) Improvements to the Quarryman had been completed at a cost of £1,868. (Minute No. 2 (j) above refers).
- (b) Improvements to the swimming pool/changing facilities were nearing completion – approximate cost of £8,700. (Minute No. 2 (d) above refers).
- (c) Resurfacing work i.e. tarmac to the roads had been undertaken at a cost of £22,000. Improvements to other non-developed areas/pathways were also being reviewed and a schedule of works compiled.
- (d) The installation of low power lights was progressing. (Minute No. 2 (i) above refers).

The General Manager highlighted the requirement for a suitable vehicle for use at the Holiday Park, particularly when showing prospective clients around the Park. It was noted that a “golf buggy” had previously been used for this purpose, but this was not considered to be practicable, particularly during period of inclement weather.

Following discussion, it was AGREED:-

That the General Manager obtain further information regarding an appropriate vehicle, the cost of which to be met from the existing budget provisions.

It was reported that 230 applications had been received regarding the payment of site rents by instalments, 7 forms had not yet been returned, 23 caravan owners had paid their site rents in full for the ensuing year, and 28 had elected to sub-let their caravans.

Arising from the above, a question was raised regarding the total number of plots on the Holiday Park and the number of pitches vacant. The Town Clerk confirmed that for budgetary purposes the Holiday Park occupancy figure used was based on 275 pitches, and enquiries would be made in respect of the current number of vacant pitches.

4. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**

There were no urgent matters to report at the present time.

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting had not yet been determined.

The meeting concluded at 3.25 p.m.

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