

Minutes of the Meeting of the **CARAVAN PARK COMMITTEE** held at the **TOWN HALL, SWANAGE** on **TUESDAY, 19th JUNE 2007** at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs. A. Turner – Chairman
Councillor C.R. Bright
Councillor Mrs. C. Gainsborough
Councillor M.W. Pratt
Councillor W.S. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

Also in attendance:- Mr. A. Leeson – Town Clerk
Mr. G. Brookes – Operations Manager
Mrs. L. Burgess – Senior Administration Manager
Mrs. A. Holmes – Tourist Information Centre Manager

Public Participation Time

There were 17 members of the public present.

The Chairman welcomed those present and invited questions and comments from the audience.

- i) Concern was expressed regarding changes that have taken place at the Holiday Park, with particular concern at the lack of consultation with the caravan owners. It was hoped that the setting up of an “Owners Association” would prove beneficial to both the Council and the caravan owners.
It was noted that this matter was to be considered under Agenda Item 5 of the following Caravan Park Committee meeting.
- ii) Introduction of pitch premiums.
It was noted that this matter was to be considered under Agenda Item 2 of the following Caravan Park Committee meeting.
- iii) Poor condition of the boundary fencing in the vicinity of the Household Waste Disposal site.
It was noted that this matter was currently being dealt with.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies to report for inability to attend the Meeting.

2. **REVIEW OF PITCH PREMIUM POLICY**

Further to Minute No. 4 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 11th April 2007, consideration was given to issues that had arisen relating to the introduction of the pitch premium policy.

It was reported that, following challenges from some owners, the BH&HPA had confirmed that the introduction of pitch premiums was a lawful practice, and that the valuation exercise, independently conducted by the Council’s Surveyor had resulted, not only in affirming the values but, identifying scope for introducing an even higher banding for some of the most attractive sites.

During the discussion, it was noted that since the introduction of the pitch premiums, the sales of secondhand caravans had remained buoyant, but there had been no sales of new caravans.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs. Gainsborough and seconded by Councillor Whitwam:-

That the present policy be amended so as to exempt existing owners from being charged the premium when upgrading or replacing their caravans.

An AMENDMENT was moved by Councillor Bright and seconded by Councillor Mrs. Turner:-

That the matter be deferred to enable further information to be obtained from the BH&HPA.

Upon being put to the Meeting FIVE Members voted IN FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT. The AMENDMENT was then put as a SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and declared CARRIED with FIVE Members voting IN FAVOUR and ONE ABSTENTION.

3. **REVIEW OF PARK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Further to Minute No. 4 (f) of the Council Meeting held on 11th April 2007, consideration was given to the interim management arrangements at the Holiday Park.

Concerns had been raised at the intolerable strain being placed upon senior management staff in dealing with operational matters and the high volume of enforcement issues and complaints. The Bars and Catering Contractor had indicated a willingness to provide assistance in these areas, at no additional cost.

During the debate, the Town Clerk, as the Council's responsible financial officer, highlighted some concerns and reservations regarding the inherent risks associated in determining the matter, and, following consultation with the senior managers affected, it was proposed by Councillor Pratt, seconded by Councillor Bright, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To RECOMMEND:

That the present interim managerial arrangements continue at the Holiday Park, and that the assistance offered by the Bars and Catering Contractor in relation to customer services and Park Rules, be accepted, subject to liaison with the Town Clerk.

4. **CARAVAN OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

A letter dated 27th May 2007 was submitted from Mr. P. Marsh, on behalf of the caravan owners group, expressing concerns over the changes that had been taking place relating to the running of the Holiday Park, and indicating their intention to set up an "Owners Association". It was hoped that this Association would provide a convenient means of communication and consultation, which would be beneficial to both the Council and individual caravan owners alike. The use of Council-owned facilities at the Holiday Park for meetings of the Association was also requested.

It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Pratt, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To RECOMMEND:

That the Town Council recognises the "Owners Association", subject to it being properly constituted, and to permit the use of Council-owned facilities at the Holiday Park for meetings of the "Owners Association", subject to liaison with the Bars and Catering Contractor.

5. **OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

(a) **Shop**

The Operations Manager reported that the change of use of the former shop into a caravan sales office was nearing completion, and that the work had been carried out “in-house” within a budget of approximately £5,000.

(b) **Fire Boxes**

The Operations Manager reported on the need to upgrade the fire boxes on the Holiday Park in accordance with recommendations contained in the Fire Officer’s Report.

It was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Turner, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND:

That 20 fire boxes be purchased at a cost of £10,000 (£500.00 each), funding to be met from the Repairs and Renewals Reserve.

(c) **Road Re-surfacing – Quarry Close**

Before consideration of this item, Councillor Pratt declared a personal interest under the Model Code of Conduct by reason of being a member of the Purbeck Housing Trust, and as his interest was prejudicial, left the Meeting during the debate.

The Clerk reported on the deteriorating condition of the road surface in Quarry Close, and following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Trite, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND:

That the quotation of £3,240.00, submitted for road re-surfacing works in Quarry Close be accepted, funding to be met from the Repairs and Renewals Reserve.

(d) **Calor Gas Compound**

The Operations Manager reported on a health and safety recommendation that the calor gas compound be re-located from its present site due to the close proximity of the adjacent building.

It was considered that the former caravan showground, opposite the Reception Office, would be a more appropriate site for the compound, and approval was given for the works to be undertaken. The estimated costs of approximately £5,000 would be met from the existing Holiday Park repairs and maintenance budget.

(e) **Condition Survey Report**

The Clerk gave a brief summary of the Condition Survey Report, which had identified some major remedial works to the main administration building. These works were currently being costed, but were estimated to be in the region of £11,000.

It was noted that these remedial works requiring funding approval, be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Council.

(f) **Launderette**

The Clerk referred to the poor condition of the launderette equipment at the Holiday Park, (which had been identified in October 2006), and the need for updating and improving this facility was acknowledged. During

the discussion, Members questioned the requirement for this facility, bearing in mind the equipment contained in modern caravans.

The Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 69, sought the views of caravan owners who were present at the Meeting, regarding the requirement for laundry facilities.

It was noted that many caravans were not equipped with washing machines, and it was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Gainsborough, and RESOLVED:-

TO RECOMMEND:

That estimated costs for upgrading of the launderette be obtained, and that delegated powers be given to the Town Clerk, Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Committee Chairman to act in this matter.

5. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

- (a) Cessation of development works at Holiday Park during main holiday season.
- (b) Caravan cleaning services.
- (c) Provision of Maintenance Staff Facilities – Holiday Park.
- (d) Conditions Survey – Panorama Road and roads around the Holiday Park.
- (e) Standards of work and specification.
- (f) It was noted that the scheme to introduce new road marking, particularly around the Reception area, be actioned at the Holiday Park.
- (g) The request to obtain a topographical survey be actioned.

The meeting concluded at 11.10 a.m.
