

Minutes of the **MONTHLY MEETING** of the Swanage
Town Council held at the Town Hall, Swanage on
MONDAY, 31st MARCH 2008 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M.W. Pratt (Deputy Town Mayor) – Chairman

Councillor B. Audley

Councillor C.R. Bright

Councillor Mrs. C. Gainsborough JP

Councillor M. Hadley

Councillor Mrs. G.A. Marsh

Councillor Mrs. A. Patrick

Councillor S. Poultney

Councillor W.S. Trite

Councillor M. Whitwam

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, 25 members of the public attended the Meeting.

In the absence of a clergyman, Councillor Mrs. Marsh offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

Public Participation Time

MR. G. WALLACE, Chairman of the Swanage Sea Rowing Club, presented some background information relating to the Sea Rowing Club since its inception in 2001. He highlighted the popularity of the Club, (which now had a membership in excess of 100), and emphasised the need to build a permanent boathouse, which would also provide secure storage for equipment and changing facilities. Some suitable sites had been identified, with preferred options, and the Town Council's support for the project was requested.

MRS. M. DIGHT enquired whether further consideration had been given to the possible re-location of the Tourist Information Centre to the Town Hall. She was informed that there was considered to be some merit in housing the Council's administration functions "under one roof", but the matter had not been fully discussed and no decision had been reached in this regard.

MR. A. SCUDAMORE, Assistant Secretary to the Bay View Caravan Owners' Association, asked questions with regard to the Options Appraisal of the Holiday Park, and subsequent actions concerning an informal tendering process and papers issued by the Town Clerk. Other areas of concern were raised in relation to the public being excluded from the Meeting when the Council's Finance and Performance Management Committee decided to carry out a "market testing" exercise in relation to the Options Appraisal.

The question was asked why the Association was named in a recently issued Public Statement and whether there was a problem with the Association, with its budgets, or the Council's auditor. The Association's spokesman indicated that the problem lay at the senior level of management at the Town Hall.

[On approval of these minutes at the Monthly Meeting held on 21st April 2008 it was noted that **MRS S. BRIGHT** had made reference to sand excavations around the beach hut staging.]

The Council Meeting commenced at 7.15 p.m.

159. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from the Town Mayor and Councillor Gloyn-Cox.

160. **MINUTES**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Mrs. Gainsborough, seconded by Councillor Bright, and RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on 25th February 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

(b) Proposed by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Marsh, and RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 3rd March 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

(c) Proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Poultney, and RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held to discuss policy and planning matters on 7th March 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

(d) Proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Patrick, and RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held to discuss policy and planning matters on 17th March 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

161. **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Pratt, and RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 22nd February 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

162. **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Pratt, and RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 10th March 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

163. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In the absence of the Town Mayor, there were no specific announcements to make at the present time.

164. **TOURISM REPORT**

The Tourist Information Centre Manager reported on the following matters:-

(a) Footfall at the Tourist Information Centre during the Easter period had been disappointing, although there had been an increase in e-mail enquiries and stock sales compared with previous years.

- (b) There had been a steady demand for use of the facilities at Beach Gardens during the Easter period, which had resulted in an income stream comparable with the Easter period in 2007.
- (c) The changeover from the winter to summer season at the Boat Park was currently being processed. There had been a good response from customers wishing to renew their grid spaces, and waiting lists for vacant grids of all sizes were being compiled.
- (d) Preparations were underway for the “Beach Awareness Week” which is being held from the 24th to 31st May 2008. The event would be based on a similar format to that of previous years, and would include involvement from the Maritime Coastguard Agency, the RNLI and the “Boots Sun Care” team.
- (e) An advertisement had again been placed in the Coach Drivers Club Year Book, and as a result of the Town Council’s continued support, a whole page editorial on Swanage had been secured. This publication was widely circulated to coach companies throughout the country, and it was hoped that the advertisement/editorial would help to promote the weekly market and encourage longer duration stays in the town.
- (f) Information leaflets relating to the “Purbeck Aware” events and the Swanage Armed Forces “Veterans Celebration Weekend” were now available at the Tourist Information Centre.
- (g) A “James Bond” themed “Murder Mystery” night was being held at the Swanage Bay View Holiday Park on Saturday, 5th April 2008.

165. **SWANAGE SEA ROWING CLUB**

Before consideration of this item, Councillor Mrs. Marsh declared a personal and prejudicial interest under the Model Code of Conduct by reason of being a close relation of Club Members. She left the Meeting during the debate.

Detailed consideration was given to the information contained in a Briefing Note regarding the proposals for a new boathouse by the Swanage Sea Rowing Club. During the discussion, the need to build a permanent boathouse, which would also provide secure storage for equipment and changing facilities, was again acknowledged and the requirements relating to the site i.e. access to water, gradients of site etc. were considered.

All Members were fully supportive of the proposals, in principle, but some concern was expressed at the preferred site option.

It was proposed by Councillor Bright and seconded by Councillor Mrs.

Patrick:-

That the Town Council reaffirms its support in principle to provide land between Encombe Road and the Broad Road Car Park retaining wall, for a boathouse, (subject to legal details being agreed).

Upon being put to the Meeting, SEVEN Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition and there were TWO ABSTENTIONS, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

It was further proposed by Councillor Trite and seconded by Councillor Mrs.

Patrick:-

That delegated authority be given to the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Bright and the Town Clerk

to hold further discussion with representatives of the Swanage Sea Rowing Club.

Upon being put to the Meeting, SEVEN Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition and there were TWO ABSTENTIONS, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

166. **REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

There were no matters to report from Council representatives on outside organisations at the present time.

167. **REPORTING OF DELEGATED MATTERS**

There were no delegated matters in need of urgent attention at the present time.

168. **METEOROLOGICAL RECORDS**

The meteorological records for the month of February 2008 were submitted for information.

Arising from the above, reference was made to the possible re-siting of the weather station, having regard to the housing development in the vicinity and the possible affect this may have on the statistical information recorded.

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

- (a) Confirmation from Dorset County Council regarding the retention of the Swanage Day Centre.
- (b) Updating of Council's website.
- (c) Temporary closure of Manor Road in connection with development of "Seacourt" site.
- (d) Possible closure of Bulky Household Waste site.

Having regard to the importance of item (d) above, it was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Hadley, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Standing Order No.17 be waived to enable item (d) to be fully considered.

It was reported that a meeting was scheduled to be held by Dorset County Council the following day (Tuesday 1st April 2008), to consider the closure of the Bulky Household Waste Disposal Site in Swanage. Members expressed grave concern at the possible withdrawal of this facility and the impact this would have on the residents of Swanage. Concern was also expressed at the lack of consultation between Dorset County Council and the Town Council on this matter, and it was proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Marsh, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a letter be sent to Dorset County Council expressing the Town Council's grave concern at the proposed withdrawal of this important facility and the lack of consultation with the Town Council and local residents in this matter.

It was FURTHER AGREED:-

That the Town Council's concerns be conveyed to County Councillors Donald Hiett and Mike Lovell in order that they may make representations at the meeting on the Town Council's behalf.

170. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Proposed by Councillor Pratt, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Gainsborough, and
RESOLVED:-

That, under Standing Order No. 67, it is envisaged that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following matters.

171. **LEGAL ISSUES**

(a) **Audit Commission – Legal Challenge**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the Council Meeting held on 17th March 2008, the Clerk updated Members on matters relating to the legal challenge by the Audit Commission.

It was noted that agreement had been reached with the Audit Commission for the respective legal advisers to meet to clarify matters relating to the Caravan Park, but a mutually acceptable date had not yet been determined.

The meeting concluded at 8.55 p.m.
