

Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **MONDAY, 1st JULY, 2002** at **10.00a.m.**

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs C Gainsborough JP - Chairman

Councillor Mrs J Farrow

Councillor Mrs H O' Donovan

Councillor J. Roscoe

Mr. D. Mouser

Swanage & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce

Mrs. R. Nicholson

Purbeck District Council

Mr. R. Stimpson

Purbeck Tourism

Mr. G. Willey

Swanage & District L. V. A.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Miller (Town Mayor), Councillors Roscoe and Sutton, Ms. K. Black and Mr. C. Ferguson.

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD - 22nd MARCH 2002**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd March 2002 were noted as approved.

Arising from Minute No. 4(b), the Clerk reported on the meeting held on 22nd April 2002 to discuss the Town Council's proposed role in the promotion of Swanage as the Eastern Gateway to the Jurassic Coast. Details were given in reference to the Town's outline brief that had been prepared for the consultants working on developing the tourism strategy for the World Heritage Site. Further details were provided of the proposed public meeting to be held at the Mowlem Institute on Monday, 16th September 2002, and the joint presentation by Mr. M. Turnbull and the Town Clerk.

3. **TOURISM REPORT**

Mrs. R. Nicholson, Tourism and Countryside Officer of Purbeck District Council, presented a report to the Meeting, detailing the following matters:-

(a) **Accreditation Scheme**

Applications for the special offer were reported as being received from twenty-six establishments. The current number of accredited properties was sixty-three out of a total in the Guide of two hundred and forty-seven. Some further applications were anticipated prior to the deadline.

(b) **Seasonal Trade**

Accommodation providers had reported on a patchy start to the season. All providers reported good trading during, and since, the Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend in May/June.

(c) **Purbeck Aware Month**

The campaign had been considered successful with good numbers attending each event. In addition, recent records have shown higher numbers of short break visitors in shoulder months to the area and increased visitor numbers to the Heritage Centre compared with 2001, including a rise in the number of visiting school parties.

(d) **Swanage & Purbeck Guide 2002**

Market research feedback showed that 62% of recipients of the Guide had booked their holiday in the United Kingdom. 46% had compared Purbeck with other areas before making a choice of region. Overall, 21% had chosen accommodation in the Purbeck area.

(e) **Swanage & Purbeck 2003 onwards**

A revamped Guide was being prepared for 2003. The Guide would aim to promote niche markets, such as walking, cycling, hiking and visitors to the World Heritage Site.

(f) **Southern Tourist Board**

Details of the merger of the Southern Tourist Board and the South Eastern Regional Tourist Board were confirmed as being agreed.

(g) **Map & Purbeck Cycleway**

A copy of the recently published map detailing the Purbeck Cycleway was provided for circulation. Confirmation was given that the map was now being distributed.

(h) **Tourist Information Centre – Wareham**

The appointment of Mr. Ben Dames as the new manager was announced.

A detailed discussion ensued regarding the format and future production of the Swanage & Purbeck Guide for 2003 and beyond. The Clerk referred to the joint meeting held on 18th June 2002. The practical issues involved in producing a guide for both accredited and non-accredited establishments until 2005 were highlighted and noted.

The Tourism and Countryside Officer confirmed that the Southern Tourist Board had stated that the manner in which the Guide is produced until it becomes accredited only in 2006, was at the discretion of the District and Town Councils. Practical solutions were suggested, following the examples of other areas that had adopted a similarly phased approach.

Further discussion ensued regarding the future role of the regional Tourist Boards since the promotion of the accreditation scheme which was previously being administered by the Southern Tourist Board (STB).

It was noted that the officers of the STB would continue to provide a role in the scheme, should the Town and District Council choose to re-register as members of South West Tourism.

A general debate, concerning the potential change in membership between the Southern and South East Tourist Board and South West Tourism was held. Mr. G. Willey advised of the

traditional and historic links between Swanage and the representation as members of the STB. The Tourism and Countryside Officer emphasised that the new government funding arrangements were being administered through the South West Regional Development Agency. The Clerk further emphasised government moves towards the creation of regional assemblies and, more appropriately, the implications of being physically linked to the south west due to the new World Heritage Site status. No decision was made regarding the possible change of membership of the Town Council from the STB to South West Tourism.

4. **REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

(a) Mr. G. Willey reported on behalf of the Licensed Victuallers Association that a blanket approval had been granted to extend the permitted opening hours during Carnival Week. It was noted that a similar request in respect of the Folk Festival Weekend had been unsuccessful.

(b) Mr. R. Stimpson reported that the "Where to Eat Guide" had been produced and was currently being distributed. It was noted that Purbeck Tourism had continued to subsidise the publication to a cost of between £2,000 and £3,000.

(c) Mr. D. Mouser announced his appointment as the Secretary of the chamber of Trade. He expressed his intention to seek an increased membership and a more active role of the members in future.

5. **DATES OF MEETINGS**

The amended dates for the next meetings were confirmed as:-

Monday	30 th September 2002
Monday	2 nd December 2002
Monday	7 th April 2003