

Minutes of the Meeting of the **BEACH MANAGEMENT
SUB-COMMITTEE** held at the **TOWN HALL, SWANAGE**
on **WEDNESDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 2015** at **2.15 p.m.**

In Attendance: Councillor Bonfield – Chairman
Councillor Mrs Bartlett
Councillor Mrs Marsh

Mr K Bragg - Private Beach Huts Representative
Ms R Compton – Ocean Bay Watersports
Mr T Greasty – Designated Bathing Zone Representative
Mr R Johnson – Swanage Pier
Mr G King – Swanage Angling Club
Mr J Taylor – Pierhead Watersports Byelaw Enforcement
Mr D Turnbull – Swanage Lifeboat Station
Mr G Wallace – Swanage Sea Rowing Club
Mr B Wallbridge – Durlston Country Park – from 2.20 p.m.

Miss N Clark – Management Support Officer
Mrs C Hooper – Tourist Information Centre Supervisor

Other Attendees: Five representatives from St Mary’s Catholic Primary School
Mrs C Finch – Swanage & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce

Public Participation Time

In addition to St Mary’s Catholic Primary School representatives, there was one member of the public present at the meeting.

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time:-

- Pupils from Years 5 and 6 of St Mary’s Catholic Primary School had been invited to attend the meeting and they took the opportunity to ask the Sub-Committee various questions during Public Participation Time. Questions raised included clarification regarding the use of adult inflatables, metal detectors and barbecues on the beach, dogs on beach byelaws, beach cleaning, the new RNLI lifeboat station, and a discussion around the dangers of ‘pier jumping’. The Chairman thanked the pupils for their valued input to the meeting, and it was hoped that they would attend a further meeting of the Sub-Committee in the future.
- Thanks were given to the Town Council regarding the completion of the seafront stabilisation scheme, and complimentary comments made about the new beach huts and lighting.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor Brown, Dr M Ayres (Town Clerk), Mr A Allison (Swanage Angling Club), Mr J Deare (North Beach Representative), PCSO T Ferrari (Dorset Police), Mr M Goater (Purbeck District Council), Mr P Loudon (Seaweed Removal), Mr R Marsh (Quay Representative), Mr R Martin (Swanage Sailing

Club), Mr A Mears (Wessex Water Representative), Mr M Slater (Swanage Boat Hire), Mr J Wardlaw (Environment Agency), Mr I Weston (Coastwatch) and Mr C Wiggins (Beach Concession Operators' Representative).

2) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Sub-Committee held on 15th October 2014.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Marsh, seconded by Mr D Turnbull and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Sub-Committee held on 15th October 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

3) Matters arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the Beach Management Sub-Committee held on 15th October 2014.

5) Five knot speed limit enforcement in the bay – A brief overview was given of an email received from Purbeck District Council (PDC). It was confirmed that a copy of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 15th October 2014 had been forwarded to the contractor requesting comments about the concerns raised therein. However, it was reported that PDC had not received a response as yet. PDC would be meeting with the contractor next week to discuss these concerns.

7) Pierhead Watersports Byelaw Enforcement – Concerns had previously been raised regarding sea safety, including the dangers of winds and tides, heavy drinking, jet skis and larger speed boats speeding out of the bay, and it had been reported that the RNLI Community Sea Safety Officer (CSSO) had developed a Community Safety Action Plan. It was confirmed that the CSSO would be invited to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee to provide details of the Action Plan, and to answer any queries or concerns Sub-Committee Members had.

8 a) Shore Road – It was reported that the resurfacing had now been completed, although damage had already been seen to the surface. It was reported that difficulties had been experienced with new materials used and that this would be addressed by Dorset County Council.

4) Beach recharge – update

An overview was given of an email received from PDC regarding the planned trial to deposit sand in the bay. It was confirmed that the recharge at Poole had gone ahead but because of Natural England's objection to this proposal PDC had not been able to take part in the pilot study in Swanage. To overcome the objection PDC had hoped to undertake a dive survey, using volunteer divers, to provide a benchmark to assess any changes if sand was deposited. Plans had been drawn up for a dive survey but, unfortunately, only one dive had taken place and there had not been enough voluntary support to be able to proceed with it.

The position now was that PDC had no funding for this project but hoped to meet with officers from Poole Borough Council and the Environment Agency to see if they could find a way ahead so that a scheme may be possible in the future.

Committee Members reported that Julie Hatcher, Marine Awareness Officer, Living Seas Team, Dorset Wildlife Trust, coordinated marine volunteering projects locally and her details would therefore be passed to PDC accordingly.

5) Main Beach – consideration of request for access to Main Beach by non-motorised dinghy

It was reported that a letter of request had been received for access to Main Beach for a non-motorised dinghy. A copy of the letter had been circulated to Sub-Committee Members with the agenda, along with a copy of the Town Council's existing Beach Regulations. A discussion ensued and concerns were raised including safety of beach users, possible issues with high tides and anchors, implications re: Blue Flag status, the safe bathing zone, and whether it would encourage larger boats into the area and how to police the same. It was also felt that the water taxi service needed to be better advertised as there was currently not enough usage of this facility. However, the general consensus of Sub-Committee Members was that some of the existing Beach Regulations were 'old fashioned', that there was no 'legal' difference between a dinghy or adult inflatable, and visitors coming ashore from their boats brought additional income into the town and boosted its economy. It was noted that landing facilities for dinghies and motorised craft were available at Ocean Bay. A busy day could see three to four boats coming ashore and they had not experienced any issues.

It was therefore felt that there should be designated 'dinghy landing areas', namely at Main Beach (north-side of the jetty/clock tower), the Stone Quay and Ocean Bay, and that it should be made quite clear that these areas were for rowed inflatable tenders only. The provision of lockers for a small fee, for storage of life jackets and belongings whilst dinghy owners were ashore, was also discussed. It was reported that this had been trialled at Salcombe and had proved successful.

It was therefore agreed that contact should be made with Salcombe Town Council and more detailed information obtained before further consideration could be given to the exploration of possible options for establishing landing areas and lockers at appropriate locations in Swanage.

6) Updates from Representatives/Organisations
Tourist Information Centre (TIC)

It was reported that the TIC were in the process of advertising for beach wardens for the 2015 summer season. Entries for the Blue Flag and Seaside Award had been submitted. Plans were going well for the first Swanage Fish Festival which would be held 5th – 7th June 2015, there would be a varied schedule of activities, please see website for full details of the event: www.swanagefishfest.org. The TIC would be arranging a 'beach awareness day' with organised games and activities for the whole family on Main Beach on Saturday 6th June 2015. It was noted that comments had been received regarding a deep drop after the last groyne before Ocean Bay, this would be brought to the attention of the Operations Manager accordingly.

Durlston Country Park

It was reported that there would be a 'beach clean' activity taking place on Sunday 1st March 2015 at 2.00 p.m. The next Great Dorset Beach Clean would be held on Sunday 26th April 2015, time to be announced, awaiting tide timetable. Further 'ten minute beach clean' activities would be announced via social media. These events were designed to encourage the public to 'love their beach'. Pickers, bags and health and safety details would be provided. The Park Rangers would also be making contact with the Fish Festival organisers as they wanted to be part of the event and hoped to provide marine-type activities.

Private Beach Hut Users

Public Liability Insurance Policy details were being finalised and a copy would be provided to the TIC for review in due course. A question was raised as to

whether it would be possible to paint the doors of the private beach huts in colours to match the colour scheme of the new Shore Road beach huts, current regulations stated that only brown paint could be used. A further query was raised regarding the wooden staging for the beach huts, repairs had been undertaken last year however it would appear that the long runners were too wide for the huts to sit on them properly. This query would be referred to the Operations Manager accordingly.

Designated Bathing Zone

It was reported that the designated bathing zone area would be in place as usual from Easter until the end of September. Thanks were given by the Chairman to the Designated Bathing Zone Operator for the sterling work undertaken by him for the Town Council.

R.N.L.I.

It was reported that the RNLI and Swanage Angling Club had now moved into their temporary accommodation. The last launch had been 1st February 2015, the lifeboat slipway had now been removed and the Angling Club building demolished. Some asbestos had been discovered which had slightly delayed the development, however, the build was now back on track for completion in April/May 2016. The RNLI were now operating from a new base in the boat park using tractors and were awaiting their first callout of 2015. Lifeboat Week would be held from 7th to 16th August 2015.

Swanage Angling Club

As the Club had now moved into temporary accommodation the Club's landline telephone number was no longer in use. If anyone needed to contact the Club they should use Mr Geoff King's mobile number.

Ocean Bay Watersports

The question was raised as to whether the five knot buoys would be in place for Easter, and it was confirmed by the Chairman that PDC had advised that they would be in position from 15th March 2015 until 30th September 2015. A further query was raised regarding the Byelaw covering the placement of the buoys and whether they had to be in place by Easter, a fixed date, or whether it could be weather dependent. This matter would be raised with the District Engineer and reported back at a future meeting.

Swanage Pier

It was reported that there would be a fishing competition held as part of the Swanage Fish Festival event, and Swanage Angling Centre would be donating prizes. The Pier had sustained major damage during storms in 2013 and repairs had been undertaken, with the assistance of many volunteers. Funds had been set aside and work to upgrade the Pier continued. An application had been submitted for Lottery funding, the outcome of which should be known by June 2015.

Swanage Sea Rowing Club (SSRC)

The indoor winter training programme had now ended and the new season on the water would commence in due course. Thanks were given by SSRC to the Town Council, TIC and Coastwatch for their support, the new clubhouse had been a success and club membership was blossoming, with a 25% increase seen. The clubhouse had also been used for various community events, and a wedding reception. SSRC would be taking part in their first rowing regatta of the season this weekend, and the next SSRC Regatta would be held on 13th June 2015. There would be an 'open day weekend' for 14–24 year olds to encourage them to take up a new activity and be more active, and there was now a national schools' rowing course for juniors.

Switch on Swanage (SOS)

It was reported that SOS would be lighting up the seafront, on the new lamp posts from the Mowlem to the Bull and Boat, in time for the summer season.

7) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

a) Wessex Water – an overview was given of an email received from Wessex Water which advised that they were planning to make the improvements to the Ulwell stream outfall during the 2015/16 financial year, although construction dates were not known as yet. A further update would follow.

b) Kayak Fishing Competition – it was reported that the kayak fishing competition would be returning this year on 16th May 2015, new name, Swanage Classic Kayak Fishing Competition, and with new sponsors.

8) To agree meeting dates for 2015/16

It was noted that Sub-Committee Members felt that meetings should continue to be held three times per annum, and that these meetings should take place at least three to four weeks prior to the Tourism Committee meetings to enable the Committee to review questions and requests raised, and information provided by the Sub-Committee in more depth before their meeting. It was also felt that the Sub-Committee meetings should be held at a more convenient time of 4.30 p.m. and this would be discussed by the new Sub-Committee members at the next meeting.

The date of the next Sub-Committee meeting would be discussed by the new Tourism Committee at their June 2015 meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.20 p.m.
