

Minutes of the **MONTHLY MEETING** of the Swanage
Town Council held at the Town Hall, Swanage on
MONDAY, 29th JULY 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M.P. Bonfield – Chairman
Councillor C. Finch
Councillor T. Foster
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor D. Monkhouse
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor J. Page
Councillor N. Rogers
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor W.S. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, approximately twenty four members of the public attended the Meeting.

Reverend Mark Hatto, Minister & Team Leader, Emmanuel Baptist Church, offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

Before opening the Meeting, the Chair welcomed members of the public and read a short statement regarding the fire evacuation procedure, filming/audio recording etc. of the Meeting, and a summary of the procedure for Public Participation Time.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time:-

- **Swanage Bandstand Project** – a query as to whether the bandstand seating options had been discussed, and a request made for permission to be granted for the official opening concert event to be held by Friends of Swanage Bandstand on 14th September 2019.
- **Sandbanks Ferry** – a query regarding diversion signs which had been put in place in Corfe Castle, and concerns raised that no consultation had taken place with Studland Parish Council (SPC). The Chairman confirmed that SPC had been represented at a recent meeting with stakeholders to consider what actions could be taken to mitigate the impact of the ferry being out of service, which would be discussed under Agenda Item 11 a).
Further representation regarding the creation of an alternative service for foot passengers.
- **Planning application** – concerns raised regarding approval of a recent planning application. The Chairman directed the member of public to contact Dorset Council as the planning authority.
- **Climate Emergency** – concerns regarding Extinction Rebellion, and the Town Council invited to ensure that it understands that organisations' aims and objectives prior to working with it.
A request made for the Town Council to give due consideration and support to a declaration of climate emergency at a future Council Meeting.

The Chairman opened the Council Meeting at 7.25 p.m.

59. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for his inability to attend the Meeting was received from Councillor Suttle.

60. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 - 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Agenda Item 12 – Councillor Bonfield declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct by reason of being a regular long-term beach hut user.

61. **MINUTES**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Whitwam, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on 24th June 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

44. **REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS**

Planning application consultation period

A question was raised regarding the concerns about the 21-day consultation period. The Clerk confirmed that these concerns had been raised with Dorset Council's Chief Executive, who had advised that discretion was generally exercised by planning officers, and that this would continue.

62. **PLANNING AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Rogers, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Consultation Committee held on 1st July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

63. **TOURISM COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Foster, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Tourism Committee held on 16th July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

It was noted that consideration would be given to the following recommendation under Agenda Item 12:-

7) **BEACH HUTS**

a) Review of Booking System

That proposed beach hut fees for 2020-21 are adopted, as set out in the VSM's Briefing Note dated July 2019, except for the proposed reduction in the Shore Road lower level annual charge, which is to remain at the same level.

64. **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Whitwam, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 24th July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

65. **STATEMENT OF CASH BALANCE**

- (a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th June 2019 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

66. **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Consideration was given to Payment Schedule 4, and questions were answered regarding a refund for a boat park space and payment for daily copies of the Bournemouth Echo.

Proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Harris, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the accounts specified in Payment Schedule 4,
amounting to £280,282.26, be authorised.

67. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Bonfield reported that in his capacity of Town Mayor he had attended the following events during the past month:-

- Litter Free Purbeck's unveiling of Dorset's first rotary nurdle filter machine on Main Beach, which had been named in honour of local 'nurdle-picker' Mrs Mary Dwen who had tirelessly collected over half a million nurdles from the shoreline over many years. Thanks and appreciation were extended to Mary.
- Swanage Jazz Festival Parade, along with the Deputy Mayor.
- Swanage Parish Fete, St Mary's Church.
- Swanage Regatta and Carnival Week – which had been very well attended.

68. **REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS**

It was reported that the new Dorset Council was continuing to 'settle down', and updates were given on a number of matters including:-

- **End of first financial year** – an update was provided regarding the most recent forecast of the likely year end out-turn.
- **Eastern Area Planning Committee (EAPC)** – further to Minute No. 44 of the Council Meeting held on 24th June 2019, further concerns had been raised that only four Members of the EAPC were from the Purbeck area. A question was raised as to whether a representation could be made to Dorset Council regarding these concerns, and it was agreed that this would be discussed at a future meeting of the Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee.
- **Climate Change Panel** – the Council's Panel had met recently to consider proposals for its carbon reduction targets, policies and actions to address climate change, and would be exploring government funding for initiatives.
- **Dorset Council's list of priorities** – this would be considered at the Council's September Meeting.

69. **CLIMATE EMERGENCY – REPORT FOLLOWING MEETING WITH PURBECK EXTINCTION REBELLION (PER) ON 17TH JULY 2019**

Further to Minute No. 54 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 24th June 2019, it was reported that a productive meeting had been held with representatives from the Purbeck Extinction Rebellion on 17th July 2019. The Town Council would consider the declaration of a climate emergency at its next meeting, and work would get underway to draft an appropriate motion for the Council to debate. This would be likely to include reference to the creation of an action plan including deliverable steps to achieve carbon neutrality. It was noted that one idea under consideration was that a carbon footprint audit of the Council and its properties could be commissioned. A further meeting would be held with PER in September 2019 to further consider these proposals.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Harris, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That delegated authority be given to Councillors
Bonfield, Harris, Trite and Suttle, and officers, to
continue discussions with the Purbeck Extinction
Rebellion on behalf of the Town Council.

The Chairman thanked PER Group for its constructive approach to discussions
with the Council.

70. **WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

(a) **Affordable Housing held on 19th July 2019**

Further to Minute No. 47 of the Council Meeting held on 24th June 2019 it was
reported that the working party had met with Mr Andrew Bibby of the Calder
Valley Community Land Trust (Hebden Bridge) on 19th July 2019, along with
representatives from the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust. A copy of
the notes of the meeting had been provided for information purposes.
A useful 'Q & A' session had been held with Mr Bibby, and recommended
next steps included:-

- Decision to establish a Community Land Trust.
- Contact to be made with Homes England to discuss proposals and
seek advice.
- Contact to be made with Dorset Council and its Housing Advisor.
- Establish who would drive the project forward, and identify/recruit
CLT Members with relevant experience and skills.

It was noted that the S&PDT had advised that it would be willing to act as
facilitator/chair for this project, and provide advice on the set-up of the CLT.

(b) **Festive Lights held on 10th July 2019**

The working party had considered draft proposals for improved festive
lighting. It was noted that if a scheme was to be delivered in time for
Christmas 2019 an order would need to be placed prior to 31st August.
It was recommended that the improvement should be introduced on a small
scale to start with, focussing on Station Road as the venue for the Christmas
Market, and that an urgent tender exercise should be undertaken.
The working party wished to have sight of the tenders prior to an order being
placed.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Whitwam, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a tender process be undertaken for improved
festive lights, and that Financial Regulation 4.1 be
suspended so that the Town Clerk can be authorised to
place an order prior to the 31st August 2019.

71. **SANDBANKS FERRY**

(a) **Report following meeting of stakeholders held on 22nd July 2019**

Notes of a meeting of stakeholders held on 22nd July 2019 had been provided
for information purposes.

A number of action points had been agreed at the meeting to mitigate the
impact of the Sandbanks Ferry being out of service, which included the
installation of advisory alternative route signage in Corfe Castle, into and out
of Studland, and the phasing of traffic lights to optimise traffic flow and
reduce congestion.

Comments were made that traffic during Swanage Regatta and Carnival Week had flowed relatively well, and a suggestion made that a letter of thanks should be sent to Dorset Highways for its prompt action in this matter.

A 'wash-up' meeting would be held at the end of the season to review the success of the measures which had been put in place, and to consider longer-term options if appropriate.

Under Financial Regulation 4.5, the Clerk reported that commitment had been given on the grounds of urgency for expenditure of up to £1,323 towards the costs of the new diversionary signage. However, an undertaking had been given by a local Dorset Councillor at the meeting to explore whether Dorset Council would cover these costs.

(b) **Future toll increases – appointment of representative to meeting being convened by Studland Parish Council**

It was reported that a request had been received from Studland Parish Council for Town Council representation at a meeting being held to discuss the possible establishment of a local action group.

It was deemed likely that a further application for an increase in tolls would be submitted by the ferry company, and Members were in agreement that it would be important for a joined-up approach to consider any such application and the potential impacts this may have on the local area/community.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Tomes, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That Councillor Finch, as Chair of the Tourism Committee, and Councillor Whitwam, as Chair of the Roads and Transport Committee, be nominated as representatives to the meeting being convened by Studland Parish Council, Councillor Whitwam to act as Councillor Finch's deputy if only one representative was required.

Further to his declaration of interest under Minute No. 60, the Town Mayor left the Meeting during consideration of the following item.

In the absence of the Town Mayor, Councillor Harris assumed the Chair.

72. **BEACH HUT SCALE OF CHARGES FOR 2020/21**

Consideration was given to a Briefing Note prepared by the VSM dated July 2019. The VSM had undertaken a review of beach hut charges, which had not been increased for the last two years, and a number of small increases were now proposed.

Further to Minute No. 7 a) of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on 16th July 2019, a reduction in the annual charge for the Shore Road upper level was now proposed to encourage increased use in the shoulder/winter months. The annual charge for the lower level would remain the same.

It was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Rogers, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the proposed beach hut fees for 2020-21 be adopted, as set out in the VSM's Briefing Note dated July 2019.

The Town Mayor returned to the Meeting and re-assumed the Chair.

73. **TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR USE OF TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTY IN RELATION TO FESTIVALS AND EVENTS IN 2019**

Consideration was given to a briefing note dated July 2019 prepared by the Visitor Services Manager which set out proposals for the following new event requests, which were discussed in turn:-

1) Monthly 5k run at King George's Field

Members were in agreement that King George's Field was a good location for this type of event. It was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the request from the event organiser, as set out in the VSM's briefing note dated July 2019, be approved, subject to submission of the required documentation at the appropriate time.

2) Swanage Bandstand Opening Ceremony – 14th September 2019

It was reported that the Friends of Swanage Bandstand had made arrangements for a concert to be held at the bandstand on 14th September 2019 to mark its re-opening, and that they were now seeking the Council's permission. It was reported that the contract administrator had advised the Town Clerk that the work was unlikely to be finished in time for the site to be fully inspected and handed over to the Council prior to that date. Attention was drawn to the Council's obligation to ensure that the site was fully safe for public use.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Foster, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Town Council approves the opening ceremony event, to be held when the bandstand is complete and the site has been fully handed back to the Town Council.

74. TO CONSIDER CONTINUATION OF TRIAL USE OF SWANAGE BOAT PARK BY OUTDOOR ADVENTURE COMPANIES

Consideration was given to a briefing note dated July 2019 prepared by the Visitor Services Manager detailing proposals for the continuation of the trial use of the boat park by outdoor adventure companies for the remainder of the summer season 2019. The original trial period had been approved for the months of June and July 2019 only, and it was reported that the trial had proved successful.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Tomes, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That approval be given to the continuation of trial use of Swanage Boat Park, for the launching of kayaks by outdoor adventure companies, for the remainder of the summer season 2019, as set out in the VSM's briefing note dated July 2019.

75. FOOTPATHS AT DURLSTON COUNTRY PARK – CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to a letter received from the Senior Ranger Purbeck Rights of Way, Dorset Council, dated 10th July 2019, regarding significant improvements being made by Durlston Country Park to the accessibility, surfacing and infrastructure along right of way footpaths SE3/97 and SE3/98, which ran from Durlston Road to Tilly Whim Caves. The footpaths were part of the route of the South West Coast Path, and a main walking route from Swanage to Durlston and, in the interests of safety, would need to be closed at times during the resurfacing and

viewpoint rebuilding works. It was noted that the works would be undertaken in stages, between October 2019 and March 2020, and alternative routes for walkers would be provided during any closures.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Finch, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council advises Dorset Council that it is in support of the works to be undertaken and raises no objection to the proposed footpath closures.

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

Councillor Whitwam reported on the following matters:-

- No incidents had been reported, therefore no meeting of the **Pub Watch Group** had been convened.
- **Purbeck Community Rail Partnership Meeting 9th July 2019** – an update was given on the Swanage to Wareham service - it was reported that one diesel unit had been returned to Swanage on 24th July 2019.
- **Purbeck Transport Action Group Meeting 10th July 2019**– at which future bus services were discussed, Morebus had no plans to reduce services at the present time.

Councillor Moreton reported that he had attended a board meeting of the **Purbeck Citizen’s Advice**.

Councillor Tomes reported on the following matters:-

- **The Annual General Meeting of Swanage Town & Herston Football Club**, at which the proposals for the Days Park Sports and Social Centre were discussed.
- **Swanage Regatta & Carnival 2019** – record visitor numbers were reported, and thanks were given to the Town Council and the General Operations Team for their continued support and assistance during Carnival Week.

Councillor Monkhouse reported that she had attended a meeting of **The Centre Management Board**.

Councillor Harris reported that she had attended a meeting of the **‘Sustainable Swanage’ Steering Group**, and gave an update on the group’s campaign to reduce the use of single-use plastics locally. The greater use of sustainable products by traders during Carnival Week was noted.

77. **REPORTING OF DELEGATED MATTERS**

- (a) **Sandbanks Ferry** – as reported under Minute No. 71)a) above, the Town Clerk had agreed under Financial Regulation 4.5 that the Town Council would underwrite the cost of diversionary signage to improve traffic flow into and out of the town over carnival week if the funding was not forthcoming from Dorset Council. The cost was currently estimated at £1,323.
- (b) **Health and Safety** – Further to Minute No. 119 of the Council Meeting held on 29th October 2018 the Town Clerk reported that he had engaged the services of Ellis Whittam as Health and Safety advisors to the Council for a three year term at an annual cost of approximately £4,000 per annum. It was noted that this sum was within budget.

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

Matters for forthcoming agendas

- (a) **Response from SSEN regarding interruptions to electricity supply** – further to Minute No. 215 of the Monthly Council Meeting held on 25th March 2019, consideration was given to an e-mail from SSEN Customer Complaints explaining improvements which had been made to the local supply network to address the interruptions to electricity supply in the town centre over winter/spring 2018/19.
- (b) **Swanage Ambulance Station** – further to Minute No. 54 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 24th June 2019, it was reported that assurance had been received from SWAST indicating that the ambulance station would remain open until at least 2021/22. It was agreed that this item should remain on the Council’s agenda so that the situation could continue to be monitored.
- (c) **Coastal Defence Matters – Update** - it was reported that following the failure of the recent funding bid to the Coastal Communities Fund, the application had been re-packaged and expanded by Dorset Council and Dorset Coast Forum for submission to Historic England under their High Street Heritage Action Zone initiative.
It was further reported that Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council had agreed to provide a joint Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Team. That team had commissioned a report on the condition of Swanage sea defences from the Victoria Avenue jetty to the Pier and remedial works would be carried out in the autumn/winter.
Finally, it was noted that the Environment Agency were intending to install temporary sea defences adjacent to the Stone Quay to protect the lower High Street from wave overtopping between October and April. Further information would be provided at the September Council Meeting.
- (d) **Petition** – it was noted that prior to the Council Meeting a petition containing 631 signatures had been handed in to the Town Council stating: ‘Scientific consensus states that bold action is needed at all levels of society to avert a climate catastrophe. We the undersigned call upon Swanage Town Council to declare a climate emergency’.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Harris, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda item 19 for reasons of data protection.

79. **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

(a) **Operations Department – Update**

A verbal update was given by the Town Clerk regarding senior staffing arrangements within the Operations Department, and it was noted that Mr Geoff Brookes had been employed as Interim Operations Manager since early June. The Council confirmed the terms of Mr Brookes’ employment.
The Town Clerk reported that the Local Government Resource Centre had been engaged as consultants to undertake a staffing review of the department and that a report would be received prior to 31st August 2019. A maximum cost of

£1,440 had been agreed for this work. The report would be referred to the Personnel Committee for consideration in the first instance.

It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY:

That a letter be sent to Mr Brookes to thank him for his dedicated work which had ensured that the Operations Department had continued to function successfully over recent weeks, and that the excellent appearance of the town's open spaces had been restored.

(b) **Administration Department – Review of salary of Mayor's Secretary/
Administration Officer**

It was reported that a review of the Council's administration section had been ongoing since the retirement of the Senior Administration and Finance Officer in 2017. In view of the additional responsibilities which had been taken on by one of the Council's administrative staff, including the role of Mayor's Secretary, a re-grading of the employee's post had been conducted by South West Councils (SWC) in accordance with the Council's job evaluation scheme. The recommendation of SWC was that the post be re-graded from Grade 3 to Grade 4.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Trite, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To accept the recommendation of South West Councils and approve the re-grading of the post from Grade 3 to Grade 4 (SCP 6 to 8), with delegated authority to officers to backdate the increase in salary to an appropriate date in 2017.

The meeting concluded at 8.55 p.m.
