

# Swanage Town & **COMMUNITY** Partnership

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the  
**SWANAGE TOWN & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP** held at  
The Town Hall, Swanage on  
**THURSDAY 10<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2015 @ 3.30 p.m.**

**Present:**

Kim Gallagher, Chairman ST&CP and Swanage Lions  
Mike Bonfield, Vice Chairman ST&CP and Swanage Town Councillor  
John Bishop, Swanage Town Councillor  
Peter Bowyer, Studland Parish Council  
Robin Brasher, Swanage Town Twinning; Swanage Walking Group  
Colin Brixton, Purbeck Society; Photographic Society  
Niki Clark, Management Support Officer, Swanage Town Council  
Peter Clark, Swanage Cricket Club  
Alan Dominy, Churches Together  
Bob Foster, Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, Swanage Rotary  
Laurence Gloyn-Cox, Swanage Coastal Change Forum; Probus 2  
Dave Morton, Swanage Youth Centre; Dorset POPP  
Mel Norris, Swanage Senior Forum; Jazz Festival; Museum  
Bill Trite, Swanage Town Councillor

**Also in attendance:**

There were no members of the public present.

**1. Welcome**

The Chairman, Mrs Kim Gallagher, welcomed all Partners to the meeting.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Mo Andrews (Dorset POPP), David Bale (Mowlem), Karen Delahay (S&PHA), Caroline Finch (Chamber of Trade), Collete Ford (Swanage Children's Centre), Neil Hardy (Swanage RNLI) and Sarah Randall (Swanage Library).

**3. Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

Proposed that these were a true record by Councillor Mike Bonfield, seconded by Mr Mel Norris and agreed.

**4. Matters Arising from Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

- 2. Dorset County Council (DCC) Feasibility Study – cycle routes** – it was reported that one of the proposed new cycle routes from Swanage to Studland included a stretch of private land which ran past the Swanage Cricket Club pavilion. A letter had been sent by the Cricket Club to DCC to raise its concerns, and a request made that DCC should include the Club in any future discussions regarding this route.
- 6. 15) Swanage Local Plan** – update on development of the draft Pre-submission Consultation Document  
**Housing Needs Survey** – it was reported that the Purbeck District Council (PDC) survey literature Had now been received by local residents. A discussion ensued regarding the possible future provision of social/affordable housing in the town, Partners were looking forward to the outcome of the survey, and it was felt that this would give a truer picture of future local housing requirements. A question was raised as to whether the survey results would feed into the SLP.

**7. Swanage2027 – feedback from the Inaugural Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015 and update on identified projects and priorities** – it was reported that contact had been made with Mr Benjamin Webb, Design and Conservation Officer, PDC, regarding the proposed review of the Conservation Areas. Mr Webb had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Partnership in March 2016 to give a presentation, and to undertake a ‘question and answer’ session with Partners regarding Conservation Areas and Local Heritage Listing. The Purbeck Society were keen to be involved and would also be invited to attend the meeting.

**5. Swanage2027 (S2027) - feedback from the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and update on identified projects and priorities**

An overview of the Swanage2027 Steering Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 was given by the Chairman. It was reported that the Committee was currently looking at a ‘refreshed’ version of the Swanage Community Strategic Plan, and was in the process of setting up ‘Theme Advisory Groups’. These groups would be concentrating on three key areas:

- Town centre improvements
- The Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Conservation Area Review

It was further reported that a Heritage Theme Advisory Group had been established, bringing together representatives from Durlston Country Park, Swanage Railway, the Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre, and Swanage Pier. The group had already met to discuss Terms of Reference and appoint a Chairman, and would be exploring options for a possible new museum/heritage centre, and the promotion of Swanage Heritage activities.

S2027 were also looking to develop a ‘Town Centre Sea Defence Strategy’ and were in discussions with Swanage Coastal Change Forum. A theme advisory group would be established to take the project forward.

**6. Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust**

**a) Update**

Further to Minute No. 8. of the Swanage Town & Community Partnership Quarterly Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015, it was reported that the ‘open evening’ held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 had been well attended, and had been an important networking event for Trustees. Attendees learnt about the Trust and its future proposals, which were met with enthusiasm.

Meetings had recently been held with the Archdeacon of Dorset to discuss the possible purchase of part of the old St Mark’s School building, namely the front hall, the Reading Room and its yard, and the front schoolyard leading onto Bell Street. This would be a positive compromise and discussions were ongoing. It was noted that the Archdeacon was in support of the purchase by the Trust.

Brief updates were given on Art Workshop and Fresh Prospects community gardening group. It was reported that other organisations were now interested in becoming members, to undertake a joint approach to projects under the ‘umbrella’ of the Trust, although discussions were still in the early stages. Projects included the provision of defibrillators in the town. It was also noted that the Trust would be involved in discussions regarding the proposed changes to youth services.

**b) Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust Membership**

It was reported that invitations to join the Trust, along with further information about the Trust and a Membership Application Form, had been sent to local organisations/groups. A meeting was planned for January/February 2016 to bring interested parties together. Trust Members would have voting rights for, and in the governance of, the Trust, and it was noted that Trustees would be voted in every three years.

**7. Future of Youth Services in Swanage**

**a) Proposed changes to youth services in Swanage**

A briefing note had been received from Dorset County Council (DCC) on their proposed changes to youth services. DCC had reviewed the services provided by the County Council in order to make significant savings of £1m from a current £2.2m budget, and after six weeks of engagement had now produced a single proposal which was to withdraw from the 22 youth clubs they operated in the County and focus limited resources on targeted youth work. This would mean that Swanage Youth Centre would close. However, DCC would be prepared to talk to other organisations/anyone who would be

interested in operating these premises. An online survey inviting comments on the proposals would only be open until 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

A discussion ensued and comments were made that this was a vital service for young people in Swanage and the surrounding areas, and that every effort should be made to retain this invaluable facility. Concerns were raised about the possible effects that the proposed budget cuts may have in the town, including the longer term consequences, e.g. social care, young people on the streets and the possible increased police/court service costs.

It was reported that a Swanage Youth Club Advisory Group had been established and had held an open meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015 to discuss these proposals. The next meeting would be held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 at Swanage Youth Centre at 2.00 p.m. to discuss the development of a possible joint strategy to put forward alternative proposals to DCC, and anyone who had an interest in youth work in Swanage had been invited. Mr Stuart Riddle, Senior Manager, Change For Children, DCC, would also be in attendance. It was noted that the possible acquisition of the Youth Centre premises in Chapel Lane by the Town Council had been discussed.

The DCC Cabinet would be making a decision on the proposals on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016, and this would be followed by a Formal Staff Consultation from 18<sup>th</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016. If the proposals were approved, DCC would start implementing changes from June 2016. Concerns were raised regarding the short consultation timeline, it was felt by all Partners that this was unacceptable and did not give adequate time for interested parties to discuss/develop alternative proposals. It was therefore AGREED:

That a strongly worded letter should be sent to Dorset County Council objecting to the proposed closure of Swanage Youth Centre and requesting an extension to the consultation period to enable alternative options to be developed.

#### **b) Youth Services Consultation – online survey**

The link to the online survey had been circulated to Partners with the agenda paperwork. It was reported an online petition ‘Save our Youth Clubs’ had also been established on the Dorset for You website. A request was made for links to both the survey and the petition to be sent round to partners via email again, and all partners were encouraged to complete these important documents. The closing date for the survey was 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015, and the petition 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

#### **8. Swanage Local Plan (SLP) - update**

It was reported that the final public consultation had closed on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015. This had been the last chance to comment on legality, completeness and soundness of the SLP before it was submitted to an independent planning inspector for consideration as part of the examination process, planned for summer 2016. A brief update was also given on the town centre redevelopment brief, which had formed part of the consultation, and the draft Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy report, which had been prepared by PDC as part of the SLP planning process.

#### **9. Any Other Business**

- **National Park proposal** – it was reported that Purbeck’s Bid for National Park status had been accumulating support locally, and had been minuted at a recent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty meeting. The response from Natural England had also been encouraging, Purbeck was one of the finalists being considered.
- **Local Government Association (LGA)** – it was reported that the LGA would be launching a Housing Commission to consult on the future of housing and the relationship between councils and communities. Concerns were raised regarding the existing limited supply of council housing locally, and a question raised as to whether PDC would be taking part in this consultation.
- **Housing and Planning Bill 2015/16** – concerns were again raised regarding the possible reduction in the availability of much-needed local council housing, and whether the Bill would affect the ability of local authorities to invest in new affordable council housing and create the right mix of housing that local residents could afford. A question was raised as to whether this should be included in the SLP.

Partners expressed their thanks and appreciation to Mrs Gallagher for all her hard work on behalf of the Partnership throughout the year.

**10. Date of Next Quarterly Meeting**

The date of the next Quarterly Meeting had been scheduled for Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at the Town Hall, Swanage, at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 4.40 p.m., and was followed by:

**11. Partner networking and information sharing**

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