

Minutes of the Meeting of the **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage  
on **WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2025** at **2.15 p.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor C Moreton

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Coward

Swanage Town Council

Councillor T Foster

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Tomes

Swanage Town Council

Councillor S Vile

Swanage Town Council

Outside Representatives: -

Ms C Barnes

Swanage Community Housing Trust

Ms R Dignan

Citizens Advice, East Dorset and Purbeck

Ms H Florence

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Mr R Foster

Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

Mr B Mawson

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Ms E Neville

James Smith Funeral Directors

Mr A Tuckey

Wellbeing Swanage

Also present: -

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Councillor P Burridge

Swanage Town Council

Mr G Duggan

Head of Regulatory Services, Dorset Council

Mr C Milmer

Visitor Services & Business Development

Manager (VSBDM)

Ms G Percival

Assets and Compliance Manager

Mr M Snowdon

Assets and Compliance Support Officer

Mr C Squires

Project Delivery Officer

There were two members of the public present at the meeting.

**Public Participation Time**

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time: -

- In respect of agenda item 11), in acknowledgement of the current Council memorial seating policy, a request made for a special exception to be granted towards the proposal for more memorial seating at Swanage bandstand. This would coincide with the Friends of Swanage Bandstand group winding down and would be a suitable and fitting tribute to certain individuals who had given years of contributions and support to the group and/or the Town Band. It was stated that the level of bandstand usage and public interest has increased, and that the additional seating would benefit those wishing to enjoy the performances.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Dorrington and Sutton, and from Mr S Butler (Greengage Nursery) and Ms L LeFevre (Swanage Tennis Club).

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with Section 9 and Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct.

No declarations were made on this occasion.

## **3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

No matters were raised on this occasion.

## **4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

Members considered the contents of a briefing paper, and the recommendations contained therein, following the meeting of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025. After a brief discussion, the following proposals were put to the meeting:

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tomes and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To request that Dorset Council give consideration to the introduction of new parking restrictions in the lower High Street.

It was proposed by Councillor Vile and seconded by Councillor Bonfield:-

That a Task & Finish group be formed, comprised of Councillors Sutton, Tomes and Vile, to work with Dorset Council to explore the options for a Town Centre 20 m.p.h. zone together with safety improvements to the zebra crossing situated outside of Surprise & Store.

Upon being put to the Meeting FIVE Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition and ONE voted AGAINST, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

It was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a Disabled Parking Bay be introduced in Panorama Road, to address the issues raised by a local resident.

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Vile and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To recommend to the Finance & Governance Committee that a budget allocation of £5,000 be made in the 2026/27 financial period to upgrade the safety measures outside Swanage Primary School, should the current School crossing patrol be unavailable for a substantial period of time, by the installation of automated flashing lights (Option 2).

## **5. Partnership Project Updates**

### **a) Swanage Community Housing Project**

Further to Minute No.5 (b) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, an update was provided by the Chairman of Swanage Community Housing Project. It was reported that the recent public engagement and consultation

event held in September 2025 regarding the proposed development of land at the junction of Ulwell Road and Washpond Lane had been well attended, and negotiations with Dorset Council were still ongoing in respect of the transfer of land for this site. Once the transfer of land had been completed, a full planning application would be submitted.

It was further reported that a larger, second site was being considered at Kings Road West, and that discussions were continuing with Dorset Council and the Town Council.

**b) Wellbeing Swanage and the Focus Centre**

Further to Minute No.5 (a) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, representatives of Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust provided an update on progress at the Focus Centre in Chapel Lane. It was reported that refurbishment and alteration work within the building was ongoing to maximise the space available for external service providers to utilise. In addition to this, the commissioning of refurbishment works in the Children's Centre was imminent. Operationally, the recently opened welcome lounge had seen a growing number of people seeking assistance or requiring signposting to other services. Access Wellbeing, an NHS Mental Health scheme was seeing high demand for its services and is looking to expand from 2 days a week to 3 days a week. Other service providers benefitting from the ability to operate from the centre included Lewis Manning Hospice, Homestart Group and All Sort'd.

**6. Aster Housing Group investment in Swanage – To consider the appointment of a task and finish group**

At its Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025, the Council had agreed to second a motion at the Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils AGM to register concern to Dorset Council and its MPs at the loss of both public and private rented housing stocks in the local area. Further to Minute No. 7 a) of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, it was reported that contact had been made with the Regional Operations Director for Aster Group regarding the intentions Aster had for the proceeds of recent sales of Aster housing stock in Swanage. A brief discussion ensued and the formal response received from Aster was noted. Acknowledgement was given to the work that had been done over the years, trying to hold housing providers to account in respect of such decisions.

A request was made that a task & finish group should be formed to review the appropriate next steps that can be taken in respect of this issue. It was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Tomes and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To form a Task & Finish group, comprised of Councillors Sutton, Suttle, Tomes and Vile, to review the next steps that the Town Council may wish to take in respect of Aster Housing Group's investment in Swanage.

**7. To consider request for increase in annual grant from East Dorset and Purbeck Citizens Advice**

The representative for Citizens Advice, East Dorset and Purbeck (CAED&P) provided a brief summary of the services currently offered by them in Swanage, the funding arrangements in place and a request to increase the level of financial contribution provided by Swanage Town Council. It was reported that regular local sessions were held within Herston Village Hall, drop-in sessions at Swanage Library and the mobile bus unit which attends Swanage Friday Market. It was reported that in the 2024/25 financial year, Citizens Advice had helped over 400 people in the Swanage area which included helping them to access over £429,000 in assistance and additional income. Whilst most services are operated by trained volunteers, they are supported by a small team of paid staff. Due to

cost increases across the board, a request to increase the annual funding provided by the Council was received with an offer to enter into a 3 year Service Level Agreement (SLA) so that a request would not have to be submitted for funding every year moving forward. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To recommend to the Finance & Governance Committee that an allocation of £8,000 p.a. as a grant to Citizens Advice East Dorset & Purbeck be included in the budget estimates for the 2026/27 financial period, continuing for 3 years, and, if approved, that a review of the draft Service Level Agreement be carried out by officers prior to a report to a future meeting of this Committee.

**8. CCTV - Update on Monitoring Arrangements - Presentation by Graham Duggan, Head of Regulatory Services for Dorset Council**

Further to Minute No.6 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the Head of Regulatory Services, Dorset Council, gave a presentation on the new arrangements for CCTV monitoring, including how the CCTV network covering Swanage had been integrated into the control room for Dorset Council's monitoring service. This had provided a significant increase in the hours during which monitoring took place. An additional summary of information was provided on various schemes including Pubwatch and Shopwatch. An offer was extended to Members to have a tour of the control room.

**9. Swanage Skatepark Community Project - Presentation by Swanage Skatepark Community Project**

Further to Minute No.9 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the representative for Swanage Skatepark Community Project (SSCP) gave a presentation detailing project progress to date and next steps. This year had seen:

- a tender process completed with the assistance of Swanage Town Council to secure a contractor for the planned works relating to Phase 1 of the project.
- a design consultation process to gather feedback from Skatepark users.
- fundraising activities including a Skate-Jam event in April, attendance at the Planet Purbeck Discovery Festival and assisting Swanage Carnival.

The planned phase 1 works were due to be completed in November 2025, and the contractor had offered to put on a free event to celebrate the opening of the new equipment at a date to be decided in 2026.

Looking to the future, it was further reported that fundraising has continued and currently stands at £14,000 of the £80,000 Phase 2 target in addition to SSCP having been approved as one of the charities supported by the Co-operative community fund for the 2025/26 period.

**10. Swanage Museum – Future Plans – To consider the appointment of a task and finish group**

The Assets and Compliance Manager reported that further to recent meetings held between representatives of Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre (SMHC) and Council officers, and subsequent correspondence received, several items now required consideration, as follows:

- i. The current lease held by SMHC expires in April 2026 and whilst the Council committed in the spring of 2024 to ensuring that the Heritage Centre retained a longer period of security of tenure of at least 10 years, substantial amendments to the lease had since been requested.

- ii. To carry out a 'light touch' feasibility study regarding a potential future relocation of SMHC facilities to the Town Hall.
- iii. To look at the potential relocation of George Burt's granite globe currently stored at Haysom's quarry to a location within Prince Albert Gardens with £1,000 towards relocation cost being provided by SMHC and any shortfall requested to be met by the Council.

After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Tomes and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To form a Task & Finish group, comprised of Councillors Bonfield, Foster & Moreton, to work with representatives of Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre and the County Museums Advisor to consider the following matters and report to a future meeting: amended terms for future lease agreements between SMHC and the Council; the proposals for a light touch feasibility study relating to the potential relocation of SMHC facilities to the Town Hall; and to investigate the feasibility of relocation of the George Burt granite globe to Prince Albert Gardens and the availability of funding to achieve this.

#### **11. Friends of Swanage Bandstand - seating request for new memorial benches**

Consideration was given to a briefing note which set out a request received from the Friends of Swanage Bandstand group in respect of memorial seating, as follows:

- i. For a memorial bench to be sponsored and installed by the Council at Swanage Bandstand in memory of the late Councillor Trite in recognition of his many years of service.
- ii. To grant permission for Friends of Swanage Bandstand to fund and install two memorial benches at Swanage Bandstand in recognition of 2 long-standing members.

Members noted that the memorial bench policy was last agreed at the Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and that the waiting list was closed at this time. It was suggested that further consideration needed to be given to these matters, including the most fitting means of commemorating the tremendous service to the town given by the late Councillor Trite. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To form a Task & Finish group, comprised of Councillors Bonfield, Coward & Tomes, to review the Town Council's memorial bench policy together with the request from the Friends of Swanage Bandstand and report back to a future meeting of this committee.

#### **12. Budget Setting**

##### **a) Draft Capital Programme 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the schedule of proposed capital projects for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years.

##### **b) Draft Significant One-Off Revenue Expenditure 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the draft list of one-off items of revenue expenditure proposed for inclusion in the Town Council's Community Services budgets for 2026/27. It was noted that all budget items would be categorised as either

regulatory/safety requirements, routine/planned maintenance or non-essential service/asset improvements.

**c) Draft Scale of fees and charges 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the proposed Scale of Fees and Charges for 2026/27 in respect of services overseen by this committee.

Having considered these matters, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Moreton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That the Community Services Committee projects set out in the Draft Capital Programme be presented to the Finance & Governance Committee for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.

That the items listed in the proposed significant one-off revenue expenditure/minor works schedule be presented to the Finance & Governance Committee for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.

That the proposed scale of fees and charges 2026/27 relevant to the Community Services Committee be presented to the Finance & Governance Committee for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.

**13. Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas**

**a) Installation of a mobile field shelter at Greengage Nursery**

The Chairman presented an update provided by Greengage Nursery which detailed their inability to attend the Committee meeting due to the arrival and installation of the mobile field shelter unit. Thanks were given to Swanage Town Council and the Assets & Compliance Manager for all their help in getting to this day. It was further announced that when the building is complete and ready to use, an official grand opening would be arranged, most likely in the spring of 2026, to which councillors would be invited.

**b) Installation of an artificial surface on tennis courts 4 & 5 at Beach Gardens**

The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that the installation of the artificial surface on tennis courts 4 & 5 at Beach Gardens was due to be starting in the next week.

**c) Installation of an accessible compostable public convenience at Godlingston Cemetery**

The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that a contractor had been appointed for the installation works. A further update would be brought to a future meeting of this Committee.

**d) Pineapple Project, Purbeck Community Event – 29<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

Further to Minute No. 7 of the of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the Assets & Compliance Manager reported that meetings had taken place between the Council, Pineapple Project and Wellbeing Swanage to further the aim of establishing a presence for the Pineapple Project in Swanage. A

collaborative Purbeck Community Event would take place on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2025 to inform the public on the activities undertaken to support younger people and present opportunities for Community Guardianship. It was noted that the Focus Centre in Chapel Lane had been instrumental in identifying a list of people and organisations that may be interested in helping to further the aims of the project.

**14. Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The Meeting closed at 3.40 p.m.

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