

Minutes of the Meeting of the **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage
on **WEDNESDAY 6th NOVEMBER 2024** at **2.15 p.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor S Brookes

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Coward

Swanage Town Council

Councillor J Dorrington

Swanage Town Council

Councillor T Foster

Swanage Town Council

Councillor D Monkhouse

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Sutton

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Tomes

Swanage Town Council

Councillor S Vile

Swanage Town Council

Outside Representatives: -

Mr S Butler

Greengage Community Gardening Project

Mr D Cater

Swanage Museum

Mr M Green

James Smith Funeral Directors

Ms H Florence

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Mr R Foster

Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

Ms L Haines

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Ms L LeFevre

Swanage Tennis Club

Mr B Mawson

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Mr R Sutcliffe

Swanage Community Housing Project

Mr B Walters

Greengage Community Gardening Project

Also present: -

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Ms G Percival

Assets and Compliance Manager

Mr M Snowdon

Assets and Compliance Support Officer

There were nineteen members of the public and one representative of the press and media present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time: -

- In respect of agenda item 12) attention was drawn to an ‘Artists in Purbeck’ exhibition at the Russell Cotes Gallery in Bournemouth, celebrating the character of the Isle of Purbeck. The Swanage Museum has loaned several pieces to the exhibit and it was noted that the Swanage History Centre contains a large number of pieces which the public rarely has an opportunity to appreciate. A request was made for the Town Council to support a move to make these items more accessible to the public.
- In respect of Agenda Item 4a) Traffic Management and Pedestrian Safety near Swanage Schools - The Deputy Headteacher of Swanage School, accompanied by several student representatives, presented concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety on Washpond Lane and the High Street near Swanage School

and St. Mark's Primary School. A representative from St. Mark's Primary School also contributed. The following key issues were highlighted:

Speed Limit Concerns - Washpond Lane currently operates under the National Speed Limit, which poses a significant hazard due to two-way traffic and increased pedestrian use from residents and students accessing the schools. A reduced speed limit, especially near the schools, was requested to mitigate risks.

Summer Visitor Impact - Many visitors are unaware of the schools' presence, partly due to insufficient signage and poor visibility caused by overgrown hedgerows. There has been an increase in near-misses between students and vehicles, exacerbated by higher pedestrian traffic in the area.

Accessibility Issues - Students using wheelchairs face additional risks due to the speed of traffic and lack of safe crossing points. Teachers now supervise road crossings at the start and end of the school day to ensure safety.

Infrastructure and Signage - Suggestions included implementing a zebra crossing at the Washpond Lane junction and enhancing road signs, junction markers, and illuminated warnings to alert drivers to the presence of schools. Improved lighting and visibility, along with reduced speed zones similar to those in city schools, were strongly recommended.

Specific Challenges for St. Mark's Primary - Many families from Herston Yards, including those with pushchairs, must walk along Washpond Lane, which lacks adequate lighting, safe pedestrian spaces, and clear school signage. The illuminated sign indicating the 30mph zone does not highlight the proximity of schools, leaving drivers uninformed about the need for caution.

Both schools emphasised the urgency of addressing these issues to protect the 500–600 children and their families accessing the area daily.

In response, the Chairman thanked the attendees for their time and for setting out their views regarding road safety.

It was suggested that the schools approached Dorset Council directly in the interim to raise their concerns. The Chairman advised that Dorset Council as the highways authority were responsible for amendments to highway signage and speed limits.

- In respect of agenda item 8), support was given to the provision of a public convenience at Godlingston Change at this location due to the next closest facility being situated in North Beach Car Park.

The Chairman reported that Mr Malcolm Green (James Smith Funeral Directors) was retiring after 15 years of service and offered thanks for his support and maintaining the close working relationship that had been built up over the years between James Smith Funeral Directors and the Town Council.

1. Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor C Moreton, Mr M Jones (Prospect Allotment Association) and Mr N Spetch (Swanage & Herston Football 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 17th July 2024

Agenda Item 3) – A request was made for an update from Dorset Council regarding the Town Council's request for a 30 m.p.h. speed limit to be introduced along the entire length of Washpond Lane. The Town Clerk agreed to follow up this matter. It was noted that this issue was closely related to the safety concerns raised during public participation time, which would be the subject of consideration by the Traffic Management Advisory Committee.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 19th June 2024

Councillor Sutton provided the following updates from the Traffic Management Advisory Committee meeting held on 19th June 2024:

- The SID post was erected in September on the approach to Swanage, near the junction with Langton Matravers, to notify drivers they are entering a 30mph zone.
- Due to issues with vehicles blocking access and causing obstructions to the barriers outside the Mowlem on Shore Road, Dorset Council were willing to support the request for additional kerb blips to be installed to prohibit parking in that location.
- Dorset Council have agreed to review and improve the signage on the approach to the Northbrook Railway Bridge to improve pedestrian safety.
- Dorset Highways have reviewed the signage in Horsecliffe Lane with the junction of Victoria Avenue in response to reports that vehicles are travelling the wrong way along the one way section and have concluded that the current signage is adequate.
- The request submitted by the Town Council to Dorset Council to amend the parking restrictions on the section of High Street between the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church has partially been agreed. The parking restrictions in the winter months will be removed but the request to increase the restriction in the summer months from 1 hour to 2 hours has been rejected along with the request to establish a residents' parking scheme.
- An upcoming meeting will be facilitated by the Town Council on 20th November 2024 regarding the Community Speedwatch scheme which will be attended by the Dorset Police Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator. This meeting will be publicised on social media, Swanage News and Purbeck Sounds.
- A section of Priests Road between the Hillview Road junction and the junction of Panorama Road has been highlighted as a potential hazard due to the narrow pavement and obstructions to pedestrians caused by parked vehicles with no dropped kerb to assist wheelchair users. A request has been submitted to install double yellow lines with a loading ban on this section of highway along with dropped kerbs to improve pedestrian access.
- Dorset Council Highways have conducted a survey in response to a request to install a crossing along the High Street, Herston in the vicinity of Cost-Cutters to improve traffic management for pedestrian safety. The survey results indicated that the site does not meet the minimum criteria required and the request for a crossing will not proceed.

5. Partnership Project Updates

a) Swanage Wellbeing Project, Chapel Lane

Further to Minute No. 7 a) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 17th July 2024, the Chairman of Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust (SPDT), provided an update on the progress of the Focus Centre in Chapel Lane. It was reported that several surveys had been completed, alteration works had commenced within the building and a planning application was being prepared with the aim of providing better integration between the Children's Centre and Explorers Nursery.

Sustainable energy was due to be discussed at a forthcoming meeting to explore the potential for replacing the gas boilers with heat pumps and the viability of solar panel installation. Works are currently focusing on preparing the Welcome Lounge and it is anticipated that this will be ready shortly. When it is in a position to be officially opened, another Open Day will be advertised. Several organisations have expressed interest in utilising the Focus Centre including a mental health drop-in service.

b) Swanage Community Housing Project

Further to Minute No. 7 b) of the Community Services Committee held on 17th July 2024, an update was provided by the Chairman of the Swanage Community Housing Project regarding the development of land at the junction of Ulwell Road and Washpond Lane. It was reported that Dorset Council had responded to the pre-application planning enquiry positively and the negotiations with Dorset Council in respect of the transfer of the land are moving forward. The Housing Association partner secured will not be able to proceed further until the legal side of the project had been confirmed. The most appropriate time for a public consultation was being considered.

It was further reported that a second site was being considered and talks have continued with Dorset Council and the Town Council.

6. Greengage Community Garden – Installation of a mobile field shelter, project update

Further to Minute No. 12 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 8th November 2023, an update was provided by a representative of the Greengage Community Garden Project regarding the installation of a mobile field shelter in the grounds of Prospect Nursery. It was reported that the cost of the installation works and the refurbishment of the WC block total £30,000 and funding of £14,419 had already been secured with other grant applications awaiting a decision. It was stated that some of the grant funding secured was subject to a time restriction and if it was not spent within a certain timescale would be withdrawn. Consideration was given to a briefing paper detailing a request by Greengage Community Garden, given the current position regarding their previous grant application to the De Moulham Trust, for the Town Council to allocate £15,000 in the 2025/26 financial year in order to cover the project shortfall and protect the funds already secured. It was noted that Greengage Community Garden are continuing to seek alternative sources of funding. Thanks were offered for the support that has been given to date by councillors and officers.

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

To recommend to the Finance & Governance Committee at its meeting being held on 11th December 2024 that a budget allocation of up to £15,000 be made in the 2025/26 financial period to Greengage Community Garden for the installation of a mobile field shelter, and refurbishment of the existing WC block.

7. Swanage Library – Update on exploration of options for extending the opening hours at Swanage Library

Further to Minute No. 8) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 17th July 2024, it was reported that engagement had been undertaken with Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust and notices placed to encourage expressions of interest from those who may wish to volunteer as Friends of Swanage Library. As a result of this, the Friends of Swanage Library group has been reinvigorated and a meeting was held on the 5th November

2024 to select a new committee and chairperson. The Friends of Swanage Library group will commence engagement with stakeholders in the coming months, to include Dorset Council and officers. Members then considered the proposal that a councillor be appointed in the role of observer to the Friends of Swanage Library group.

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

TO RECOMMEND:-

That Councillor Sutton is appointed to the Friends of
Swanage Library in the role of observer.

8. Public Conveniences

a) Consideration of the installation of a Full Access Composter Public Convenience at Godlingston Cemetery

It was reported that a Public Conveniences Working Party meeting had been on was held on 9th September 2024, attended by a representative of James Smith Funeral Directors, at which consideration had been given to the installation of a public convenience at Godlingston cemetery. Due to the location of the site, it was noted that a composter toilet was the most appropriate product. The Assets and Compliance Manager reported that site surveys had been completed and discussions held with prospective suppliers on the most suitable model. A Permitted Development enquiry has subsequently been submitted to Dorset Council to confirm if planning permission would be required and a response is awaited. The cost of the supply and installation works is estimated at approximately £13,000 although there would be additional ongoing cleaning and maintenance costs to consider.

The Assets and Compliance Manager reported that a Dorset Council grant may be available from the Capital Leverage Fund which could contribute 20% of these costs. It was noted that the deadline for the last round of funding from this grant is 12th January 2025 and if a decision is received from Dorset Council advising that planning permission is required then it would not be possible to secure the planning permission required to satisfy the grant application in time.

After a brief discussion, It was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Sutton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To approve the installation of a full access composter public convenience at Godlingston cemetery and to make a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee meeting to be held on 11th December 2024 that a budget allocation be made of up to £13,000 in the 2025/26 budget.

It was further proposed by Councillor Monkhouse, seconded by Councillor Brookes and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To approve the submission of a grant application to the Dorset Council Capital Leverage Fund for 20% of the cost of the supply and installation of the public convenience noting that should it be determined that planning permission is required, an application would be unable to be made to the fund as planning consent would need to be provided as part of the application process.

b) Consideration of additional opening hours at Main Beach Public Conveniences in November and December 2024

The Assets and Compliance Manager reported that the Polar Express attraction would return to Swanage Railway during November and December 2024 and that

promotional information regarding the event would direct visitors to Main Beach car park. During this period, the public conveniences are usually open Friday to Sunday however there are trains scheduled for four Thursdays in this period. A discussion was held regarding the recommendation of the Public Conveniences Working Party meeting held on 9th September 2024 that consideration should be given to opening the public conveniences on the additional Thursdays to coincide with the Polar Express trains, in accordance with the seasonal opening schedule. It was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To approve adjusting the opening schedule for Main Beach public conveniences in November and December 2024 on four Thursdays in accordance with the operational dates of the Polar Express attraction and that the additional costs associated with this are met from the public conveniences cleaning budget.

9. CCTV – Update on monitoring arrangements

Further to Minute No. 10) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 17th July 2024, the Assets and Compliance Manager reported that the agreed transfer of CCTV monitoring to the CCTV monitoring Control Centre operated by Dorset Council is moving forward. It was reported that discussions were being held with Dorset Council contractors in respect of the information required regarding the network, necessary to facilitate the transfer of the monitoring. A further update will be brought to the next meeting of the Community Services Committee.

10. Town Hall – Withdrawal of Police office and front desk service review

The Assets and Compliance Manager presented a briefing note prepared by the Planning and Community Engagement Manager which detailed the notice received by the Town Council in late September 2024 of the closure by Dorset Police, of the Swanage enquiry office on 1st October 2024. It was noted that a meeting had been requested between representatives of the Town Council and the West Dorset and Purbeck Neighbourhood Policing Team Inspector.

11. Swanage Skatepark Community Project - Update

A representative of the Swanage Skatepark Community Project offered thanks to the Assets and Compliance Manager and the operations team for their assistance in the preparation of the skatepark for the event that had been scheduled to take place in October 2024 but was cancelled on safety grounds due to poor weather. It was reported that engagement had shown how vital a piece of infrastructure the Skatepark was to a wide cross section of residents in the area. Details were provided regarding fundraising activity undertaken to date, and it was noted that the Phase 1 improvements aimed to make the park accessible and inclusive. A number of grants had been applied for to help reach the £66,000 target required to implement the Phase 1 improvements in 2025. Some grants had already been secured with others still awaiting a decision. It was noted that in order to prepare a tender to secure a contractor to undertake the works the funding needed to be secured. A request was made to the Town Council for consideration of providing additional funding to the Swanage Skatepark Community Project to assist in covering the shortfall between the current funds held by the group and the Phase 1 target.

Having considered how best to take this matter forward, it was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Foster and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To recommend to the Finance & Governance Committee at its meeting being held on 11th December 2024 that consideration be given to

making an additional budget allocation of up to £20,000 in the 2025/26 financial year to Swanage Skatepark Community Project to assist in achieving the Phase 1 target of £66,000.

12. Swanage Museum - Update

It was reported that a stakeholder meeting had been held at the Mowlem Theatre to discuss the future of the Swanage Museum following a number of its trustees having recently stood down. A further workshop is planned to take the discussions forward.

A representative of Swanage Museum reported that since the stakeholder meeting, two individuals had expressed an interest in the role of trustee and the committee are discussing the best route forward.

The comments raised during public participation time were acknowledged and in order for the display of paintings currently stored in the archive department it was suggested that public viewing weeks be arranged during the summer months, potentially at the Town Hall. This would be included on a future agenda of the committee for further discussion.

13. Beach Gardens Sports Park

a) Consideration of future arrangements for the management of Beach Gardens Sports Park

It was reported that the Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing Working Party held a meeting on 16th October 2024 and agreed to consider the following proposals with the Bowls and Tennis Clubs:

- i. Develop a long-term vision for Beach Gardens Sports Park as a whole, including the Pavilion to ensure that the facility will meet the needs of the future.
- ii. In three years' time, to consider passing the management of the site to an organisation with an appropriate legal structure which includes the Bowls and Tennis Clubs.

b) Proposed licence for the use of the Pavilion by the Bowls Club and Tennis Club – Update

- iii. To consider the revised licence which would charge the two clubs a fixed fee for three years for the use of the Pavilion, based on a 15% increase on current fees.

c) Revised licence for the use of the Tennis Courts by the Tennis Club

- iv. To consider a revised licence to cover the next three years for the tennis courts.

It was reported that further to the meeting held on 23rd October 2024 with the Tennis Club and Bowls Club it was agreed that the Town Council would draft a proposal for a Pavilion Licence for both clubs which would be further discussed at a forthcoming meeting and would be submitted to the Finance and Governance Committee for consideration at the meeting being held on 11th December 2024. The revised Tennis Courts licence would also follow this timetable.

14. Budget Setting

a) Draft Capital Programme 2025/26

Consideration was given to the schedule of proposed capital projects for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years.

b) Draft Significant One-Off Revenue Expenditure 2025/26

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 2025/26. 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) Scale of fees and charges 2025/26

Consideration was given to the proposed Scale of Fees and Charges for 2025/26 in respect of services overseen by this committee.

Having considered these matters, it was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Tomes and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Community Services Committee projects set out in the Draft Capital Programme be taken forward to the meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee to be held on 11th December 2024 for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26.

That the items listed in the proposed significant one-off revenue expenditure/minor works schedule be taken forward to the meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee to be held on 11th December 2024 for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26.

That the proposed scale of fees and charges 2025/26 relevant to the Community Services Committee be taken forward to the meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee to be held on 11th December 2024 for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26.

d) Godlingston Cemetery - Consideration of Memorial Fees in respect of infill kerb sets

The Assets and Compliance Manager reported that the Scale of Fees and Charges 2024/25, within the Godlingston Cemetery section Monuments, Gravestone and Inscriptions contains a fee exists in respect of natural stone kerb sets for £210. This is an additional charge to the fee for a Headstone, Cross or other memorial when erected (not exceeding 3' in height). Due to the receipt of several applications for more complex kerb sets which include an infill and/or a stone central feature, consideration had been given as to whether these requests should be classified as a Monument not exceeding 6' height with a charge of £625 or whether a new fee should be created for a kerb set with infill for £420.

After a brief discussion, It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Brookes and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To recommend that the Finance and Governance Committee consider the inclusion of the proposed additional fee of £420 for a kerb set with infill in the Draft Scale of Fees and Charges 2025/26 as part of the budget setting process.

15. Swanage War Memorial – Update regarding required repairs

Further to Minute No. 17) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 17th July 2024, the Assets and Compliance Manager reported that the Dorset Council Planning Conservation Team had confirmed that Listed Building consent is not required for repairs to the memorial, although they have requested a method statement from a qualified stonemason in advance of any repair works commencing. Quotes have been obtained from

two qualified stonemasons and an application to secure a grant from the War Memorials Trust had been submitted. If successful the grant monies would contribute 50% towards the cost of the repair works. As part of the repair works, a name on the damaged plaque will be amended to reflect the correct spelling of the last name following a request by a family member and which has been verified with appropriate records. An update on the progress of this project will be reported to a future meeting of the Community Services Committee.

16. Request from Cancare Purbeck for the installation of an information board in the Cancare Garden in Prince Albert Gardens

Consideration was given to a request received from Cancare Purbeck for the installation of a lectern style information board within the newly installed Cancare Garden in Prince Albert Gardens which will provide information on the history of Cancare and of the bequest which enabled the provision of the garden in this location. It was confirmed that no costs would be incurred by the Town Council. Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Vile and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To approve the request made by Cancare Purbeck to install an information board in the Cancare garden in Prince Albert Gardens.

17. Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

a) Community Sports Facility, Day's Park

Further to Minute No. 11) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 17th July 2024, it was reported that a planning application had been submitted and that a meeting with local sports clubs would be held before Christmas to generate support for the project and identify potential volunteers to serve the new Community Sports facility CIO.

18. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday 12th March 2025.

The Meeting closed at 3.45 p.m.

To consider recommendations from the Meeting of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 11th June 2025

Item 5c) Motorbikes on Stone Quay	An email was received by the Town Council requesting the addition of signage on Stone Quay to assist enforcement officers in deterring motorcyclists parking their bikes there.	Update- The Assets and Compliance Manager has had confirmation from Dorset Council that motorbikes are clearly prohibited from parking in this area due to it being behind double yellow lines and therefore, there is no requirement for signage.
<p>Consideration was given to the re-purposing of the existing Hackney Carriage Taxi Rank located on the lower High Street, near the junction of lower Seymer Road, into a designated motorcycle parking bay. During the discussion, it was also suggested that the adjacent unused Police Parking Bay be similarly repurposed to provide additional motorcycle parking provision in the area. It was, therefore, proposed by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Dorrington, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY;-</p> <p>TO RECOMMEND That a request be made to Dorset Council that the Hackney Carriage Taxi Rank and the Police Parking Bay located on the lower High Street, near the junction with lower Seymer Road, be re-purposed as designated motorcycle parking bays.</p>		

National Coastwatch Institution – Request to install a display screen at Peveril Point Lookout

The following request was recently received from the National Coastwatch Institution (NCI) Swanage Estates Manager.

I write as Estates Manager for Swanage NCI at The Peveril Point Lookout to ask for The Community Services Committee's approval for us to install a display screen to the West side of the door into the Display Room.

This would entail cutting a hole in the stud wall and fitting a fixed toughened glass window within a new timber frame. The screen itself would be mounted within the room. It would be programmed to only be "active" within our normal watch times - 0900 to 1800.

Our hope would be to display a brief history of The Station and our role with The Marine Coastguard Agency, also such information as local tide tables, weather forecasts and Notices for Mariners. Also any information about local events - Swanage Carnival Week or The Fish and Food Festival for example and from other agencies such as The RNLI and local Coastguards.

Image of proposed display screen



Image of Display Room (display board to be situated right hand side of door)



The Licence held by the Swanage NCI requires prior written consent from the Council prior to any alterations being made to the exterior of the building. The Assets and Compliance Manager has met with the NCI team at the Lookout to discuss this request and has not raised any concerns regarding the proposal.

Decision required

To consider approving the request from NCI Swanage to install a display screen to the west side of the door of the display room to provide relevant coastal and local information to the community.

Gail Percival, Assets and Compliance Manager
July 2025