



## **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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**To note updates from the Meeting of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

Location	Matter Raised	Suggested Action
Parking Restrictions at Lower High Street/Pier Approach	Further to discussions at the Traffic Management Advisory Committee meeting held on 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2025 regarding the recommendation of a review of the parking restrictions at Lower High Street, a further amendment was proposed for consideration.	It was suggested that an amendment be made for the inclusion of kerb blips alongside the Double Yellow Lines adjacent to The Ship Inn frontage.
<p>It was therefore proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">That the Traffic Management Advisory Committee is supportive of the inclusion of kerb blips with Double Yellow Lines adjacent to The Ship Inn frontage.</p>		
Update on Installation of Dropped Kerbs	Members received an update from The Community Highways Team Leader (CHTL) regarding the recent installation of dropped kerbs in Swanage.	The CHTL confirmed the recent installation of additional dropped kerbs had been completed.
Double Yellow Lines (DYL's) along Priests Road	The CHTL advised that he had been approached by a resident, who wishes to raise their concerns regarding the recent installation of the DYL's along Priests Road.	Councillor Bonfield stated that he would be happy to meet with the resident, together with the CHTL to listen to the resident's concerns and to provide an opportunity to explain the safety benefits associated with the Council's decision.

**Godlingston Cemetery - Clarification of fees in relation to prepurchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial (adjoining grave plot)**

The Town Council's cemetery fee structure differentiates between residents and non-residents of the parish, with individuals who are not resident in the parish at the time of their passing (unless they have moved for the purpose of care) being subject to double fees.

In certain circumstances, at the time of interment, a close family member may wish to secure the Exclusive Rights of Burial for an adjoining plot at the time of interment. This is often done to ensure that family members may, in due course, be laid to rest together. Such a request does not involve an additional interment at the time but simply the acquisition of the Exclusive Rights of Burial for the adjoining plot.

A point of clarification has arisen regarding how residency status should be applied in these circumstances.

The Committee is asked to consider and clarify the following:

Where an individual being buried/interred was a resident at the time of their passing, and a member of their immediate family who is currently not a resident of the parish, pre-purchases the Exclusive Rights of Burial for an adjoining plot to ensure, that in due course, they may be laid to rest together, should the fee reflect:

- The residency status of the deceased (i.e. resident's rate) or
- The residency status of the purchaser of the Exclusive Rights of Burial (i.e. non-resident rate)?

By way of example:

The deceased was a parish resident at the time of their passing, therefore qualifies for the resident fee. An immediate family member, who now resides out of the parish but retains close family ties to the town, wishes to secure the adjoining plot at the time of interment in accordance with Cemetery Regulations, with the intention of maintaining family unity.

In such circumstances, should the pre-purchase fee be charged at the resident rate (reflecting the status of the deceased) or at the non-resident rate (reflecting the current address of the purchaser)?

It should be noted that the pre-purchase of an adjoining plot is sometimes made months or even years after the initial interment.

The Committee's guidance will assist in ensuring that fees are applied consistently, transparently and with due sensitivity to bereaved families seeking to make arrangements during a time of loss.

## **Decision Required**

To consider whether the pre-purchase fee charged to non-residents of the parish for the acquisition of Exclusive Rights of Burial for adjoining plots to parish residents reflects:

- The residency status of the deceased or
- The residency status of the purchaser of the Exclusive Rights of Burial.

Samantha Layton-Kelly

Administration Officer

**Swanage Community Emergency Response Plan – update and proposed next steps**

The Council’s Emergency Response Plan was adopted at the Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023, Minute No. 44 refers. Since that time, it has been subject to updates (telephone numbers and contact names) most recently in February 2026. At this time a review of the emergency response plan was also undertaken by two Councillors and a police representative.

This review has resulted in the following recommendations:

- An engagement meeting is held with ‘places of safety’ representatives to recognise their contribution to community resilience, conduct a desk-based scenario exercise, exchange ideas and best practice and identify any gaps in provision.
- A core number of individuals, primarily Council officers, undertake Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) training to support the emergency response function for Swanage. This training enables non police staff to gain limited and targeted police powers to support community safety under the supervision of local police forces. This would enable those accredited to close roads and control traffic in consultation with the police in emergency situations.

It is proposed these recommendations are taken forward. To this end, the Assets and Compliance Manager has a meeting scheduled for early April with the Dorset Police, Citizens in Policing Manager to understand more about the requirements of the CSAS training. In addition, a meeting with ‘places of safety’ representatives is being arranged.

A redacted version of the February 2026 Community Emergency Response Plan has been circulated to relevant parties.

**Action Required**

To note the contents of this report, specifically the proposals for CSAS training, primarily for Council officers and the planned engagement meeting with ‘places of safety’ representatives.

To note that updates on these actions in support the Swanage Community Emergency Response Plan function, will be provided to future meetings of this committee.

Gail Percival, Assets and Compliance Manager

March 2026

## Beach Gardens – conversion of court 6 to a multi-use tennis and pickleball court

### 1. Introduction

The Swanage Tennis Club have approached the Council with a request to install two Pickleball courts on Tennis Court 6 at the Beach Gardens Sports Park.

### 2. What is Pickleball?

Pickleball is a fast-growing racket sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis. It is played on a small court with a low net, using solid paddles and a lightweight perforated ball. Easy to learn but highly competitive at advanced levels, pickleball is accessible to all ages and abilities, making it popular for both casual recreation and organised sport. More about the sport can be found here: [HOME - Pickleball England](#)

It is considered that Pickleball would be very popular in Swanage and would drive additional membership to the Tennis Club and support income generation for the Town Council and provide a range of health benefits to both residents and visitors.

### 3. How might Pickleball work at Beach Gardens?

Court 6 is currently made up of a tarmacadam base. In order to increase the longevity of the life of the surface a polyurethane resin would be added. This would provide an opportunity to add the playing lines necessary for two pickleball courts onto the single tennis court. In addition, this will extend the life of the tarmac by at least 2-3 years.

Pickleball nets can be located on the courts and moved aside when the court is required for tennis play. Nets would be set up by Beach Gardens kiosk staff each morning and put away at closing time. Nets would be locked to the side of the courts over night with the Tennis Club also having a key to use the nets in the evening if necessary.

### 4. How might Pickleball affect the current Tennis Club Licence?

Currently the Tennis Club are unable to book Court 6, although they may use it when it is not being used otherwise by the Council. It is suggested that a similar approach is taken with Pickleball. Court 6A which will be useable by the Tennis Club under the same arrangements that exist with the other courts. Court 6B will be useable under the same arrangements as court 6 currently is.

If customers were to book both courts for tennis, the nets could be easily moved to one side for the duration of the game. It is understood that Clubspark, the Tennis Club booking system can accommodate this function.

### 5. Other things to consider

Pickleball has a distinct high frequency ‘pop’ that typically carries further than tennis noise. While the noise difference is between 3-5 decibels, the noise can sound louder to nearby residents and balls are hit every 1-2 seconds compared to every 2-4 seconds with tennis. However, court 6 is at least 25 metres away from the nearest building and there is a very large hedge in between which should effectively absorb any additional noise. In addition, the court orientation is such as to focus noise away from the houses.

If agreed the works will likely be undertaken before summer 2026.

## 6. How might these costs be funded?

It is proposed that the costs might be funded as follows:

	Cost Item	Budget Cost	Funded by		
			Tennis Court Maintenance Fund	Town Council	Tennis Club
1.	Tarmac maintenance	£3,700	£3,700		
2.	Pickleball lining	£300			£300
2.	Net for Court 6A	£150	£150		
3.	Net for Court 6B	£150	£150		
4.	Locks and other misc. equipment	£100	£100		
4.	Equipment for hire by Council (4 sets)	£350		£350	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,750</b>	<b>£4,100</b>	<b>£350</b>	<b>£300</b>

The Tennis Court maintenance funding agreement is currently being agreed between the Tennis Club and Town Council. This has not yet been finalised but is designed to operate up to 2040. This ensures that sufficient funding is included to maintain and replace any courts and fencing as required on the six Tennis Courts. The majority of the costs within the table above are related to increasing the lifespan of the tarmac court by the application of a resin coating. The benefit to the Council is that this will enable the work to be delayed by three years and align the works with the resurfacing for court 1 and 2 in 2031-32. Due to the regular underspends seen each year within this budget, there will be sufficient funding within the budget to ensure that these works could be funded through this maintenance budget. The Tennis Club have indicated that they may be able to make additional funds available to support this proposal.

The proposed nets to be procured are designed for outdoor use, although probably not designed to be kept out at all times. As the Council gains an increased knowledge of the game and how the practicalities around joint use of the tennis and pickleball courts might work, it may prove necessary to procure more robust equipment in the following year. For the budget above, relatively low cost options are proposed that are lightweight and can be moved easily when not required.

## 7. What might be the charge to play on a Pickleball Court?

The cost to play pickleball varies a great deal across the country with an average cost to use outdoor converted tennis courts seeming to be between £6 and £8. The cost to play tennis at Beach Gardens for 2026-27 is £11 per court. It is therefore suggested that a court is charged at £6 each for one hour. The fees below are proposed for 2026-27.

	Cost per court	2026-27 Tennis	Proposed 26-27 Pickleball
1.	Singles/doubles per hour (per court)	£11.00	£6.00
2.	With Club Member (per court)	£7.00	£5.00
3.	Schools (per court)	£6.00	£4.00
4.	Children - under 16 (per court)	£5.00	£3.00
5.	Racket Hire	£3.00	£1.00
6.	Ball Hire	£1.00	£1.00
	Court Fees - Coaching	-	-
7.	- Adults	£5.20	£3.20
8.	- Children	£0.00	£0.00

**Decision required:**

1. Consider and agree if Beach Gardens Tennis Court 6 should be improved with a polyurethane resin surface and Pickleball lines included
2. Agree works and the budget as detailed in section 6 above
3. Agree the proposed charges for Pickleball for 2026-27 as et out on section 7

Culvin Milmer, Visitor Services and Business Development Manager  
March 2026



*Figure 1 - Example Pickleball court*



*Figure 2 - Example Pickleball set*

**Swanage Museum Future Plans – Update further to appointment of task and finish group**

At the Community Services Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025 it was resolved, Minute No.10 refers, to form a Task & Finish Group to work with representatives of the Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre (SMHC) 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;
- investigate the feasibility of relocation of the George Burt granite globe to Prince Albert Gardens and the availability of funding to achieve this.

An initial meeting was held with the Task & Finish Group comprising Councillors Bonfield, Foster and Moreton in December 2025 followed by a meeting with representatives of the SMHC Committee, the County Museums Advisor and the Conservator - Southwest Museums on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

The meeting was positive and discussions included:

- Information from SMHC outlining its current position, operational challenges, and emerging future vision. It was agreed that the museum would continue developing this – covering capacity, income generation and building improvements – and present it formally in the coming months.
- The potential for small scale exhibitions to be held by the museum in the Town Hall in the shorter term to enable assessment of the interest and success of accompanied viewings of these.
- Consensus that an extension of the current lease (due to expire in March 2026) on the same terms as the existing, by a period of up to two years was a prudent approach to enable long-term plans and options for SMHC to be considered.

Further to this, at the Full Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, it was resolved to extend the existing museum lease for a period of up to two years, providing continuity while the feasibility report is completed and longer-term options are explored. Solicitors have been instructed in this matter. In addition, the Assets and Compliance Manager met with SMHC representatives on 20<sup>th</sup> February to view the granite globe and explore potential locations for siting this on Council land, primarily locations within Prince Albert Gardens. A number of options were considered, and it is proposed that this matter is progressed at a future meeting with SMHC and the Task & Finish Group upon receipt of the light touch feasibility study anticipated in late April 2026.

**Action Required**

To note the contents of this report.

Gail Percival, Assets and Compliance Manager

March 2026

**Memorial bench policy task and finish group – outcome of review**

The Community Services Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025, Minute No. 11 refers, resolved to form a Task & Finish group 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. This request was for three new benches to be installed at Swanage Bandstand, one to be funded by the Council in memory of the Late Councillor Trite, and two to be funded by the Friends of Swanage Bandstand to commemorate two long standing members.

The Task & Finish group met on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025, and the following matters were considered:

- The Town Council’s current policy on memorial benches, agreed at the Council meeting held on Monday 24th April 2023 (Minute No. 10 refers) where it was resolved that the Council’s then memorial bench policy be suspended, that the waiting list for memorial benches remain closed and that the 20 individuals who had recently expressed an interest in remaining on the waiting list for a memorial bench be offered an inscription on an existing memorial bench, a memorial plaque at Godlingston Cemetery or a commitment to remain on the waiting list until opportunities to locate new benches are identified.
- The extensive number of requests received by the Council for memorial benches that have been declined since the decision to suspend the memorial bench policy and retain the closure of the waiting list was made.
- The most fitting form of commemoration of the Late Councillor Trite given his remarkable service provided to the town.

Given all of the above factors, the sensitivity of this policy and the number of requests from loved ones to commemorate their friends and family with a memorial bench it was considered that a further meeting of the Task & Finish group should be held to enable further consideration of the Council’s current policy.

**For information**

To note the meeting of the Task & Finish group to review the Council’s memorial bench policy, whereby following serious consideration it was considered that a further meeting of the Task & Finish group would be held and the outcome of this reported to a future meeting of this committee.

Gail Percival, Assets and Compliance Manager

March 2026