

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held at The Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on
MONDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY 2026 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M. Bonfield – Chairman

Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor P. Burridge
Councillor M. Coward
Councillor J. Dorrington
Councillor T. Foster
Councillor J. Lejeune
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor C. Sutton
Councillor C. Tomes

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, 12 members of the public and two members of the local press and media attended the Meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time:-

- Queries were raised regarding the decision-making process in respect of the Green Seafront Stabilisation Scheme and whether the town would receive sufficient benefits to justify the additional £2.5 million cost of the larger scheme. It was noted that a business plan had not yet been published.
- Thanks were expressed to the town's two Dorset Councillors for supporting the retention of two-way traffic along Shore Road. Reference was made to a report prepared by the resident which raised queries regarding the development of the Shore Road proposals and it was noted that a revised copy would be issued shortly. The need for residents and business owners to be fully informed when decisions relating to the Green Seafront Stabilisation Scheme were made was highlighted.
- A resident of Shore Road commented on the proposed traffic measures, noting that the town was in need of a well-designed pedestrian-friendly promenade. Good design was considered paramount to ensure successful shared use of space between vehicles and pedestrians.
- Further to an item in the minutes of the January Council Meeting, a member of the public noted the generosity of Swanage residents, which had assisted Graham Warburton in raising significant funds for the Salvation Army, and expressed thanks to him. It was also commented that it would have been beneficial had public consultation regarding Shore Road and the Green Seafront Stabilisation Scheme been conducted separately. In addition, the resident noted that a submission he had made for inclusion on the agenda of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee meeting had not yet been considered.
- Support was expressed for the need to stabilise the seafront land, and it was noted that two-way traffic had historically operated successfully along Shore Road. It was further noted that issues such as open car doors and other obstructions on the pavement would need to be addressed to ensure that the area functioned effectively, especially for disabled residents and visitors.

Rev. Ian Bird offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

The Chairman opened the Council Meeting at 7.15 p.m.

178. **Apologies**
Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Suttle and Vile.
179. **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.
There were no declarations to record on this occasion.
180. **Minutes**
(a) Proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Sutton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26th January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.
181. **Planning and Consultation Committee**
(a) Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Lejeune and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 2nd February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.
- Consideration was given to the following recommendation contained in the Minutes:-
- 8(a)(i) Swanage Neighbourhood Plan website – to recommend approval of creation of website and allocate budget at the Council Meeting on 23rd February 2026**
It was proposed by Councillor Lejeune, seconded by Councillor Burridge and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the creation of a dedicated Swanage Neighbourhood Plan website, and the allocation of a budget of up to £2,000 for this additional work by ONH Planning Consultants, be approved.
182. **Statement of Cash Balance**
(a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 31st January 2026 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).
183. **Payment of Accounts**
In accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Council's Financial Regulations, the following Payment Schedule was submitted for information:-
 - Payment Schedule 10, amounting to £632,561.77.
184. **Chairman's Announcements**
The Town Mayor reported his attendance at the following events since the Council Meeting held in January:
 - Rotary Young Musician of the Year – The Mayor noted the enthusiasm of this young group of musicians and had an enjoyable afternoon.
 - Folk Festival Presentation and AGM – It was reported that £10,000 had been donated to local charities.

- Silver Afternoon Tea – The Deputy Mayor attended the afternoon tea event on behalf of the Mayor.
- Swanage Community Awards – It was reported that the nominations were now open and awards would be issued at the Annual Parish Assembly being held on 20th April 2026.

185. **Shore Road Enhancement Project - To consider report from Dorset Council setting out preferred option**

Further to Minute No. 169 of the Council Meeting held on 26th January 2026, consideration was given to a briefing paper which set out Dorset Council’s preferred option for enhancements to Shore Road, following public engagement undertaken during summer 2025. This would retain two-way traffic on Shore Road whilst removing on-street parking in order to enable wider footways and deliver public-realm enhancements (including a reduction in street ‘clutter’ on the pavements), introduce a 20-mph speed limit and make associated changes to the wider highways network.

It was noted that the planned works to Shore Road would be co-ordinated with the Green Seafront Stabilisation Scheme. It was clarified that the pavements would be widened on the seaward side with some smaller targeted improvements on the landward side.

It was explained that the current proposal represented an initial plan and an indicative timescale was noted for next steps. Subject to the proposals gaining Town Council support, it was anticipated that Dorset Council would prepare a more detailed design by late summer 2026, with the proposals then being subject to formal public consultation in autumn 2026. Members committed to working with Dorset Council to refine the designs to ensure that the best possible outcomes would be achieved for Swanage.

It was proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Lejeune and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Town Council wholeheartedly supports Dorset Council’s preferred option for Shore Road enhancements proceeding to the next stage of development.

186. **To consider recommendations of the Grants Panel**

Consideration was given to a briefing paper prepared by the Planning and Community Engagement Manager, which set out recent grant applications received for the 2025/26 financial year.

It was noted that the Council had approved a grants budget of £10,000 for 2025/26, a total of £2,518.50 had been awarded to date, and a further £9,188.80 had been requested. Members considered the summary of the recommendations of the Grants Panel as outlined below:

Applicant	Sum Requested	Recommended grant	Summary of project	Reason for support
1 st Swanage Guides	£300.00	£300.00	Swanage District Guides Association – Registered Charity No. 301224 (Girl Guiding (UK) – Registered Charity No. 306016) This application seeks a small grant to assist towards the costs of a trip to Switzerland in August 2026 for 20 Guides and leaders.	Recommend approval - the grant request fits within the Town Council’s criteria by supporting a non-profit youth organisation, benefiting local girls and young women, and providing developmental, cultural and educational value to the community. Supports confidence, independence, and personal growth for young people.

It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Dorrington and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Town Council approves the recommendation of the Grants Panel to award a grant of £300 to the Swanage District Guides Association.

Purbeck Art Weeks Festival	£1,500.00 (to be paid in 3 annual instalments of £500)	£1,050 (to be paid in 3 annual instalments of £350.00)	Registered Charity No. 1140350. The application seeks funding over a three-year period towards <i>Purbeck Young Artist</i> workshops in Swanage schools, costed at £350 each (provided free of charge to all primary and secondary schools in Purbeck), taking place from March to May, with residual funds going towards a proposed <i>Whispering Dome</i> music project. A grant application has been made to Dorset Council for £5,000 towards the cost of the <i>Whispering Dome</i> project.	Recommend approval at £350 x 3 years (£1,050 in total) in support of the school youth workshops - a wide range of free, year-round entertainment and activities is available for all ages, providing significant benefits to the mental health, wellbeing, and social engagement of both the local community and visitors. These activities also generate economic benefits by attracting additional visitors to the area.
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It was noted that Members had considered the total amount requested of £1,500 and recommended that a total of sum of £1,050 be offered.

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

That the Town Council approves the recommendation of the Grants Panel to award a grant of £1,050 (to be paid in three equal annual instalments of £350) to Purbeck Art Weeks.

Purbeck Film Festival	£500.00	£ - decline	Registered Charity No. 1195008. The application seeks funding towards the costs of this year's festival (16 th October to 1 st November), an established annual event held across various venues in Purbeck/Dorset. The festival provides a wide range of film screenings which facilitate an enjoyable social gathering whilst also showing many different cultures, viewpoints, and lifestyles. Financial support is currently	Recommendation - decline as submitted – this is a long-established, ticketed event - in line with the Council's existing grant policy, eligibility Points 3 to 3.6 refer (grant awards have been made in previous years towards the costs of the festival). However, the application notes that one of the festival's aims is to provide film-related activities and workshops for local children. It is also recognised that the festival hosts a <i>Short Film Evening</i> intended to encourage and promote the work
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			received from the British Film Institute, sponsors and donors, fundraising activities, and audience revenue.	of young film-makers. Members therefore recommend that the Council invites the festival organisers to consider a specific youth-focused project for inclusion in this year's event, which could be eligible for grant funding. Members would welcome the resubmission of a grant application in support of such a project.
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It was proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Dorrington and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council approves the recommendation of the Grants Panel to refuse the grant application from Purbeck Film Festival for a sum of £500.

Swanage Depression Support Group	£500.00	£500.00	Volunteer-led community group. The group re-opened in May 2025 after a period of closure. Its aim is to provide support for individuals experiencing depression through open meetings at The Focus Centre, where members can receive confidential assistance. Meetings are held twice monthly, with a charge of £2 per session. These fees do not cover the group's costs which include monthly room hire, insurance, supervisory visits from a mental health professional, and refreshments.	Recommendation - approve – to safeguard this important local service. The group contributes significantly to the wellbeing and mental health of local residents and provides a clear benefit to the community. Members feel that this group could be considered for regular annual funding in the future, should the proposed new grant guidelines be approved/adopted, which would provide additional stability and help ensure the continuation of its valuable service.
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It was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Sutton and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council approves the recommendation of the Grants Panel to award a grant of £500 to the Swanage Depression Support Group.

Swanage Town Band	£388.80	£150.00	<p>Registered Charity – No. 1214942.</p> <p>The application seeks funding to assist with the purchase/costs of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Printed panels to existing A frame £98.00 2. Printed vinyl banner with fixing eyelets £76.00 3. VAT on the above £34.80 4. Design work on the above £80.00 5. New music for next year £100.00. 	<p>Recommendation - approve £150 – to support the purchase of new music (previous grants of the same amount were awarded for this purpose in 2024 and 2025) - in support of funding the purchase of new music, in recognition of the valuable contribution that the band makes to the town and local community, supporting community health and wellbeing through free events, social activities, and youth engagement. It is noted that the Band donates its surplus funds to other charitable causes; in 2025/26, donations were made to Swanage Carnival, Weldmar Hospice, and towards a second Admiral Nurse.</p>
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It was proposed by Councillor Coward, seconded by Councillor Bishop and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council approves the recommendation of the Grants Panel to award a grant of £150 to the Swanage Town Band.

The Swanage Emporium	£6,000.00	£ - decline	<p>The legal structure of the new shop and café at 52 High Street is currently unknown (TBA)</p> <p>The application seeks funding towards the installation of accessible toilet facilities at the premises to serve a new café area within the shop, at an estimated cost of £6,000 (no supporting costings provided at this stage).</p> <p>It is intended that the café will provide drinks and snacks to residents and visitors, offering an additional space for people meet in a relaxed and comfortable setting, with accessible facilities available. Income generated by The Swanage Emporium is to support The Loft Swanage Community Centre.</p>	<p>Recommend decline as submitted – does not currently meet the Council’s Grant Guidelines - Eligibility Criteria, Point 2, which states that applications will only be considered from community groups and organisations that are a properly constituted body.</p> <p>Met with applicant who advised that further discussions are planned with his accountant to finalise the arrangements for the new ventures. At present, there is insufficient information regarding the intended legal set-up of the new café within The Swanage Emporium shop at 52 High Street. While The Loft Community Centre in Commercial Road is established as a CIC, the</p>
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				structure for the new High Street café remains unclear. Recommend a further meeting with applicant once the organisational arrangements have been finalised, to allow the proposal to be reconsidered if appropriate.
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It was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Burridge and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council approves the recommendation of the Grants Panel to refuse the grant application for £6,000 from the Swanage Emporium.

Whilst the application was not approved, Members noted their willingness to meet with the applicant in the future to discuss the proposals.

187. **Working Party and Task & Finish Groups Updates**

(a) **Property Panel held on 6th February 2026**

It was noted that discussions at this meeting in relation to the Shore Place concessions would be considered under Agenda Item 17 (see Minute No. 194 (c) below). Matters relating to leases, licences and rent reviews were also discussed.

(b) **Museum Task & Finish Group held on 6th February 2026**

It was noted that this had been a positive meeting with Museum representatives and that the Town Council maintained its support for the Museum. Discussions had included the potential joint use of the Town Hall building, although consideration would be given to the existing lease arrangements.

188. **To consider revised Committee meeting dates.**

(a) **Finance & Governance Committee – Change from 11th to 18th March**

(b) **Community Services Committee – Change from 15th July to 1st July**

(c) **Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee – Change from 3rd June to 22nd April**

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

That the change in Committee meeting dates as set out above be approved.

189. **Reports from Council representatives on outside organisations**

Cultural Purbeck – It was reported that Cultural Purbeck anticipated setting up as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with four trustees. It was noted that the group hoped to submit a bid to be the UK Town of Culture 2028 and that an event would be held at Emmanuel Baptist Church on 27th February 2026. A report would be provided to the next Council meeting.

190. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

The following updates were provided by Councillor Tomes:

- **Budget** – It was reported that due to funding constraints Dorset Council had increased Council Tax by 4.99%. It was anticipated that a three-year financial settlement would be agreed with central government that would provide greater

certainty for the authority. Work relating to the 'Our Future Council' programme was continuing, with the aim of delivering savings across the Council.

- **Road repairs/gully issues** – It was reported that £5 million had been allocated for road repairs and gully clearance.
- **Aster Housing** – Councillor Tomes reported that he had seconded a motion at a meeting of Dorset Council requesting registered providers to review the disposal of housing stock and the maintenance arrangements that had resulted in properties being sold.

191. **Reporting of delegated matters**

No delegated matters were reported this month.

192. **Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas**

There were no matters raised.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda item 16 (in order to preserve the integrity of the forthcoming public consultation process) and items 17 and 18 (due to legal and commercial confidentiality).

193. **Neighbourhood Plan – To consider approval of draft Neighbourhood Plan to be issued for Regulation 14 public consultation**

Members received an update regarding progress towards completion of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Following consideration by the Steering Group and the Planning and Consultation Committee, a workshop had been held to consider the draft plan in detail. It was noted that the Committee had made a formal recommendation to the Council to approve the draft plan. However, a number of questions raised at the workshop had yet to be resolved. Consequently, it was proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Burridge and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Council defers consideration of the draft Neighbourhood Plan to a future meeting.

194. **Property Related Legal Matters**

(a) **Punch and Judy Concession – To consider amendments to licence for 2026 and 2027 seasons**

Further to Minute No. 47 of the Council Meeting held on 23rd June 2025, consideration was given to amendments to the licence agreement for the performance of Punch & Judy shows on the Main Beach for the 2026 and 2027 seasons. The principal changes were summarised in a briefing note circulated prior to the meeting. The licence holder had requested an extension to the season, commencing in late-May instead of mid-July and operating until mid-September. In previous years a beach hut had been made available in connection with the operation of the concession and this had also been requested for an extended period for the next two seasons. Attention was drawn to potential alternative arrangements.

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

That the extended season requested by the Punch and Judy concessionaire be agreed for the 2026 and

2027 seasons, at the current fee of £150 per season, excluding use of a Shore Road beach hut, and that delegated authority be granted to officers to make alternative arrangements to provide secure storage for use by the concessionaire.

Officers noted that if agreement could not be reached with the concessionaire the matter would be brought back to a forthcoming Council meeting.

(b) Swanage Museum – To consider extension to existing lease

Further to Minute No. 10 of the Community Services Committee Meeting held on 15th October 2025, and discussion at recent meetings of the Museum Task & Finish Group, consideration was given to a proposal to extend the lease of the Heritage Centre building to Swanage Museum for a period of up to two years. It was noted that the Museum was currently looking to strengthen its trustee base and review key elements of its operation to ensure a sustainable future. It was, therefore, felt that a comparatively short lease extension would allow the Museum Trust to finalise its plans, prior to entering into a longer-term commitment. It was proposed by Councillor Lejeune, seconded by Councillor Moreton and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Council enters into a renewal lease with Swanage Museum for a period of up to two years on the same terms as the existing lease (excluded from the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954) and agrees to pay the cost of its own legal fees.

(c) Shore Place – To consider proposed event usage by business tenants

Members considered a briefing paper regarding a proposal from the two concessionaires operating from Shore Place to deliver a programme of wellbeing-focused activities, including yoga, fitness sessions and related events. The Property Panel had reviewed the proposal and expressed support in principle, subject to a number of conditions, including a one-year trial period, agreed allocation of use between charities and businesses, seasonal restrictions, and the use of an adapted Sports and Wellbeing Licence.

Members noted the potential benefit to both residents and tourists to accommodate well-being activities in this location. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Foster and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the proposed arrangements for the use of Shore Place by the two concessionaires, as set out in section two of the briefing paper, be approved.

Members noted the plans by the Swanage Sauna to install a webcam, to be positioned with a view to the sea. It was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Coward and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Council notes the proposed installation of a webcam by the Swanage Sauna.

Consideration was given to a proposed amendment to the Council's Sports and Wellbeing Licence criteria to allow greater flexibility in recognising appropriate instructor qualifications. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Foster and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the proposed change to the Council's Sport Licence arrangements, as set out in section 4 of the briefing paper, be approved.

(d) **Mowlem Land (De Moulham) Trust and Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds Trust – To consider approval of draft management agreements and authorisation of Members to sign documents.**

Further to Minute No. 176 (c) of the Council Meeting held on 26th January 2026, Members considered draft management agreements between the Town Council and the Mowlem Land Trust and the Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds Trust, following earlier agreement to formalise management arrangements on the advice of the Council's insurers and legal advisors. It was noted that both Trusts had considered the draft agreements and requested that the Council enter into formal arrangements, subject to final amendments. Members were advised that a number of clarifications and additional clauses were currently being reviewed by the Council's solicitors. It was proposed by Councillor Bishop, seconded by Councillor Moreton and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To enter into management agreements with the Mowlem Land Trust and Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds Trust (subject to final amendments) and to authorise the signing of the same by two councillors.

(e) **Marsh Way/Victoria Terrace boundary wall – Consideration of next steps**

Members noted a verbal update regarding ongoing negotiations around the works to the boundary wall, which it was anticipated would be commenced over the summer.

(f) **Vodafone Mast, Day's Park – Update on lease renewal and rent review**

A verbal update was provided following a meeting with representatives of Vodafone held at the Football Club. It was noted that the Council's professional advisers had been instructed to assess revised proposals that had subsequently been submitted and that an update on the Town Council's position would be provided to a future meeting.

195. **Mowlem Land (De Moulham) Trust and Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds Trust – To consider correspondence from Trusts regarding proposed acquisition of Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field by Town Council to facilitate ground stabilisation work, together with legal and professional advice**

Further to Minute No.152 of the Council Meeting held on 15th December 2025, Members considered the contents of a briefing paper which detailed the correspondence from both Trusts requesting that the Town Council acquire Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field for a nominal sum, in order to facilitate required ground stabilisation works. Members noted the legal advice received, which outlined the potential routes for acquisition, together with their respective advantages and disadvantages. It was further noted that independent valuation advice had not yet been obtained and would be required to inform any final decision.

A lengthy discussion ensued, during which Members considered the options available and the need to determine a way forward. The Mowlem Land Trust's proposal to retain a small section of Sandpit Field in order to secure the future enforceability of the estate covenants was scrutinised. The importance of seeking further legal and valuation advice was highlighted. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Tomes and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Town Council agrees to acquire Sandpit Field and the Weather Station Field from the Mowlem Land Trust and Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds Trust for a nominal sum, subject to the consideration of valuation advice and further legal guidance regarding the Trust's proposed retention of a small parcel of land at Sandpit Field.

The Meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY 25th FEBRUARY 2026** at 2.15 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor M. Bonfield (Town Mayor) – Chairman

Councillor T. Foster
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor C. Sutton
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor S. Vile

Also in attendance: -

Dr M Ayres Town Clerk and RFO
Mrs R Darkin-Miller Internal Auditor (until 2.35 p.m.)
Miss A Spencer Finance Manager

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

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.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CAPITAL PROJECTS SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 19TH JANUARY 2026 AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Consideration was given to the following recommendations made by the Capital Projects Sub-Committee to the Finance & Governance Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Sutton, and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY: -

5. Parade Railing Repair-Proposals

That the sum of £5,000 allocated within the 2025/26 one-off revenue budget for the upgrade of the Santa Fe railings be reallocated to the repair of railings at the parade and that the authority to determine the most appropriate course of repair be granted to the Assets and Compliance Manager in conjunction with Dorset Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Vile, and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY: -

6. Town Centre Festive Lights Catenary - proposals

That the budget allocation of £6,000 per annum for the hire of town centre festoon lighting be brought forward a year from 2027/28 to 2026/27.

4. **INTERNAL AUDIT**

For the benefit of the most recently appointed members Mrs Darkin-Miller, the Council's Internal Auditor, introduced herself to the committee.

a) **INSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL WORK**

Proposals were set out by the Chairman and Town Clerk for a review of certain internal processes and procedures by the Council's internal auditor. It was noted that additional internal audit work had been commissioned previously as a tool for learning and applying this knowledge to future projects, thereby driving continuous improvement. A recognition of the benefits of self-review was seen as a key organisational strength and members welcomed this approach. The audit work would include:

1. Asset transfer – a review of the processes applied during the asset transfer from the legacy Purbeck District Council leading up to the formation of Dorset Council in 2019 to inform work around future asset transfers.
2. Delegated decision-making – a review of processes required under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations, 2014, and the consistency of practices around the recording and reporting of officer decisions.

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

To instruct the Internal Auditor to review and report on:

- Asset transfers (specifically, the transfers enacted between Swanage Town Council and the legacy Purbeck District Council); and
- Delegated decision-making (the practice around the recording and reporting of officer decisions).

b) **UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS FROM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS 2024/25**

Members reviewed the updates on the high and medium level recommendations that had been made by the council's internal auditor contained within six Internal Audit reports issued relating to the 2024/25 financial year. The status updates on the recommendations made in those reports were noted.

5. **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a) **Income and Expenditure Account Q3 2025/26**

Consideration was given to a report setting out the Council's financial position at the end of the third quarter of the financial year and forecast year-end position.

It was reported that at the end of Q3 net expenditure was £137k under budget in total, with income from car parking and investments being significantly over budget, and employee costs being under budget.

It was noted that an appropriation of £140k from the general reserve to the Green Seafront Scheme earmarked reserve had been allocated during the 2026/27 estimates, and this sum had been included in the forecast for the current year. However, it was noted that any further adjustments would be made to these reserves at year end, as per the Council's Reserves Policy. The reserves held for the Green Seafront Scheme were discussed and it was agreed that the funding should be held in one Earmarked Reserve, rather than a number of component EMRs. Members noted the contents of the report.

b) **Capital Programme Monitoring Report**

A Capital Programme Monitoring Report for the 2025/26 financial year was submitted for information. The report and the progress made with the projects was noted. Discussion arose as to the proposed way forward in respect of the IT tender. It was noted that this would be in two processes with the first being an EOI being issued for IT Consultancy services, the second with the purchase of any recommended hardware/software. Discussion also ensued regarding a digital transformation process and how this may be incorporated into any procurement.

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

The following matters were listed for forthcoming agendas.

- **Update on creation of FOI webpage** – it was reported that this was still under construction.
- **Digital Transformation**– discussed in item 5 b).
- **Review of Social Media Policy**
- **Internal Audit Report 2025/26 - Visit 4 of 6** - Members were informed that an Internal Audit Report for Visit 4 had been received, reviewing Risk Management, Payments and Car Park Income, with no recommendations having been made by the Internal Auditor.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was noted as 18th March 2026, at 12.00 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 3.15 p.m.

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the **PLANNING AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **MONDAY, 2nd MARCH 2026** at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman: -

Councillor T Foster

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor P Burridge

Swanage Town Council

Councillor J Lejeune

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Sutton

Swanage Town Council

Councillor S Vile

Swanage Town Council

Also in attendance: -

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Miss N Clark

Planning and Community Engagement Manager

Mr C Milmer

Visitor Services Manager

Eighteen members of the public attended the meeting in person.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised:

Agenda item 3 a) Purbeck Watercraft Byelaw 2027 Public Consultation – concerns were raised regarding the proposals and the consultation process, including the following:-

- Lack of consultation with local groups, including Swanage Sailing Club, and the Swanage Sea Rowing Club.
- The proposed relocation of buoys from 300m to 200m from the shore, which was felt to be a significant reduction, with a potential decrease in water safety for sea swimmers, rowing boats, and non-motorised watercraft.
- Potential conflict between beach users and water users, along with concerns about speeding motorised craft in the bay, particularly larger boats and jet skis, which would operate nearer to the safe bathing zone. It was noted that their wake could create difficulties for less confident swimmers.
- Comments highlighting the national increase in wild and sea swimming. It was noted that the local sea swimming group, established in 2020, now had 170 members.
- A potential increase in noise pollution.

1) Apologies

Apologies for his inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Tomes.

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.

There were no declarations on this occasion.

Further to Standing Order No. 12) a) viii, prior to commencement of the Meeting it was proposed by the Chairman and AGREED:-

That Item 5 a) on the agenda be brought forward to Item 3 a).

Consultation

3) To note receipt of the following consultation document, and to determine the Council's preferred method of response, if any:

a) Dorset Council - Purbeck Watercraft Byelaw 2027 Public Consultation

It was noted that Dorset Council was consulting on proposed updates to the Seaside Pleasure Boats Byelaws 2013, which were intended to form the new Purbeck Watercraft Byelaw 2027. The proposed changes aimed to improve safety, protect the environment, and ensure that all users could enjoy Purbeck's coastal waters responsibly. Councillors had reviewed the consultation document and the online survey questions.

During Public Participation Time, residents raised several comments and concerns regarding the proposals, and the consultation process. Councillors noted that these included:

- Limited/lack of engagement with a number of local groups and users.
- The potential for increased noise pollution.
- Risks of conflict between beach users and watercraft users.
- Water safety concerns, particularly regarding the mix of motorised and non-motorised craft.
- The proposal to move the buoy line/operational zone closer to the beach, increasing perceived risks for swimmers and other non-motorised users.

Councillors were in agreement that the pre-consultation engagement process appeared to have been limited, lacking input from a number of stakeholders. In light of the concerns raised above, Councillors also felt that Dorset Council should give further consideration to the proposals and undertake wider pre-consultation engagement.

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

That the Town Council submits a strong objection to the consultation document in its current form, and recommends that it should be withdrawn and revised in light of comprehensive pre-consultation engagement with stakeholders.

The Chairman encouraged all residents to ensure they submitted their comments directly to Dorset Council, noting that this was a Dorset Council-led consultation and that public feedback was essential.

b) Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority – Proposed Station Closures Public Consultation

It was reported that the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority had a statutory duty to set a balanced revenue budget. It was noted that the recent finance settlement received from central government did not provide the Authority with sufficient funding for the service to continue operating at its current level. As a result, it was proposed that eight fire stations across Dorset and Wiltshire, four in each county, would be closed. No decisions had been made, and feedback was being sought from the public before any changes were implemented. One of the stations affected in Dorset included the Hamworthy station.

During the discussion Members expressed significant concern about the potential impact on emergency response provision for the town of Swanage, and the wider Purbeck area, noting that the local crew was already operating below full capacity.

Reference was made to the severe fire incidents experienced in recent years, including the major wildfire at Studland in the previous year and earlier fires within Wareham Forest. Councillors emphasised that these events demonstrated the critical need for robust and fully resourced fire and rescue coverage in the area, and agreed that the Town Council should write formally to the Chief Fire Officer to express the Council's concerns about the proposed changes and their potential effect on local community safety. Councillors and local residents were also encouraged to submit individual responses to the Authority's online consultation

survey to ensure that the views of the town were fully represented.

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

That a letter be sent to the Chief Fire Officer outlining the Council's concerns regarding the proposed station closures, reduced cover for Swanage, and the potential adverse impact on the Swanage crew.

Planning

4) Plans for consideration Delegated Applications

P/FUL/2026/00696

Swanage Conservation Area

Salvation Army Hall, 54 High Street, Swanage, BH19 3HA

Alterations to convert former Salvation Army Hall into two residential dwellings.

OBSERVATION: While the Town Council expresses disappointment at the loss of this community building to residential use, it raises no objection to the proposal, subject to adherence to the Design and Conservation Officer's report and any associated recommendations. However, clarification is requested regarding the submitted Sustainability Checklist, as no detailed explanation has been provided for the applicant's failure to meet the sustainability objectives, relating to the 'No' responses to questions 1.2 to 1.4, 2.1, 4.2, 5.1, and 7.1.

P/FUL/2026/01009

Store, Burlington Chine, Swanage

Convert existing storage area into two beach chalets, with double-opening doors and roller shutters.

OBSERVATION: No objection.

* P/FUL/2026/01088

Swanage Conservation Area

28-36 Station Road Swanage BH19 1AF

Remove existing redundant doors, set back from street. Replace with new glazing, flush with existing glazing along the street elevation.

OBSERVATION: No objection, subject to adherence to the Design and Conservation Officer's report and any recommendations.

P/HOU/2026/00172

23 Priests Road, Swanage, BH19 2RG

Retain fully panelled boundary fence.

OBSERVATION: No objection. However, the Town Council wishes to note that the description of this proposal is misleading. The fence in question is newly constructed and has been repositioned northwards from the location of the original boundary fence, with the applicant now seeking retrospective planning permission.

P/HOU/2026/00564

Woodland Rise, Atlantic Road, Swanage, BH19 2EF

Replacement windows to the existing dwelling, and conversion of ground floor garage to studio. New replacement garage/store.

OBSERVATION: No objection.

Appeal Information

P/FUL/2025/03548

Notification of Appeal - Appeal Reference: 6005160

Land between 48-50 Victoria Avenue, Swanage, BH19 1AP

Redevelop site with two attached (one pair of semi-detached) houses.

Appeal start date: 17th February 2026

An appeal had been made to the Secretary of State against the decision to refuse to grant planning permission by Dorset Council. The appeal would be determined on the basis of written representations. The procedure to be followed was set out in Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Appeals) (Written Representations Procedure) (England) regulations 2009, as amended. Any further representations had to be received by 24th March 2026.

OBSERVATION: The Committee did not wish to modify or withdraw its previous comment dated 7th July 2025, therefore, no further action was required at this time.

For information only

P/CLP/2026/00594

Certificate of Lawful Use Proposed

4 Heather Close, Swanage, BH19 2QZ

4-metre rear extension, and internal remodelling.

P/CLP/2026/00785

Certificate of Lawful Use Proposed

5 Beach Gardens, Swanage, BH19 1PG

Single storey rear extension to dining and kitchen area. Amendments to windows and doors.

P/CLP/2026/01089

Certificate of Lawful Use Proposed

Land adjacent to Purbeck Heights, Priests Way, Swanage, BH19 2RS

Installation of hardstanding as parking area benefitting from approved planning application No. P/RES/2023/03476 (amended by approved planning application No. P/NMA/2026/00209).

Please note:

* The Town Council is Corporate Trustee of the De Moulham Trust, which holds the benefit of covenants in the properties that are the subject of applications marked *.

The Town Council is the owner of land included within, or directly affected by, applications marked #.

5) Applications for tree works - opportunity to raise any matters of concern

Consideration was given to the following proposed tree works:-

P/TRT/2026/00738

Holly Oak House, 6A Durlston Road, Swanage, BH19 2DL

T1 Holm Oak:-

- Reduce secondary branches growing south west and protruding from the canopy back into the upper crown by approximately 1 metre.
- Reduce secondary branches growing south by approximately 0.5 metre.
- Reduce the overall height of the tree by up to 0.5 metres.
- Prune branches to achieve approximately 0.5 metres clearance from the adjacent BT line.

OBSERVATION: No objection.

P/TRT/2026/00798

4 Tilly Whim, 10 Durlston Road, Swanage, BH19 2HX

- T1 Beech - Reduction of lateral branches and canopy by 2m.
- T2 Beech - Reduction of lateral branches and canopy by 2m.
- T3 Beech - Reduction of lateral branches and canopy by 2m.

OBSERVATION: No objection.

P/TRT/2026/00907

Sherwood Court, 2 Cliff Avenue, Swanage, BH19 1LX

Sycamore at the front of Sherwood Court - fell tree and replace with a Fastigate Oak, Quercus robur 'Fastigiata'.

OBSERVATION: No objection.

6) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

a) Herston Yards Farm – a local resident had reported concerns regarding the potential use of land at Herston Yards Farm as a waste disposal site, and the risk of contamination. It was noted that no planning permission existed for such use. The Chairman of the Committee confirmed that the matter had been referred to Dorset Council, which held environmental responsibility for the area, and that the Town Council's Dorset Councillors were also investigating the matter.

7) Date of next meeting

The next meeting had been scheduled for Monday 30th March 2026.

The meeting closed at approximately 7.55 p.m.

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT & GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 4th MARCH 2026** at **2.15 p.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor C Sutton

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Tomes

Swanage Town Council (until 3.45 p.m.)

Councillor S Vile

Swanage Town Council

Outside Representatives: -

Mr B Cooke

National Trust

Mr D Skinner

Planet Purbeck

Mr L Luke

Planet Purbeck

Mr J Griffen

Sustainable Swanage

Mr F Roberts

Swanage Landers

Also in attendance: -

Mr C Milmer

Visitor Services and Business

Development Manager (VSBDM)

Mr M Snowdon

Assets & Compliance Support Officer

Mr A Young

Purbeck Energy Group

There was one member of the public and one member of the press present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised during Public Participation Time.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Ms J Owens (Sustainable Swanage), Ms K Black (Durlston Country Park), Mr T Clarke (National Trust) and Mr D Pratten (Beach Buddies).

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 Meeting of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee held on 12th February 2025

No matters were raised on this occasion.

4) Environment Action Plan – Progress Update

Further to Minute No. 5 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 8th October 2025, Members noted the contents of the Environment Action Plan. The Visitor Services and Business Development Manager (VSBDM) reported that works

on Priority Action 4 within the Environment Action Plan, to develop an Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and increase the provision of charging facilities in Swanage Town Council car parks was ongoing and further meetings were scheduled for March 2026 between officers and Dorset Council, to deliver the Charging Ahead scheme. It was noted that a progress report will be brought to a future meeting of this Committee.

5) Swanage Town Council's Energy Footprint – To receive 2025 report.

The VSBDM presented the Energy Footprint Report for 2025, which detailed energy use, water use, and waste generated by the Town Council over a 12-month period. An alternative approach to measuring the Carbon Footprint was implemented for the 2025 report using conversion factors provided by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero instead of those provided by Low Carbon Dorset. It was reported that due to the change in approach, Carbon Footprint comparisons with previous years were not currently possible. However, actual usage data indicated that there had been a reduction in the Council's energy use and it was the lowest recorded since reporting began in 2022.

It was further reported that the Council took delivery of an additional electric vehicle at the beginning of 2025, replacing one of the aging diesel vehicles and that solar panels (PV) installed at Beach Gardens and the Operations Depot had generated over 29,000kWh across the year, providing electricity for those sites and feeding surplus energy generated back into the grid.

Members noted the contents of the report. In doing so it was acknowledged that the favourable weather in 2025 would have resulted in less energy used for heating and would have resulted in lower fuel consumption from grounds maintenance activities due to the reduced grass and hedge growth compared to previous years.

6) Swanage Information Centre – Air source heat pump feasibility study

Members noted the contents of a briefing paper produced by the Assets and Compliance Manager which detailed the gas boiler system currently installed at Swanage Information Centre and some of the recent problems experienced with both the boiler and the radiators. Several options for replacement were being explored, including the installation of a new more efficient combi-boiler or the potential for the installation of an air source heat pump system which would contribute to the goal of achieving the Council's net zero 2030 target.

An expression of interest had been submitted to Low Carbon Dorset to ascertain if there was funded support available to investigate the feasibility of replacing the boiler with an air source heat pump. The submission had received a positive response and Low Carbon Dorset had awarded up to two days of free technical advice to generate a feasibility assessment, the results of which will be reported to the next meeting of this committee.

7) Consideration of Net Zero 2030 target

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 25th June 2025, the VSBDM presented a briefing paper detailing the Carbon Neutral target and the actions included within the Environment Action Plan to help achieve this. It was reported that in 2025 the carbon footprint was 39.1 tonnes of CO₂ compared to the carbon footprint of circa 100 tonnes of CO₂ in 2022. This had been achieved with several initiatives which included:

- Increasing the number of electric vehicles and reducing the reliance on Diesel (currently 4 out of 7 vehicles)
- Sourcing energy from 100% renewable energy suppliers
- Solar (PV) panels on Depot and Beach Gardens with additional battery storage system implemented at Beach Gardens
- Insulation in Swanage Information Centre and Town Hall

- LED lights throughout the estate

It was reported that further reductions in the Carbon Footprint could be realistically achieved. Investigations were ongoing into the feasibility of installing an air source heat pump within the Swanage Information Centre and the utilisation of a Building Management System within the Town Hall. The results of these investigations would be presented at a future meeting of this committee.

Members noted the contents of the report and considered the formation of a working party to further discuss the feasibility of the net zero 2030 target and identify any additional actions that could be implemented. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Sutton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To form a task & finish group consisting of councillors and outside representatives with specialised knowledge to review the Council net zero 2030 target and identify any actions that can be implemented to further reduce the carbon footprint, with the results being presented to the Autumn 2026 meeting of this committee.

8) **Sustainable Swanage - Update**

The representative of Sustainable Swanage provided an update on recent activities which included a workshop in January 2026 to consider the groups forward strategy and how to achieve this vision. It was reported that as more initiatives were launched, to assist the Council in delivering the Environmental Action Plan, a lot more co-ordination has been required, with a growing number of projects and volunteers. It was further reported that Sustainable Swanage had identified the need to establish three volunteer groups:

- Community Marine Group
- Waste and Recycling Group
- Community Active Travel Group

Members considered the contents of a proposal received from Sustainable Swanage requesting a contribution from unallocated funds within the 2025/26 environmental budget to facilitate the appointment of a temporary Volunteer Co-ordinator. It was further requested that consideration be given to allocating funds from the 2026/27 budget, to enable the Volunteer Co-ordinator to provide ongoing support to the newly formed groups. The primary responsibility of the Volunteer Co-ordinator would be to identify local stakeholders and establish the three groups, ensuring they are able to function effectively with a defined purpose and governance structure. The Volunteer Co-ordinator would be employed by Planet Purbeck but report to the Visitor Services and Business Development Manager. The temporary contract would be for 14 days in March 2026 to facilitate the establishing of the groups and a further three days in the future to progress the sustainable tourism vision. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by the Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That unallocated funds within the 2025/26 Environmental budget be re-allocated to the contracting of a temporary Volunteer Co-ordinator for 14 days, through Planet Purbeck, to aid in the establishment of the volunteer groups.

It was further agreed that the potential for the volunteer co-ordinator to provide resource for the development of a sustainable tourism vision should be considered by the Tourism and Local Economy Committee.

9) **Swanage Streams Partnership update**

The representative for Planet Purbeck gave a presentation on recent actions which included involvement with several projects in the surrounding area, improving ditches and installing log breaks to help adjust the flow of surface water during periods of heavy rainfall and the speed with which it reaches the water courses. Work to identify opportunities to advise and assist with the implementation of flood management improvements were actively being sought and via engagement with the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and large estate owners in Purbeck.

It was noted that public engagement continued to receive strong support and practical activities had continued with the assistance of volunteers and National Trust staff, including fly monitoring surveys, River Morphology surveys and the establishment of a Storm Photo Patrol group.

An update was also provided on forthcoming activities which included:

- Investigating the possibility of a collaboration with Dorset Wildlife Trust to set up a Water Guardians scheme.
- Working with volunteers to conduct further River Fly surveys in Swan Brook
- Exploring potential opportunities to expand the scope of areas covered by Swanage Streams Partnership to include Durlston Stream.
- Planned walks of Ulwell Stream.

10) **Herston Community Field Engagement – Update from Planet Purbeck**

Further to Minute No. 11 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 8th October 2025, the representative for Planet Purbeck provided an update on the progress of the Herston Community Field Engagement. Members noted the update provided and considered the contents of a proposal received from Planet Purbeck, detailing the public engagement consultation events planned to be carried out in March and April 2026, with a final report to be submitted by the end of April 2026. The results contained within this report would be presented to the next meeting of the Environment Committee.

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

To approve the proposed actions as detailed within the Planet Purbeck consultation plan for Herston Community Field, with a final report to be provided to Council by 30th April 2026.

11) **Swanage Greenspace Strategy 2025 - Action plan update**

Further to Minute No. 13 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 8th October 2025, Members considered a report, produced by the Assets & Compliance Manager detailing the progress to date of the Swanage Greenspace Strategy 2025 Action Plan which included:

- 105 trees obtained from Dorset Wildlife Trust and 43 trees purchased by the Council had been planted, 90 new shrubs had been planted, and hazel hedging has been procured for Godlingston Cemetery.
- The match funding application submitted to Dorset Community Tree Fund towards additional tree, plant and wildlife information boards was successful and the new signage had been installed at Day's Park. Plans were being developed for additional information signage in other greenspace locations.
- Exploring the potential to enter Godlingston Cemetery for consideration for the Cemetery of the Year award.

It was further reported that the Council had launched an initiative to tackle dog waste and litter, one of the most critical issues for residents as identified in the recent public greenspace consultation. Councillors will attend local primary schools to engage children, aged 5-12, to design a poster encouraging people to use the litter bins and pick up dog waste. Some of these designs would be turned into permanent signage that would be placed in local greenspaces. Members considered whether this signage could also be used in residential areas and locations that have a high volume of foot traffic to further increase public awareness.

Members noted the progress to date and the proposed new additions to the Swanage Greenspace Strategy 2025 Action Plan, to develop a nature corridor in Journeys End and to develop a Swanage Town Council Tree Warden scheme.

12) Consideration of proposed seaweed management project

The VSBDM presented a proposal received from Lantern Consulting, a local marine sector consulting company, offering to conduct a free seaweed management project. The project would look at the current seaweed management plan implemented by Swanage Town Council, the costs involved, and would engage with stakeholders and the current contractors carrying out associated activities. In addition to this, the project would explore other methods of seaweed management to identify if a more effective, sustainable and cost-effective approach may be suitable for Swanage. A report of findings would be brought to the next meeting of this committee. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Sutton and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To accept the proposal for a free consultation and report of findings, regarding seaweed management and disposal activities undertaken on Swanage beach.

13) Environmental Budgets

Further to Minute No. 14 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 8th October 2025, the VSBDM provided an update on the Environmental Community Engagement budget approved for the 2025/26 financial period of £20,000. It was reported that the current forecast indicated that £13,650 of the budget would be utilised by the end of the 2025/26 financial period. It was further reported that a budget allocation of £15,000 had been approved for the 2026/27 financial period. This figure included allocations for supporting:

- Sustainable Swanage in the provision of a bi-monthly programme of public information and educational meetings
- Swanage Streams Partnership public engagement activities (subject to project proposal and approval by this committee at a future meeting)
- The implementation of the Council Greenspaces Strategy, Neighbourhood Plan and Environment Action Plan
- Public engagement projects.

Members noted the contents of the report and the forecast spend for the 2025/26 financial year.

14) Waste Management

a) Update on activities from Beach Buddies

An update was provided by the Chairman on behalf of Beach Buddies which reported that in 2025, there have been a total of 50 beach cleans carried out with a total removal of 960kg of litter and debris. It was also reported that in 2026, there have been a total of 9 beach cleans carried out so far with a total removal of 230kg of litter and debris, much of which was brought ashore during the recent storms.

b) Update on activities from Swanage Landers

The Committee offered thanks and recognition to Frank Roberts for his leadership in establishing and sustaining the Swanage Landers which is currently approaching their 10-year anniversary in July 2026. During that time, the Swanage Landers have made a clear and practical contribution to the town by regularly volunteering to clean rubbish from local roads and public areas. The Chairman noted that their work reflects a strong sense of community responsibility and pride, with Frank's commitment playing a key role in their continued success.

The representative of Swanage Landers provided an update on their activities. It was reported that, although they had not formally met for four years, Swanage Landers was re-forming and in 2026, a team of 5 people have already removed a total of 75kg of litter and debris. It is anticipated that towards the end of spring 2026, their road cleaning activities would have covered over 50 miles of the roads in and around Purbeck. Additionally, they had continued to provide encouragement and support to volunteers to conduct activities independently. Some of the heavier work had continued to be carried out using the Mechanical Road Sweeper (MRS) with the support of the Town Council's Operations Department.

c) Dorset Council Waste Services Update

The VSBDM presented an update from Dorset Council Waste Services stating that at present they were still seeking additional cover to provide waste collection services post 2.30pm on weekdays in the summer season. It was further reported that a proposal for Council to procure the services of a Seasonal Waste Operative will be presented to the Personnel Committee on 22nd April 2026. Members noted the information provided in the update and briefly considered potential actions that could be implemented to ensure waste collection for the summer service would be maintained at a sufficient level.

15) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

No matters were raised on this occasion.

16) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting had been provisionally scheduled for 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday 24th July 2026.

The Meeting closed at 3.50 p.m.

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY 18th MARCH 2026** at 12.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor M. Bonfield (Town Mayor) – Chairman

Councillor T. Foster
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor G. Suttle
Councillor C. Sutton
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor S. Vile

Also in attendance: -

Dr M Ayres	Town Clerk and RFO
Ms G Percival	Assets & Compliance Manager
Miss A Spencer	Finance Manager
Mr C Squires	Project Officer

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies to report.

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.

Agenda Item No. 3 – Councillor Tomes declared a non-pecuniary interest in the scale of charges under the Code of Conduct by reason of close family members being private beach hut site licensees.

Further to his declarations of interest under item 2) above, Councillor Tomes left the meeting.

3. **PRIVATE SITES LICENCE FEE – UPDATE ON NNDR AND VAT**

Consideration was given to a briefing note regarding matters relating to Business Rates (NNDR) and VAT in connection with the Private Beach Hut Sites licence fee charged by the council. It was reported that the matters initially under discussion had been resolved with the appropriate bodies, i.e. the VOA and HMRC. It was noted that the individual sites could not be individually rated and that the standard rate of VAT had correctly been applied to the licence fee.

However, following correspondence with an officer at HMRC, it was determined that the incorrect rate of VAT had been applied for the licence fee for the 2021 and 2022 seasons due to a change introduced during Covid. It was noted that a reduced rate of VAT should have been applied to the licence fee rather than the standard rate, resulting in an overpayment of VAT by the licensees. It was reported that a refund of the overpaid VAT had been received from HMRC in relation to the 2022 licence fee which would be passed on to the licensees, but a refund for the 2021 licence fee had been refused due to being outside of the 4-year time limit for the notification of errors.

A discussion ensued during which it was recognised that although the council did not have an obligation to refund licensees in respect of the 2021 licence, it was felt that it would be right to do so. It was noted that this should draw all outstanding matters in relation to VAT and NNDR in connection with the private sites to a conclusion. It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

To issue a credit note to the Private Beach Hut Site licensees for the value of the overpaid VAT in relation to the 2021 licence, as a gesture of goodwill.

Councillor Tomes re-entered the meeting.

4. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2026-30 – TO CONSIDER RESPONSE TO FORMAL CONSULTATION AND AGREE NEXT STEPS

Members considered a briefing note summarising responses to the recent public consultation regarding the Draft Corporate Plan. It was noted that there had been a total of 214 responses, a small majority being paper submissions, demonstrating the importance of sending the consultation document to every home. Although this was not a large response, it was an improvement on the 181 responses received in 2022. There had been greater engagement with many of the Council's key partners than last time, resulting in a number of detailed responses from this group of consultees. It was reported that comments had largely been supportive of the draft Corporate Plan content, 93% of respondents agreeing with the Council's five priorities.

A discussion ensued about some of the key points raised via the consultation survey. Consideration was given as to how best to integrate culture into the plan. It was suggested that this would be best under the Tourism and Local Economy section as culture was likely to play a part in the delivery of regenerative tourism. The introduction of a sixth priority to address cultural matters was ruled out given the need to focus the Town Council's limited resources on matters within its remit. The use of the word 'advocate' in relation to third party activities, over which the council had no authority, was also questioned. The view that the primary focus of the Corporate Plan should be on matters under the Town Council's direct influence was strongly expressed, although it was acknowledged that the Council has an important role to play as a partner organisation to support the delivery of projects by third parties.

The potential for making stronger references to youth services in the Corporate Plan was raised, but again it was noted that the Town Council's focus should be on the provision of facilities within its direct control (e.g. play parks and the proposed improvements to Day's Park), whilst supporting youth services provided by third parties.

It was noted that many of the comments received related to the activities of Dorset Council or other public sector bodies. The benefits of publicising a pictorial representation of the responsibilities of each of the tiers of local government was highlighted. Following further discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Suttle, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

That officers should prepare a revised draft plan, reflecting the discussion at this meeting, to be presented to a forthcoming Council Meeting for approval.

5. ANNUAL HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT 2025/26 - TO NOTE CONTENT

Consideration was given to a report, prepared by the Assets and Compliance Manager, setting out the number of accidents and incidents involving the Council's workforce during the period April 2025 to March 2026. Members were pleased to note the implementation of a Challenging and Aggressive Behaviour Reporting Procedure and Incident Form. The content of the health and safety report was noted.

6. **COUNCIL PRIORITIES SPRING/SUMMER 2026 AND TO NOTE OUTTURN FOR 2025/26**

Members were updated as to the progress made with the Council's priorities. It was noted that good progress had been made since the last review. The need to finalise the committee structure and terms of reference was noted, and it was felt best that this was addressed after the adoption of the Corporate Plan and the appointment of the committees in May.

The priority list for the forthcoming six-month period was noted, with key projects being the Green Seafront Scheme, Charitable Trust review, Football Club and Neighbourhood Plan. It was suggested that the UK Town of Culture 2028 bid be included in the Spring/Summer 2026 priorities list, pending approval at the Council meeting on 23rd March.

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

TO RECOMMEND

That the draft Council Priority Plan for spring/summer 2026 be approved, including the UK Town of Culture 2028 bid.

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

The following matters were listed for forthcoming agendas.

- **Update on creation of FOI webpage** – It was reported that a plan to make this live in the near future had been developed.
- **Digital Transformation** – It was noted that various options were being explored to adopt AI and digital technology to improve efficiency.
- **Member Training** - It was reported that cyber security training had recently been undertaken, but it was noted that a wider training schedule would be beneficial.
- **Review of Social Media Policy**
- **Audit 2025/26 – Assertion 10** – It was noted that this was a new requirement for the AGAR in 2025/26. It was reported that an IT policy had been adopted.
- **Prospect – Replacement of water pipes** - The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that a broken drainage pipe through the Greengage Community Garden and Prospect Green had been discovered and was in need of urgent repair. The Town Clerk stated that he had approved the expenditure under his delegated authority, due to the urgency of the matter, at an estimated cost of £5.5k. It was noted that further works may be required.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda items 8, 9 and 10 in relation to legal matters and data protection requirements.

8. SCHEDULE OF DEBTORS AND REVIEW OF BAD DEBT PROVISION

A report on aged debtors dated 13th March 2026 was submitted for information and it was noted that the majority of debts were anticipated to be collected. Concern was raised over two debts, and it was reported that further steps would be taken in relation to the first debt due to the value and repayment plan already in place. Consideration was given to a second bad debt, with a value of £277. Following discussion it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Vile, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To send a solicitor’s letter in connection with the outstanding debt of £277.

The bad debt provision of £35,000 was noted to be retained until outstanding debts had been recovered.

9. INSURANCE – NOTIFICATION OF CLAIMS

It was reported that the council had two live claims being reviewed by its insurers, Zurich. These were noted as one public liability claim and one property claim.

10. ANNUAL REVIEW OF CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

Members gave consideration to the Council’s Corporate Risk Register last updated in March 2025. It was reported that The Practitioners’ Guide expects Members to be fully engaged in the review of the Council’s Risk Register.

In addition to minor changes, including updated completion and target dates, the following significant amendments were proposed as the basis of a recommendation to the Town Council.

Financial Risks	
A change in Dorset Council policy leads to unplanned transfer of assets and/or services to Swanage Town Council	Update control – remove EMR: Ensure maintain close contact with ward members and build relationships with senior leadership team; attend DAPTC briefings. As part of budget setting process, consideration to be given annually to establishing an earmarked reserve to provide emergency funding to support key services.
Compliance Risks	
Failure to comply with General Data Protection Regulations	Amend control to include: Annual review of implementation of data protection policies by Data Protection Officer with action plan. Staff training provided.
Operational Risks	
Loss of computer data leads to inability to deliver Council services.	Update control: All data saved to Town Council main server which is backed up daily. Accounts and payroll data also backed up separately. All back-ups saved in fire-proof safe. IT policy restricts personal use of internet during working hours. Appropriate firewalls and anti-virus software in place. Update actions, as follows: Improved business continuity plan required. IT policy to be reviewed. Cyber insurance to be considered.

New risk: Loss of computer data/data breach as a result of a cyber attack/hacking incident	Control measure: IT Policy introduced for members and officers; data protection policies in place and compliance regularly reviewed; cyber security training provided for members and officers; firewalls and anti-virus software in place.
Strategic Risks	
Lack of continuity planning leads to over-reliance on key individuals.	Amend control to include: Options identified for employing temporary cover for key officers.

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

TO RECOMMEND:

That the revised Corporate Risk Register for 2026/27, incorporating the amendments in the table above, be adopted.

11. PROVISIONAL DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The provisional date of the next scheduled meeting was noted as 22nd July 2026.

The meeting concluded at 1.10 p.m.

Proposed STC Priorities Spring/Summer 2026

Project	Urgency - H/M/L	What does success look like @ 30th September 2026?	Immediate Next Steps
Good Governance			
Corporate Plan 2026-30	H	Plan Adopted	Arrange councillor workshops and plan process for consultation and adoption.
Charitable Trust Review	H	Proposals agreed by Charity Commission	Undertake public consultation and submit proposals to Charity Commission; complete transfer of James Day Trust.
Asset Review	H	Property Panel to have completed review and recommendations made to Council regarding any surplus assets identified.	Property Panel to continue to review of list of assets.
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews, including Peveril Point	H	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.	Valuer recommendations to be presented to Council; solicitors to be instructed.
Implement Data Protection policies and procedures	H	Continued 'green' rating in DPO's annual report and document retention policy being actively implemented.	Implement recommendations from DPO Annual Report including document retention policy.
Communications Plan	H	Plan to be reviewed and priorities actioned.	Adopted plan to be reviewed by working party.
Local Economy and Tourism			
Green Seafront Scheme	H	Strategic Outline Business Case completed, planning applications lodged and progress made towards securing funding.	Finalise presentation of SOBC and prepare planning applications.
Cultural Purbeck UK Town of Culture Bid	H	Cultural Purbeck leading development of Town of Culture Bid with support of Town Council and partner organisations.	Expression of Interest to be submitted; Cultural Purbeck to be registered with Charity Commission.
Community Services, Health and Wellbeing			
Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road land; Kings Court	H	Washpond Lane - Asset transfer from Dorset Council to Swanage Community Housing Group completed. Kings Court - Action plan agreed with Dorset Council.	Town Council to continue to attend meetings and assist in driving projects forward.
Day's Park Community Sports Facility and 3G pitch	H	Memorandum of Understanding agreed and fundraising underway.	Continue regular meetings with S&HFC Ltd and newly registered CIO; continued partnership working with Active Dorset and Dorset Council. Resolve MoU and VAT position.
Beach Gardens future plan	H	Legal agreements completed.	Agree draft Pavilion Licence, amended Tennis Court Licence and Funding Agreement for Tennis Courts.
Swanage Skatepark Community Project	H	Plans for Phase 2 agreed.	Support Project Group in development of plans for Phase 2.
Peveril Point Road stabilisation/improvements	M	Work completed.	Works underway.
Town Centre 20mph zone	M	Draft proposals developed.	Working party to meet to consider options.
Planning & Heritage			
Produce Neighbourhood Plan	H	Plan finalised and out to Reg 15 consultation.	Carry ou Reg 14 consultation and amend plan in light of responses received.
Environment & Climate Crisis			
Install additional EVCPs in Car Parks	M	Legal agreements drafted and installation programme agreed.	Finalise legal documents once Dorset Council clarifies position with new commercial partners.

Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	M	Next priorities from Environmental Action Plan agreed by Environment & Green Spaces Committee.	Working party to review action plan to identify priorities.
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coincide with the winding down of the Friends of Swanage Bandstand group and would provide a suitable and fitting tribute to individuals who had given many years of contributions and support. It was also stated that usage of the Bandstand and public interest had increased, and that additional seating would benefit those wishing to enjoy the performances.

1. Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor Coward, Mr M Jones (Prospect Allotment Association) and Ms E Neville (James Smith Funeral Directors)

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 15th October 2025

No matters were raised on this occasion.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 4th March 2026

Further to Minute No. 4 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15th October 2025, Members noted the contents of a briefing paper which had been presented to the meeting of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 4th March 2026. It was reported that, in response to the request made to Dorset Council to consider new parking restrictions in the lower High Street, a suggested amendment had been put forward to include kerb blips alongside the double yellow lines adjacent to The Ship Inn frontage.

Members were also advised that the Dorset Council Community Highways Team Leader (CHTL) had confirmed the completion of the requested installation of dropped kerbs at various locations in Swanage.

It was further reported that the CHTL had been approached by a local resident who had raised concerns regarding the installation of double yellow lines on Priests Road to improve accessibility. Councillor Bonfield confirmed that he would be willing to meet with the resident, together with the CHTL, to discuss the concerns raised and to explain the safety benefits associated with the Council's decision.

5. Partnership Project Updates

a) Swanage Community Housing Project

Further to Minute No.5 (a) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15th October 2025, members received an update reporting that the land transfer for the site at the junction of Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road was progressing well, and it was hoped that completion would be achieved shortly. This would enable SCHP to carry out the necessary ecological surveys in the spring to support the planning application.

Members were also advised that progress had been made regarding consideration of a larger, second site for development at the former Council Depot on Kings Road West.

It was further noted that SCHP had agreed to meet with developers considering potential development projects in Swanage alongside representatives from Swanage Town Council.

b) Wellbeing Swanage and the Focus Centre

An update was provided on progress at the Focus Centre in Chapel Lane. Several building and refurbishment projects had been completed, and works were planned to commence on a new Community Café, creating a welcoming environment and opening opportunities for young people and individuals with disabilities to train and learn valuable skills through a developing partnership. Exterior works were due to begin to update the gardens and green spaces, creating a more ecologically friendly habitat and improving accessibility for all visitors.

It was reported that the Welcome Lounge had experienced its busiest month since opening, with 47 people seeking advice and support in February 2026. Services offered at the Focus Centre had expanded to include Citizens Advice Bureau, joining from April 2026. The needs of Swanage residents continued to be assessed, with feedback provided to Swanage Town Council via the Wellbeing Advisory Group. Significant requests for support were related to Mental Health services, Housing, Carers' support, and Benefits guidance, helping to guide the Focus Centre in identifying additional services to offer.

It was further noted that the internal and external refurbishment of the Children's Centre had been completed, allowing the Explorers group to resume use. The sections of the Focus Centre upstairs, temporarily used by the Explorers group during refurbishment, were now available for development into a Family Hub.

c) Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

An update was provided by the representative of the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust (SPDT) on recent progress. It was stated that, as the Focus Centre became more established and required less input, SPDT had more time available to allocate to other projects, including:

- **Herston Village Hall** – Full-scale fundraising was targeted to commence in September 2026, with building works expected to begin within the following 12–18 months.
- **Community Transport** – Significant progress had previously been made on feasibility studies. Due to SPDT resource limitations, the project had been paused, but a team of trustees had now been formed and early investigations of other locations with similar schemes had begun.

6. Aster Housing Group investment in Swanage – Update further to appointment of task and finish group

Further to Minute No.6 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15th October 2025, Councillor Tomes reported that, although the Task & Finish group had not yet met, a recent meeting of Dorset Council had seen a motion carried calling on all registered providers of social housing operating in the Dorset Council area to review their disposal policies, noting that the disposal of social housing in rural or semi-rural areas could be highly damaging to local communities.

It was further reported that the Dorset Council Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Gill Taylor, had agreed to visit Swanage to meet with the Task & Finish group and representatives from the Swanage Community Housing Project.

7. Godlingston Cemetery - Clarification of fees in relation to pre-purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial (adjoining grave plot)

Consideration was given to a briefing paper, regarding the application of residency status for fees when a close family member, who is not a parish resident, pre-purchases the Exclusive Rights of Burial for a plot adjoining that of a deceased parish resident. The Town Council's cemetery fee structure differentiates between residents and non-residents, with non-residents charged double fees, except where individuals have moved for the purpose of care.

It was noted that the pre-purchase may occur at the time of interment or months or even years later, and that such requests do not involve an additional interment at the time but simply secure the Exclusive Rights of Burial for the adjoining plot.

Following detailed consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Foster and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the pre-purchase fee for an adjoining plot should reflect the residency status of the purchaser of the Exclusive Rights of Burial, rather than that of the deceased.

8. Swanage Community Emergency Response Plan – update and proposed next steps

The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that the Swanage Community Emergency Response Plan, adopted at the Council meeting held on 26th June 2023, received periodic updates to keep contact names and numbers current. The most recent update had been carried out in February 2026, and a review of the Plan was also undertaken at this time by two Councillors and a police representative.

The review resulted in a recommendation to hold an engagement meeting with ‘places of safety’ representatives to recognise their contribution, and to conduct a desk-based scenario exercise to exchange ideas, identify any gaps in provision, and strengthen community resilience. A further recommendation was for a small number of Council officers to undertake Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) training to support the emergency response function for Swanage. These matters were being taken forward by the Assets & Compliance Manager.

Members noted the contents of the report and that updates on the recommended actions would be provided to a future meeting of the Committee.

9. Beach Gardens – Conversion of court 6 to a multi-use tennis and pickleball court

The VSBDM presented a briefing note which detailed a request from Swanage Tennis Club to install two Pickleball courts on Tennis Court 6 at Beach Gardens. It explained how the introduction of Pickleball as an offering could work within the schedule of current activities available at Beach Gardens. It was reported that the potential costs to implement the installation of Pickleball courts would be circa £4,750, with the majority of these funds sourced from the Tennis Court Maintenance Fund earmarked reserve and topped up by small additional contributions from the Council and Swanage Tennis Club.

Members discussed the contents of the briefing note and recognised that Pickleball is currently one of the fastest growing sports in the world. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Dorrington and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

TO RECOMMEND:

That the proposal for the installation of a polyurethane resin surface and Pickleball court lines on court 6 at Beach Gardens, together with the required budget of £4,750, be approved.

The proposed charges for use of the Pickleball courts during the 2026/27 financial period, as detailed in the briefing note were discussed at length. Amendments were considered including free use for schools and children under 16 years of age. It was noted that the charges would be reviewed during the budget setting process for 2027/28 in the autumn.

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

TO RECOMMEND:

That the scale of charges for Pickleball at Beach Gardens, as detailed below, be approved incorporating provision for the charge for schools to be waived for the first 12 months.

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

	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 (free for first 12 months)
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

10. Swanage and Herston FC – Presentation on proposals for new community sports facility and artificial pitch

Further to Minute No.10 (a) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 16th July 2025, a representative of Swanage and Herston FC (S&HFC) gave a presentation on the proposals for the development of a new Community Sports Facility and artificial pitch. It was reported that planning permission for the new facility is in place and conversations between Swanage Town Council and S&HFC are ongoing regarding the demolition of the existing sports hall. It was further reported that a Community Consultation has is underway regarding installation of a 3G pitch to provide evidence for the need and public support for this feature, a necessary step in securing the 70% funding support offered by the Football Foundation for the installation of the new pitch.

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

Further to Minute No.10 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15th October 2025 the Assets & Compliance Manager reported that a meeting held in February 2026 between the Task & Finish group, representatives of Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre (SMHC) committee, the County Museum Advisor and the Conservator for Southwest Museums had been very productive. The meeting explored options for establishing small scale exhibitions held by SMHC in the Town Hall, the potential for relocating George Burt’s granite globe onto Council land and extending the SMHC lease for a period of up to 2 years to allow the time for longer term plans and future options for SMHC to be developed and considered.

A further meeting of the Task& Finish group and the SMHC is planned for late April following receipt of the light touch feasibility study being undertaken into the potential future relocation of the museum into the Town Hall .

12. Swanage Skatepark Community Project - Presentation by Swanage Skatepark Community Project

A representative of Swanage Skatepark Community Project (SSCP) gave a presentation on the successful completion of phase 1 works, proposals for phase 2 implementation and a schedule of events and activities planned for 2026. Although phase 1 had taken longer to complete than initially planned, it was a great success and extremely popular. Thanks were offered to the Assets & Compliance Manager and the Operations Team for their support during the installation works.

Activities planned for 2026 include photography workshops and film nights and a celebratory event to be held in May 2026, which the contractor for phase 1 had offered to deliver free of charge.

It was further reported that attention was now focussed on phase 2 of the project.

Fundraising was ongoing with £52,000 of the £80,000 phase 2 target secured.

Members noted the details of the progress to date and thanked the SSCP team for all the work that had been carried out offering praise for their dedication to the project and the results that had been achieved to date.

13. Swanage Memorial bench policy task and finish group – review update

Further to Minute No.11 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15th October 2025 the Assets & Compliance Manager reported a meeting of the Task & Finish group was held on 10th December 2026. The group reviewed the current position 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 and that the waiting list for memorial benches remain closed. Discussions were also held regarding the request received from the Friends of Swanage Bandstand, the number of requests received by the Council for memorial benches since the waiting list had been closed and the most fitting form of tribute for the Late Councillor Trite. Due to the sensitivity of the memorial bench policy and the number of requests received to commemorate loved ones with a memorial bench that had been declined by the Council in accordance with the current policy, it was decided that an additional meeting of the Task & Finish group should be held to enable further consideration of this matter with an update reported to a future meeting of this committee.

14. Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

a) 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 had been completed in March 2026.

b) Installation of a new accessible composting public convenience at Godlingston Cemetery

The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that works to install the new accessible composting toilet at Godlingston Cemetery had been completed with opening scheduled for 1st April 2026.

c) Dorset Waste Services – seasonal resort service

The Assets and Compliance Manager reported that there was no further information available to that reported to the Environment and Green Spaces Committee, Minute 14 (c) of the meeting held on 4th March 2026.

d) Grand opening of mobile field shelter at Greengage Nursery

The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that a grand opening event of the mobile field shelter would be publicised in the near future.

e) Pineapple Project – community guardianship in Swanage

It was reported that a meeting had been held on 17th March 2026 between Councillor Vile and a senior manager for the Pineapple Project with a focus on Community Guardianship in Swanage. It was noted that the Pineapple Project is still conducting preparatory works, therefore a launch date has not yet been set for Swanage.

f) Potential for 20 m.p.h. zone in town centre - update

An update was provided update on the progress of the recent Task & Finish group meeting which had considered whether a 20 mph zone in the town centre was needed and the feasibility of implementing such a scheme. A follow up meeting will be arranged between the Task & Finish group and representatives from Dorset Highways to further explore the feasibility of a 20 mph zone, the potential impact on the town centre and any other measures that would need to be considered.

15. Date of next meeting

The provisional date of the next scheduled meeting was noted as Wednesday 1st July 2026 at 2.15 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda Item 5 (a)

SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

Statement of Cash Balance as at 28th February 2026

	£ p	£ p
Balance in Hand at 01/04/2025		£73,888.50 Cr
As per reconciliation dated 31/01/2026	£9,382,182.12 Cr	
Income during February	£89,801.40 Cr	
Movement of Cash-Investment	£500,000.00 Cr	
Add - Outstanding receipts- January	£241.20 Cr	
Less - Outstanding receipts - February	<u>£6.00 Dr</u>	£9,972,218.72 Cr
Less payments made:		
As per Reconciliation dated 31/01/2026	£9,337,737.49 Dr	
Schedule 11	£250,182.22 Dr	
Movement of Cash-Investment	<u>£350,000.00 Dr</u>	£9,937,919.71 Dr
		<u><u>£108,187.51 Cr</u></u>
Balance at Bank		
Current Account		£35,406.92 Cr
Deposit Account		<u>£72,780.59 Cr</u>
		<u><u>£108,187.51 Cr</u></u>
Short Term Investments held by the Council		
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (MMF)		£750,000.00
Abrdn (MMF)		£500,000.00
DMADF-Deposit		£350,000.00
DMADF-Deposit		£500,000.00
DMADF-Deposit		£350,000.00
DMADF-Deposit		£400,000.00
		<u><u>£2,850,000.00</u></u>

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge and belief this is a true and accurate Statement of the Town Council's Cash Balance as at 28th February 2026

Prepared by Alison Spencer

Dated: 11th March 2026

Certified by Martin Ayres

Dated: 11th March 2026

SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

Year Ending 31st March 2026

Payment schedule reported to Council - 23rd March 2026

Schedule 11:

The following payments have been made in accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Town Council's Financial Regulations, amounting in aggregate to:

**SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND, ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY TWO POUNDS
AND TWENTY TWO PENCE**

.....(**£600,182.22**).....

Swanage Town Council Schedule of Payments - Month 11

Cheques

Date	Name	Chq number	Inv Date	Details	Payment Total
25/02/2026	Petty Cash	015023	25/02/2026	Petty Cash & Postage	199.93
Total of Cheques					199.93

Direct Debits & Standing Orders

Date	Name	Inv Ref	Inv Date	Details	Payment Total
16/02/2026	AIB Merchant Services	300126.00001	30/01/2026	Merchant Serv charge	223.94
10/02/2026	Barclaycard Merchant Services	001884330126	31/01/2026	Monthly charge	62.57
16/02/2026	DNA Payments	007340386770	01/02/2026	Card charge	21.99
20/02/2026	Ecotricity Ltd	08185595	06/02/2026	Electricity - various sites	4,558.59
20/02/2026		08185601	06/02/2026	Electricity - various sites	36.27
23/02/2026		08202704	09/02/2026	Electricity - various sites	1,168.32
27/02/2026		08185603	06/02/2026	Electricity - various sites	423.46
09/02/2026	Lloyds Bank PLC	477427999	12/01/2026	Bank charge	45.09
24/02/2026		478167011	06/02/2026	Bank charge	92.20
10/02/2026	Paytek Admin Services Ltd (First)	11247	03/02/2026	Regular service charge	72.00
10/02/2026		14565	03/02/2026	Regular service charge	128.35
16/02/2026	Sage (UK) Ltd	INV22124750	01/02/2026	Monthly charge	703.80
26/02/2026	SEFE Energy Limited	INV04140819	12/02/2026	Town Hall- Annexe	643.77
26/02/2026		INV04140821	12/02/2026	Town Hall- Office	992.76
26/02/2026		INV04140822	12/02/2026	Depot	296.72
26/02/2026		INV04140820	12/02/2026	TIC	275.92
02/02/2026	water2business	6069635919	31/12/2025	Shore Road Toilets	273.44
02/02/2026		6069635893	31/12/2025	Heritage Toilets	120.46
02/02/2026		6069635900	31/12/2025	Mermond Toilets	543.02
02/02/2026		6069693911	07/01/2026	Burlington Chine Toilets	17.58
Total of Direct Debit & Standing Orders					10,700.25

Lloyds Chargecard

Date	Name	Inv Ref	Inv Date	Details	Payment Total
13/02/2026	Klarstein	4008145855	16/12/2025	Floor heating mat	46.98
13/02/2026	AAT	1674196321	16/12/2025	Fees	195.00
13/02/2026	Corfe Bakery	D2112114	16/12/2025	Sundries-Civic Service	60.00
13/02/2026	Land registry	1000009188396	16/12/2025	Land search	14.00
13/02/2026	STOOV B.V	STO-1511706	09/01/2026	Heating Wrap	149.99
Total of Chargecard payments					465.97

BACS / CHAPS

Date	Name	Inv Ref	Inv Date	Details	Payment Total
27/02/2026	123 Send Limited	2026020004653210	01/02/2026	A920Pro with SIM	158.36
27/02/2026	4C Managed Service Ltd	70077	10/02/2026	Depot IT/phone	379.56
27/02/2026		70078	10/02/2026	TIC IT	483.26
27/02/2026		70078	10/02/2026	BG phone	42.00
27/02/2026		70079	10/02/2026	Project Plan	106.74
27/02/2026		70079	10/02/2026	TH IT	781.92
27/02/2026		70079	10/02/2026	TH phone	42.00
27/02/2026		70089	12/02/2026	Concillors Laptops subscription	360.00
27/02/2026		70172	21/02/2026	Domain Hosting	38.40
27/02/2026		A.B.A. Groundcare (SW) Ltd	163686	11/02/2026	investigate/resolve leak on iszeki
27/02/2026	Ace Office Environments Ltd.	01169871	30/01/2026	Sundries	55.59
27/02/2026		01170445	30/01/2026	Stationery	26.78
27/02/2026		01171244	13/02/2026	Computer mouse	34.19
27/02/2026		01171351	13/02/2026	TIC - stationery	62.34
27/02/2026	AquAid (Southcoast)	519866	31/01/2026	Water	252.76
27/02/2026	Audit West	8504771	23/01/2026	DPO Services 2025-26	1,650.00
27/02/2026	C86 Signs & Graphics	INV-0873	03/02/2026	Beach Gardens - Artwork	85.00
27/02/2026	Central Southern Security Ltd	213758	08/02/2026	OOH CSS call out	90.00
27/02/2026	Card Geotechnics Ltd	INV025162	09/02/2026	Seafront Monitoring	1,848.00
27/02/2026	C G Ltd	Q3 25-26	31/12/2025	Management Account Q3	12,350.46
27/02/2026	Dorset County Pension Fund	Payroll M11	20/02/2026	Payroll M11- Pension	22,648.35
27/02/2026		Payroll M11	20/02/2026	Payroll M11- CAYS	120.51
27/02/2026	From Dorset with Love	INV-8191	10/02/2026	TIC - jams for retail	60.00
27/02/2026	Dorset Council	1801565192	04/02/2026	Swanage Town Tourism Data 2024	276.00
27/02/2026		2800485118	11/02/2026	Water Patrols 2025 Season	5,040.00
27/02/2026	Dorset Waste Partnership	2800483101	05/02/2026	Recycling	40.90

27/02/2026	Flowbird Smart City UK Ltd	UI00023201	19/02/2026	WebOffice incl Airtime	286.73	
27/02/2026		UI00023201	19/02/2026	Gateway transaction BR and MB	366.44	653.17
27/02/2026	GH Print Management	INV-8179	28/01/2026	Beach Gardens - printing		96.00
27/02/2026	Greenham Trading Ltd.	04/546838	02/02/2026	Padlock	399.39	
27/02/2026		04/547074	04/02/2026	Washing up liquid, Cable ties	208.13	607.52
27/02/2026	Hardy Signs	SI-109594	31/01/2026	Day's Park Interpretation Panel.		272.16
27/02/2026	A.R. Harris & Son	36953	27/01/2026	Electrical services	62.59	
27/02/2026		36983	30/01/2026	Electrical services	72.00	
27/02/2026		37001	05/02/2026	Electrical services	75.76	
27/02/2026		37041	11/02/2026	Electrical services	102.23	
27/02/2026		37046	12/02/2026	Electrical services	3,510.61	3,823.19
27/02/2026	Heritage Seeds	21076	11/02/2026	Wildflower Seed mixture		50.09
06/02/2026	HMRC	VAT	06/02/2026	HMRC VAT Qtr Dec 25	18,869.17	
27/02/2026		Payroll M11	20/02/2026	Payroll M11- PAYE/NI	21,867.63	40,736.80
27/02/2026	ICTHUS Event Solutions Ltd	0905	30/01/2026	Festive lights		1,464.00
27/02/2026	Impact (Boston) Ltd	111-131280	17/02/2026	Co-op Car Park stock tickets		804.96
27/02/2026	J&P Cleaning Services Limited	INV-0040	01/02/2026	TIC cleaning	325.00	
27/02/2026		INV-0040	01/02/2026	Beach Huts- winter cleaning	185.00	510.00
27/02/2026	JONES & PRIOR OF SWANAGE L	INV-1214	28/01/2026	Shore Road WC		912.00
27/02/2026	J.D. Facilities Ltd	INV-2064	01/02/2026	Depot - cleaning	197.59	
27/02/2026		INV-2063	01/02/2026	Depot - deep clean staff area	230.62	
27/02/2026		INV-2065	01/02/2026	TH-cleaning	614.39	
27/02/2026		INV-2066	01/02/2026	Public Toilet- cleaning	7,958.09	9,000.69
27/02/2026	King Ramps Ltd	1930	29/01/2026	skate park installation		45,000.00
27/02/2026	The Little Map Co & Fernhill Who	2876	24/12/2025	TIC - souvenirs for retail	114.00	
27/02/2026		2876	24/12/2025	TIC - Tide Times Tables 2026	130.00	244.00
27/02/2026	Metric Group Ltd.	4944	12/01/2026	Monthly charge Aslan	84.00	
27/02/2026		5537	12/02/2026	Monthly charge Aslan	84.00	168.00
27/02/2026	MiddlePeak Engineering Limited	SI-1349	04/02/2026	Finger Arm signs		1,686.60
27/02/2026	National Express	AREXT/00248246	31/01/2026	January Agency tickets		39.75
27/02/2026	Newitt & Co Ltd	SALE-1863024	19/02/2026	Beach Gardens - putters		107.71
27/02/2026	Newlands Training Ltd	INV-1644	12/02/2026	Training	888.00	
27/02/2026		INV-1648	13/02/2026	Training	1,512.00	2,400.00
27/02/2026	Newsquest Southern	48711683	23/01/2026	Advertisement	185.05	
27/02/2026		48790735	06/02/2026	Advertisement	1,516.03	1,701.08
27/02/2026	NFP Workshops	4482	27/01/2026	Training		95.00
27/02/2026	Nisbets Plc	51668245	27/01/2026	Beach Gardens - chairs		455.95
27/02/2026	Nixons Hardware Ltd	125411	02/01/2026	key cutting and lubricants	20.29	
27/02/2026		125422	05/01/2026	doorbell	19.99	
27/02/2026		125430	08/01/2026	threadlock & nuts	17.30	
27/02/2026		125462	16/01/2026	wd40,reflective tape	27.58	
27/02/2026		125473	20/01/2026	Kilrock descaler	3.99	89.15
27/02/2026	Ofcom	78821429	03/02/2026	Radio charge fees		75.00
27/02/2026	Openings	A75426	13/02/2026	TH Gate service		210.00
20/02/2026	Swanage Town Council	Month 11 Payroll	20/02/2026	Net Wages - Month 11		65,261.81
27/02/2026	Personnel Hygiene Service	71961009	14/02/2026	Hygiene services		2,518.48
27/02/2026	Pipefix	139292	12/02/2026	Pipe repair		2,571.10
27/02/2026	Planet Merchant Service Ltd	PP4000681IE2601	31/01/2026	Gateway fees		204.29
27/02/2026	Pod Point Ltd	ADF-33105	08/02/2026	Admin Fees Mer	17.45	
27/02/2026		ADF-33858	08/02/2026	Admin Fees MB	21.10	38.55
27/02/2026	PSTAX	INV-00021750	28/01/2026	CIS		252.00
27/02/2026	Purbeck Gazette	43872	02/02/2026	Purbeck Gazette	486.00	
27/02/2026		43958	06/02/2026	Stour & Avon	486.00	972.00
27/02/2026	Purbeck Media Group	INV-5772	04/02/2026	TIC - uniform for staff		156.00
27/02/2026	Recruit Local Ltd	2727	09/02/2026	TIC - Recruitment		40.00
27/02/2026	SECURITY PLUS LIMITED	1149128	31/01/2026	Cash Collection	382.37	
27/02/2026		1149750	31/01/2026	Cash Processing	67.54	449.91
27/02/2026	DWG Smith	26073	28/01/2026	remediation works	252.00	
27/02/2026		26072	28/01/2026	Tarmac new footpath	1,476.00	1,728.00
27/02/2026	St. Michaels Garage	4850	31/01/2026	Diesel Jan		293.69
27/02/2026	Swanage News	1284	31/01/2026	News paper Jan		48.50
27/02/2026	Swanage Regatta & Carnival	2026/006	05/02/2026	Carnival Programme advert - 2026		275.00
27/02/2026	Telefonica O2 UK Ltd	42680189	24/02/2026	SIM Charges		203.86
27/02/2026	Toasty Products Limited	TP4568	29/01/2026	Beach Gardens - paninis		840.00

27/02/2026	Travis Perkins	1037025400	29/01/2026	Materials & Equipment	75.94	
27/02/2026		1037225443	02/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	95.45	
27/02/2026		1037244657	03/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	46.94	
27/02/2026		1037361719	04/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	40.56	
27/02/2026		1037361720	04/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	16.34	
27/02/2026		1037361717	04/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	115.06	
27/02/2026		1037361718	04/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	14.57	
27/02/2026		1037496651	06/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	190.22	
27/02/2026		1037521660	06/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	17.45	
27/02/2026		1037632620	09/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	25.40	
27/02/2026		1037708950	10/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	14.28	
27/02/2026		1037753167	11/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	210.00	
27/02/2026		1037830535	12/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	13.92	
27/02/2026		1037830534	12/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	39.78	
27/02/2026		1037956251	14/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	78.91	
27/02/2026		1038031900	16/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	16.34	
27/02/2026		1038045969	17/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	101.03	
27/02/2026		1038078829	17/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	214.90	
27/02/2026		1038160002	18/02/2026	Materials & Equipment	5.96	1,333.05
27/02/2026	Thrid Parties	Payroll M11	20/02/2026	Payroll M11- Third Party Deductions		328.72
27/02/2026	Violet Farm Foods Ltd	187298	27/01/2026	TIC - tea for retail		112.20
27/02/2026	Westmade Ltd	1015993	29/01/2026	Plumbing Services	568.25	
27/02/2026		1016061	12/02/2026	Plumbing Services	780.00	
27/02/2026		1016076	12/02/2026	Plumbing Services	727.09	
27/02/2026		1016141	18/02/2026	Plumbing Services	665.40	2,740.74
Total of BACS/CHAPS Payments						238,816.07

<i>BACS Payment issued 6th February 2026</i>	18,869.17
<i>BACS payroll payment issued 20th February 2026</i>	65,261.81
<i>BACS supplier payments issued 30th January 2026</i>	154,685.09
	238,816.07

Total of Payments 250,182.22

Investments - Cash Movements

Date	Name	Inv Ref	Inv Date	Details	Payment Total
27/02/2026	DMADF	transfer	27/02/2026	DMADF	350,000.00
Total of Investments					350,000.00

Total of Payments & Investments 600,182.22

Cultural Purbeck – To consider request for support for submission of an Expression of Interest for Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck to be the UK Town of Culture 2028 (small town category)

**Cultural Purbeck CIO
A Proposal to Swanage Town Council, March 2026**

Proposal

This is a proposal for Swanage Town Council in partnership with Cultural Purbeck (CP) to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to DCMS for Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck to be the UK Town of Culture 2028.

Background

At the meeting of Swanage Town Council held on Monday 18th November 2024, it was resolved unanimously that the Council should support Swanage and Purbeck submitting an expression of interest to be the Dorset Town of Culture 2026 and in principle committing up to £30,000 to support the bid.

The bid was not successful, but a Steering Group of organisations which had worked on the proposal decided to build on the work undertaken. This group organised a successful workshop in November 2025 at which around 60 representatives from over 30 organisations enthusiastically supported the establishment of an umbrella organisation called Cultural Purbeck (CP) to encourage better networking, the sharing of good practice and joint working on creative projects. Such an organisation would also help celebrate what Purbeck has to offer, better raise the profile of the area and its organisations, build capacity and raise skill levels and so support local economic and social objectives.

In order to access grant funding, Swanage Town Council requires that CP should be constituted as a registered organisation, and in December 2025 a proposal was submitted to the Charity Commission. Four initial shadow Trustees were recruited; a Business Plan developed and a funding proposal submitted to the Talbot Village Trust. In January 2026 the Cultural Purbeck Steering Group handed over their responsibilities to the prospective charity.

UK Town of Culture 2028

In January 2026, DCMS announced a competition to select a Town of Culture 2028. There are three bands depending on the size of population and a town can include its neighbouring areas where the area has some recognisable coherence. Cultural Purbeck propose to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) by the closing date of 31st March with Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck as the named area. This area would be in the under 20,000 population category.

The initial evaluation will focus on the story of the area and what makes it special. Cultural Purbeck, with the support of the 30+ organisations which attended the February workshop, will have as its theme “From Stone to Sea”. This will note the Jurassic Coast, the use of Purbeck stone and marble, how Swanage and Purbeck’s villages grew on the basis of the stone industry, how the geology creates such a diverse landscape and the greatest biodiversity in England and how our wide range of Festivals and Carnivals can work even closer together to celebrate what our very special area has to offer.

The EOI will also cover inclusivity, how it will boost the area’s profile and how we will make it happen in terms of programme and financial management. The winning town will be awarded £3

million to deliver a cultural programme in 2028 of around six months. Additionally, the two finalists from their category will receive £250,000 each to deliver elements of their bid. CP has developed and takes responsibility for the EOI. If we are shortlisted, then CP will receive some £60,000 to develop a full proposal and will harness local expertise and organisations to help in that process.

The DCMS Guidance Document states that: “We expect bids to be from a partnership for your bidding place and include the relevant local authorities.” DCMS has since clarified that as Cultural Purbeck is constituted and supported by the Local Council, the lack of charity registration should not be an issue. The Charity Commission has subsequently said they are able to fast-track our application for charitable status. Hence it would seem appropriate for Cultural Purbeck to submit the EOI while showing that STC is fully supportive. The Parish Councils of Corfe Castle, Church Knowle, Worth Matravers, Langton Matravers and Studland have all expressed their support for the EOI to be submitted and we hope Arne Parish Council will also support. Dorset Council officers have also offered their support.

There are two responsibilities on the applicant, namely to be:

- The Accountable Body
- The Delivery Body.

The former involves the responsibilities set out in the Annex to this proposal. The latter covers the planning, procuring, commissioning and delivery of the planned UK Town of Culture programme. CP will have £60,000 funding to augment its capabilities and should also be a fully constituted CIO with the relevant policies and procedures in place. Submitting an EOI does not involve any financial or resource commitments from Swanage Town Council.

Irrespective of the EOI for UK Town of Culture, Cultural Purbeck will develop in partnership with Swanage Town Council and a wide range of local organisations a cultural programme that will support better networking, promote more regenerative tourism, greater involvement by young people and those who may feel excluded and the other themes Swanage Town Council is setting out in its Corporate Plan.

The Trustees of Cultural Purbeck propose that they submit an Expression of Interest to DCMS for Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck to be the UK Town of Culture 2028 and highlight that this has the full support of Swanage Town Council. They invite Swanage Town Council to offer a letter of support to reinforce Cultural Purbeck’s bid, potentially commenting as follows:

‘Culture in all its many facets plays a key role in fashioning and enhancing the life, health and well-being of our community. Promoting culture, regenerative tourism, community engagement and inclusivity are key themes of our Corporate Plan. We look forward to partnering with Cultural Purbeck on this exciting opportunity for the local area which promises a significant and sustainable legacy to benefit our Town and surrounding villages’.

Cultural Purbeck Trustees, March 2026

Annex

Accountable Body: A place's chosen party, who are the recognised Accountable Body in relation to a planned UK Town of Culture programme e.g. the relevant local or regional public authority. If successful, the Accountable Body will have overall responsibility and ownership for the programme. The responsibilities of the Accountable Body may include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring the safe and successful delivery of a UK Town of Culture programme;
- Managing the financial and legal requirements associated with the delivery of a UK Town of Culture programme;
- Taking responsibility for the organisation of a UK Town of Culture programme, including leading on the necessary coordination between relevant partners;
- Taking responsibility for any grant funding associated with a UK Town of Culture programme, for which the Accountable Body is the recipient organisation; and
- Monitoring delivery of a UK Town of Culture programme and undertaking relevant reporting as may be required by DCMS.

Mowlem Theatre – To consider grant request for hearing loop

The Town Council has recently received the following grant request from the Mowlem Theatre to provide funding towards the provision of new hearing loops for the auditorium and studio.

At the Council Meeting held on 17th November 2025 it was agreed to award a grant of up to £15,000 in support of the Mowlem's 'Raise the Roof' campaign. In effect, this was a reallocation of the £15,000 budgeted for 2025/26 for the unsuccessful Dorset Town of Culture bid. That work has now been completed and £12,406 has been drawn down by the Mowlem from the Town Council's grant.

This further grant request is for the remainder of that £15,000 budget (£2,594) to be allocated towards new hearing loops, together with an additional £1,106. Were Members to support this it could be funded from the underspend on the Council's community grants fund. It would support the Council's objective to encourage participation in sporting and cultural activities and its commitment to provide grant funding in support of educational, social and cultural activities.

Martin Ayres
Town Clerk

March 2026

Sent: 13 March 2026 12:05

To: Councillor Chris Tomes <cllrtomes@swanagecouncillors.uk>

Subject: The Mowlem's new Hearing Loops & Accessible Signage

Dear Chris,

I am writing to let you know that the work on our roof is fully complete! (I've added a video of the roof and how it looks now - so different to all the cracks and lumps that were up there before). Thank you again for making this happen for us. We feel such a sense of security knowing that it's done and don't have to worry about the several winters to come.

Also, I wanted to let you know that we've had a successful result from the Linbury Trust who have agreed to fund £7,500 towards new hearing loops for the auditorium and studio. This will also pay for new accessible signage inside the building.

This is fantastic news and a major part of making the Mowlem accessible for all. We've had so many comments over the years about audiences being disappointed about not being able to hear our events and screenings properly. It's so exciting to be able to install the most up to date system and revolutionise the experience of visiting the Mowlem.

The full project cost is £11,276, which means we still need to fundraise for the additional £3,700 to close the gap.

I would like to ask whether STC would consider supporting us with this? STC awarded us £12,406 towards our roof with the ability to access up to £15,000 to cover contingency. We

won't now be needing that contingency of £2,594 so technically the ask is whether we could secure this for the hearing loops instead and an additional £1,106.

The time and energy it will take to raise the money at our end is huge. It would be such a relief to be able to secure the remaining amount and get the hearing loops and signage sorted as soon as possible. It's such a shame to be awarded the money and then see a long delay in the work coming to fruition.

Do let me know what you think. I'm very happy to come in for a meeting about it as needed.

Very best,

Kate McGregor (she/her)

Executive Director

The Mowlem

