

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council  
held at The Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on  
**MONDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 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 G. Suttle  
Councillor C. Sutton  
Councillor S. Vile

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, 10 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:-

- A report was presented on information obtained under the Freedom of Information Act from the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust regarding the Ambulance Car service, together with liaison with NHS bodies, concerning access for Swanage and Purbeck patients to health services. It was noted that the Ambulance Car was performing well, and the importance of continuing to request information to monitor performance was emphasised.  
Members of the public were encouraged to attend a Health Services event to be held at Corfe Castle Village Hall on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026. Thanks were expressed for the continued work to support health services in Purbeck.
- A query was raised in relation to a question previously asked at the last Council meeting regarding whether best value had been achieved in the commissioning of professional services to support the submission of planning applications for the essential and new Green Seafront scheme options. In response, the member of the public was advised that any further queries should be submitted in writing to enable a fully informed response to be provided.
- A member of the public raised a query regarding the Green Seafront report, noting that Dorset Council and Dorset Coast Forum had been working in support of the Town Council. It was queried whether the Council, as the commissioning body, accepted the validity of the comments and findings included in the report.

Rev. Dave Richards offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

The Chairman opened the Council Meeting at 7.05 p.m.

162. **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Tomes and Moreton.

163. **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.

164.

**Minutes**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Lejeune and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed.

(b) Proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Coward and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Annual Estimates Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

165.

**Planning and Consultation Committee**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Burridge and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

166.

**Statement of Cash Balance**

(a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

167.

**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 9, amounting to £608,044.24.

168.

**Chairman's Announcements**

The Town Mayor reported his attendance at the following events since the Council Meeting held in December:

- Civic Carol Service at St Mary's Church – Thanks were extended to councillors and staff for their assistance in providing refreshments.
- Kim Gallagher Retirement Event (Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust) – The Mayor, together with the Town Clerk, attended an event marking Kim Gallagher's retirement and acknowledged her hard work and contribution for the benefit of the community.
- Purbeck Parkies – Attendance at a local Parkinson's support group event celebrating two years since its establishment.
- Salvation Army Church Service – A service held to mark the long-standing dedication of Graham Warburton, who had sold The War Cry and Kids View magazines for 22 years, raising in excess of £250,000 for the Salvation Army during that time.

169.

**Shore Road Options Engagement Report - To receive and note content**

Further to Minute No. 108 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025, Members noted the contents of a briefing paper prepared by the Town Clerk together with Dorset Coast Forum's Shore Road Options report. It was acknowledged that the results of

the survey in relation to Shore Road would be taken into account by Dorset Council in determining a preferred option to be taken forward for further consideration. It was currently anticipated that this would be presented to the Town Council at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

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

(a) **Property Panel held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

It was noted that the panel had discussed business proposals for Shore Place with further discussions to be held at the next meeting of the panel. An update would be provided to a future Council meeting.

(b) **Seafront Masterplan held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

It was noted that the subject matter of this meeting would be considered under agenda item No. 14).

(c) **Events Working Party held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026**

The working party had considered the following matters:

**Purbeck Marathon**

The Working Party met with the organiser of the relaunched Purbeck Marathon, due to take place in September 2026, and noted the professionalism of the organiser.

The Working Party looked forward to the event taking place.

**Trek 26 Alzheimer's Event – Negotiation of fee for car parking in King Georges Playing Field**

The Visitor Services Manager reported negotiations with Gladiator Sports regarding the use of King George's Playing Field for parking for approximately 800 cars for the Alzheimer's Society Trek 26 event on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026. It was proposed to charge £5 per car, generating an estimated £4,000 for the Town Council. The event headquarters will be located at Forres Field and it was proposed that this should be charged the standard event administration fee of £750.

**Jazz Festival**

The Working Party considered a request from the Jazz Festival to place a marquee on the Recreation Ground for the weekend of 10<sup>th</sup> July 2026. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Recreation Ground, as the location of the town's War Memorial and the Trevor Chadwick Memorial, is a place of quiet reflection and is not considered appropriate for large-scale music events. The Working Party also wished to avoid setting a precedent for such use and agreed to develop a policy for the future use of the Recreation Ground for events, to be considered by the Tourism and Local Economy Committee.

With regard to the Trek26 event, Members noted that the overflow car park would not be used by the Town Council on that day and that in the event that wet weather resulted in the field becoming unusable, alternative arrangements would need to be made. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Vile and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the proposed car parking arrangements for the Trek 26 event be approved and that the income generated would be held in the King George's Field reserve.

In respect of the request from the Jazz Festival to place a marquee on the Recreation Ground it was proposed by Councillor Dorrington, seconded by Councillor Coward and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the request from the Jazz Festival to place a marquee on the Recreation Ground be declined and

that a policy outlining the future use of the Recreation Ground be developed by the Working Party for consideration by the Tourism and Local Economy Committee.

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

**Citizens Advice Bureau** – It was reported that representatives of the CAB wished to express their thanks for the agreed increase in the grant from the Town Council from £2,000 p.a. to £8,000 p.a.

172. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

The following updates were provided by Councillor Suttle:

- **Shore Road Options** – It was reported that a meeting had taken place with the Leader of Dorset Council and Highways officers. The Dorset Councillors' position remained unchanged, with a preference for retaining two-way traffic with the removal of parking. Dorset Council's recommendation will be presented to a future Town Council meeting for consideration.
- **Dorset Council Budget** – It was reported that Dorset Council has proposed a 5% increase in Council Tax for the 2026/27 financial year.
- **Aster Housing** – It was noted that Aster Housing currently has another property for sale in Swanage. It was anticipated that a motion would be submitted to Dorset Council seeking to prevent a further reduction in the availability of three-bedroom family homes in the town.

173. **Reporting of delegated matters**

There were no matters to report.

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

There were no matters raised.

175. **Green Seafront Scheme**

**(a) Proposed amendments to design in response to public feedback**

Further to Minute No. 120 of the Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025, Members noted the contents of a briefing paper which included that following public engagement, design amendments had been developed for both the essential and new Green Seafront options to improve access, accessibility, infrastructure, greenspace, and facilities. Heidelberg Materials UK had been engaged to assess cost and buildability, and the Seafront Masterplan Working Party had reviewed the proposals on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The revised high-level cost estimates were £4.75 million for the essential option and £6.9 million for the new option.

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

That the Council incorporates into the planning application the design amendments to the essential and new options for the Green Seafront as set out within the briefing paper.

**(b) Appointment of Beach Hut Design Task and Finish Group**

Members noted that in order to inform the planning applications for both the essential and new Green Seafront stabilisation options a task and finish group be appointed to review the design options for the new beach huts at the Spa in light of feedback received from the community as part of the Green Seafront engagement 2025. In addition, it was proposed that the task and finish group include discussions

around commercial space and therefore the title of the group be Beach Hut Design and Commercial Space Task and Finish Group.

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

That the Mayor/Deputy Mayor and Councillors Coward, Dorrington and Foster be appointed to the Beach Hut Design and Commercial Space Task and Finish Group, together with the Visitor Services Manager.

#### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was proposed by Councillor Vile, 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 15 and 16 (due to legal and commercial confidentiality).

#### 176. **Property Related Legal Matters**

##### (a) **Beach Hire Concession – To award contract**

Further to Minute No. 151 of the Council Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025, Members considered the contents of a briefing paper which set out the outcome of the reissued tender process for the Swanage Beach Hire Concession. It was noted that three submissions had been received and assessed, but that one tender was non-compliant due to the absence of a required five-year financial plan. Having considered the recommendations of the Beach Hire Concession Task and Finish Group, it was proposed by Councillor Dorrington, seconded by Councillor Suttle and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Council approves the recommendation of the Task & Finish Group to invite Mr Carlo Wiggins to enter into a without prejudice discussion to negotiate the terms of an appropriate draft legal agreement for the Beach Hire Concession and authorises expenditure on any legal advice required to complete the concession award process.

##### (b) **Swanage and Herston Football Club – Consideration of legal advice regarding regularisation of tenure**

Consideration was given to a briefing paper which outlined legal advice received regarding the regularisation of Swanage Town and Herston Football Club's occupation of Day's Park. It was noted that the existing licence had expired in 2007 and that legal advice received had recommended that a Tenancy at Will be entered into in order to regularise the position pending a new long-term lease. It was noted that appropriate terms regarding insurance and maintenance provisions would be required, to provide clarity ahead of proposed works to the site. It was proposed by Councillor Dorrington, seconded by Councillor Suttle and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council commissions a draft Tenancy Will in respect of Swanage Town & Herston Football Club's continued occupation of Day's Park, pending agreement of a new long-term lease.

##### (c) **Mowlem Land (De Moulham) Trust and Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds**

**Trust – consideration of proposal to enter into a management agreement regarding Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field**

Having considered a briefing note circulated prior to the meeting, Members noted the action taken by the Town Clerk in instructing solicitors to draft management agreements between the Town Council and the Mowlem Land Trust and the Gift of Public Pleasure Grounds Trust. This followed advice from the Council’s insurers and legal advisors that it was advisable for formal management agreements to be put in place. It was noted that the agreements, once drafted, would be subject to approval by the Council and the respective Trusts.

(d) **Marsh Way Boundary Wall – Update and consideration of legal advice**

Further to Minute No. 161 (a) of the Estimates Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Members received a verbal report of a meeting between Council officers and the owner of 1 Victoria Terrace which took place on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January. It was reported that a further meeting would be arranged within two weeks to progress matters and a report made to a future Council meeting.

177. **Procurement**

(a) **Peveiril Point Road wall repairs – To award contract**

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 and Minute No. 4 of the Sub-Committee Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Members considered the outcome of the procurement process for works to buttress the wall at Peveiril Point Road. It was noted that four compliant tenders had been received. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Vile and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Council awards a contract to David R White Building Services Ltd for the sum of £15,840 to buttress the wall located at Peveiril Point Road noting that this sum contains a contingency allowance of £1,500.

(b) **Peveiril Point Road resurfacing – To award contract**

Further to discussion at recent meetings of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee (see references in Minute No. 177 (a) above), consideration was given to a briefing paper which set out a quotation from Dorset Council for resurfacing works to a section of Peveiril Point Road. In respect of the procurement route for these works, a comparison was drawn with the manner in which Dorset Council, together with their commercial partners Heidelberg Materials, had been engaged to undertake recent improvements to Station Approach (see Minute No. 69 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024).

Given the projected cost of the works this contract would normally be put out to tender. However, the briefing note set out factors that supported the waiving of financial regulations in order to permit a direct award to the partnership. This highlighted the fact that Heidelberg Materials had been procured by Dorset Council under a competitive tender via a two-stage process in 2016/17 and as part of their agreement regular meetings were held to monitor performance. The partnership had been nationally recognised at the Highway Awards 2023 for delivering improved efficiency and reduced costs.

Taking these matters into consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Coward and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Council waives financial regulations in respect of contracts for the reasons set out within the briefing paper, to the extent required to enable a direct contract award to Dorset Council to undertake

resurfacing works to Peveril Point Road for the sum of £48,874.10 (including a 30% optimism bias).

Members also noted that Dorset Council would manage and supervise the works and that affected residents would be notified in advance.

(c) **Green Seafront Scheme planting design - To award contract**

Members considered the contents of a briefing paper which set out the procurement of planting design services required to support the planning applications for the essential and new Green Seafront options. It was noted that Financial Regulation 11.1.b exempts contracts such as this, for the undertaking of specialist services in which the exercise of professional knowledge is of primary purpose, from the requirement to obtain three quotes. Consideration was given to two submissions received and in making the decision particular weight was given to the level of qualifications of the advisor, local knowledge and experience, and agreement to liaise with the Town Council team responsible for the future maintenance of any planting. It was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Dorrington and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That Tony Harris BA Dip LA CMLI, Chartered Landscape Architect, be appointed to provide planting design and associated planting details required to submit planning applications in respect of the essential and new Green Seafront options for the sum of £5,600.

(d) **Town Council water supply – To award contract**

Further to Minute No. 5 (a) of the Finance & Governance Committee Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025, consideration was given to a briefing paper which outlined the outcome of the tender process for the supply of water and sewerage services. It was reported that the largest proportion of the Town Council's annual water charges related to the wholesale cost which could not be competitively tendered. In terms of the retail costs, having reviewed quotations received via Utility Aid and undertaken a comparative and sensitivity analysis, it was noted that Everflow offered the most economically advantageous tender through a fixed annual retail fee. It was therefore proposed by Councillor Lejeune, seconded by Councillor Foster and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the tender for the supply of water and sewerage services be awarded to Everflow on a 3-year contract for a fixed fee of £3,906.18 per annum.

The Meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.