

Minutes of the **ANNUAL MEETING** of the Swanage Town Council held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on **MONDAY, 11th MAY 2026** at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M. Bonfield – Chairman

Councillor P. Burridge
Councillor J. Dorrington
Councillor T. Foster
Councillor J. Lejeune
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor G. Suttle
Councillor C. Sutton
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor S. Vile

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, approximately 24 members of the public and one member of the local press and media attended the Meeting and were welcomed by the Town Mayor.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Town Mayor presented former Mayors, Avril Harris and Councillor Foster with 'Past Mayors' badges, which were gratefully received.

Public Participation Time

- The Council was commended for all it is doing for the town. Particular thanks were given to the Swanage Information Centre team for the promotion of the bandstand and the Depot team for continued maintenance of the bandstand and surrounding area.
- A query was raised regarding the establishment of a banking hub, particularly in light of the imminent closure of the Lloyds Bank branch in Wareham.
- A request was made for an additional waste bin to be installed at the skatepark to help users keep the area clean and tidy.

Reverend Natalie Davies offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

Councillor Bonfield opened the meeting at 7.10 p.m. and expressed thanks to councillors and staff for their support over the past year, with particular appreciation to the Town Clerk for his guidance on Council matters. He also expressed thanks to his family for their support in enabling him to fulfil his mayoral duties.

1. **Appointment of Town Mayor**

Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Moreton and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Councillor Chris Tomes be appointed Town Mayor for the ensuing year.

Councillor Tomes completed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and expressed his gratitude for being elected as Town Mayor. Sincere thanks

were extended to the outgoing Mayor, and his consort for their devotion and service to the council and the town. He also expressed appreciation to the dedication of council staff and to the residents of Swanage for their continued support.

The Mayor confirmed that his wife, Mrs Cam Tomes, would serve as Mayoress during his period of Office and thanked her for her continued support.

Councillor Tomes assumed the Chair.

2. **Appointment of Deputy Mayor**

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

That Councillor Sarah Vile be appointed Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year.

Councillor Vile completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and stated that she was honoured to accept the appointment. She offered support to the newly elected Town Mayor and thanked all councillors for their guidance. She was delighted to announce that her husband, Mr John Vile, would be her consort during her period of Office.

3. **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Bishop and Coward.

4. **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.

5. **Appointment of Committees**

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

That the following appointments be made to the Committees:-

Community Services Committee

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Coward, Dorrington, Foster, Moreton and Sutton.

Environment and Green Spaces Committee

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Dorrington and Sutton.

Personnel Committee

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bishop, Bonfield, Dorrington, Foster and Sutton.

Planning and Consultation Committee

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Burridge, Foster, Lejeune and Sutton.

Tourism and Local Economy Committee

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Burridge, Coward, Foster, Lejeune, Suttle and Sutton.

6. **To appoint Chairmen of the above Committees and confirm membership of the Finance & Governance Committee**

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

That the following appointment of Committee
Chairmen and membership of the Finance and
Governance Committee be approved:-

Community Services Committee

Chairman – Councillor Moreton

Environment and Green Spaces Committee

Chairman – Councillor Sutton

Personnel Committee

Chairman – Councillor Vile

Planning and Consultation Committee

Chairman - Councillor Foster

Tourism and Local Economy Committee

Chairman – Councillor Bonfield

Finance and Governance Committee

Chairman – Town Mayor

(To consist of the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Chairman of each of the
Council’s Standing Committees) and Councillors Bishop and Suttle.

7. **Appointment of Councillor Members of Advisory Committees 2026/27**

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

That the following appointments to the Coastal
Change and Beach Management Advisory
Committee and Traffic Management Advisory
Committee be approved:-

(a) **Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory
Committee**

Councillors Bonfield, Foster, Sutton and Tomes.

(b) **Traffic Management Advisory Committee**

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bishop,
Dorrington and Sutton.

8. **To review Committee Terms of Reference**

Consideration was given to the Committee Terms of Reference. It was noted
that requests had been received for a number of organisations and interest groups to be
added to the list of those able to send outside representatives to a number of
committees. It was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Foster and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the following groups be added to the list of
outside representatives set out in the Committee
Terms of Reference:

Coastal Change & Beach Management Advisory
Committee – a representative of local sea swimmers
Community Services Committee – Day’s Park
Community Sport Trust CIO
Tourism & Local Economy Committee – Accessible
Swanage

9. **Appointment of Councillor Members of Working Parties 2026/27**

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by the Town Mayor and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the following appointments to Council
Working Parties and Panels be approved:-

Panels – lead councillor Town Mayor

Community Awards Panel

Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Lead officer – Planning & Community Engagement Manager

Grants Panel

Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Councillor Foster.

Lead officer – Planning & Community Engagement Manager

Property Panel

Town Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Foster, Sutton and Vile.

Lead officer – Assets & Compliance Manager

Working Parties – lead councillor shown in bold

Car Parks and Market

Councillors Bonfield, Dorrington, **Foster** and Tomes.

Lead officers – Finance Manager (Car Parks) and Visitor Services Manager
(Market)

Communications Strategy

Councillors Coward, **Foster**, Sutton, Tomes and Vile.

Lead officer – Planning & Community Engagement Manager

Events

Councillors Coward, Dorrington, Sutton, **Tomes** and Vile.

Lead officer – Visitor Services Manager

Health Services

Councillors **Bonfield**, Suttle and Tomes.

Lead officer – Town Clerk

Seafront Masterplan

Councillors Bishop, **Bonfield**, Coward, Foster, Suttle, Sutton and Tomes.

(Councillor Suttle, Dorset Councillor, co-opted member).

Lead officer – Assets and Compliance Manager

Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing

Councillors Bishop, Bonfield, Coward, Dorrington, Foster, Suttle, Sutton and
Tomes.

Lead officer – Town Clerk

10. **Representatives on Outside Bodies**

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

That the following appointments of representatives to outside bodies be approved:-

To appoint representatives to outside bodies 2026/27

Citizens Advice	Councillor Vile
Cultural Purbeck	Councillor Tomes
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Town Mayor & Deputy Mayor
Dorset Coast Forum	Councillor Foster
Herston Village Hall Management Committee	Councillor Moreton
Herston Reading Room*	Councillor Bonfield
Mowlem Institute Trust	Councillor Tomes
Purbeck Rail Partnership	Councillor Bonfield
Purbeck Transport Action Group	Councillor Sutton
SE Purbeck Parishes Liaison Group	Town Mayor & Town Clerk
Sustainable Swanage Group	Councillor Sutton
Swanage Community Land Trust	Councillor Vile
Swanage Fairtrade	Councillor Lejeune
Swanage Library Friends	Councillor Sutton
Swanage Museum	Councillor Moreton
Swanage Pier Trust*	Councillor Suttle (DC & STC Trustee)
Swanage Regetta & Carnival Committee	Town Mayor, Councillors Dorrington & Coward
Swanage Skatepark Community Project	Councillors Bonfield, Dorrington & Tomes
Swanage Town & Community Partnership	Town Mayor
Swanage2027 Steering Committee	Councillor Sutton
Swanage Town & Herston Football Club	Councillors Bonfield, Sutton & Tomes
The Centre Management Board and Wellbeing Swanage	Councillor Dorrington

N.B. Councillors will act principally as observers in all cases except those marked * where named councillors will be Trustees of these charities.

11. **Annual Membership Subscriptions 2026/27**

Consideration was given to membership subscriptions paid annually. It was proposed by Councillor Lejeune, seconded by Councillor Sutton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That membership of the following organisations be renewed during the forthcoming year:

Renewal	Date	Amount (Approx.) £
National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM)	1 st January	264.00
CPRE (prev. Campaign to Protect Rural England)	1 st February	36.00
Fields in Trust	1 st February	65.00
National Association of British Markets Authority (NABMA)	1 st April	509.00
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils (DAPTC)	1 st April	1359.53
National Association of Local Councils (NALC)	1 st April	677.42
Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM)	1 st April	105.00
Rural Market Town Group (RSN)	1 st April	56.12
South West Councils	1 st April	666.00
National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners (NSALG)	1 st August	84.00
The Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers (AHGTC)	1 st August	30.00
Open Spaces Society	New	45.00

12. **To approve a calendar of meetings for 2026/27**

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

That the schedule of meetings for 2026/27 be approved.

13. **Minutes**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by the Town Mayor and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 27th April 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 6th May 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

14. **Planning and Consultation Committee**

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

That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee held on 6th May 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed.

15. **Statement of Cash Balance**

A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th April 2026 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

16. **Payment of Accounts**

In accordance with Financial Regulations 5 and 6, the following Payment Schedule was submitted for information:-

- Payment Schedules 13 & 1, amounting to £1,189,540.26.

17. **Swanage Town Council Corporate Plan 2026-2030 – To consider adoption of revised draft document**

Further to Minute No. 4 of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 18th March 2026, Members considered the contents of a briefing paper which set out the results of the recent public consultation, together with a revised draft Swanage Town Council Corporate Plan (2026-2030) incorporating the amendments proposed by the Finance and Governance Committee.

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

That the revised draft Swanage Town Council Corporate Plan 2026-2030, be adopted without further amendment.

18. **Park Yoga – To consider granting a licence to use Queen Elizabeth II (Forres) Field**

Consideration was given to a briefing paper which set out a request from Park Yoga, a national charity providing free community yoga sessions, to use Queen Elizabeth II (Forres) Field on Sunday mornings between May and September. Members noted the health and wellbeing benefits of the proposal and the alignment with the Council's Corporate Plan. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Lejeune and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Park Yoga be permitted to operate from Queen Elizabeth II (Forres) Field for a one-year trial with delegated authority granted to officers to determine

arrangements for future years, subject to compliance with the terms and conditions set out in the briefing paper.

19. **Dorset COP – To consider request from Planet Purbeck to issue a letter of support**

Members considered a request from Planet Purbeck for Swanage Town Council to support its bid to host the Dorset COP 2027 event in Swanage. Members noted that the proposal aligned with the Council’s Corporate Plan objectives relating to environmental protection and addressing the climate crisis. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Dorrington and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council supports Planet Purbeck with their bid to host the Dorset COP 2027 by forwarding a letter, based on the suggested draft, to Dorset COP.

20. **Reporting of delegated matters**

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

21. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

The following updates were provided:

- **Commercial Lane** – It was reported that Commercial Lane had been resurfaced and was a great improvement to the area.
- **Eastern Area Planning Committee** – Councillor Suttle reported that he would no longer sit on Dorset Council’s Audit and Finance Committee but would represent Swanage on the Eastern Area Planning Committee.
- **Capital Grant for Swanage Green Seafront Scheme** – It was reported that Dorset Council would consider the Capital Grant at its Cabinet Meeting on 14th May 2026.
- **Street Lighting** – It was reported that adjustments were being made to the brightness levels of some streetlights to reduce light intrusion into nearby properties.

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

There were no reports on this occasion.

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

There were no items of information to report.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.
