

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on
MONDAY, 24th JULY 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor T. Foster – Chairman

Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor C. Finch
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor N. Rogers
Councillor G. Suttle
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor W. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, one member of the public attended the Meeting.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised.

Reverend Dave Richards, Associate Priest at St Mark's, Herston, Swanage, offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

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

65. **Apologies**

No apologies were received for inability to attend the meeting. Councillor Monkhouse attended the meeting remotely.

66. **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. 21 (c) - Councillor Bonfield declared a disclosable pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct by reason of being an employee of a local taxi company.

67. **Minutes**

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

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on
26th June 2023 be approved as a correct record and
signed.

(b) Proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Bishop, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council
Meeting held on 5th July 2023 be approved as a
correct record and signed.

- (c) Proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Rogers, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Extra Council Meeting held
on 17th July 2023 be approved as a correct record
and signed.

68. **Planning and Consultation Committee**

- Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Rogers and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation
Committee Meeting held on 3rd July 2023 be
approved as a correct record and signed.

69. **Tourism and Local Economy Committee**

- Proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Tourism and Local
Economy Committee Meeting held on 5th July 2023
be approved as a correct record and signed.

Consideration was given to the following recommendation contained in the
Minutes. It was noted that the recommendations set out in Minute No's 9 and 10
would be considered under agenda items 10 and 11:-

11) **To consider adoption of the revised Winter Market fees**

- Proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Finch and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the revised Winter Market fees be adopted.

70. **Environment and Green Spaces Committee**

- Proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Tomes and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Environment and Green
Spaces Committee Meeting held on 12th July 2023
be approved as a correct record and signed.

It was noted that the recommendations set out in Minute No's 7 and 8 would be
considered under agenda items 12 and 13.

71. **Finance and Governance Committee**

- Proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Harris and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Finance and
Governance Committee Meeting held on 5th July
2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

It was noted that the recommendation set out in Minute No 5 would be
considered under agenda item 19.

72. **Statement of Cash Balance**

- (a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th June 2023 was submitted for
information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

73. **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 3, amounting to £849,405.24.

74. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Town Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for deputising during her time away on holiday. The Mayor reported that on her return there had been extra meetings to attend, with important decisions to be made, and thanked all councillors for their attendance. Following the recent news that the facilities at Beach Gardens had successfully achieved a Green Flag award, the Mayor had attended the prestigious award ceremony in Southampton, with the Deputy Mayor, on 20th July 2023. It was reported that one of the judges who had attended Beach Gardens remarked that the venue had been noted as exceptional. The Mayor thanked all staff and officers involved in the process.

The Deputy Mayor reported that he had attended the following events, whilst deputising for the Mayor, since the Council meeting held on 26th June 2023:

- Swanage Sea Rowing Regatta – attended the award ceremony and noted that it was a pleasure to present approximately 80 awards at the event held on 1st July.
- Youth Concert – attended the concert held on 3rd July to raise funds for instruments for children in schools. It was a privilege to listen to the children's choir and talented young people performing instrumental pieces.
- Women's Institute – accompanied by the Town Crier, it was an honour to attend the first fundraising event of the W.I. held on the hardstanding on 16th July.

75. **Working Party Updates and Recommendations**

(a) **Tourism Marketing, 28th June 2023**

Further to Minute No. 5 a. of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee meeting held on 5th July 2023, it was reported that Visit Dorset anticipated a soft launch of the new Visit Swanage website in November 2023. It was noted that a photographer had been engaged to provide images of the area, including drone footage.

(b) **Property Panel and Seafront Masterplan, 12th July 2023**

It was noted that items discussed during the working party meeting would be covered under agenda items 9 and 11.

(c) **Day's Park Development Forum, 19th July 2023**

Further to Minute No. 187 (b) of the Council meeting held on 24th April 2023, it was reported that the Council continued to work alongside the Football Club and Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust to progress the delivery of improved facilities at Day's Park.

(i) **To confirm grant of telecommunications mast rent to Swanage & Herston Football Club**

Further to Minute No. 195 of the Council Meeting held on 24th April 2023, it was reported that the Council had received confirmation that the telecommunications mast rent had been revised upwards to £5,250 p.a. As some years had passed since the Town Council resolved that the rent would be paid as an annual grant to the Football Club, Members were asked to re-affirm their intention to continue this practice, subject to the back rent being retained in a reserve as agreed in April.

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

To confirm that the Town Council will make a grant equivalent to the annual rent received for the telecommunications mast at Day's Park to Swanage & Herston Football Club, until such time as the current lease arrangements come to an end.

(ii) **To agree further work on draft heads of terms for lease to Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust in advance of Council Meeting on 18th September 2023**

It was noted that at the Meeting of the Day's Park Development Forum it had been explained that, following discussions between Swanage & Herston Football Club and Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, the Town Council would be asked to consider changes to the lease arrangements agreed under Minute No. 148 of the Council Meeting held on 17th December 2018. A briefing note had been circulated prior to the meeting, setting out potential next steps in order to progress this matter. During the debate, the view was expressed that Council should not incur further legal expenses on this issue at the current time. It was, however, proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Town Clerk should meet with the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust to consider revised draft Heads of Terms, which should then be reviewed by the Council's representatives on the Day's Park Development Forum (Councillors Bishop, Bonfield and Tomes), prior to a report being made to a forthcoming Council meeting.

76. **Seafront Masterplan – To consider response from public engagement and adoption of revised document**

Consideration was given to a briefing paper which summarised some minor amendments to the draft Seafront Masterplan that had been proposed by Dorset Coast Forum further to the most recent public engagement exercise. A document which set out a summary of the responses received had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

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

That the final draft Swanage Seafront Masterplan, incorporating the minor amendments set out in the briefing paper, be adopted.

The Dorset Coast Forum team were thanked for their work in producing the Seafront Masterplan.

77. **Beach Hut Charges 2024/25 and Revised Terms and Conditions – To consider recommendations from Tourism & Local Economy Committee and potential for further review**

Further to Minute No. 10 of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee meeting, held on 5th July 2023, consideration was given to a briefing paper, prepared by the Visitor Services and Business Development Manager (VSBDM) which outlined the recommendation of the committee together with further thoughts as to next steps. Members had made various observations regarding the structure of the Beach hut fees and the Beach hut terms and conditions and therefore it had been suggested that a working party be established to review the information and provide a report to the next Council meeting.

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

That a Beach Hut working party be appointed, consisting of Councillors Finch, Foster, Moreton, Rogers and Tomes, to review the Beach Hut fees and charges and booking terms and conditions and provide a report to the Town Council meeting being held on 18th September 2023.

78. **Commercial Operations on Town Council Land – To consider recommendation from Tourism and Local Economy Committee to adopt process for inviting expressions of interest for 2024**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee meeting, held on 5th July 2023, consideration was given to a briefing paper, prepared by the VSBDM which detailed the proposed process for inviting expressions of interest for commercial activities on Town Council owned land.

The following process and timescale were proposed as follows:

Action	Date
Proposals approved by Full Council	24 th July 2023
Each of the proposed sites are considered in detail by the Property Panel during August	August 2023
Concession pack developed and published requesting ‘Expressions of Interest’ (EOI) for each location. This will include maps, available facilities, restraints, and information useful to potential operators	Early September
Concession EOI closes	End October
Reviewed by Property Panel	Early November
Property Panel recommendations to Tourism and Local Economy Committee regarding which opportunities to take forward for further development	15 th November
Recommendations to Full Council	11 th December
Work up details with potential concessionaires	December / January
Licences approved by Full Council	29 th January 2024

It was stated that potential commercial activities would be evaluated against a set of agreed criteria. Members had recommended that the locations identified, which had included sections of Main Beach car park, King George’s Playing Field, the beach and hardstanding on Shore Road, Broad Road car park, the boat park, North Beach car park and Journey’s End, would be reviewed by the Property Panel for potential inclusion within a ‘Concessions Pack’. Attention was drawn to the benefits of providing prospective applicants with a ‘Concessions Pack’, in order to clarify the opportunities available and specify the timescales involved.

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

That the process and timetable, as set out above, for inviting expressions of interest for potential commercial opportunities on Town Council land be adopted and that the working up of the details for each site to be included within the ‘Concession Pack’ be delegated to officers, in consultation with the Property Panel.

79. **Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation Action Plan to 2030 for the Council's principal buildings – To consider recommendation from Environment & Green Spaces Committee to agree next steps**

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 12th July 2023, consideration was given to a briefing paper prepared by the VSBDM, which detailed the Council's Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation Action Plan, up to 2030, for the Council's principal buildings. The Town Council's Carbon Neutral Plan, produced by CO2 Target, the foundation on which the action plan had been based, had been included as an appendix to the briefing paper.

A debate ensued as to whether or not to accept the Committee's recommendation that the action plan should be approved and adopted, together with the next steps set out in the briefing note. The environmental benefits as specified in the action plan were discussed in detail, and consideration was given to the implementation of energy efficiency measures such as the installation of LED lighting, the installation of building management systems and the replacement of gas boilers with heat pumps.

The financial implications to the Town Council of implementing the plan were considered and some concern was expressed as to how the indicative cost of £308,000 over the next three financial years could be met, given the Council's agreed budget of £150,000 and the match funding requirements of the government-backed SALIX grants.

Three proposals to adopt all or part of the Action Plan and Timetable were made and seconded, but ultimately withdrawn. After further consideration, it was acknowledged that more information would become available over coming weeks, further to an inspection of the boilers at the Town Hall and the obtaining of quotes for the installation of building management systems in the Council's main buildings. Therefore, following a lengthy discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Foster and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the adoption of the Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation Action Plan 2023: Council Buildings be deferred and that the matter be considered further in the autumn during the budget setting process.

80. **EV Charging in Town Council Car Parks – To consider recommendation from Environment & Green Spaces Committee that officers work with Dorset Council to develop a detailed proposal for EV charging points in the town's car parks as per the 'Charging Ahead' scheme**

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 12th July 2023, consideration was given to a briefing paper prepared by the VSBDM, which outlined three options for the procurement and installation of enhanced electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities in the Council's car parks. Dorset Council's draft 'Charging Ahead' information document had been circulated as an appendix to the briefing paper.

Members had reviewed the procurement options, both through the Environmental Policy and Action Plan working party, and the Environment and Green Spaces Committee, and had recommended option three, i.e. working in partnership with Dorset Council through their 'Charging Ahead' grant. It was reported that working jointly with Dorset Council would provide access to professional support, and through a successful grant application would minimise financial outlay for the Town Council.

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

That the Town Council accepts the recommendation of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee that officers work with Dorset Council and their supplier to develop a detailed proposal for Electric Vehicle charging points in the town's car parks as per the 'Charging Ahead' scheme and report further to the autumn meeting of the Environment & Green Spaces Committee.

81. **Reports from Dorset Councillors**

Councillors Suttle and Trite provided updates on matters that included the following:-

- The installation of the Bibby Stockholm barge at Portland had demanded a substantial amount of DC councillor and officers' time. A motion condemning the Bibby Stockholm barge plan had been amended to include concerns for occupants on humanitarian grounds.
- The asset transfer of the Day Centre in Chapel Lane was ongoing and DC councillors continued to support the project and do what they could to expediate the transfer.
- Further to the public meeting with Dorset Police, held on 12th June 2023, regarding anti-social behaviour in town, it was reported that additional resources had been allocated to assist with the provision of services. It was anticipated that the resources would be used to engage with families of the small number of young people displaying anti-social behaviour to assist with the reduction in the number of incidents.
- Bournemouth FC Community Team would be providing three coaching sessions over the summer holidays in Swanage for 14 to 17 year olds.
- DC continued to appeal to residents to house Ukrainian refugees.
- DC's Housing Strategy consultation had been launched today with further details available through the website.
- DC's Dog related Public Space Protection Order consultation would close on 25th August 2023.
- Some progress was reported in respect of the Asset Transfer to the Town Council of land on the corner of Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road in connection with potential development by Swanage Community Housing.

82. **Reports from Council Representatives on Outside Organisations**

(a) **Swanage Community Rail Partnership**

It was noted that an online meeting had been arranged by South Western Railway to engage with stakeholders around the proposed changes to staffing at Wareham station. It was reported that the intention was to provide staff on the station to assist with ticket purchases from the ticket machines, as opposed to ticket purchases being available from the office. It was noted that the waiting room and toilets would remain open all day, which is currently not the case.

It was also noted that the matter had been raised at a Dorset Council meeting and further information would be provided under Agenda item 17(b) (see Minute No. 84(b) below).

(b) **ATM provision following bank branch closures**

An update was provided further to the installation of an ATM at Swanage Post Office in Institute Rd. The Post Office was in effect functioning as a banking hub, but it was noted that the facility could become extremely busy at peak times.

Councillor Bishop encouraged any feedback on this matter to be directed to him so that he could liaise with relevant bodies.

(c) **Swanage Carnival Committee**

It was reported that Swanage Carnival would commence on Saturday 28th July and a competition for best dressed shop window, highlighting the theme ‘Under the Sea’, would run throughout the week. It was noted that Dorset Coast Forum would hold a pop-up event on 4th August regarding the seafront stabilisation scheme. Thanks were given to Town Council officers for their assistance in the preparation for Carnival.

83. **Reporting of delegated matters**

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

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

- (a) **Dorset Police proposals for operation of Police counter services from Town Hall Annexe** – it was noted that the Police Counter Services would be open on Mondays and Fridays 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., as a trial period, and the works had been completed.
- (b) **Railway ticket office closure consultation** – further to a briefing paper, which outlined the Purbeck Transport Action Group’s draft response to the South Western Railway ticket office closure consultation, Members suggested that a letter be written to South Western Railway supporting the comments contained therein. Members were also encouraged to forward any additional comments.
- (c) **Proposed experimental closure of Lower High Street, 17th-22nd August 2023** – it was noted that the trial had been proposed by Dorset Council’s Flood and Coastal Erosion Management Team as part of the preliminary plans for the Flood Defence Scheme.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Rogers and AGREED:-

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 18 to 21 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality.

85. **Seafront Stabilisation and Enhancement Scheme – To confirm arrangements for public consultation**

Further to Minute No. 56 of the Council Meeting held on 26th June 2023, consideration was given to a briefing paper prepared by the Town Clerk which set out a phased approach to the forthcoming public consultation about the proposed Seafront Stabilisation and Enhancement Scheme. Phase 1 between July and September would raise awareness of the problems of ground instability and the proposals set out in Zone E of the Seafront Masterplan. Phase 2 would follow from mid-September, seeking views on two costed design options and setting out potential sources of funding.

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

To endorse the proposed content and timing of the public consultation process for the seafront stabilisation scheme.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED:

To request the Seafront Masterplan Working Party to work with Dorset Coast Forum to finalise the format of Phase 2 of the consultation process.

86. **Charitable Trust Governance Review - To consider recommendations from Finance and Governance Committee and legal advice received**

Further to Minute No. 12 of the Finance & Governance Committee Meeting held on 22nd November 2022, and Minute No. 5 of the Extraordinary Finance & Governance Committee Meeting held on 17th July 2023, consideration was given to a briefing note summarising legal and valuation advice received regarding future governance of the charitable trusts of which the Town Council is the corporate trustee. Consideration was given in turn to three recommendations made by the Finance and Governance Committee.

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

To accept the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee that, in order to ensure that the Council has the legal power to undertake the stabilisation of Sandpit Field and the Weather Station Field, agreement in principle be given to the Council's outright acquisition of those parcels of land from the De Moulham Trust and the Public Pleasure Grounds Charity, in accordance with the legal and valuation advice received, and to agree to this proposed course of action being referred to within the forthcoming public engagement and consultation process in connection with the seafront stabilisation scheme.

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

To accept the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee that the Council should inform Lloyds Bank that it is willing to become the corporate trustee of the James Day Will Trust.

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

To accept the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee that the potential amalgamation of the De Moulham Trust, Public Pleasure Grounds Charity and James Day Will Trust should be further explored, and that legal advice should be sought accordingly.

87. **Asset Review – To consider initial report from Property Panel**

Members gave consideration to a briefing note that set out recommendations made by the Property Panel further to an initial review that had been carried out regarding the future of properties owned by the Town Council in four key locations: North Beach Car Park/Day's Park/Journey's End; Main Beach Car Park/King George's Playing Field/Forres Field; Broad Road Car Park/The Downs/Peveril Point; and the Seafront. It was noted that this work had been carried out in accordance with the six-monthly Council

priority plan for the period May-October 2023, adopted under Minute No. 182 of the Council Meeting held on 24th April 2023.

It was reported that the Property Panel had carried out the review in accordance with the Town Council's priority to protect its significant green open spaces, playing fields and other public amenities, as set out in the Corporate Plan. Hence, only a small number of minor assets had been identified as potentially being surplus to the Council's requirements. These were:

- Foreshore adjoining Old Coastguard Cottages, Peveril Point (disposal process agreed under Minute No. 54 of the Council Meeting held on 26th June).
- Garage and stores along Peveril Point Road.

These are in addition to the vacant space adjoining Burlington Chine public conveniences, previously identified as surplus to requirements as part of the review of that facility.

Councillor Rogers left the room at 9.00 p.m.

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

To agree that the properties listed above be included on a list of assets that are potentially surplus to the Council's requirements, and that delegated authority be given to officers, in consultation with the Property Panel, to prioritise those disposals which will make the greatest contribution to the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives, obtaining the professional advice required in order to bring forward a final recommendation to a future Council Meeting.

Councillor Rogers re-entered the Meeting at 9.02 p.m.

The Property Panel had also considered, in principle, the potential for asset disposal to part-fund significant capital projects that would enhance the provision of community facilities in accordance with the Council's Corporate Plan. It was noted that if any significant proposals for development on Council-owned property were to be brought forward they would need to be considered in the context of the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan, which would be subject to public consultation in coming months. It was proposed by Councillor Moreton and seconded by Councillor Bonfield:

That the Town Council should take exploratory steps in respect of potential asset disposals to fund essential Town Council and community projects, including the engagement of appropriate professional advice.

Upon being put to the Meeting **NINE** Members voted **IN FAVOUR** of the Proposition and there were **TWO ABSTENTIONS**, whereupon the Proposition was declared **CARRIED**.

The Town Mayor invoked Standing Order 1q to enable the Meeting to continue for longer than two hours.

88.

Property-Related Legal Matters

(a) **Beach Ice Cream Kiosks – To determine next steps**

Further to Minute No. 60 (a) of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 6th July 2023, consideration was given to a briefing note, prepared by the Town Clerk.

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

To delegate the determination of next steps in the recovery of sums owing to the Town Council from the former tenant of the beach ice cream kiosks to the Finance & Governance Committee.

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

Not to proceed with seeking expressions of interest for concessions to operate from the ice cream kiosk platforms on the beach this summer.

(b) **Housing Development, Northbrook Road East – To receive update regarding drainage connection into Ulwell Stream**

Further to Minute No. 58 of the Council Meeting held on 11th July 2022, Members considered the contents of a briefing paper prepared by the Town Clerk, which provided an update regarding the legal regularisation of the drainage connection into Ulwell Stream. It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Suttle and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

To note the update set out in the briefing note, grant delegated authority to the Town Clerk to act in accordance with legal and valuation advice received, and authorise the mayor and deputy mayor to sign any deed that may be required to conclude matters.

Concerns about the removal of trees and undergrowth by the developer along the boundary between Day's Park and the former Grammar School site were also reported and it was noted that negotiations with the developer are ongoing.

Further to his declaration of interest under Minute No. 66 above Councillor Bonfield left the meeting at 9.10 p.m. Councillor Whitwam also left the meeting at the same time.

(c) **Rental of former Taxi Office – To consider next steps**

Further to Minute No. 33 of the Council Meeting held on 24th May 2023, it was reported that the prospective tenant was likely to withdraw his offer due to an unexpected change in personal circumstances. Therefore, it was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Bishop and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

To grant delegated authority to the Town Clerk to take appropriate steps in relation to the letting of the taxi office.

The Meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.
