

Minutes of the Meeting of the **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage
on **WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2026** at **2.15 p.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor C Moreton

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Coward

Swanage Town Council

Councillor J Dorrington

Swanage Town Council

Councillor T Foster

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Sutton

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Tomes

Swanage Town Council

Councillor S Vile

Swanage Town Council

Outside Representatives: -

Mr R Foster

Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

Ms E Neville

James Smith Funeral Directors

Ms H Florence

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Mr B Mawson

Swanage Skatepark Community Project

Mr G Richardson

Swanage Community Housing Project

Also present: -

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Ms G Percival

Assets and Compliance Manager

Mr M Snowdon

Assets and Compliance Support Officer

There were three members of the public and one member of the press present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time: -

- In respect of agenda item 10), representatives from Cancare provided a brief overview regarding the proposed installation of a Corten and stainless-steel memory tree and a stone seat in the Sanctuary Garden at Prince Albert Gardens. The committee was advised that if permission was granted it was anticipated that the works would be completed by May 2027, coinciding with Cancare's anniversary celebrations.
- In respect of agenda item 9), a request was made for a special exception to the Council's memorial bench policy to allow two additional memorial seats to be installed at Swanage Bandstand.

1. Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Ms C Barnes (Swanage Community Housing Project), Mr M and Mrs P Jones (Prospect Allotment Association) and Ms L LeFevre (Swanage Tennis Club)

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 18th March 2026

No matters were raised on this occasion.

4. Reappointment of Task & Finish Groups

a) Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre Task & Finish Group

b) Aster Housing Group's – Investment in Swanage Task & Finish Group

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

To re-appoint Councillors Bonfield, Foster, Moreton, and Tomes to the Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre Task & Finish Group.

It was further RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To re-appoint Councillors Suttle, Sutton, Tomes, and Vile to the Aster Housing Group's - Investment in Swanage Task & Finish Group.

5. Partnership Project Updates

a) Swanage Community Housing Project

Further to Minute No.5 (a) of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 18th March 2026, the representative for Swanage Community Housing Project (SCHP) reported that the land transfer from Dorset Council for the site at the junction of Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road was still progressing.

Members were also advised that discussions are continuing with Dorset Council regarding consideration of a larger, second site for development that includes the former Council Depot on Kings Road West subject to suitable, alternative arrangements being identified for the existing activities conducted on the site.

b) Wellbeing Swanage and the Focus Centre

An update was provided on progress at the Focus Centre in Chapel Lane. It was reported that the first stage of refurbishment works had been completed and that the Focus Centre is now a financially sustainable site. The Family Hub running within the Centre received positive feedback from Dorset Council, which has led to a planned visit by Weymouth Development Trust to see the initiatives that have been implemented and gain ideas and inspiration for their own projects.

c) Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

An update was provided by the representative of the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust (SPDT). It was reported that due to the good progress at the Focus Centre, more time was now available to allocate to other projects, including:

- **Herston Village Hall** – A number of three-dimensional models and walkthroughs are being prepared for display during drop-in sessions planned for August and September 2026, which will allow people to see the designs for the new hall in a more visual way.
- **Community Transport** – An investigative site visit had been arranged to Totnes, where a community bus scheme had been established ten years ago and now successfully operates five buses in the area. After initial assessment, it is projected that a similar scheme, if established to service the needs of residents in Purbeck could be self-sufficient within three years.

6. Prospect Allotments – Clarification of measures to manage dogs on allotment site and proposals for amended signage

The Assets & Compliance Manager reported that the Council had received representations regarding dogs within the Prospect Allotment site that related to:-

- dogs not being kept on a lead while on the site;
- dog fouling;
- potential contamination of the allotment water troughs when owners allow their dogs to drink or bathe in the troughs.

It was noted that within current allotment tenancy agreements, dogs brought onto the site by allotment holders must be kept on a lead at all times. At a recent meeting between councillors, council officers and the Prospect Allotment Association support had been expressed for ensuring parity between allotment holders and individuals who walk through the site. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To implement a policy that all dogs brought onto the Prospect Allotment site should be kept on a lead at all times, and to install improved signage within Prospect Allotments setting out this policy.

Consideration was given to the current consultation regarding Dorset Council's Dog related Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), which only requires dogs to be kept on a lead within Dorset Council controlled allotment sites. It was proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Sutton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a formal representation be made to the current Dorset Council consultation regarding the Dog related PSPO, that it should be amended so that the requirement for dogs to be kept on a lead at all times is extended to include Swanage Town Council allotments, and possibly those operated by other town and parish councils.

7. Swanage Community Emergency Response Plan – update further to places of safety workshop held in May 2026

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 18th March 2026, members noted the contents of a briefing paper that detailed the results of a workshop, held on 28th May 2026, which was attended by representatives from each of the 'places of safety' designated within the Emergency Response Plan, Councillor Moreton, council officers and two representatives from Dorset Police.

The exercise provided a valuable opportunity for attendees to discuss their capabilities, consider the resources they have at their disposal and look at the levels of collaboration possible between the various organisations, to provide a cohesive response. The exercise also identified several actions that the Council could take forward to provide greater clarity and resilience within the Emergency Response Plan. These included:

- approaching newly identified local organisations relating to transport, food provision, and catering, to investigate their suitability and potential willingness to be included in the Emergency Response Plan;
- re-allocating some organisations to more appropriate categories within the Emergency Response Plan;
- considering development of a new section of the Emergency Response Plan providing guidance relating to press, media, and general public enquiries during an incident.

The contributions made by the places of safety to local resilience was recognised and organisations were formally thanked for their participation, and their effort on behalf of the community.

8. Swanage Skatepark Community Project - Presentation on phase 2 progress

A representative of Swanage Skatepark Community Project (SSCP) gave a presentation which included:-

- the initial results from the impact survey, launched after the successful completion of the Phase 1 works
- a summary of the successful Skate Jam open day, held on 26th June 2026
- an update for the Phase 2 improvement works, including fundraising progress and the initial designs which are currently the subject of public consultation, providing more variety and equipment suitable for beginners.

The Chairman formally recognised and thanked the Swanage Skatepark Community Project team for their dedication and all their hard work in delivering this project.

9. Memorial Bench Policy Task & Finish Group – review update

Further to Minute No. 13 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 18th March 2026, the Assets & Compliance Manager reported on a meeting of the Memorial Bench Policy Task & Finish Group which was held on 5th May 2026 to further consider the council's policy regarding memorial benches. Members considered the contents of a briefing note and the recommendations set out therein. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Vile and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Council's current policy on memorial benches should remain in place and that a review of the policy should be scheduled at a future date, in advance of the completion of the Green Seafront scheme, noting that this will provide additional seating and opportunities for memorial benches.

10. Request from Cancare for the installation of corten and stainless-steel memory tree within the Cancare Garden at Prince Albert Gardens

Consideration was given to a briefing note, detailing a request from Cancare for the installation of new features within the Cancare Sanctuary Garden in Prince Albert Gardens, including a Corten and stainless-steel memory tree (measuring 14 feet in height) and a plain stone seat.

Members noted that due to the Cancare Sanctuary Garden being located within the Swanage Conservation Area, a Permitted Development enquiry to Dorset Council would be required to establish if planning permission would be needed. An enquiry to the Dorset Council Senior Landscape Architect would also be needed to establish if any additional permissions would be required. Members also noted that due to the resolution passed in agenda item No. 9) relating to memorial benches, it would not be appropriate to consider granting permission for the requested stone bench at this time. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Coward and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY :-

To approve the installation of a corten and stainless-steel memory tree within the Cancare Sanctuary Garden, Prince Albert Gardens, subject to confirmation from Dorset Council's Senior Landscape Architect and the Local Planning Authority that all relevant conditions have been met

and to delegate all Council actions associated with the project to the Assets and Compliance Manager.

11. Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

a) CCTV operations in Swanage – update

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15th October 2025, it was reported that a briefing paper will be brought to the next meeting, providing a review of the last 12 months service following the transfer of the monitoring of the Swanage Town Council network of CCTV cameras to the Dorset Council Control room.

b) Swanage Museum Future Plans – meeting of the task and finish group

Further to Agenda item No. 4 of this meeting, it was reported that a meeting will soon be scheduled with the newly re-appointed members of the Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre Task & Finish Group, and a progress report will be brought to the next meeting of this committee.

c) Installation of pickleball court at Beach Gardens

It was reported that the installation of the pickleball court at Beach Gardens is scheduled to take place in July 2026 and tests are currently underway to ensure the ability to book the courts and equipment online is a smooth experience.

d) Grand opening of mobile field shelter at Greengage Nursery

It was reported that the installation of the mobile field shelter was ongoing and that once works are complete, Greengage Nursery have indicated that an invitation will be provided to all councillors, to attend the opening ceremony for the new facility.

e) Godlingston Cemetery – entry into BRAMM Cemetery of the Year Awards 2026

It was reported that Godlingston Cemetery has been entered into the BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons) Cemetery of the Year Awards 2026. An update on the judging and the results will be brought to a future meeting of this committee.

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

Further to Agenda item No. 4 of this meeting, it was reported that a meeting will be held on 20th July 2026 with the newly re-appointed members of the Aster Housing Group's – Investment in Swanage Task & Finish Group and representatives of Aster Housing Group. A progress report will be brought to the next meeting of this committee.

12. Date of next meeting

The date of the next scheduled meeting was noted as Wednesday 14th October 2026 at 2.15 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 3.30 p.m.
