



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 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

No matters were raised on this occasion.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

Further to Minute No. 4 of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 26<sup>th</sup> 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.

	<b>Cost per court</b>	<b>2026-27 Tennis</b>	<b>Proposed 26-27 Pickleball</b>
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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 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 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026 at 2.15 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 3.30 p.m.

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