

Minutes of the Meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT & GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 24th JUNE 2026** at 2.15 p.m.

Chairman: -

Councillor C Sutton

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor J Dorrington

Swanage Town Council (from 2.25 p.m.)

Councillor C Tomes

Swanage Town Council (from 2.40 p.m.)

Councillor S Vile

Swanage Town Council

Outside Representatives: -

Ms T Churcher

National Trust

Mr L Luke

Planet Purbeck

Mr P Floyd

Planet Purbeck

Also in attendance: -

Mr C Milmer

Visitor Services and Business

Development Manager (VSBDM)

Mr M Snowdon

Assets & Compliance Support Officer

There was one member of the press present at the meeting until 2.30 p.m.

Public Participation Time

The following matter was raised during Public Participation time: -

- A question was raised about whether the Council had plans or arrangements to provide cool spaces during periods of intense heat, offering vulnerable people somewhere to find relief from high temperatures.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Ms K Black (Durlston Country Park), Mr T Clarke (National Trust), Ms J Owens (Sustainable Swanage), and Mr D Pratten (Beach Buddies).

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 Meeting of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee held on 4th March 2026

No matters were raised on this occasion.

4) Environment Action Plan – Progress Update

Further to Minute No. 4 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026, Members noted the contents of the Environment Action Plan. The VSBDM reported that works on Priority Action 4, to increase the provision of charging facilities in Swanage Town Council car parks, were progressing, working with Dorset Council within the context of the Charging Ahead scheme. It was noted that any

outstanding matters would be discussed by the car parks working party with any significant changes to the proposals being referred to a future Council meeting for determination.

5) Swanage Information Centre – Air source heat pump grant application

Further to Minute No. 6 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026, Members noted the contents of a briefing paper, which provided information regarding the heating system at Swanage Information Centre and some of the recent problems experienced with the gas boiler and the radiators. Low Carbon Dorset had provided free technical advice and a feasibility assessment, which indicated that an air source heat pump could be installed in this location. It was noted that initial cost estimates to implement this project are circa £18,000 and a Low Carbon Dorset grant had been identified, which if awarded, could fund up to 50% of the installation costs. The balance of £9,000 and any additional costs not directly covered by the grant could be funded from the Council's Environmental Projects reserve, established to support the delivery of the Council's carbon neutral ambitions. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Sutton and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

TO RECOMMEND:

That officers submit an application to Low Carbon Dorset for grant funding and, if successful, to undertake a competitive procurement exercise for the installation of an air source heat pump and radiators at the Swanage Information Centre, the balance of the cost to be funded from the Environmental Projects reserve.

6) Town Hall Annex – Heating system replacement

Members noted the contents of a briefing paper, which set out the need to replace the 13-year-old gas boiler servicing the Town Hall annex and two options for the way forward, i.e. to replace the system with an air source heat pump or alternatively a new gas boiler. Members noted that previous studies commissioned by the Town Council had indicated that installation of an air source heat pump may not be feasible for the Town Hall at the current time due to the requirement for additional insulation, locating of suitable external space for the air source heat pump system, and a number of consents which would need to be sought due to the Grade II listed status of the building. Having considered these matters, it was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To request officers to undertake a competitive tender exercise for the replacement of the current gas boiler at the Town Hall annex, along with improved heating controls and a replacement electric 'point of use' water heater system serving the kitchen.

7) Dorset Active Travel plan – Proposed cycle route to Studland

Members noted the contents of a briefing paper relating to the Dorset Council Active Travel Plan and the potential for establishing a cycle route along Ulwell Road. It was noted that the proposal aligns with Action Point 6 within the Swanage Environment Action Plan and that any investigation, feasibility studies and project costs would be funded by Dorset Council as the local Highway Authority. After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Dorrington and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To submit a request to Dorset Council to investigate the provision of a dedicated uphill cycle lane on Ulwell Road.

8) Sustainable Swanage – Update

Members noted the contents of a briefing paper, detailing the recent activities of Sustainable Swanage, including:

- establishing new volunteer community groups;
- arranging a showing of the National Emergency Briefing film;
- arranging community meetings;
- updating the Sustainable Swanage website.

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026, Members noted the level of progress achieved since the appointment of a temporary Volunteer Co-ordinator and Project Officer by Sustainable Swanage.

9) Swanage Streams Partnership - Update

The representative of Planet Purbeck provided an update on recent actions, which included several ongoing projects in the surrounding area. There had been five events held to date within 2026 with positive attendance numbers and feedback received, evidencing growing levels of engagement, support and the welcoming of new volunteers.

An update was also provided on forthcoming activities which included:

- collaborating with the Council to improve the nature corridor habitat buffer within Journeys End;
- installation of interpretation boards to improve public awareness of the wildlife that benefits from the Ulwell stream habitat;
- a collaborative project between Swanage Streams Partnership and the Andrew Simpson Foundation (Portland) to provide three public educational sessions in August 2026.

10) Herston Community Field Engagement – Update from Planet Purbeck

Further to Minute No. 10 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026, the representative of Planet Purbeck presented a report summarising the outcome of the recent Herston Community Field Engagement. Members considered the findings of the report and the suggested actions developed from the results of the engagement which were broken down into easy, medium and harder tasks. It was noted that Planet Purbeck would provide up to three days of co-ordination, including on-the-day support, to help strengthen the 2027 Herston Community Picnic.

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

To establish a Herston Community Field Task & Finish Group (comprising Councillors Sutton, Tomes and Vile).

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

To instruct officers to work with Planet Purbeck and the Herston Community Field Task & Finish Group to implement some of the easier to achieve actions set out in the report, and to provide a progress report to the next meeting of this committee.

To request Herston Community Field Task & Finish Group to recommend whether a budget should be identified to deliver actions in the 2026/27 or 2027/28 financial periods.

Attention was drawn to Planet Purbeck's success in securing a Dorset Council grant to support youth-led improvement projects at Herston Community Field, subject to obtaining permission from the Town Council. It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To approve the further scoping of the youth-led Pheonix Project.

11) Swanage Greenspace Strategy 2025 - Action plan update

Further to Minute No. 11 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026, Members noted the contents of a briefing paper detailing the progress that had been made to date in implementing the Swanage Greenspace Strategy 2025 Action Plan, including:

- an initiative to tackle dog waste and litter with multiple poster submissions having been submitted by local school children aged 5-12 years of age and four winning designs having been used to create 16 signs which have been installed in a range of Swanage greenspaces;
- completion of a management plan for Day's Park, which will be uploaded to the Council's website in due course;
- the design of additional information signage boards for Beach Gardens, which will be installed in the coming months.
- submission of an application to enter the BRAMM Cemetery of the Year awards 2026;
- commencement of works to provide an improved nature corridor in Journey's End adjacent to the Ulwell Stream.

12) Environmental Budgets

Further to Minute No. 13 of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026, Members considered a briefing note which provided a breakdown of the projects that will be supported from the Environmental Community Engagement budget of £15,000 that had been approved for the 2026/2027 financial year. It was reported that the current forecast indicated that the full £15,000 would be utilised by the end of the financial year. The position was noted.

13) Waste Management

a) Update on activities from Beach Buddies

An update was provided by the Chairman on behalf of Beach Buddies which reported that there have been a total of 25 beach cleans carried out in 2026 to date, with an average attendance of 20 volunteers at each meeting and a total removal of 524kg of litter and debris from Swanage Bay. The most common items remained cigarette butts and dog waste, although it was noted that heavier marine debris is sometimes recovered after being washed ashore at North Beach.

It was further reported that Beach Buddies regularly co-ordinate with the Council's operatives to ensure areas that require particular attention are prioritised and frequent feedback is received from visitors who comment favourably upon the cleanliness of the town.

b) Update on activities from Swanage Landers

An update was provided by a representative of Swanage Landers on recent activities which included assisting a local farm in reclaiming the wall by their entrance from significant overgrowth to improve visibility and make the entrance on High Street safer for farm workers, residents and visitors to Swanage as they enter the town.

14) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

a) Results of Seaweed Management Project

The VSBDM reported that the results of the Seaweed Management Project would be brought to a future meeting of this committee.

b) Herston Field Village Green update.

It was noted that an update on the Herston Field Village Green would be brought to a future meeting of this committee.

15) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting had been scheduled for 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday 21st October 2026.

The Meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.
