

Minutes of the Meeting of the **SWANAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **MONDAY, 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024** at 2.15 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Harris – Chair

Councillor Bonfield  
Councillor Foster  
Councillor Rogers  
Councillor Moreton  
Councillor Whitwam

Mrs J Sutcliffe  
Mr A Thompson

**Also in attendance:** Dr M Ayres  
Miss N Clark - Planning and Community Engagement Manager  
Mrs L Coney – O'Neill Homer Planning Consultants (via online link until 2.40 p.m.)

One member of the public attended the meeting remotely.

**Public Participation Time**

There were no matters raised.

**1) Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Mr A Larner and Mr G Richardson.

**2) Declarations of Interest**

Sub-committee Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations (Councillor Members in accordance with Section 9 and Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct).

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

**3) To approve as a correct record Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) Steering Group held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

It was proposed that these were a true record by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed.

**4) Matters arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SNP) held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

Further to questions and concerns raised at meetings of the Steering Group held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024, updates had been received from Dorset Council (DC) as follows:

- **Draft Dorset Local Plan/updated Swanage Chapter** – it was reported that the timetable for the DLP was set to be amended, and a report was being taken to DC's Cabinet Meeting being held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 which included an amended

timetable (known as the Local Development Scheme). The report would be published on DC's website with the agenda papers in due course.

- **Term of SNP** – DC had advised that although the DLP was still at an early stage, the latest thinking was that it would look ahead until at least 2042. There were no rules regarding NP periods, and that it was for the Steering Group to decide what plan term would be suitable for the area/plan policies. However, although it was not a legal requirement for NPs to be reviewed every five years, DC had recommended that it would be prudent to review the plan regularly and once adopted a 'Neighbourhood Plan monitoring group' could be set up to keep an eye on the effectiveness of the NP's policies, and any changes in Dorset/national policies which may prompt a review of the Plan.
- **Future retail floorspace** – DC had advised that the information in both the Purbeck and Swanage Local Plans was based on historic evidence, and that the nature of retail had changed rapidly in recent years. As previously reported, DC's latest retail survey had provided a strong message that the county should be planning for less retail space, not more. However, there were some retailers that were 'bucking the trend' and a suggestion was made that the Group could consider contacting these companies to ask whether they were interested in Swanage, and what their requirements would be for a suitable site.

**Other updates:**

- **Design Coding** – free technical assistance regarding design coding was available from Locality and an application for this would be considered at the next DTT meeting.
- **Draft Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)** – it was reported that the draft HNA had been received today from the Locality/AECOM consultants and would be reviewed/discussed at the next meeting of the Development Task Team.
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment** – the first stage/five-week consultation of the SEA had been completed, and the second stage had now commenced. The Locality/AECOM consultants would be arranging a site visit to Swanage in the near future.

**5) ONEILL HOMER PLANNING CONSULTANTS – REVIEW OF REVISED ACTION PLAN**

Councillor Harris welcomed Mrs Leah Coney, Planning and Development Manager, ONEILL HOMER PLANNING CONSULTANTS, to the meeting. Mrs Coney introduced herself together with the latest SNP action plan. Further to Minute No. 5) of the SNP Steering Group Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024, Mrs Coney was in the process of preparing a revised action plan, which was being amended in light of the timescale of the upcoming pre-election period and the decision to be made regarding the draft SNP information slides pack that had been prepared for the Group to consider for public engagement, which would be discussed under Agenda Item 6). It was noted that the amended action plan would be received in due course for consideration by the Group.

Mrs L Coney left the meeting.

**6) CONSIDERATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

Further to Minute No. 5) of the SNP Steering Group Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024, consideration was given to the possibility of holding a public engagement event regarding the SNP, during which concerns were again raised about the upcoming pre-election period, uncertainties surrounding the draft Dorset Local Plan and the emerging

Purbeck Local Plan, and consulting on potential development sites when the future housing number for the town was presently unknown.

Attention was drawn to the Local Government Association's guide to publicity during the pre-election period, and it was again confirmed that the Steering Group, and its Task Teams, could continue to meet during this period, although a cautious approach was recommended in terms of launching new consultation exercises unless they were required to fulfil a statutory duty.

A discussion ensued during which comments were made that it would be prudent to provide a community update by way of an information drive, which should include the following information/updates:-

- An introduction to NPs, and the SNP Steering Group.
- A progress report on the process/development of the SNP to date, and proposed timeline.
- Detail what research/work had been undertaken by the Group – including what evidence had been gathered, key issues, and reports commissioned.
- Next steps, including future public engagement.

Consideration was then given to the draft SNP information slides pack which had been put together by Mrs Coney. Each slide was reviewed in turn, and amendments/additions made as appropriate.

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

That the amended draft of the SNP information slides pack be circulated to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Task Team Leads, for final review prior to being published.

It was noted that the finalised pack would be published on the Town Council's website, Facebook page, in the local press, and circulated to local community groups/organisations accordingly.

## **7) Task Teams**

### **a) Development Task Team (DTT) – to confirm date of next meeting to finalise potential development sites/opportunities list**

The next DTT meeting would be held on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024, at the Town Hall at 11.30 a.m.

### **b) Environment Task Team (ETT) - to confirm date of next meeting to review progress**

The next ETT meeting was pencilled in for 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024, this would be confirmed in due course.

## **8) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas**

There were no matters raised.

## **9) Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting would be scheduled in due course.

The Meeting was closed at 3.40 p.m.

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