

Minutes of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the
Swanage Town Council held at the Town Hall, High Street,
Swanage on **WEDNESDAY, 25th MAY 2022** at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor T. Foster (Town Mayor) – Chair

Councillor M.P. Bonfield

Councillor A. Harris

Councillor C. Moreton

Councillor N. Rogers

Councillor C. Tomes

Councillor W.S. Trite

Councillor M. Whitwam

There was one member of the public present at the Meeting.

24. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Bishop, Finch and Suttle. Councillor Monkhouse attended the meeting remotely.

25. **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.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

26. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2021/22**

(a) **Visit 5 of 5**

The fifth interim Internal Audit Report for the year 2021/22 prepared by Darkin-Miller – Chartered Accountants was presented. It was noted that one high priority and two low priority level recommendations had been made.

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

That the fifth interim Internal Audit Report 2021/22
and the recommendations contained therein be
accepted and approved.

(b) **Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22**

Consideration was given to the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2021/22, prepared by Darkin-Miller Chartered Accountants. The document provided background information and explanations regarding the recommendations and conclusions in respect of the Council's services, in accordance with the internal audit's objective to provide an appraisal function for the review of the Council's internal control system.

It was noted that the Audit Opinion concluded that the Council's 'central systems and internal control arrangements continue to be effective' and that the annual audit did not identify any significant control weaknesses for inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement.

Arising from the annual report, Members noted that the total number of appendix 9 recommendations made during the 2021/22 audit was 26, a decrease of 11 on the prior year. Two were graded 'high', eleven 'medium' and thirteen

'low' priority.

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

That the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22 and
the recommendations contained therein be accepted
and approved.

27. **SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2021/22**

In accordance with paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, a Report on the Findings of the Review of the System of Internal Control 2021/22 was submitted for consideration. This highlighted the important work of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee in considering the internal auditor's reports and taking measures to improve the System of Internal Control. It was proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Rogers, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Review of the System of Internal Control
2021/22 be approved and accepted.

28. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021/22**

(a) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement**

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

That the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 be
approved and signed.

(b) **Section 2 – Accounting Statements**

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

That the Accounting Statements be approved and
signed for submission to the Council's external auditor
with the Annual Governance & Accountability Return
2021/22.

29. **ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2021/22**

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

That the Annual Treasury Report 2021/22 be
approved and accepted.

30. **ADOPTION OF REVISED HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY – TO CONSIDER
RECOMMENDATION FROM MINUTE NO. 8 OF THE POLICY, FINANCE
AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH MAY
2022**

Further to Minute No. 8 of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee Meeting held on 11th May 2022, and Minute No. 15 of the Annual Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note setting out a summary of the Council's draft Health and Safety Policy. Members had also been issued with an electronic copy of the full document, which had been prepared in consultation with the Town Council's Health and Safety consultants, WorkNest (formerly Ellis Whittam). The briefing note highlighted some of the key changes, including the expansion of the Arrangements section which now incorporated guidance on a wider range of workplace risks.

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

That the revised Health and Safety Policy dated May
2022 be adopted with immediate effect.

31. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING
AGENDAS**

There were no matters raised.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by Councillor Harris, 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 9 and
10 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality.

32. **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, NORTHBROOK ROAD EAST – REQUEST FOR
DRAINAGE CONNECTIONS INTO ADJOINING TOWN COUNCIL
PROPERTY**

Further to Minute No. 189 of the Council Meeting held on 25th April 2022,
consideration was given to a briefing note setting out valuation advice received in
respect of requests from Barratt Homes in relation to new and/or improved drainage
connections across land under the management of the Town Council that are required to
facilitate their redevelopment of the former Grammar School site.

a) **Temporary connection via Lower Grammar School Field**

It was noted that the developers were seeking to regularise a temporary
connection already made into existing drains running across the Lower Grammar
School Field to the rear of St Mary's School. During the discussion consideration
was given to the possibility of the Town Council charging an administration fee,
in addition to recovering its costs for legal and valuation advice. It was proposed
by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Rogers and RESOLVED
UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council agrees to regularise the
temporary drainage connection via the Lower
Grammar School Field and accept the fee set out in
the valuation advice dated 20th May 2022, together
with an administration charge to be calculated by the
Town Clerk.

b) **Permanent connection to the Ulwell Stream via Journey's End**

Consideration was given to a proposal to upgrade existing surface water drainage
running under the cricket ground and across the northern section of Journey's
End, prior to entering the Ulwell Stream. During the debate, concerns were
expressed regarding the maintenance of the stream and the need for assurances
regarding the environmental impact of this proposal, in terms of both the volume
and quality of water to be discharged into the stream. It was proposed by
Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Harris and RESOLVED
UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the matter be deferred for further information
regarding the environmental impact of the proposal.

33. **COMMERCIAL PROPERTY RENT ARREARS – TO CONSIDER NEXT STEPS**

Further to Minute No. 162 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022 the Town Clerk provided a brief update on recent correspondence with the Council's legal advisers.

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee Meeting held on 9th March 2022 the Town Clerk updated Members regarding the options available for the recovery of rent arrears. It was AGREED:

That the Town Clerk should continue to act under delegated authority in the matter, having taken appropriate legal advice.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.
