

Minutes of the **MONTHLY MEETING** of the Swanage Town Council held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on **MONDAY, 16th DECEMBER 2019** at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor M.P. Bonfield – Chairman
Councillor C. Finch
Councillor T. Foster
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor D. Monkhouse
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor J. Page
Councillor N. Rogers
Councillor G. Suttle
Councillor W.S. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, approximately 50 members of the public attended the Meeting.

Reverend Martyn Needs, of the Pastorate of Swanage, Wareham and Skinner Street, Poole, United Reformed Churches, offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

Before opening the Meeting, the Chairman welcomed members of the public and read a short statement regarding the fire evacuation procedure, filming/audio recording etc. of the Meeting, and a summary of the procedure for Public Participation Time.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised during Public Participation Time:-

- **#Willdoes** - support for the #Willdoes charity, and a request made for the Town Council to favourably consider the application made for agreement in principle to be given to the charity to construct a community youth facility and boxing gym on part of Forres Field. It was noted that the aim of the charity was to raise awareness of the mental health and wellbeing of young persons, and to provide a safe and protected environment for young people to meet, socialise and take part in activities. Further supportive comments were made by pupils from local schools, a Cub Scout leader, and mental health professional.
- **Institute Road improvements** – comments and concerns raised by a number of local business owners regarding the upcoming improvement works including:
 - The removal of the loading bay in Institute Road and the potential issues for delivery drivers/deliveries.
 - The proposed new loading bay outside of the former Nat West Bank, and the impact that unloading deliveries may have on the pavement/café area outside the adjacent shops.
 - Possible pavement closures and potential reduction in footfall to shops in Institute Road.
 - Assurances sought regarding Dorset Council’s Traffic Regulation Order public consultation and related procedural matters.
 - Timing of the works given the impact on local businesses of the Sandbanks Ferry suspension earlier in the year.

- Comments that the current roadworks signage could give the impression to visitors that Swanage town centre was ‘closed’.
- Potential impact on town centre residents during the works.

The Chairman opened the Council Meeting at 7.25 p.m.

152. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for his inability to attend the Meeting was received from Councillor Tomes.

153. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 - 13 of the Council’s Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

(a) **Agenda Item No. 16** – Councillor Foster declared an interest under the Code of Conduct by reason of having recently undertaken freelance work for the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

(b) **Dispensation to Town Councillors in respect of setting the level of Members’ and Mayoral Allowances**

Consideration was given to Grant of a Dispensation to Town Councillors in respect of setting the level of Members’ and Mayoral Allowances. It was explained that the dispensation was being sought under the Code of Conduct by reason of Councillors being recipients of these allowances, and the dispensation would therefore be required to enable them to participate in any discussions/decisions made regarding this matter.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Rogers and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a dispensation be granted to all Town Councillors in respect of setting the level of Members’ Allowances, in order to ensure that meetings at which this matter is discussed remain quorate.

There were no other declarations to record on this occasion.

Further to Standing Order No. 12) a) viii, it was proposed by the Town Mayor and
AGREED:-

That Item 11 on the Agenda be brought forward to 3.

154. **#WILLDOES – REQUEST FROM LOCAL CHARITY FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO CONSTRUCT A COMMUNITY YOUTH FACILITY AND BOXING GYM ON PART OF FORRES FIELD**

Further to comments raised in Public Participation Time, consideration was given to a request received from #Willdoes, a charity which had been set up in memory of a local young man, William Paddy, ‘to help young people who may be finding life tough, struggling to cope with daily life’.

Members were in agreement that the Town Council should support and endorse the project, as it provided much needed community youth facilities, and would benefit the young people of Swanage, the skate park being an existing meeting place for young people which was adjacent to the proposed site for the new building.

During the ensuing discussion some concerns were expressed regarding encouraging young people to box, and comments were made that the proposal should be widened to other sports, and not just boxing. It was acknowledged that these were matters to be resolved at a later stage of project development.

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

That agreement in principle be given to the #Willdoes Charity to construct a community youth facility and boxing gym on part of Forres Field.

155. **MINUTES**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Harris and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on 25th November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

156. **TOURISM COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by the Town Mayor and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Tourism Committee held on 19th November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

Consideration was given to the following recommendation contained in the Minutes:-

12) **BUDGET 2020-21**

a) **Fees and Charges**

It was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Foster and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Purbeck Runners group be granted the ability to book their weekly training sessions at Beach Gardens Pavilion on an annual basis, with a 25% discount being applied to the total booking fee.

157. **ROADS AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Whitwam, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Roads and Transport Committee held on 27th November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

158. **PLANNING AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Rogers and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Consultation Committee held on 2nd December 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

159. **POLICY, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Finch and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 11th December 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

Consideration was given to the following recommendations contained in the Minutes:-

4. **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE DORSET PARISH INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

The dispensation granted to Councillors under Minute No. 153 (b) above was noted.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Trite and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, in recognition of the wide range of functions carried out by the Town Council, a Members' Allowance of 5% of Dorset Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances be adopted, level 4 on the Panel's recommendations, equating to £650 for the current year of office.

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

That the Chairman's Allowance be set at twice that of the Council's basic Members' Allowance.

Attention was then drawn to Minute No. 3 of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee Meeting held on 11th December 2019 and the Internal Audit Report 2019/20, Visit 2 of 6, 5th December 2019, point 3.1 – Error on minute date.

During the audit it had been identified that Minute No. 14 of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 13th May 2019 referred in error to the approval of the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29th April 2018. The Minutes being approved were from the Council Meeting held on 29th April 2019. It was recommended that this error was noted at the December 2019 Council Meeting in order to ensure that there was a complete record of the formal business and decisions of the Council.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That it is noted that Minute No. 14 of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 13th May 2019 should be amended to read:

14. **MINUTES**

(a) Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Whitwam and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on 29th April 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

160. **STATEMENT OF CASH BALANCE**

(a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th November 2019 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

161. **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Further to Minute No. 141 of the Council Meeting held on 25th November 2019, in accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Council's revised Financial Regulations Payment Schedule 9, amounting to £573,108.83, was submitted for information.

162. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Bonfield reported that in his capacity of Town Mayor he had attended the following events during the past month:-

- Swanage Christmas lights ‘switch-on’ event. Comments were made that good feedback had been received about the new lights and that they had enhanced the town.
- Swanage Town Carol Service at St Mary’s Church, along with Councillor Harris.

163. **REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS**

Updates were given on a number of matters including:-

- **Dorset Council** – it was reported that the Council was heading towards budget setting and it was confident of a balanced budget by end of March 2020.
- **Planning matters** – concerns raised regarding a planning application for a property on the Ballard Estate which had been submitted to Dorset Council in August 2019, on which a decision had not yet been made. Further concerns were raised regarding the reduction seen in planning cases being referred to the Eastern Area Planning Committee for consideration, and that site visits did not appear to be undertaken by the Committee on a regular basis.

Further to Minute No. 134 of the Council Meeting held on 25th November 2019 it was confirmed that letters had been sent to Dorset Council setting out the Town Council’s concerns regarding the existing planning consultation arrangements and approval process. If Councillors had any further concerns a request was made for these to be brought to the attention of the Planning and Consultation Committee for consideration at a future meeting accordingly.

- **Polling Stations** – further to Minute No. 143 of the Council Meeting held on 25th November 2019, it was reported that during the recent General Election a reduction in polling station numbers in the town had been seen. Councillor Trite would be taking up this matter with Dorset Council accordingly.

164. **APPROVAL OF AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES AND BANK MANDATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH REVISED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, ADOPTED 25TH NOVEMBER 2019**

Further to Minute No. 141 of the Council Meeting held on 25th November 2019, in accordance with Section 5.5 of the revised Financial Regulations, Council was invited to approve the bank mandate.

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

To confirm the appointment of the Town Clerk, Finance Manager, and Finance Assistant as authorised signatories in respect of the Town Council’s bank accounts and associated financial transactions.

165. **WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

(a) **Appointment of Tourism Website and Marketing Working Party**

Further to Minute No. 5 of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on 19th November 2019, and Minute No. 144 c) of the Council Meeting held on 25th November 2019, consideration was given to the establishment of a working party to explore all options and costs for a new tourism website for Swanage, and consideration of a marketing strategy.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Harris and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That a working party be formed consisting of Councillors Finch, Foster, Harris, Page, Tomes and Whitwam.

166. **INSTITUTE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS – UPDATE AND CONSIDERATION OF REPRESENTATION FROM CONCERNED BUSINESS OWNERS**

Further to Minute No. 5 b) i) of the Roads and Transport Committee Meeting held on 27th November 2019, and comments and concerns raised during Public Participation Time, consideration was given to a letter of representation dated 9th December 2019 received from concerned business owners.

It was reported that answers to the questions and concerns raised in the letter had been provided by Dorset Highways, a copy of which was circulated to the Town Council and members of public in attendance for information purposes.

The Town Mayor then gave an overview of the timeline of the project and consultation process from March 2016 to December 2019. Dorset Council was committed to commencing the improvement works on 6th January 2020. Comments were made that funding could possibly be withdrawn if the works did not go ahead as planned.

The Town Council fully appreciated the difficulties faced by local businesses during the past year due to the suspension of the Sandbanks Ferry service for a lengthy period, and their concerns would be brought to the attention of Dorset Council's Cabinet Member for Highways. Reassurance would be sought regarding the timescale of the works, and that these would be undertaken as quickly as possible, with the aim of reducing the duration of the disruption and maintaining pavement access to town centre businesses. Councillor Suttle, as Dorset Councillor, confirmed that he would discuss these concerns with the portfolio holder.

Councillors were in agreement that it would be important to undertake some positive marketing during the works, which brought the opportunity to reduce risk and provide an enhanced shopping experience to residents and visitors alike in the future.

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

That the Town Council writes to the Head of Highways, Dorset Council, advising that it is in support of the project, but requesting assurance that disruption to local businesses will be minimised, and emphasising the urgency for completion of the works.

At 8.20 p.m. the Town Mayor invoked Standing Order No.1 p. to briefly suspend the Meeting so as to allow members of the public to address the Town Council and respond to questions regarding/relevant to agenda item 12.

167. **DORSET POLICE – UPDATE FOLLOWING RECENT MEETINGS AND CONSIDERATION OF SUGGESTED PRIORITIES FOR THE LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM**

An overview of recent meetings with the new Neighbourhood Inspector was provided. It was reported that the Inspector was particularly keen to undertake community engagement, attend meetings, and meet with Town Councillors on a regular basis. An invitation had also been extended to Councillors to accompany the Purbeck Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) on patrol.

Members were invited to contribute to the setting of priorities for the NPT on a monthly basis. These were currently drugs, criminal damage, and speeding.

Councillors were in agreement that the Inspector and his team should be invited to a future Council Meeting to give a presentation, which would also provide the Council with an opportunity to undertake a 'Q & A' session with the team.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Suttle and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That delegated authority be given to officers to liaise with the Inspector on a monthly basis regarding the Council's policing priorities.

168. **SUSTAINABLE SWANAGE – UPDATE**

An overview was provided of a detailed briefing note prepared by the Visitor Services Manager (VSM) titled ‘Sustainable Swanage: Review of activities and aspirations so far’, which set out actions undertaken by the group to date, its aims and objectives, and listed its achievements so far which included:

- ‘Plastic free’ status for the town.
- The trial of a winter market.
- A new Facebook page which already had 260+ followers, and a mailing list with 70+ subscribers who received regular updates from the group.
- Engagement with local schools.
- Establishment of the ‘Greening Swanage’ sub group, which had been set up to increase bio-diversity and plant trees in the town.
- Swanage Information Centre had been set up as a recycling point for difficult to recycle items, and a list had been compiled detailing where items could be recycled in Swanage.

Membership of the group was made up of a number of local organisations and interested parties, including representatives of the Town Council, Litter Free Coast and Sea, and Swanage and District Chamber of Trade.

Comments were made that the group had achieved so much in such a short time, and thanks were given to the VSM for the informative and detailed briefing note.

169. **WINTER MARKET – UPDATE AND AMENDED PROPOSALS**

Further to Minute No. 93 of the Council Meeting held on 16th September 2019, consideration was given to a briefing note dated December 2019 prepared by the VSM which provided an update on the winter market, which had now been up and running for approximately six weeks, and setting out a proposed amendment to the licence agreement.

It was explained that the original approved charging structure had been based on the size of the stall, however, this had proved difficult to administer and, in consultation with the Mayor and Town Clerk, it had been agreed that a single fee of £230 would be charged to each stallholder for the period November to March.

The amendment to the licence agreement had been highlighted by the Council’s Internal Auditor during a recent audit, and Members were therefore being requested to retrospectively approve this amendment accordingly.

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

That the amendment to the winter market licence agreement be approved and a single charge of £230 be made for the period November 2019 to March 2020.

170. **CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND (CPRE) – TO CONSIDER SUBSCRIPTION**

Consideration was given to an email dated 12th December 2019 received from the CPRE’s membership support team outlining the benefits of membership of CPRE, which included access to planning advice. Details of member benefits were also provided on CPRE’s website: www.dorset-cpre.org.uk. The annual membership fee for town councils was currently £36.00 per annum.

Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Page and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Town Council becomes a member of the Campaign to Protect of Rural England.

171. **SWANAGE BOWLING CLUB – APPROVAL OF DRAWDOWN OF FUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO GREEN SURROUNDS AND FENCING**

Further to Minute No. 165 of the Council Meeting held on 27th November 2017 consideration was given to a briefing note dated December 2019 prepared by the Town Clerk setting out details of the proposed improvements to be made to the surrounds of the bowling green and boundary fencing by Swanage Bowling Club, and a request for the drawdown of funds to cover the costs of the proposed works. A budget allocation of £45,000 was set out in the Council's capital programme for the current financial year.

Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Finch and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council authorises the payment of a capital grant of £33,183 to Swanage Bowling Club to cover the cost of the improvements to the Bowling Green surrounds and installation of new boundary fencing.

172. **REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

173. **REPORTING OF DELEGATED MATTERS**

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

174. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**
Matters for forthcoming agendas

- (a) **Future of NHS dental services in Swanage - Update** – there was no update to be given at this time.
- (b) **CAB Purbeck Branch Constitutional Changes – Update** – further to Minute No. 124 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 28th October 2019, it was reported that Dorset Council's legal officer had confirmed that the changes made to CAB's Constitution had raised no cause for concern with the Council.
- (c) **Wellbeing Swanage – Future discussions re. delivery of wellbeing services in Swanage** – it was reported that at a recent meeting of Swanage2027 attention was drawn to the need to ensure a joined-up approach to assets and services across the Town Council, Dorset Council, Swanage Health Centre and Swanage Hospital, and a round table meeting, to include the Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust, would therefore be arranged in due course.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Harris, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -

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 item 21 for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

175. **PROCUREMENT OF BUILDING WORKS VIA DORSET PROPERTY MINOR WORKS FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT**

- (a) **Alterations to North Beach Public Toilets**
- (b) **Town Hall Annexe Repairs**
- (c) **Shore Road Beach Hut Door Replacement**
- (d) **Godlingston Chapel Structural Repairs**

Further to approval of outline budget costs for the above projects at the meeting of the General Operations Committee held on 13th November 2019 (Minute Nos 5.c. and 7.b. refer), Members received a report from Dorset Property setting out contract sums for the proposed works calculated in line with the schedule of rates costs contained in the Minor and Small Capital Works Framework Agreement.

After due consideration it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Foster, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Town Council awards the contract for the above works to Blacknoll Ltd under the Minor and Small Capital Works Framework Agreement in the contract sum of £80,597.70, as set out in the e-mail from Dorset Property dated 11th December 2019.

The meeting concluded at 8.50 p.m.
