

Minutes of the Meeting of the **GENERAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2016 at 4.30 p.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor J Bishop

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Finch

Swanage Town Council

Councillor G Green

Swanage Town Council

Councillor A Harris

Swanage Town Council

Councillor G Marsh

Swanage Town Council

Councillor S Poultney

Swanage Town Council

Also present: -

Councillor W Trite

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Whitwam

Swanage Town Council

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Mr G Brookes

Operations Manager

Mrs L Burgess

Senior Administration and Finance Officer

Miss C Johnston

Operations Department Administration Officer

Mr M Green

James Smith Funeral Directors

Mr T Bennett

Prospect Allotment Association
(until 4.50 p.m.)

Mrs S Powell

Prospect Allotment Association
(until 4.50 p.m.)

Public Participation Time

There were no members of the public present.

1. Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Lejeune and Mr A Lander (Fishermen's Association).

2. 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.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

The dispensation granted to Councillor Green in respect of Cemetery Matters was noted.

3. Matters Arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the General Operations Committee held on 20th July 2016

Arising from Minute No. 5 (a), it was noted that no further information was available regarding the possibility of contracting out burial services at weekends.

4. Allotment Matters

a) Matters raised by the Allotment Association.

i) Speed restrictions

A request was received from the representative of the Allotment Association for a 5mph speed restriction to be installed along the allotment road and also requested that humps be placed along the road to try to combat speeding. The representative reported that there had been two complaints received recently regarding speeding vehicles. Consideration was given to the request and a suggestion was put forward for speed restriction signs to be installed. The Operations Manager advised that allotment works were not yet completed, and that future consideration would be given to this request.

ii) Seaweed provision and non-residents

A request was received from the representative of the Allotment Association for a regular delivery of seaweed to the allotments, which would be of particular benefit to the elderly plot holders. The Clerk reported that this request had previously been considered at the General Operations Committee meeting held on 2nd July 2014 (See Minute 3 4. a). Environmental issues were further discussed with regard to the smell generated from rotting seaweed, the attraction of rodents and associated storage problems. It was agreed that the Allotment Association representative would discuss possibilities with the Town Council's Operations Manager.

iii) Availability of allotments for non-residents

The availability of some allotment plots was reported, and consideration was given to the possibility of extending the tenancy agreement to allow these vacant plots to be allocated to non-residents. It was agreed that further consideration be given to this suggestion at the spring committee meeting.

It was further suggested that the availability of vacant allotments be advertised at the Prospect allotment site and also through social media.

A request for more frequent allotment inspections was also noted.

5. Cemetery Matters

a) Matters raised by James Smith Funeral Directors

i) Meadowland burial ground

Consideration was given to concerns regarding the condition of the Meadowland burial area at Godlingston. It was acknowledged that the planned wildflower meadow had not developed as envisaged due to environmental factors. Remedial action by the planting of wildflower turves had helped to improve the situation.

During the ensuing discussion, the need to retain the area for natural burials in Swanage was agreed, but it was proving difficult to promote this facility to bereaved families due to the condition of the land. The Operations Manager confirmed that he would continue to monitor the Meadowland, and that a budget had been allocated for improvements.

It was RESOLVED:-

To retain and improve the Meadowland area.

6. Fishermens Huts and Jetties

a) Matters raised by Swanage Fishermen's Association

There were no matters raised by the Swanage Fishermen's Association.

b) The Town Clerk reported on the FLAG (Fishermans Local Action Group) and the presentation regarding the possibility of euro funding. Issues had been highlighted regarding cold storage for the catch.

7. Budget Setting 2017/18

a) Capital Programme Monitoring and Plans for 2017/18

Consideration was given to the Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2016/17 and the proposed capital programme for 2017/18.

During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that budget provision had been included in the capital programme 2016/17 for works to the Stone Quay. These works had not been undertaken during the current financial year, but provision for these and additional works required following the recent storms, had been carried forward to 2017/18.

Other items highlighted included:-

- Re-allocation of budget re changing facilities at Forres Field.
- Proposed refurbishment of toilets at King Georges Field/Main Beach Car Park.
- Improvement to public address system in the Council Chamber.

Following further discussion, it was AGREED:-

That a Workshop be held for members of the General Operations Committee to prioritise the most urgent projects for progression included within the Capital Programme.

b) Review of Operations Budgets

Comprehensive details of the current operations budgets and the projected out-turn for 2016/17 were submitted.

Members noted the information.

c) Scale of Charges 2017/18

A draft Scale of Charges was submitted for consideration prior to the budget setting process for 2017/18.

During the ensuing discussion, a question was raised regarding the fees charged for the use of the football pitches/changing facilities at King George's Field/Forres Field and the process and frequency of collecting the fees. The possibility of introducing an annual charge was mooted.

Consideration was then given to the costs generated by users of Council-owned land for public events i.e. Prince Albert Gardens, Sandpit Field etc. and the possibility of introducing a nominal charge to cover these costs was suggested.

Following further discussion, it was AGREED:-

That no charges be levied for the use of Council-owned land for public events in 2017/18, and that consideration be given to the possible introduction of an appropriate fee in the future.

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

That the draft Scale of Charges be taken forward to the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee Meeting scheduled to be held on 14th December 2016 and considered further during the budget setting process for 2017/18.

8. Operations Manager's report

- **Health & Safety report**

The Operations Manager provided an update on health and safety matters at work, and reported that there had been only one injury recorded in the last quarter. No RIDDOR (Reporting Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) incidents had occurred and there were no near misses. It was reported there had been, in total, 350 working days lost due to sickness which was mainly recovery from operations.

Health & Safety risk assessments had been updated and tool box talks were on-going. Annual fire safety training had been arranged for all available council staff on the 13th December 2016.

- **Update on contracts issued and agreed works**

The contract works on the war memorial had been completed as per the contract specification. The new Eastgate seating and the British Legion stone seat had also been installed.

- **Tourist Information Centre refurbishment**

A contractual pre-site meeting had taken place on 16th November. The building was handed over to the contractor on the 21st November for pre-site inspections and set up. Works were due to commence on the 29th November with a completion date of 27th March 2017. As part of CDM (Construction, Design and Management) nobody would be permitted on site without permission.

- **Town Hall**

Works were due to commence on the external redecoration and repairs to the Town Hall. A pre-start contractual meeting had been arranged for 24th November to discuss the erection of scaffolding, site set up and the commencement date of works. Parking restrictions would apply within the Town Hall car park.

- **Tennis Courts 4 & 5 resurfacing works**

Works had been completed within the budget and on time.

- **Installation of artificial playing surfaces for tennis courts 1 & 2**

Works were progressing well. The first snagging meeting took place on 23rd November and another meeting was scheduled in three weeks' time. It was hoped that the courts would be available for use week commencing 28th November.

- **CCTV update**

The upgrade had been completed on budget and within the timescale. It was suggested that consideration be given to the installation of additional cameras and a budget allowance made accordingly.

- **Reinstatement of Coastwatch Path at Peveril Point**

Works to reinstate the path to the Coastwatch building and general maintenance works to the area had been completed.

- **Prospect Allotments**
Road repairs had now been completed and road safety “slow down” lettering would be installed shortly.
- **Day’s Park & St Mary’s School**
Works were progressing for the provision of a pathway in agreement with Dorset County Council, and should be completed during the week commencing 28th November.
- **Storm Damage (Storm Angus)**
Clean up works had taken place on the morning of 20th November and a number of council staff and vehicles deployed. An on-going assessment of the sea wall and repairing obligations was being undertaken by Purbeck District Council.
- **Christmas events**
The lighting up of the Christmas tree was scheduled to take place on the 26th November and the Christmas market would be held on the 3rd December.
- **Vandalism**
Reported incidents of vandalism:
 - Graffiti attacks on the shelters at Shore Road
 - Fire damage to shelter seats
 - Damaged fencing at King George’s
 - Broken play equipment at Days Park & Kings George’s
 - Broken retaining hooks on beach huts at Shore Road
 - Two damaged warm air dryers in toilets

Dog Foulin

Dog fouling in the town continued to be a problem.

- **General work**
General ground works and repairing maintenance were on-going.

In noting the Operations Manager’s Report, Members wished to express their appreciation of the sterling work undertaken by the Council’s workforce following ‘Storm Angus’.

9. Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

It was suggested that a report on vandalism be produced to highlight issues to local residents.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Wednesday, 5th April 2017 at 4.30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 5.55 p.m.

