

Minutes of the **EXTRAORDINARY MEETING** of the
Swanage Town Council held at the Swanage School, High Street,
Swanage on **MONDAY, 26th SEPTEMBER 2022** at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor T. Foster– Chair

Councillor M.P. Bonfield
Councillor C. Finch
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor D. Monkhouse
Councillor N. Rogers
Councillor G.M. Suttle
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor W. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, one member of the public and one member of the local press attended the Meeting.

Before opening the meeting, the Mayor paid tribute to her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, and concluded with the statement ‘God Save the King’.

Public Participation Time

The following matter was raised:-

- **Future of Swanage-based Ambulance Car** – it was noted that although the news in March 2022, concerning the retention of the car, had been welcomed, concerns remained over the current staffing levels and the impact of this on response times.

The Chair opened the Council Meeting at 7.05 p.m.

70. **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Moreton (Deputy Mayor) and Councillor Bishop.

71. **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.

72. **Minutes**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor Trite, seconded by Councillor Whitwam, and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held
on 11th July 2022 be approved as a correct record and
signed.

Further to Minute No. 54 of the Council Meeting held on 11th July 2022, a query was raised as to whether the Planning and Consultation Committee had reviewed the new PSPO document and made representation to Dorset Council regarding the inclusion of Swanage within the document. It was agreed that this item would be included on the

agenda for the next meeting of the Planning and Consultation Committee to be held on Monday 3rd October 2022.

- (b) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tomes and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

73. **Planning and Consultation Committee**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Whitwam and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee held on 1st August 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.
- (b) In considering acceptance of the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 5th September 2022, attention was drawn to comments made by members of the public raising concerns regarding the proposed redevelopment of garages at 4 Hillview Road that did not appear in the minutes. Subject to an amendment to the Minutes being made to include a summary of those comments, it was Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Trite and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee held on 5th September 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

74. **Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Whitwam and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 27th July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

- 4) **Weekly charge for lower-level Shore Road Beach Huts**
It was proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Finch:-
That the charge of £25.00 per weekly booking of a lower-level Shore Road beach hut, between 17th September 2022 and 31st March 2023, be retrospectively agreed.

Upon being put to the Meeting, NINE Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition, and there was ONE ABSENTION, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

- 6) **Revised Members' and Officers' Protocol**
During consideration of this item a brief discussion took place regarding the appropriate way of referring to the person chairing a meeting, given that the draft protocol asked those attending meetings to refer to the Chair. It was suggested that Members in the chair should have the right to be addressed as they prefer, whether Chair, Chairman, Chairwoman or Chairperson. Subject to an amendment to the draft Members' and Officers' Protocol to

include those options when referring to the person chairing a meeting, it was proposed by Councillor Trite and seconded by Councillor Bonfield:-

That the Revised Members' and Officers' Protocol be adopted.

Upon being put to the Meeting, EIGHT Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition, and there were TWO ABSENTIONS, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

7) **Members' Code of Conduct – Amendment to Section 2**

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

That the revisions to Section 2 of the Members' Code of Conduct be accepted.

(b) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tomes and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 7th September 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

75. **Statement of Cash Balance**

- (a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 31st July 2022 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).
- (b) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 31st August 2022 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

76. **Payment of Accounts**

In accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Council's Financial Regulations, the following Payment Schedules were submitted for information:-

- Payment Schedule 4, amounting to £265,220.17
- Payment Schedule 5, amounting to £200,591.82

77. **Chairman's Announcements**

It was reported by Councillor Foster that she had attended the following events as Town Mayor since the Council meeting held on 11th July 2022:

- Swanage Regatta and Carnival
- Opening of Herston Halt Pond
- Lifeboat week
- Service to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Swanage bombing raids
- Tennis Court opening
- Trevor Chadwick statue unveiling
- Burlington Chine Public Conveniences public meeting
- Folk Festival
- Proclamation at the Bandstand.

The Town Mayor also wished to record her thanks to Councillor Moreton for his support as Deputy Mayor during this busy period.

78. **Revised Committee Structure**

Further to Minute No. 3 of the Meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 7th September 2022, and a briefing paper prepared by the Town Clerk, consideration was given to a recommendation that a revised committee

structure be approved, with the arrangements to be reviewed in April 2023. The aim of better aligning the committees with allocated budgets and corporate objectives was noted. During the ensuing discussion the importance of a committee, or advisory committee, to discuss roads and traffic management was highlighted. Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Rogers:-

That the revised committee structure, membership and chairmanship of the committees be approved (as set out below), with the arrangements to be reviewed in April 2023 by the Finance and Governance Committee, as set out in the briefing paper.

Upon being put to the Meeting, EIGHT Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition, and there were TWO ABSENTIONS, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED:

That a revised schedule of Council and Committee meetings for the period October 2022-July 2023 be approved.

List of Committees (Chairs/Chairmen/women in bold)

Community Services Committee (formerly General Operations Committee)
Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bishop, **Bonfield**, Finch, Harris, Monkhouse and Tomes.

Environment Committee (new)

Town Mayor, **Deputy Mayor** and Councillors Harris, Monkhouse, Rogers, Trite, Tomes and Whitwam.

Finance and Governance Committee (formerly Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee)

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bishop, Bonfield, Harris, Trite, Tomes and Whitwam.

Personnel Committee (unchanged)

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Harris and **Trite**.

Planning and Consultation Committee (unchanged)

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Finch, **Harris**, Rogers and Whitwam.

Tourism and Local Economy (formerly Tourism Committee)

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bonfield, Finch, **Tomes** and Whitwam.

Beach Management Advisory Committee (unchanged)

Councillors **Bonfield**, Finch and Tomes.

Traffic Management Advisory Committee (new)

Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Bishop, Monkhouse and **Whitwam**.

It was noted that arrangements in respect of the Town Council's two Sub-Committees would continue unchanged, although the Capital Projects Sub-Committee would now report to the Finance & Governance Committee.

79. **To receive the external auditor report and certificate 2021/22**

It was reported that the Town Council had received the External Auditor Report and Certificate for the 2021/22 financial year, confirming that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return had been completed 'in accordance with Proper Practices' and that no other matters had been identified 'giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met'. Thanks were extended to the Council's Finance Manager, Alison Spencer, for her hard work. It was AGREED:-

That the Town Council notes receipt of the external auditor report and certificate from PKF Littlejohn LLP for the year ended 31st March 2022 and that no further action is required.

80. **Working Party Matters**

(a) **Environmental Policy and Action Plan– Update**

Further to a briefing paper prepared by the Visitor Services and Business Development Manager, dated September 2022, it was reported that CO2 Target were developing a 'Carbon Neutral Strategy' to provide the Council with a costed programme for achieving carbon neutrality, in terms of energy use, by 2030. The consultant had informed the working party about the SALIX grant process and emphasised that the deadline for the initial stage had been brought forward to w/c 26th September. It was noted that the grant applications would be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis and, therefore, the information required for the application would need to be ready.

During the ensuing discussion a question was raised regarding the likely financial contribution required from the Town Council. The initial assumption regarding the cost of changes to Council-owned sites to become carbon neutral was circa £900,000, however, if the Council were successful in obtaining the SALIX grant the amount would be match-funded, leaving a total of circa £450,000 to be funded over several years. It was noted that the final report would contain further detail regarding costs per annum and confirmed that the lodging of a grant application would not result in a commitment to proceed. Further to discussion Members felt that there was no reason not to apply at this stage and therefore:-

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

That delegated authority be provided to officers to submit a SALIX grant application.

The Mayor thanked the Visitor Services and Business Development Manager for his hard work.

81. **Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) Annual General Meeting Saturday 19th November 2022 – To consider whether to propose any motions for consideration by the executive committee– Call for Motions for consideration at AGM**

Members were invited to put forward a motion for consideration at the DAPTC AGM in November. In response, it was suggested that concerns about access to healthcare in rural areas could be submitted as an item. In light of the short timescale in which to submit a proposal it was suggested that delegated authority be provided to officers to work on the proposal.

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

That delegated authority be given to officers to work with interested Members to submit a motion to DAPTC for consideration at the AGM on Saturday 19th November 2022.

82. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

Councillors Suttle and Trite provided updates on matters that included the revised timescale for the preparation of the Dorset Local Plan and the budget deficit currently facing Dorset Council. Councillor Suttle was thanked for his work as the Portfolio Holder for Finance.

83. **Reports from Council representatives on outside organisations**

(a) **Purbeck Community Rail Partnership**

It was reported that a new Rail Officer had been appointed and that a Roads and Rail inspection was due to take place in November, which would form part of the assessment on the suitability to run the trial service to Wareham in 2023. It was noted that the 'Flying Scotsman' train would be in operation in Swanage over the October half term.

(b) **Chamber of Trade**

Concerns were raised over the reduction of ATM cash machines, following the closure of Lloyds Bank, and it was reported that the recent intermittent internet connection issues had also caused traders disruption to online payment methods. It was reported that the 'Business Awards' were being launched at an upcoming Chamber of Trade meeting to promote Purbeck businesses.

(c) **Swanage Regatta & Carnival**

A record number of visitors were reported, with many attendees delighted to see the Lancaster plane fly over the bay. The Enforcement Officers, Depot and Tourist Information staff were praised for the cleanliness of the town, their professional manner, and response to situations as they arose. The Operations Manager and Visitor Services and Business Development Manager were also congratulated for working closely with the Carnival Committee to provide a smooth operation.

(d) **Swanage Community Housing Group**

It was reported that, through joint working between the Town Council and Dorset Council, and with the assistance of Dorset Councillors, a first affordable homes build site could be announced shortly.

(e) **Dorset Coast Forum**

It was reported that the Dorset Coast Forum conference, held at Kingston Maurwood, had been well attended and had been beneficial in establishing new contacts, especially in relation to the Swanage Seafront Masterplan.

84. **Reporting of delegated matters**

- (a) Further to Minute No. 5 of the Meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee held on 7th September 2022, it was reported that the Town Council had renewed its contract for the supply of gas with Green Energy UK. The impact of the government's energy cap on local council contracts was as yet unclear, but the importance of avoiding out-of-contract charges was noted.

85. **Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas.**

- (a) **Civility and Respect Pledge** – information was provided regarding an initiative being promoted by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks to encourage councils to demonstrate their commitment to measures which support civil and respectful conduct. It was noted that prior to signing the pledge Council's were being asked to consider introducing a Dignity at Work Policy and this would be considered at a forthcoming meeting of the Personnel Committee.
- (b) **Future of Swanage-based Ambulance Car – Update** - it was reported that a response had been received from SWAST to the Town Council's Freedom of Information Request regarding local ambulance response times in the first half of 2022. Some concern was expressed about the limited support that the ambulance

car could provide for local GPs whilst staff shortages remained. It was suggested that a further such request should be lodged in January to obtain data for the latter half of 2022.

- (c) **A & E Local – Update** – attention was drawn to ongoing efforts to ensure that Dorset Council uses its statutory powers to protect A&E services at Poole Hospital in accordance with assurances provided as part of the clinical services review.
- (d) **Wellbeing Swanage – Update** – a report was provided regarding various initiatives being pursued by Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust (S&PDT), including the work of the Cost of Living group. It was reported that a meeting between representatives of Dorset Council, the Town Council and S&PDT regarding the future operation of the Day Centre and Children’s Centre would take place in early October.
- (e) **ATM provision following bank branch closures** – concern was expressed regarding the impact on local residents and businesses of the loss of ATM provision following the closure of local bank branches. It was noted that the Cash Action Group, which includes banking industry representatives and the ATM network Link, had announced that Swanage would see the installation of an unmanned withdrawal and deposit machine, although details were as yet unclear. During the discussion concern was also expressed regarding the impact of solar flares on the functioning of the banking system. This matter was referred to the Community Emergency Plan Steering Group.
- (f) **Shore Road Experimental Closure Order – Update** – it was reported that Dorset Council had now introduced an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order to keep the gated section of Shore Road closed to traffic this winter. Local residents were encouraged to comment either in support or against this measure via Dorset Council’s website. The initial phase of consultation would close on 3rd November.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Bonfield 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 6 to 8 for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

86. **Procurement**

- (a) **To approve purchase of new grounds maintenance vehicles/equipment**
Further to discussion at the Capital Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 7th September 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Operations Manager which set out a recommendation relating to the procurement of three pieces of grounds maintenance equipment. In accordance with Financial Regulations three quotes had been obtained for each item.
It was noted that the purpose of the acquisition was to enable a wide range of grounds maintenance works to be undertaken in a more effective and flexible manner, in turn delivering significant efficiency savings.
The Sub-Committee had recommended that a tractor and mower be purchased in the current financial year and that the purchase of a frontloader attachment for the tractor be incorporated into the budgets for 2023/24. It was noted that the purchase would be part funded by the disposal of four existing items of grounds maintenance equipment to supplement sums allocated in the 2022/23 capital programme and earmarked reserves.

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

That the Council should purchase a John Deere
4066m compact utility tractor MY20 and a Trimax
S2 320 mower from Hunt Forest Group Ltd in the
sum of £55,200.

(b) To award contract for the design, specification and production of a tender package in respect of Highway and Ground Stabilisation Works, Peveril Point Road

Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Operations Manager, which set out the procurement process that had been followed to identify a suitably qualified consultant to prepare the design and specification of highway and ground stabilisation works required to Peveril Point Road. The consultant would also be required to prepare a tender pack for the procurement process to recruit contractors to deliver the project. It was reported that six companies had been invited to provide a quotation for this work.

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

That WSP be appointed to prepare the design and
specification of highway and ground stabilisation
works required to Peveril Point Road, together with
a tender package, in the sum of £30,000.

87. To consider proposal from Jurassic Fibre to install an Exchange Cabin at North Beach Car Park to support Full Fibre to the Premises rollout

It was reported that the Town Council had been approached by Jurassic Fibre Ltd to explore the possibility of installing an exchange cabin adjoining the Coastguard Station at North Beach Car Park. Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Town Clerk which set out details of the proposal, together with concerns that had been raised by the local Coastguard team.

During the discussion, Members requested further information about the company's proposals and how they would benefit local residents. It was suggested that they might make a presentation to a future Council meeting and **AGREED:**

That this item be deferred for further consideration
at a future meeting.

The Meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.
