

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on
MONDAY, 25th APRIL 2022 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor A. Harris – Chair

Councillor M.P. Bonfield

Councillor T. Foster

Councillor C. Moreton

Councillor N. Rogers

Councillor G. Suttle

Councillor C. Tomes

Councillor W. Trite

Councillor M. Whitwam

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

Dorset Police – Police and Crime Commissioner David Sidwick (PCC), introduced himself to the meeting and provided a presentation on the Police and Crime Plan 2021/29, its six priorities and themes, its vision: to make Dorset the safest county, and its values: justice, fairness, community and respect. The presentation also included an overview of the role and responsibilities of a PCC. It was noted that Dorset was one of the safest counties in the UK in which to live. Further details could be found on the Dorset Police website: [Police and Crime Plan for Dorset · Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner \(pcc.police.uk\)](https://www.pcc.police.uk)

Attendees then had the opportunity for a ‘question and answer’ session, during which a number of comments and concerns were raised regarding instances of anti-social behaviour which had recently been experienced in the town, whether the local Police team had any future plans for engagement with the town’s young people, and also regarding the recent changes to policing in the Purbeck area. PCC Sidwick made a note of these questions and concerns accordingly.

The Town Mayor gave thanks to PCC Sidwick for taking the time to attend the meeting and for the informative presentation.

PCC Sidwick left the Meeting at 7.25 p.m.

Major Katrina Greetham, The Salvation Army, then offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Council Meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised:-

- Congratulations were extended to the Town Council for its ‘first class’ parks and play areas, and a question raised as to whether provision of a temporary sports hall could be considered to facilitate indoor sports/activities, e.g. table tennis, whilst the Day’s Park sports hall was closed.
- **Swanage Skate Park** – Mrs Lorna Haines was excited to report that the last phase of the project was nearing installation. The final piece of equipment had been fabricated and galvanised and would be installed during the summer. It was reported that this was a bespoke piece of kit to be proud of for the town’s young people.

The Town Council gave thanks to Mrs Haines for the many years of hard work and tireless fundraising she had undertaken regarding this project.

- **Grazing land at corner of Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road, and former Depot/Kings Court, Kings Road West** – it was noted that Town Councillors had received copies of an email from a local resident raising comments and concerns regarding the possible future use of the grazing land, and former Depot/Kings Court. These matters would be discussed under Agenda Items 16 (a) and (b).

The Chair opened the Council Meeting at 7.30 p.m.

172. **Apologies**

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

(a) **To consider request from Councillor Finch for leave of absence for a period of six months**

Consideration was given to a request for a leave of absence for up to six months due to family circumstances, set out in an email from Councillor Finch dated 30th March 2022.

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

That the Town Council authorises the request from Councillor Finch for a leave of absence for a period of up to six months with effect from 25th April 2022.

It was noted that Councillor Finch's apologies would be reported to all meetings during this period, although she remained able to attend if she felt able to do so.

173. **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.

Agenda Item No. 11 – Councillor Suttle declared a pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct by reason of having a potential business association with any future concessionaire.

There were no other declarations to record on this occasion.

174. **Minutes**

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

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

That the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 4th April 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

175. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the following Committee Meetings, and consider the recommendations contained therein**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Foster and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on 29th March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

- (b) Proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by the Town Mayor and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the General Operations Committee Meeting held on 30th March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

13. **Request by Greengage Nursery for a new access onto Prospect Green**

Proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Tomes and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That permission be granted for the installation of a gate linking Prospect Nursery to the adjoining Green, subject to it remaining locked when not in active use by the Greengage Community Garden Group.

- (c) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Foster and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 4th April 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.
- (d) Proposed by Councillor Whitwam, seconded by the Town Mayor and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Roads and Transport Committee Meeting held on 6th April 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.
- (e) It was reported that consideration of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Consultation Committee held on 22nd April 2022 would be deferred until the next scheduled Council Meeting.

176. **To receive reports from the following Working Party Meetings**

- (a) **Seafront Masterplan – To consider draft specification for appointment of consultant to prepare Seafront Strategy and allocation of budget**

Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Visitor Services Manager (VSM) setting out details of discussions and actions undertaken to date by the working party, which included the creation of a draft brief for development of a Masterplan for Swanage Seafront. It was anticipated that the Masterplan would be a ‘vision’ for the seafront, and would identify how different areas might be utilised, and what type of investment would be required to achieve a seafront that better met the needs of residents and visitors alike. In order to bring in a different perspective, together with additional skills and expertise in this field, and to maximise the chances that a Masterplan would be delivered in advance of budget setting for 2023/24, it was recommended that a consultancy be procured to assist in the process.

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

That the Town Council approves a tender process for the procurement of a Seafront Masterplan consultancy,

as outlined in the VSM's briefing note and the draft brief for development of a Seafront Masterplan for Swanage Seafront, and sets aside a budget of up to £15,000 for this work.

(b) **Events**

(i) **To consider schedule of event requests**

Further to Minute No. 142 (d) of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022 consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the VSM which set out details of two additional requests for events for 2022. Provisional approval was being sought from the Town Council to allow event organisers to start the planning process.

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

That the Town Council provides provisional approval for the requests from event organisers for 2022, for the use of Council-owned land, as set out in Appendix 1 of the VSM's briefing note dated April 2022, subject to adherence to government guidance for public events and the Town Council's requirement to demonstrate compliance therewith, including submission of the required documentation at the appropriate time.

(ii) **To consider event organiser requests regarding future use of single-use plastic**

Further to Minute No. 142 (d) of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the VSM setting out the outcome of the review of the Town Council's single-use plastic policy for events which had been undertaken by the Events Working Party, and also a request for approval to purchase reusable cups to be sold on a 'sale or return' basis to events by Swanage Information Centre. It was proposed that the 'Swanage cup' would be simply branded, and it was noted that some event organisers had already expressed an interest in purchasing cups from the Town Council.

In light of the review, a number of recommendations had been set out in points 3.1 to 3.4 of the briefing note, which were discussed in turn. During the ensuing discussion comments were made that, giving due regard to the Town Council's Environment Action Plan Point 6.3, the hire only of these cups would be a better option, meaning that the cups could be reused at other events. However, this option would need further investigation.

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

That, as set out in points 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of the VSM's briefing note, the Town Council:-

- Notes the outcome of the review undertaken by the Events Working Party.
- Permits the RNLi Lifeboat Week and the Swanage Folk Festival events to use up old stocks of single-use plastic in 2022, alongside reusable cups.

- Delegates any similar requests around single-use plastic for 2022 events to the VSM, in consultation with the Events Working Party, for approval.

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

That the Town Council approves a budget of up to £3,500 for the purchase of reusable cups, and that delegated authority be given to officers to implement the best option for the purchase or hire of the cups.

177. **Statement of Cash Balance**

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

178. **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 12, amounting to £322,902.80

179. **Chairman's Announcements**

Councillor Harris reported that in her capacity of Town Mayor she had attended the following events:-

- **Raffle organised to fund a defibrillator at Burlington Chine 18th March** - the raffle had been arranged by a group of beach hut users, and members of the local Women's Institute, and had raised £2,521. It was noted that this would be the 37th defibrillator installed in the local area, and thanks were given to all involved in this life-saving voluntary service.
- **Herston Village Hall Community Café 4th April** – which had seen the launch of the Swanage Community Pantry, and also the first Citizens Advice East Dorset and Purbeck drop-in session, which would be held at the hall on the first Monday of the month in future (excluding Bank Holidays).
- **Swanage Town Crying Competition 9th April** – which had been hosted by Mr Andrew Fleming, Swanage Town Crier. It was noted that Councillor Harris had been invited along to judge the volume of the Criers.
- **Purbeck Coast Community Radio Station** – Councillors Harris and Foster had taken part in an 'on the spot' interview on 13th April. Councillor Harris had visited the station again on 20th April for a half hour interview and phone-in, and a further visit had been planned in late-May.
- **St Mark's Church Sunday Service 24th April** – which had been a special occasion to mark the 150th anniversary of the church.
- **Charity Day & Classic Car Display 24th April** – it was reported that Mrs Jenny Lazenbury, who had organised this event for the past 27 years, would now be retiring. However, it was noted that the event would be continuing in 2023 as a new organiser had been found.

Thanks and appreciation were extended to Mrs Lazenbury for her many years of hard work and commitment in making the event a success, also raising funds for many charities and good causes.

180. **To confirm arrangements for the Town Council's Annual Meeting, 23rd May 2022**

Further to Minute no. 141 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, delegated authority had been granted to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor

and Deputy Mayor, to change venue or make other arrangements for Council meetings that may be required. It was currently planned that the Annual Council Meeting on 23rd May would be held at the Town Hall, subject to an assessment of the likely number of attendees, and appropriate review of the Council's Risk Assessment for meetings.

181. **Request for commemorative event to mark 80th anniversary of the 'Swanage Blitz' of August 1942**

Consideration was given to a request received for a commemorative event to be held to mark the eightieth anniversary of the bombing of Swanage during August 1942, which included the laying of a wreath at the site of the old Westminster Bank in Institute Road, followed by a walk to The Square for a short period of remembrance. Details of the air raids on Swanage and timeline of events from April to August 1942 were provided, and it was noted that 20 people had lost their lives during the attacks on the town.

During the ensuing discussion Members felt that there was not enough information about the proposed event to enable them to make a decision on this request, and comments made that it may be prudent for the organiser to also make contact with the Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre. A further suggestion was made that it may be appropriate for consideration to be given to the installation of a Blue Plaque in Institute Road.

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

That the Town Council refers consideration of the request for a commemorative event to mark the 80th anniversary of the 'Swanage Blitz' of August 1942 to the Events Working Party, the outcome of which to be brought back to a future Council Meeting for further consideration.

Further to his declaration under Minute No. 173 Councillor Suttle left the room during consideration of the following item.

182. **Monkey Beach Rings – To consider advertising concession to operate for 2022 season**

Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the VSM setting out a proposal for a one-year trial for a concession to manage the boat rings in the vicinity of the Stone Quay and Monkey Beach. A map was provided detailing the position of the rings, which were situated on the beach, and on the slipway. It was explained that until 2017 up to 10 rings had been available for rent on the beach for circa £80 each p.a. However, due to changes in the height of the beach over the years, it had become increasingly difficult to use these rings. Many of the rings were currently being used on an 'ad hoc' basis by a number of different users.

Concerns were raised around the practicalities of using this facility, and the likely limited income from such an arrangement. However, it was noted that the Town Council would be keen to enable a wider and fairer use of the slipway rings to help support and promote easier access for visitors and residents who used the sea.

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

That the Town Council places an advert in local media seeking expressions of interest for a concession to manage the boat rings in the vicinity of Monkey Beach for the period from 1st June to 30th September 2022.

Councillor Suttle re-entered the room.

183. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

Updates were given on the following matters:-

- **Council Meeting 14th April** – it was reported that Dorset Council had considered a motion for the Council to lobby national government urgently to revise the Minerals section of the National Planning Policy Framework to enable Dorset, and other Planning Authorities, to decline planning permissions on the grounds of climate impact alone, and also lobby the Local Government Association to do the same.
Further information regarding this matter could be found on Dorset Council’s website: [Council Meeting 14th April 2022 - Dorset Council](#)
- **Ukraine crisis - Refugee programme in Dorset** – it was reported that DC was actively engaged in supporting humanitarian relief efforts, and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, to help find suitable housing for refugees in Dorset.

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

The following update was provided:-

- (a) **Purbeck Community Rail Partnership Stakeholder Meeting 7th April** – further to Minute No. 154 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, Councillor Whitwam reported that the news that the 90-day trial service to Wareham would not operate this year had not been well received at the meeting.

185. **Reporting of delegated matters**

- (a) **Award of contract for emergency repairs to jetty, Peveril Point Boat Park**
Further to Minute No. 170 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, the Town Clerk reported that the contract for the repairs to the jetty had been awarded to Suttles Projects in the sum of £7,900.
- (b) **Award of contract for a feasibility study in respect of ground stabilisation and redevelopment of seafront locations at Shore Road, Swanage**
Further to Minute No. 171 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, the Town Clerk reported that the contract for a feasibility study had been awarded to WSP in the sum of £7,450.

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

- (a) The Town Mayor provided updates on the following matters:
- **New seafront litter bins** – the Town Mayor was pleased to report that 15 new bins had arrived, which were larger, and seagull proof. A further 15 bins were expected in due course. Comments were made regarding the excellent refuse collection services provided by Dorset Waste Services (DWS) over the Easter holiday, and a request was made for an acknowledgment and thanks to be sent to DWS accordingly.
 - **Tennis Court 3, Beach Gardens** – further to Minute No. 161 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022 it was reported that the resurfacing of tennis court 3 was scheduled to commence on 9th May, and would take approximately 2-3 weeks to complete.
 - **King George’s Play Area** – the Town Mayor was pleased to report that the refurbishment project was nearing completion, and was looking good.
 - The Operations Manager then gave an update on the progress of the following projects:
 - **Former St Mark’s School Playing Field**
 - **Jetty, Peveril Point Boat Park**
- (b) **Future of Swanage-based Ambulance Car – Update** – concerns were again raised regarding the staffing of the Swanage-based Ambulance Car, and it was noted that this matter would be considered at a meeting of the Emergency Health Services Working Party on 26th April.

- (c) **A & E Local – Update** – concerns regarding the services at Poole Hospital A&E were discussed, and it was reported that this matter would be considered at a meeting of the Emergency Health Services Working Party on 26th April.
- (d) **Wellbeing Swanage – Update** – an update was given on the work being undertaken on the directory of local community groups and services.
- (e) **Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee** – it was proposed that a meeting of the Committee would be convened on 11th May 2022 at 3pm.

187. **Dorset Council owned assets in Swanage - To consider options for future use, development of social housing and allocation in Dorset Local Plan**

Further to a site meeting held on 28th March 2022, attended by the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors Suttle, Trite and Rogers, alongside the Town Clerk and officers from Dorset Council, consideration was given to the future of the following sites, currently in the ownership of Dorset Council. The meeting had been arranged in response to enquiries from Swanage Community Land Trust regarding possible sites for the construction of social housing, and in the context of the developing Dorset Local Plan.

(a) **Grazing land, corner of Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road**

It was noted that this site formed part of a larger parcel of land that had been gifted to the former Dorset County Council in 1944 by the late James Day, before transferring to the new Dorset Council in 2019. It was currently occupied as a grazing field for horses. Although it adjoins an earlier social housing development, it was noted that the site is now classified as lying within a flood zone. Members also felt that it was not an ideal location for social housing given its distance from the shops and services available in the town centre.

A preference was expressed for the land to be preserved as informal green space and it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Foster and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

That the grazing land on the corner of Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road be protected as green open space in the Dorset Local Plan and that negotiations be opened with Dorset Council for the transfer of the ownership of this property to Swanage Town Council.

(b) **Former Town Council Depot/Kings Court, Kings Road West**

It was noted that ownership of this site transferred from the former Swanage Urban District Council to Purbeck District Council in 1974, and in turn passed to the new Dorset Council in 2019. The western part had been occupied by the Town Council on a rent-free basis since 1974. Although most of the Council's Depot functions transferred to a new site at Prospect Park in 2018, it was noted that the Town Council still exercised its user rights for a number of purposes.

At the site visit on 28th March Members expressed a view that this was an ideal location for community-led social housing, being close to town centre amenities. In order to achieve this it was acknowledged that the flood-risk on the site would need to be addressed and that there was also a need to protect the availability of employment land in the locality. It was noted that this was broadly in line with Policy KCD of the current Swanage Local Plan.

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

To request Dorset Council to enter into discussion with Swanage Community Land Trust to facilitate

the development of community-led social housing for local people on at least part of the Kings Court/ former Town Council Depot site, and to include this allocation in the Dorset Local Plan.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor 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 17 to 20 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8.40 p.m., to allow Members to take a short break, and was reconvened at 8.50 p.m.

188. **Former Town Council Depot, Kings Road West - Consideration of future options**

Further to Minute No. 187 (b) above, consideration was given to a briefing note setting out matters that would need to be addressed prior to the Town Council giving consideration to relinquishing its user rights in respect of the Old Depot on Kings Road West. After careful consideration it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Moreton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To instruct a valuer to provide advice in respect of the Council's user rights in connection with the Old Depot on Kings Road West, in order to inform future negotiations with Dorset Council.

Consideration was also given to potential options for relocation of the Town Council's ongoing uses at the Old Depot. In order to facilitate the exploration of all possibilities, and further to Minute No. 207 of the Council Meeting held on 27th January 2020, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Moreton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To request Dorset Council to enter into formal discussions to explore the joint acquisition of property adjoining the Purbeck Business Centre.

189. **Housing Development, Northbrook Road East – request for drainage connections into adjoining Town Council property**

Further to Minute No. 159 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, the Town Clerk reported that initial discussions had taken place between the Council's valuer and representatives of the developers, Barratt Homes. However, in the absence of written advice this item was again deferred to a future meeting.

190. **Procurement**

- (a) **To award contract for hire of festive lights and catenary wire**
Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Operations Manager setting out the need to take action ahead of the expiry of the current contracts for the hire of festive lights and catenary wire, and their installation. Further to Minute No. 99 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 16th September 2019, the Town Council had entered into a three-year contract with the Festive Lighting Company Limited for the hire of festoon and festive lights in Swanage. In 2020 an addition to the contract had been made for the hire of further Christmas lighting in the High Street for the years 2020 and 2021. In 2019 the Town Council also entered into an agreement with WGS Power and Lighting Ltd to install and remove the festive lighting and dress the Christmas tree.

Negotiations had been had with the current contractors to extend their existing contracts by two years on the basis of there being no change to the summer and Christmas lighting displays (although it was noted that additional lighting could be added later if desired). It was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Moreton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Swanage Town Council extends the contract with the Festive Lighting Company Limited for the hire of festoon and festive lighting for a further two years from September 2022 for the sum of £9,691 per annum.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Swanage Town Council extends the agreement with WGS Power and Lighting Ltd to install and remove the Christmas lighting on the festoon and dress the Christmas tree for a further two years for the sum of £6,440 per annum.

191. **North Beach Car Park – Bike hire concession update**

Further to Minute No. 164 of the Council Meeting held on 15th March 2021 and Minute No. 74 of the Council Meeting held on 13th September 2021, an update was provided by the Visitor Services Manager regarding the proposed electric bike hire concession at North Beach Car Park.

It was noted that a number of problems had been identified with the site at North Beach Car Park which would be detrimental to the operation of a bike hire concession at this location. These included the presence of badgers and the costs required to develop suitable drainage facilities. It had therefore become clear that this location was unsuitable for the proposed use, and this had been communicated to the business operator.

The Council gave consideration to next steps, recognising that such a concession would be a significant benefit to Swanage. However, it was agreed that future possibilities should be considered in the wider context of business opportunities on the Council's property holdings. It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Foster and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council refers consideration of potential future options for a bike hire concession, to the Rents and Licences Panel in the autumn, the outcome of which to be brought back to a future Council Meeting for further consideration.

The Meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.
