

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on
MONDAY, 11th JULY 2022 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor C. Moreton – Chair

Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor M.P. Bonfield
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor N. Rogers
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor W. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

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

In the absence of a member of the clergy, Councillor Moreton offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Council Meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised:-

- **Public Participation Time** – a question regarding the arrangements for Public Participation Time. The Town Clerk confirmed that members of the public could raise any matter during this time, limited to three minutes. It was noted that for more complex matters it may be prudent to contact the Council via email prior to the meeting.
- **Burlington Chine Public Conveniences** – concerns again raised regarding the future of the public conveniences, fouling, litter, and water supply. The Chair confirmed that no decision regarding the toilets had been made, and that a public meeting would be held in September 2022.
- **Swanage-based Ambulance Car** – a request made for consideration to be given to a Freedom of Information request regarding staffing and emergency response times data.

In the absence of the Town Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Moreton, assumed the Chair.

The Chair opened the Council Meeting at 7.20 p.m.

34. **Apologies**

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

35. **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. 10 – Councillor Tomes declared a pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct by reason of his family business being a supplier to Ballard Stores.

There were no other declarations to record on this occasion.

36. **Minutes**
(a) Proposed by Councillor Whitwam, seconded by Councillor Rogers and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held
on 23rd May 2022 be approved as a correct record and
signed.
- (b) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Whitwam and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 25th
May 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

37. **Planning and Consultation Committee**
Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation
Committee Meeting held on 6th June 2022 be
approved as a correct record and signed.

It was noted that the recommendations contained within the Minutes (Minute No. 3)
would be considered under Agenda Item 11.

38. **General Operations Committee**
Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Harris and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the General Operations
Committee Meeting held on 8th June 2022 be
approved as a correct record and signed.

39. **Planning and Consultation Committee**
Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation
Committee Meeting held on 4th July 2022 be
approved as a correct record and signed.

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

- 6) **National Association of Local Councils (NALC) – Survey on Dementia-Friendly Communities 2022**
Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Tomes and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That Councillor Bonfield is appointed as a Town
Council representative of the Swanage Area Dementia
Friendly Community.

Thanks were given to Councillor Bonfield for the work he undertook with the
group.

40. **Personnel Committee**
Proposed by Councillor Trite, seconded by Councillor Rogers and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-
That the Minutes of the Personnel Committee
Meeting held on 6th July 2022 be approved as a

correct record and signed.

It was noted that the recommendations contained within the Minutes (Minute No. 4) would be considered under Agenda Item 22.

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

(a) **Events – Review of Seafront Market, 27th May 2022**

It was reported that a review of the recent seafront market had been undertaken at the meeting. It was anticipated that a meeting would be held with local businesses and the Chamber of Trade in September, after the summer season, to discuss concerns raised regarding the market, and how the Council could work with them in the future regarding such events.

(b) **Public Conveniences – Burlington Chine stakeholder engagement, 8th June 2022**

Further to discussions held during Public Participation Time, it was confirmed that at the above meeting it had been decided that a public meeting would be held in September 2022, which would provide an opportunity for all parties to take part in an open and frank discussion about the future of the Burlington Chine public conveniences.

Details of the meeting would be widely publicised, and the Council would also write to anyone who had already submitted comments, along with contact details, regarding this matter.

(c) **Environment Policy – Meeting with Co2 Target, 22nd June 2022**

Further to Minute No. 16 (a) of the Annual Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2022 an update was provided regarding the progress made to date by the Energy Consultant on the development of the Town Council's strategy to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. The Consultant's report was anticipated in September 2022, and the working party remained confident that the Council would be provided with a suitable action plan.

(d) **Seafront Masterplan – Feedback following visit to Portsmouth and return visit of Coastal Partners, 15th and 29th June 2022**

Further to Minute No. 16 (d) of the Annual Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2022 an update was provided on Coastal Partners' visit to Swanage on 29th June. Site visits had been undertaken at the seafront, the Spa, and lower High Street, and advice and guidance had been sought from the Partners regarding the proposed Swanage project.

Further to Minute No. 176 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 25th April 2022, consideration would be given to the appointment of consultants to develop a Seafront Masterplan in accordance with the specification approved at that meeting.

42. **Statement of Cash Balance**

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

(b) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th June 2022 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

43. **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 2, amounting to £260,737.84

- Payment Schedule 3, amounting to £209,407.56

44. **Chairman's Announcements**

It was reported by Councillor Moreton that Councillor Foster in her capacity of Town Mayor had attended the following events since the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 23rd May 2022:-

- **The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend** – various events attended over the weekend, which included the Beacon Lighting Event at Durlston Castle on 2nd June which had been well attended, and a good time had by all.
- **Launch of the 31st Swanage Jazz Festival** - at The Mowlem Theatre.
- **Swanage Library** – crown making event with local children in the library's garden.
- The official opening of the new orange **drinking water fountain** in Shore Road.
- **Swanage Sea Rowing Club Regatta** – presentation of winners' cups.
- **40th Anniversary of the Falklands War** – Swanage RBL commemoration service and wreath laying held at the Swanage War Memorial.
- **Concert at St Mary's Parish Church, Swanage.**
- **Wareham Town Council's Civic Service** - at the Priory Church of Lady St Mary, Wareham.
- **Swanage Pirate Festival** – at which Cllr Foster reported that she had been 'held to ransom' by pirates.
- **Swanage Town Band** – concert held at the Swanage Bandstand.
- **Trevor Chadwick Memorial** – Cllr Foster had dug the first turf for the installation of the plinth for the new statue in the Recreation Ground.
- **Sustainable Swanage 'Rights of Way' Open Meeting** – which had been held in the Emmanuel Baptist Church Hall.
- Swanage Conservative Club - a **'Thank you' evening** held in honour of the Platinum Jubilee Committee volunteers.
- The official opening of the **Purbeck Arts Weeks Platinum Jubilee mural** – at the hardstanding in Shore Road.

In her report Councillor Foster also gave thanks and appreciation to Councillor Moreton, Deputy Mayor, for his support at many of the above events, and for chairing the Council Meeting in her absence.

45. **To consider holding special Council Meeting at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 27th July to approve draft Corporate Plan for consultation, and appoint consultant to prepare Seafront Masterplan**

As the next full Council Meeting would not be held until 12th September 2022 Members were in agreement that a special Council Meeting should therefore be held on 27th July 2022 in order to move these important matters forward.

Further to his declaration under Minute No. 35 Councillor Tomes left the room during consideration of the following item.

46. **Ballard Stores – To consider request to apply for registration with Dorset Council as an Asset of Community Value (ACV)**

Consideration was given to a briefing note dated July 2022 which detailed a request received from a member of the public for the Town Council to make an application to Dorset Council on behalf of local residents to register Ballard Stores as an Asset of Community Value. An online petition had also been created which had 160 'signatures' as at 7th July 2022. It was noted that the business was currently on the market as a 'going concern' for £1m.

It was reported that in response to the petition the business owners had written to Town Councillors to make it clear that their wish was for the business to remain a going commercial concern as a neighbourhood corner store that served the local community, as they had done.

During the ensuing discussion comments were made that this was a private business which had been run successfully for the past 40 years, and that it had only recently been placed on the market for sale, as the owners now wished to retire.

It was noted that there were questions as to whether Ballard Stores met the criteria for listing, in view of the substantial residential element of the property, and an enquiry had therefore been sent to Dorset Council. It was also pointed out that if the business was to be listed as an ACV, at the present time the Council had not been made aware of a community group that would seek to exercise the Community Right to Bid. Further details could be found on Dorset Council's website regarding the ACV scheme: [Assets of Community Value - Dorset Council](#)

After careful consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Trite and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council is not prepared to take any action towards registering Ballard Stores as an ACV at this time.

The Town Council extended thanks and best wishes for a happy retirement to the business owners, and wished them every success in selling the business.

Councillor Tomes re-entered the room.

47. **Swanage Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – To consider appointment of consultants and establishment of Steering Group**

Further to Minute No. 3) of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 6th June 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note dated July 2022 which provided an update on the outcome of that meeting, and actions taken to date regarding the proposed Swanage Neighbourhood Plan. The note also set out recommendations from the Committee for the Council to engage the services of O'Neill Homer (ONH), Planning Consultants, to take the plan forward, and to agree to the establishment of a steering group and invite members of the Swanage Local Plan Steering Committee to join.

This followed a procurement process during which three consultants had been invited to quote.

A detailed presentation had been given by representatives of ONH at the meeting held on 6th June on the company's neighbourhood planning project support services, and had been followed by a very informative 'question and answer' session. Attendees had been impressed by the wealth of knowledge of the consultants, the research that had been undertaken regarding Swanage and the Swanage Local Plan, and track record of the company (it was noted that the company had worked with 51 planning authority areas, including Dorset, and had been involved in 100 successful neighbourhood plans and referendums). The company's day rate for NP work was £550 +VAT, and it was estimated that for a project the scope of the Swanage NP the total cost of the project would be between £30,000 to £40,000. The representatives had confirmed that the company would be involved in the NP process from start to end, and would work with the Council to create the plan policies.

It was noted that the Council had already set aside a budget of £15,000 for the 2022/23 financial year towards commencement of this work, and it was anticipated that grant funding of £18,000 would be available to the Council from Locality. Additional funding sources would also be explored.

During the ensuing discussion Members were in support of the Committee's recommendations. However, comments were made that it would be prudent for the

Council to agree to a ‘cap’ on the fees payable to the consultants, as a measure of budgetary control, and that any potential increase in fees required in the future should be assessed by the steering group and brought back to a full Council Meeting for further consideration/approval.

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

To appoint O'Neill Homer, Planning Consultants, to take the Neighbourhood Planning process forward, and agree to their charging rates, as set out in their submission dated June 2022, subject to a maximum budget of £40,000. Any request for an increase in fees to be brought back to a future Council Meeting for further consideration.

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

That the Town Council agrees to the establishment of a Swanage Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, invites members of the Swanage Local Plan Steering Committee to join, and that delegated authority be given to the Planning and Consultation Committee to appoint Steering Group Members.

Next steps would include the creation of a draft Terms of Reference for the steering group, which would be presented to the Planning and Consultation Committee for consideration, and a ‘Vision Workshop’ would be arranged with the planning consultants once the steering group had been appointed.

48. **To consider recommendations from Capital Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 8th June 2022**

(a) **To approve installation of a path and lighting at Day’s Park, Swanage, including update on Dorset Highways’ improvements to Ulwell Road/ Redcliffe Road junction as part of safe route to school**

Further to Minute No. 6 of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee Meeting held on 18th March 2020 and Minute No. 5 of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee Meeting held on 8th June 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note setting out technical details of a new pathway and associated lighting at Journey’s End and Day’s Park. The proposal had been developed in association with Dorset Council to provide a safe route to school via Ulwell Road or North Beach Car Park to St Mary’s School on Northbrook Road.

During the debate, the benefits to the local community of a well-lit route during the winter months, together with improved access to the bus stops on Ulwell Road, were highlighted. However, some concern was expressed that the commitment to spend on this project might prevent investment in improvements to pedestrian safety along Washpond Lane.

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

To proceed with the works to install a new path and lighting at Day’s Park/Journey’s End, as per the indicative drawings and information supplied, with a budget of £120,000, to be funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy reserve.

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

That the decision to invest in the installation of a footpath and lighting at Day's Park/Journey's End will not impinge on the Council's willingness to consider improvements to pedestrian safety in the vicinity of Washpond Lane.

(b) **To seek the adoption of Cow Lane and a section of Panorama Road**

Further to Minute No. 88 of the Council Meeting held on 1st November 2021 and Minute No. 8 f) of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee Meeting held on 22nd September 2021, consideration was given to a briefing note setting out estimated costs for improvement works required prior to the adoption of sections of Cow Lane and Panorama Road by Dorset Council as highway maintainable at public expense. It was noted that Dorset Council would also charge a fee of 8.5% of total costs to cover administration and project management fees and that there would be a number of other related legal charges together with the payment of a commuted sum for the future management of a grass verge.

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

To proceed with the adoption of sections of Cow Lane and Panorama Road at an estimated cost of £82,000.

49. **Day's Park Forum – To consider matters arising from meeting held on 6th July 2022**

(a) **Funding request for architects' fees – Update**

Further to Minute No. 20 of the Annual Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2022, consideration was given to a revised funding request from Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust (S&PDT) towards the costs of architect's fees in respect of the proposed redevelopment of the Football Club facilities at Day's Park. It was reported that since that meeting circumstances had changed. Council's agreement to the drawdown of £55,000 had been conditional on the Football Foundation confirming in writing that it would be appropriate to locate a new 3G pitch at Day's Park, but following a meeting with the Football Foundation and Dorset FA it had become clear that such an assurance was unobtainable at the current time. In light of this, S&PDT now proposed to postpone the ground improvement works set out in Phase 1 and instead focus on moving ahead with a pre-planning application for Phases 2 and 3 of the redevelopment, including a new sports and leisure centre. It was envisaged that obtaining positive pre-planning advice would be key to encouraging national funding bodies to look favourably upon this proposal. In order to carry out this work, the architect's fees would be much reduced. Hence a revised application for £9,398 had been submitted, instead of the £55,000 previously agreed. It was envisaged that the costs of applying for full planning consent could then be included in future applications to national funders.

In light of this revised information it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tomes and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To approve the drawdown of £9,398 to the Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust from the Town Council's budgeted allocation towards architects' fees to obtain pre-planning advice for Phases 2 and 3 of the Day's Park redevelopment.

(b) **To consider request for drawdown of funds for youth football**

An application had also been received directly from Swanage and Herston Football Club to access the sum of £6,957.80 which was currently held by the Town Council in an earmarked reserve for youth football facilities. This money had been donated to the Town Council in memory of a young local footballer, Lee Crooks, towards the provision of improved facilities for youth football in the town. In consultation with the Crooks family, the Club now wished to drawdown these funds as a contribution towards the costs of developing a youth training pitch and acquiring a minibus.

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

To agree to the request from Swanage & Herston Football Club to drawdown the sum of £6,957.80 in support of youth football projects.

(c) **Works to Swanage and Herston FC Access Road and Car Park**

Consideration was given to a briefing note that set out measures required to address damage to the access road between North Beach Car Park and the Football Ground at Day's Park and to the Football Club's car park. It was noted that this property was owned by the Town Council and that the damage, caused by badger activity, was extensive and posed a danger to users of this facility. In order to address this, advice had been sought from an ecologist who had assisted in the development of a programme of works compliant with Natural England's requirements. It was also reported that a large tree adjacent to the access road would also require removal as it had suffered damage due to the recent movement of heavy plant along the roadway.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1.c. a contractor had been engaged via Lot 11 of Dorset Council's Repairs, Maintenance, Minor and Small Capital Works (RMMSCW) Framework Agreement. Given that there was a short window for these essential works to take place an order had already been placed for the work to commence on 18th July. This followed consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and councillor representatives on the Football Club Forum.

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

That approval be given to works to be undertaken to the access road and car park of Swanage & Herston Football Club to commence on 18th July 2022 at an estimated cost of up to £33,250.

50. **Festive Lights – To consider request from Swanage & District Chamber of Trade for acquisition of additional Snow Globes**

It was reported that the request from Swanage & District Chamber of Trade had now been withdrawn.

51. **North Beach Public Toilets – To confirm agreement to Dorset Council installing Changing Places Disabled Toilet Facilities**

Further to Minute No. 87 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 1st November 2021 it was reported that Dorset Council (DC) had confirmed that its grant funding bid towards the construction and installation costs of two new Changing Places disabled toilet facilities had been successful. These facilities were larger, accessible toilets for people with significant disabilities, and DC had previously identified the existing public conveniences at North Beach car park as a potential location for these new facilities.

Although details of the receipt/timing of the grant were still awaited, DC had scheduled the works to be undertaken during the current financial year (start date not before 1st September), and these works would be arranged and project managed by DC. The Town Council would be responsible for ongoing cleaning and maintenance costs once complete.

It was noted that the footprint of the Changing Places facilities was greater than the existing toilet and would therefore require use of the rear storage area of the premises, which was currently being used by the local arts club on a licence agreement. The club had been notified and the Council was seeking an alternative location for storage of its equipment.

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

That the Town Council agrees to the installation of a Changing Places toilet facility at North Beach car park, and enters into a licence agreement with Dorset Council to facilitate the work.

52. **Peveril Point and The Downs Local Nature Reserve – To confirm declaration**

Consideration was given to a briefing note dated July 2022 which provided a timeline and update on actions taken to date regarding the proposed declaration of Peveril Point and The Downs as a Local Nature Reserve, which included the development of a Management Plan in consultation with the Sustainable Swanage Group, a copy of which had been submitted to Natural England in support of the designation process. The update also highlighted the benefits of such a declaration.

In order to complete the process the Town Council was now required to formally approve the declaration of the area as a Local Nature Reserve. Authorisation was also required to seal the declaration and map of the area, which could take place following the execution of an agency agreement with Dorset Council, further to Minute No. 298 of the Council Meeting held on 27th July 2020.

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

That the Town Council formally declares Peveril Point and The Downs as a Local Nature Reserve, and authorises the sealing of the declaration and plan, subject to the execution of the agency agreement with Dorset Council.

Thanks were extended to Mrs Sarah Spurling, Sustainable Swanage Officer, and the Sustainable Swanage Group volunteers, for all their hard work and commitment to this project.

53. **Punch and Judy, Swanage Beach - To consider award of licence agreement**

Further to Minute No. 199 of the Council Meeting held on 27th January 2020 consideration was given to a briefing note dated July 2022 which reported that although the agreed tender exercise for a Punch and Judy concessionaire to operate on the beach for the period 2020 to 2024 had been undertaken, the Covid-19 pandemic had led to the formal award of the concession being postponed until now.

Mr J Burns, who had operated on Swanage Beach as Mr Punch since 2016, had been the preferred candidate for the licence, and a request was therefore made for a new three-year licence (2022 to 2024) to be provided to him.

A copy of the proposed licence terms was provided, which would be subject to review by the Council's legal advisors.

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

That the Town Council offers Mr Burns a three-year concession (2022 to 2024) to operate ‘Punch and Judy’ on Swanage beach during the period July to September (or as appropriate), the concession payment to remain fixed at £100 per annum, subject to legal advice being sought regarding the proposed new licence.

54. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

Updates were given on the following matters:-

- **Dorset Council’s final budgetary outturn 2021/22** – it was reported that DC had in effect ‘broken-even’, which had been a good result for the Council. However, DC was forecasting an extremely challenging financial year 2022/23, which would be impacted by the expected rises in inflation.
- **Dorset Waste Services** – the service was still experiencing issues with household waste and recycling collections due to under-staffing and vehicle problems.
- **NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board (known as NHS Dorset)** – with effect from 1st July 2022 NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had become NHS Dorset. This change was happening to all CCGs across the country, as part of the national reforms under the Health and Care Bill to promote more joined-up services.
- **Annual Council Meeting 12th May 2022** – it was reported that there had not been any changes made to DC’s Leadership Team, Cabinet, or Lead Members. An update was given on DC’s priorities for 2022-2024.
- **Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)** – a new PSPO came into force on 1st July 2022 that prevented people from lighting fires, including BBQs, fireworks, lanterns, and campfires, in many public areas across Dorset.
- **Dorset Council Community Governance Review** – following public consultation, final recommendations for Town and Parish Council governance arrangements had been drawn up for consideration at DC’s Council Meeting being held on 14th July 2022.
- **Dorset Highways road resurfacing programme** – it was reported that Rabling Road had been included in the latest programme of works.
- **Alternative educational provision for children with Special Educational Needs** – an update was provided on changes that were being made.
- **Cost of living crisis** – details of Dorset Council’s Household Support Fund were provided, which the government had introduced to support vulnerable households. The deadline for applications for the existing round of funding was 30th September.
- **Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen** – consideration was being given to reinstating the creation of aldermen/alderwomen, following a recommendation from DC’s Audit and Governance Committee.
- **Ukraine crisis - Refugee programme in Dorset** – it was reported that 559 Ukrainian refugees had so far been welcomed to Dorset.

The Meeting was briefly suspended at 8.30 p.m. so as to allow members of the public to address Councillors and ask questions.

Further to the update given on the new PSPO, it had been noted that the Swanage area had not been included in the PSPO, and Councillors therefore agreed that the Town Council’s Planning and Consultation Committee should review the document at a future meeting, and consider making a representation to Dorset Council accordingly.

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

The following updates were provided:-

- (a) **Purbeck Community Rail Partnership Stakeholder Meetings held on 9th and 20th June** – further to Minute No. 154 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022, Councillor Whitwam reported that an approach had been made to SWR regarding the possibility of SWR undertaking the 90-day trial service to Wareham. However, SWR had confirmed that they would not be in a position to do so.
It was noted that Kelly Marshall, Community Rail Partnership Officer, would be leaving, and a recruitment process would be undertaken to find a replacement officer in due course.
- (b) **Swanage Pier Trust Annual General Meeting held on 10th June** – Councillor Whitwam reported on the AGM, at which a walkabout around the pier had been undertaken to view the condition of the pier, and discussions had been held regarding potential repairs which may be required in the future.
- (c) **Swanage and Herston Football Club on 8th July** - Councillor Tomes reported on the official switching on of the new floodlights, at which a pre-season friendly match had been held with Poole Town FC, which had been well attended.
- (d) **Swanage Regatta and Carnival 30th July to 6th August 2022** – a reminder was given by Councillor Tomes regarding the dates for the return of Carnival Week, brochures were now on sale, and the Committee was very much looking forward to welcoming everyone back.
- (e) **The Mowlem Institute Trust** – Councillor Bonfield reported that the Show Bar at the Mowlem Theatre was now open every evening from Monday to Saturday, everyone was welcome.

56. **Reporting of delegated matters**

There were no matters to report.

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

- (a) **Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils Star Awards 2021-22** – it was reported that the Town Council had been awarded a Double Star Award for Councillor Development, for achieving 84% participation of Councillors at training events organised by DAPTC to strengthen and update Council knowledge. Congratulations were also extended to the Council for continuing to support the development and training of both elected members and employees.
- (b) **Future of Swanage-based Ambulance Car – Update** –it was reported that the Emergency Health Services Working Party had requested 6-monthly report data on staffing and emergency response times for Swanage and Wareham on two occasions, without success. It was agreed that the Clerk should now request this information as a Freedom of Information request.
- (c) **A & E Local – Update** – concerns reiterated that the change to the A&E provision at Poole Hospital was proceeding ahead of time. It had been reported that Poole A&E would be operational until 2026 but was already being run down.
- (d) **Wellbeing Swanage – Update** –it was reported that a new Wellbeing Co-

ordinator had been appointed, and discussions continued between Dorset Council and the Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust regarding the Chapel Lane project.

- (e) **Town Twinning Association – Update** – it was reported that it was now likely that the Swanage group would be disbanded. Although meetings, and trips to/from Rudesheim, would no longer be held, it was hoped that the existing connections with Rudesheim would continue on an ‘informal’ basis.
- (f) **Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community** – it was reported that the Swanage and Wareham groups would be merging in due course. It was noted that over £100,000 had been raised and donated towards Admiral Nurse services. Funds would be used towards helping local families going forward.
- (g) **Trevor Chadwick Memorial** – it was reported that the base and plinth for the statue had now been installed at the Recreation Ground, and that the statue would be arriving on 23rd August 2022. The official unveiling of the statue would be held on 29th August at 3.00 p.m. and an invitation to the event was extended to all Town Councillors and the local community. There would also be a concert held in the Swanage Bandstand from 2.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. on the day.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Trite 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 22 to 25 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality, and data protection requirements.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8.50 p.m. to allow Members to take a short break, and was reconvened at 9.00 p.m.

58. **Housing Development, Northbrook Road East – To consider request for drainage connection into Ulwell Stream**

Further to Minute No. 32 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 25th May 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note which provided an update from the Environment Agency regarding both the flow rate and the quality of the surface water discharge into the Ulwell Stream. In light of this information, it was proposed by Councillor Tomes, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Town Council grants the rights requested by Barratt Homes in respect of upgrading the surface-water drainage connection across Journey’s End, subject to the negotiation of an appropriate sum by the Council’s appointed chartered surveyors in accordance with the valuation advice dated 20th May 2022.

59. **Town Hall Annexe – To consider request from Dorset Police for new lease term**

Consideration was given to a briefing note setting out a request received from Dorset Police for a further 5-year lease term for the Town Hall Annexe, the existing 5-year term being due to expire in October 2022. Pending Members’ approval, the Council’s appointed surveyors and valuers had entered into initial negotiations as to a revised rent.

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

That the Town Council agrees to a further 5-year lease term with Dorset Police in respect of their occupation of the Town Hall Annexe, subject to the successful conclusion of negotiations regarding a revised annual rent.

60. **Commercial property arrears and defence of claim for new lease – To consider advice from legal advisors**

Further to Minute No. 162 of the Council Meeting held on 14th March 2022 consideration was given to a briefing note which set out legal advice received.

It was AGREED:-

That the Town Council notes the advice received, and delegates the decision as to next steps in the matter to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Rents and Licences Panel.

61. **To consider recommendations from Personnel Committee Meeting held on 6th July 2022**

Further to Minute No. 4 of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 6th July 2022, consideration was given to a briefing note setting out the Committee's recommendations regarding a proposed revised staffing structure. These had been informed by a series of recommendations made by the Local Government Resource Centre in a report dated July 2021 and the results of a related job evaluation exercise carried out by South West Councils. The committee had noted that the total annual cost of the proposals was broadly in line with the salary budget for the current financial year, as agreed in January 2022. It had also noted that planned efficiencies have the potential to deliver future reductions in the salary budget. It was recognised that no changes to the staff structure could be made until staff consultation had been completed. Four recommendations had been put forward, and numbers 1 to 3 were considered in turn, as follows.

Recommendation 1

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

That approval be given to the revised staff structure and salary grades, as set out in the briefing note, subject to staff consultation being undertaken.

Recommendation 2

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

That delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to undertake the consultation and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal (or an amended version of it) once the consultation has been completed and the feedback considered.

Recommendation 3

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Tomes:-

That pay protection be offered for a period of two years to any employee whose post is subject to a reduction in salary as a result of the proposed restructure.

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

The Town Clerk left the Meeting 9.25 p.m.

As at the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 6th July 2022, Members considered evidence provided about the benchmarking of the Town Clerk's salary, and particular attention was paid to the information regarding the salaries of clerks serving councils with similar budgets, providing a comparable range of services to those provided by Swanage Town Council. Consideration was also given to proposed changes to the Clerk's contract in respect of the removal of overtime payments and a qualifications-based salary increment.

Recommendation 4

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

That the salary payable to the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer be re-graded to the LC4 – Substantive grade (SCP50-54), backdated to 1st April 2020, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations over possible contractual changes.

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.
