

Minutes of the Meeting of the **SWANAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE** held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **MONDAY, 3rd FEBRUARY 2025** at 2.15 p.m.

Present: Councillor Bonfield – Chair

Councillor Monkhouse
Councillor Moreton
Councillor Vile

Mr A Larner
Mrs J Sutcliffe

Also in attendance: Dr M Ayres – Town Clerk
Miss N Clark – Planning and Community Engagement Manager
Mrs E Evans – Democratic Services Officer
Mr N Homer – O'Neill Homer Planning Consultants
Ms T Powell – Dorset Coast Forum
Ms E Snow – Dorset Coast Forum

Two members of the public attended the meeting remotely.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised.

1) **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Foster and Tomes, Mr L Luke and Mrs J Owens (Environment Task Team), Mr G Richardson, and Mr A Thompson.

2) **Declarations of Interest**

Sub-committee Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations (Councillor Members in accordance with Section 9 and Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct).

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3) **To approve as a correct record Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) Steering Group held on 19th August 2024**

It was proposed that these were a true record by Councillor Vile, seconded by Mr A Larner and agreed.

4) **Matters arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SNP) held on 19th August 2024**

Minute No. 3 ii) – It was noted that recruitment to the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would be discussed under agenda item 7).

Further updates were provided as follows:-

- **Draft Dorset Local Plan** – Dorset Council had advised that examination of the draft plan was proposed for Q4 of 2026, with adoption anticipated by May 2027.

- **Former Harrow House International School redevelopment proposals** – it was reported that no decision had been made on the outline planning application to date. It was noted that further discussion would be held during the sites list review at a future meeting.
- **Design Coding/Grant application/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)/ Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)** – applications had been submitted to Locality for a grant to cover consultant costs to the end of March, the Design Coding technical assistance, and to resurrect the SEA/HRA assistance. O'Neill Homer, Planning Consultants, had spoken to the AECOM (Locality) consultants and following a final review at the next DTT meeting, the sites list would be provided to the AECOM consultants to progress this work.
- **Dorset Council's (DC) Review of Proposed Conservation Areas** – it was reported that since the last meeting contact had been made with the Service Manager for Conservation at DC. Although supportive of the possibility of progressing with the recommendation for the designation of a 'Durlston Conservation Area', it was noted that no resources were available at DC to take this forward in the foreseeable future.
- **Review of the Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy SPD** - the review which had been undertaken on behalf of the ETT by community members and the previous Chairman of the SNP, in consultation with the Town Council's Assets and Compliance Manager, would be reviewed at the next ETT meeting.
- **Townscape Character Areas/potential additional character areas map** – it was noted that this would be provided to Dorset Coast Forum (DCF), and O'Neill Homer, for the informal engagement/policy intent work. As previously advised, the Council's Assets and Compliance Support Officer had been working on large scale maps for the group. DCF advised that they were able to create A1-sized maps.
- **Draft Housing Needs Assessment** – a request was made for this document to be re-circulated for information purposes, once the final amendments had been made.

5) **Dorset Coast Forum - consideration of arrangements for informal community engagement**

Further to Minute No. 9) of the SNP Steering Group Meeting held on 19th August 2024, representatives of Dorset Coast Forum provided a presentation on potential arrangements for informal community engagement on the SNP. The presentation covered the timeline, policy ideas and themes, target groups, and various engagement methods that could be utilised.

A discussion took place regarding the draft SNP policies, and the most appropriate formats for engaging the community to ensure valuable feedback and input was received on these, which would be used to inform the development of the draft SNP.

The DCF representatives confirmed that they would review the group's feedback received during the discussion, and progress work on the draft communication and engagement plan, display materials, a new website, and press release. An update would be provided at the next SNP meeting.

6) **O'Neill Homer (ONH) Planning Consultants – review of updated action plan and to consider timetable and next steps**

Further to Minute No. 8) of the SNP Steering Group Meeting held on 19th August 2024, a revised action plan had been received from the planning consultants dated 17th January 2025 and reviewed by Group Members accordingly. Following the presentation made by

DCF representatives, it was agreed that it would be pragmatic for the action plan to be updated again once the communications plan timeline had been agreed. This would be brought back to the next meeting for further review.

Updates were then provided which included:-

- Details of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which came into force in December 2024. Particular reference was made to Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, which relates to the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the context of neighbourhood plans.
- As uncertainties remained regarding the draft Dorset Local Plan and future housing numbers for the town, it was prudent to continue developing the SNP. Once adopted, reviewing the SNP every five years was considered good practice to keep it current and relevant.
- Members raised concerns regarding the potential future increase in housing numbers for Dorset, in light of the recent changes to the NPPF, and that it would be beneficial to understand Dorset Council's expectations regarding appropriate housing numbers, and the method of calculation. This question would be posed to DC accordingly.

7) To further consider arrangements for recruitment process to fill current vacant positions

Further to Minute No. 3 ii) of the SNP Steering Group Meeting held on 19th August 2024, members reviewed information received from the planning consultants regarding various styles of advertisements used by other councils to recruit new Steering Group members.

8) Task Teams

A discussion took place regarding the significant progress made by both the Development and Environment Task Teams, and the potential benefits of bringing them back together under a single meeting of the SNP Steering Group. It was noted that members could then contribute to the most relevant meetings, according to their own area of expertise.

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

That the Task Teams would be disbanded, and that SNP Steering Group meetings would be held on the first Monday of the month going forward, to ensure that Members know the set date in advance, making attendance easier.

It was noted that the Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee meetings (parent committee to the SNP Steering Group) were held on the same day.

It was further noted that, in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Order, No. 1C, the SNP Steering Group meetings would be open to the public unless their presence was prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons.

The Planning and Community Engagement Manager was thanked for her work on the SNP to date.

9) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

a) Locality - Design Code assistance - comments were made that the group would

benefit from advice regarding the implementation of a design code. It was reported that an application to Locality had already been submitted for Design Code technical assistance.

10) Date of next meeting

As agreed under Item 8) above, meetings would now be held on the first Monday of the month. The next meeting would therefore be held on Monday 3rd March 2025 at 2.15 p.m.

The Meeting was closed at 4.15 p.m.
