

SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

Dr Martin Ayres
Town Clerk

Town Hall
SWANAGE
Dorset
BH19 2NZ

13th April 2023

Dear Councillor

Finance & Governance Committee

A meeting of the above Committee will be held at the **TOWN HALL, SWANAGE** on **WEDNESDAY, 19th APRIL 2023** at **9.30 a.m.** for the purpose of transacting the business mentioned in the Agenda.

Yours sincerely

M.K. Ayres

Town Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: **15 MINUTES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME WILL BE HELD AT 9.30 A.M. PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING.**

Although legal restrictions in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic have been lifted, Swanage Town Council will, in accordance with advice issued by Public Health Dorset, continue to take appropriate precautions to limit the risk of transmitting the disease and politely asks those planning to attend this meeting to do the following:

- at the earliest opportunity notify the Council of your intention to attend by e-mail admin@swanage.gov.uk or telephone 01929 423636, because capacity will continue to be carefully managed;
- stay at home if you feel unwell and/or have Covid symptoms;
- wear warm clothing to the meeting as doors and windows will be open for ventilation purposes;
- be mindful of others and respectful of their personal space.

The latest advice from Public Health Dorset can be found here: [News and updates - Public Health Dorset - Dorset Council](#)

To The Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor,
Councillors Bishop, Bonfield, Harris, Tomes, Trite and Whitwam.
All Councillors and Chief Officers

AGENDA

1. Apologies.
 2. Declarations of Interest and consideration of requests for Grants of Dispensations (Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare their interests in accordance with Section 9 and Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct).
 3. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26 - To agree next steps.
 4. To consider Council Priorities/Work Plan
 - (a) Outturn Winter/Spring 2022/23
 - (b) Proposed Plan Summer/Autumn 2023 (Papers enclosed)
 5. Review of Committee Structure (Briefing note enclosed)
 6. Health and Safety Report – October 2022 to March 2023 (Briefing note enclosed)
 7. Review of Council Reserves
 8. Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas
 - Ethical Investments-ESG report
 - Vexatious correspondence policy
 - Review of format of internal audit reports
 - Grant support to Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust Wellbeing Project, Chapel Lane – Service Level Agreement
 9. Date of Next Meeting – 12th July 2023
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Item 4 (a)

Priorities Winter/Spring 2022-23 - Draft Outturn Report

Project	Urgency - H/M/L	What does success look like @ 1st May 2023?	% Complete			
			<25%	25%<50%	50%<75%	>75%
Good Governance						
Complete staffing review and undertake recruitment	H	Finalise recruitment to vacant posts.			Down from >75%	
Financial Planning	H	Council has agreed sustainable spending objectives for medium term.			Up from <50%	
Corporate Plan 2022-25	H	Plan adopted.				Up from <50%
Off-Street Parking Places Order	H	Draft order completed and timescale agreed for adoption.	No change			
Charitable Trust Review	H	Governance arrangements reviewed and action plan identified.		Up from <25%		
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews	H	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.		Up from <25%		
Improve access to Transparency Code Data and Revise Asset Register	H	All relevant data accessible via a single webpage.			Up from <50%	
Produce Community Emergency Plan	H	Partners engaged and plan produced to co-ordinate community response to local emergencies.			New objective	
Finalise lease/licence agreements North Beach and Peveril Point	M	Finalise outstanding lease/licence agreements.		Up from <25%		
Develop Communications Plan	M	Draft communications plan in preparation for presentation to Council.	Up from <25% (red)			
Tender new Council website	M	Tender process for website fully compliant with accessibility regs at an advanced stage.	No change			
Local Economy and Tourism						
Develop Seafront Enhancement Scheme Phase 2	H	Preferred option identified and public consultation underway.			Up from <50%	
Develop Seafront Master Plan	H	Draft plan prepared and public consultation underway.			Up from <25%	
Agree public realm improvements for Lower High Street	M	Format of public realm improvements in lower High Street agreed.	No change			
Review Boat Park Operation and Procedures	M	Improvements in operation implemented.				Up from <50%
Develop Marketing Strategy	L	Progress made towards completing series of meetings, reviewing findings and drafting strategy ready for adoption.		Up from <25%		
Community Services, Health and Wellbeing						
Investigate options for footpath linking Washpond Lane and Northbrook Road	H	Discussions concluded with stakeholders and outcome determined.	No change			
Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road land	H	Progress made towards asset transfer.		New objective		
Progress Football Club redevelopment proposals	H	Clear progress being made in planning redevelopment proposals.		No change		
Public Conveniences - Determine future of Burlington Chine WCs	H	Council considered options for future operation and sustainable course of action identified.				Up from <50%
Peveril Point Road stabilisation/improvements	H	Specification of works agreed.			Up from <25%	
Town Hall services review	M	Operation of Town Hall/Police help desk reviewed and new opening hours in place; future operation of CAB/Registration agreed.	No change			
Beach Gardens future plan	M	Meetings held with Bowls and Tennis Clubs and outline plan agreed for way ahead, together with financial contributions.	No change			
Planning & Heritage						
Produce Neighbourhood Plan	H	Task Groups appointed and draft Plan under development.		New objective		
Station Approach Improvements	H	Specification for improvement works agreed.			Up from <50%	
Environment & Climate Crisis						
Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	H	Action plan developed and priorities identified.				Up from <25%

Item 4 (b)

Proposed STC Priorities Summer/Autumn 2023

Project	Urgency - H/M/L	What does success look like @ 1st November 2023?	Immediate Next Steps
Good Governance			
Complete staffing review and undertake recruitment	H	All vacant posts filled.	Final job descriptions to be drafted and job evaluated.
Financial Planning	H	Council has adopted medium term financial strategy.	Councillor workshop(s) summer 2023.
Off-Street Parking Places Order	H	Draft order completed and timescale agreed for adoption.	Agree action plan with consultant. Organise CPWP meeting to determine schedules required.
Charitable Trust Review	H	Action plan in advanced stage of implementation.	Councillor Workshop to review options, April 2023. Agree action plan.
Asset Review	H	Property Panel to have completed review and recommendations made to Council regarding any surplus assets identified.	Property Panel to review list of assets.
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews	H	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.	Valuer recommendations to be presented to Council; solicitors to be instructed.
Improve access to Transparency Code Data and Revise Asset Register	H	All relevant data accessible via a single webpage.	Finalise spreadsheets containing data.
Produce Community Emergency Plan	H	Partners engaged and plan produced to co-ordinate community response to local emergencies.	Plan to be adopted May 2023.
Finalise lease/licence agreements North Beach and Peveril Point	M	Finalise outstanding lease/licence agreements.	Meet with third parties and follow up legal advice.
Develop Communications Plan	M	Draft communications plan in preparation for presentation to Council.	Draft plan to be presented to working party.
Tender new Council website	M	Tender process for a website fully compliant with accessibility regs at an advanced stage.	Develop brief for tender process in consultation with working party.
Local Economy and Tourism			
Develop Seafront Enhancement Scheme Phase 2	H	Preferred option identified and public consultation planned.	Project team to continue to meet and review.
Develop Seafront Masterplan	H	Plan adopted.	Public consultation May/June 2023.
Concessions Plan	H	Plan adopted.	Prepare draft plan identifying locations for potential business opportunities.
Develop Marketing Strategy	H	Tourism website live.	Work up Tourism website with Visit Dorset.
Agree public realm improvements for Lower High Street	M	Format of public realm improvements in lower High Street agreed.	Continue to participate in Dorset Council project meetings.
Community Services, Health and Wellbeing			
Investigate options for footpath linking Washpond Lane and Northbrook Road	H	Discussions concluded with stakeholders and outcome determined.	Once received, consider advice from Dorset Council.
Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road land	H	Asset transfer to Town Council completed.	Dorset Council decision anticipated during May.
Progress Football Club redevelopment proposals	H	Lease(s) finalised and date for completion agreed.	Continue regular meetings with S&PDT/S&HFC.
Peveril Point Road stabilisation/improvements	H	Specification of works agreed.	Consultants' report to be considered.
Town Hall services review	M	Operation of Town Hall/Police help desk reviewed and new opening hours in place; future operation of CAB/Registration agreed.	Liaise with partners and develop timetable for reopening.
Beach Gardens future plan	M	Meetings held with Bowls and Tennis Clubs and outline plan agreed for way ahead, together with financial contributions.	Continue to meet with sports clubs.
Planning & Heritage			
Produce Neighbourhood Plan	H	First round public consultation completed and draft plan under preparation.	Task Groups to complete work June/July 2023.
Station Approach Improvements	H	Specification for improvement works agreed and procurement route identified.	Specification being developed.
Environment & Climate Crisis			
Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	H	Significant steps taken towards implementation of priorities set out in action plan for 2023/24 financial year.	Carbon Neutral Plan to be considered by Environment Committee June 2023.

To review operation of revised Committee Structure

1. Background

At the Council Meeting held on 26th September 2022 (Minute No. 78 refers) it was agreed that a new committee structure should be introduced on a trial basis. It was resolved that a review should take place in April 2023, prior to the appointment of committees for the 2023/24 Council year at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2023.

2. Review of the new committee structure

The committee structure was reorganised with the following objectives in mind:

- There should be improved alignment between the Council's corporate priorities and the management of related properties, services and budgets.
- The remit of committees should be determined by their objectives, grouping the services that they oversee by shared purpose rather than by departmental management.
- There should be greater sharing of responsibility for individual committees among members of the management team.

Although there have been some teething troubles, in terms of ensuring the right business has been placed on the right committee agenda, these objectives appear to have been broadly achieved. The following strengths of the new system have been demonstrated:

- Improved understanding of the remit and purpose of each committee, as recorded in the Terms of Reference, and a clear link to a designated section of the Corporate Plan.
- Improved budgetary alignment e.g. now only two committees consider relevant sections from the scale of fees and charges during budget setting (Community Services and Tourism & Local Economy).
- Positive engagement has been achieved with outside representatives, and there is some evidence of better attendance.
- The strengths of the former committee structure have been retained, including the important role played by the Finance & Governance Committee in terms of performance management and policy development.

These strengths were particularly evident during the spring committee meeting cycle, with a broad range of items being dealt with, driven by a clear sense of each committee's aims and objectives, in turn pursuing the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. This was perhaps least evident in the Environment Committee, but progress here has been somewhat hampered by the delayed presentation of the Council's Carbon Neutral Report. This will be brought forward in June 2023.

3. Potential further changes

Of course, the new system is not perfect. Some grey areas remain between committee remits (particularly between Community Services and Environment) and the total number of meetings is difficult to manage with existing staff resources. It is envisaged that this will ease

as staff capacity is increased and the number of meetings reduces following the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan in early 2024.

The following matters are put forward for more detailed consideration:

- It is proposed that the remit of the **Beach Management Advisory Committee** be expanded to incorporate matters currently dealt with by the Swanage Coastal Change Forum, including cliff stability, the flood defence scheme and the ongoing review of the Shoreline Management Plan. Officers from Dorset Council have agreed to attend the Advisory Committee to ensure that the Town Council and local stakeholders are kept informed of developments on these issues. If Members agree this change it is proposed that the name of the committee be changed to the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee. This is likely to be subject to the approval of a final meeting of the Swanage Coastal Change Forum.
- Some concern has been expressed as to whether it is appropriate for the **Capital Projects Sub-Committee** to report to the Finance & Governance Committee. Given that there has been only one meeting of the sub-committee since the new structure was adopted, it is difficult to assess at the current time. The reason for the current reporting structure is because the sub-committee's primary purpose is to monitor the delivery of council projects. However, when the sub-committee considers changes to budget allocations there is an argument that they should be first considered by the committee managing the relevant service or facility.
- Although there is a desire to keep committee titles as short as possible, Members are asked to reconsider the name of the **Environment Committee**. It was initially proposed that it should be called the Environment and Green Spaces Committee, to make clear that the committee remit includes the management of the Council's parks and gardens, not simply delivery of the Council's Environmental Action Plan.
- It is proposed that the role of the **Traffic Management Advisory Committee** be reviewed. Meetings have not been well attended, and much of the discussion at the Advisory Committee has been repeated at the parent committee (Planning & Consultation) when recommendations have been taken forward. In addition to this, Dorset Council's Highways Officers have recently questioned whether Town Council recommendations represent the settled view of the local community. Members are asked to consider whether the Advisory Committee should undertake a review of the relationship between Dorset Council, the Town Council and local residents in order to improve the efficiency of decision making in respect of traffic management measures.

4. The role of Working Parties

The Town Council did not review the role of working parties when the new committee structure was adopted. It is therefore proposed that this committee review the number and remit of the council's working parties, in order to see whether some rationalisation could be implemented. The current list of working parties, with lead members, is set out below. Those with a clearly defined ongoing role are indicated by an asterix.

Car Parks	Cllr Foster
Communications Strategy	Cllr Foster

Community Awards Panel*	Cllr Foster
Community Emergency Plan	Cllr Moreton
Emergency Health Services	Cllr Monkhouse
Environmental Policy Action Plan*	Cllr Harris
Events*	Cllr Tomes
Grants Panel*	Cllr Foster
Lower Grammar School Field	Cllr Whitwam
Market	Cllr Foster
Museum	Cllr Whitwam
Property Panel*	Cllr Bonfield
Public Conveniences	Cllr Bonfield
Seafront Masterplan	Cllr Bonfield
Shore Road Closure	Cllr Whitwam
Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing	Cllr Tomes
Tourism Marketing	Cllr Tomes
Waste Management	Community Services Committee Chairman

Decisions Required

1. To consider whether to recommend to Council that the revised committee structure should be made permanent.
2. To consider making recommendations in respect of the issues listed under section 3 above.
3. To consider making any recommendations in respect of the number and remit of working parties, as listed in section 4 above.

Martin Ayres
Town Clerk

April 2023

Health & Safety Report – October 2022 to March 2023

There have been three incidents or accidents and one near miss reported since November 2022. Two of these resulted in no incapacitation, whilst one related to seven consecutive days incapacitation and was thus subject to a RIDDOR report.

A review of the Council's Worknest system (a database health and safety system) is currently being undertaken to ensure all relevant activities are accurately recorded, reviewed and that notifications are sent at appropriate intervals.

Formal Health and Safety related training completed in the past 6 months has included the following courses. In terms of scale, these have included training of large or small groups of staff and training for individual team members.

- LANTRA certificated Brushcutter/Strimmer maintenance & operation
- LANTRA Awards Training Qualification - Hand Held Application of Pesticides
- Royal Horticulture Society – Level 2 Award

In-house training has been delivered in the form of toolbox talks.

Hand Arm Vibration Screening has also been undertaken with relevant staff members.

The training plan for the forthcoming year is being finalised and the following courses are booked and scheduled:

- First Aid at work
- Competence in Trailer Handling and Towing
- NPORS Tractor + mower + loader training

Training courses shortly to be scheduled include:

- Signing and Guarding (Chapter 8 Overview)
- Portable Appliance Testing

It is anticipated that additional training will be scheduled in the near future to ensure existing certifications remain valid.

Action required

To note the content of this report.

Gail Percival
Assets and Compliance Manager

April 2023