Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed						
THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF THE	Yes	No*	'Yes' means that this authority:				
We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	1		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.				
We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	1		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.				
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	~			v done what it has the legal power to do and has d with Proper Practices in doing so.			
We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.				
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.				
We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.				
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		respond external	led to matters brought to its attention by internal and audit.			
We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	\		disclosed everything it should have about its business act during the year including events taking place after the yea end if relevant.				
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.			

^{*}Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

Clerk

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Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL

	Year e	nding	Notes and guidance				
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.				
Balances brought forward	1,125,564	652,900	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.				
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	840,000	849,030	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.				
3. (+) Total other receipts	3,708,472	2,976,632	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.				
4. (-) Staff costs	1,074,527	1,202,456	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.				
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).				
6. (-) All other payments	3,946,609	1,462,489	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash- book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).				
7. (=) Balances carried forward	652,900	1,813,617	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).				
Total value of cash and short term investments	832,427	2,038,228	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.				
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	14,258,246	13,407,889	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.				
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).				

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11 a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	1			The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date 29/05/2024

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

29/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE 30(6)

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

RESIDENCE



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Final External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/24 in respect of Swanage Town Council

Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a limited assurance review is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is not a full statutory audit, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website - https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with Proper Practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

External auditor report 2023/24

On 27 September 2024, we issued a report detailing the results of our limited assurance review of Sections 1 and 2 of this authority's Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024. We explained that we were unable to certify completion of the review at that time. We are now in a position to certify completion of the review.

The external auditor report given in Section 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return requires amendments as follows:

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We recommend that the Council should make a note in the asset register of the notional market value of each investment as at 31 March to inform readers, as noted in Paragraph 5.180 of the Practitioners Guide 2023.





External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

-DocuSigned by:

BDO UP ___467DFB746A8A428...

BDO LLP - Southampton

24 February 2025

Annual Health & Safety Report – April 2024 – March 2025

There have been nine incidents or accidents since April 2024. These comprise two trapped fingers/hands, two cuts/abrasions, two muscle strains, one incident of a bird bite and one case of office furniture falling onto a foot. There have been no RIDDOR reports.

A review of the Council's Worknest system has been undertaken (a database health and safety system) to ensure all relevant compliance activities are accurately recorded, reviewed and that notifications are sent at appropriate intervals. In addition, systems for monitoring that were previously operated externally to the Worknest system have been incorporated into this system.

The Council's Health and Safety Consultant visited in late March 2024 and January 2025. In March 2024 a review of operations at the Visitor Information Centre and Beach Gardens kiosk was undertaken. This included site visits and reviews of existing risk assessments and methods of operation. In January 2025 a review of asbestos management, lone working and the provision of first aid was undertaken. This again included site visits and reviews of existing risk assessments and areas of operation.

A key change to a method of working that has been implemented following this review is a change to the provision of first aid to members of the public. Based upon the professional advice received, delivery of first aid to members of the public will not be provided as a service. The delivery of care and support to the public by team members remains unaffected by this change as does the availability of plasters and hot water, the latter in respect of weever fish stings. Signage at the Visitor Information Centre will be installed to advise the public regarding this. It should also be noted that the RNLI lifeguard service is able to deliver first aid throughout the summer season and that basic medical supplies can be obtained from local pharmacies.

Formal Health and Safety related training completed in the past 12 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.

- Safeguarding
- Emergency First Aid at Work
- First Aid Catastrophic Bleeds
- Fire Safety Training (including the use of extinguishers)
- Asbestos Awareness Training
- NPORS 360 Excavator
- JD Pallet Fork attachment NPORS
- Operational Inspection of Children's Playgrounds RPII
- RHS Horticulture Level 2
- Intensive driving course

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

Hand Arm Vibration Screening was completed in April and May 2024 and has been scheduled again for April 2025.

The training plan for the forthcoming year is being finalised and thus far includes, working at height and safe use of ladders, IOSH Managing Safely and conflict resolution. This training plan for 2025 will also include refresher training to ensure existing certifications remain valid.

Finally, a review of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety Manual has been completed by the Council's health and safety advisor and the Assets and Compliance Manager. This has resulted in minor amendments only to reflect any recent changes in legislation. This updated policy and manual is scheduled for distribution to all staff, as well as an all staff meeting to discuss this and other relevant matters in April.

Action required

To note the content of this report.

Gail Percival, Assets and Compliance Manager March 2025 **Committee Structure and Terms of Reference – To initiate review**

Swanage Town Council



Committee Terms of Reference

Standing Committees and Sub Committees

- 1. Community Services Committee
- 2. Environment Committee
- 3. Finance & Governance Committee
- 3.a. Capital Projects Sub-Committee
- 4. Personnel Committee
- 5. Planning & Consultation Committee
- 5.a. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Sub-Committee)
- 6. Tourism & Local Economy Committee

Advisory Committees

7. Coastal Change & Beach Management Advisory Committee

8. Traffic Management Advisory Committee

Adopted 13th March 2023

Amended version adopted 24th April 2023

1. Community Services Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To protect and enhance the delivery of public services in Swanage, encourage health and wellbeing and enhance community safety. To comment on proposals for improved traffic management in the parish.

Reports to: Full Council

Outside Representatives: Prospect Allotment Association, James Smith Funeral Directors, Swanage Tennis Club, Swanage Bowling Club, Dorset Police, S&PDT, Greengage Community Gardening Project, S&HFC, Swanage Cricket Club.

Frequency of Meetings: Three scheduled meetings per year, otherwise as and when required.

Member Training requirements: None

Sub-Committees/Advisory Committees: Traffic Management Advisory Committee.

Working Parties/Panels: The following working parties will report to the Committee (or to full Council), and can also be instructed to examine specific matters by the Committee:

- Emergency Health Services
- Lower Grammar School Field
- Public Conveniences
- Sport, Leisure & Wellbeing

Other Matters:

The public shall be excluded from any matter that is confidential in nature. This may include non-voting committee members.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To oversee the management, within agreed budgets, of the following Town Council services: allotments; bandstand; Beach Gardens; CCTV; cemeteries; play areas/skate park, playing fields; public toilets; SIDs; street furniture (benches, shelters, signs, streetlights, bus shelters); Town Hall and public help desk.
- 1.2 To determine the allocation of existing budgets where the relevant manager requires clarification or wishes to bring forward an alternative allocation of funds. N.B. Where a formal virement is required it must be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 1.3 To agree minor amendments to relevant Council policy documents.
- 1.4 To receive the minutes of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee, consider any recommendations set out therein and make representations to Dorset Council accordingly.

1.5 To consider any other matters delegated to the Committee by full Council.

- 2.1 To consider project proposals from partner organisations and other third parties relating to community safety, community transport, culture, health, leisure, sport and wellbeing.
- 2.2 To consider revenue funding requests to support the provision of community services by third parties (e.g. Dorset Council school crossing patrol).
- 2.3 To consider proposals for the provision of additional community services by Swanage Town Council.
- 2.4 To refer matters for detailed consideration to a relevant working party.
- 2.5 To make recommendations to full Council regarding matters requiring the allocation of unbudgeted expenditure or significant changes to policy.
- 2.6 To consider relevant capital and revenue budget proposals as part of the annual budget setting process and make recommendations to the Finance & Governance Committee.
- 2.7 To consider relevant sections from the Council's scale of fees and charges as part of the annual budget setting process and make recommendations to the Finance & Governance Committee.
- 2.8 To consider any other matters relating to the delivery of community services to Swanage residents and improvements to traffic management in the parish.

2. Environment Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To consider measures to protect the natural environment, address the climate crisis and oversee the management of the Town Council's parks, gardens and green spaces.

Reports to: Full Council

Outside Representatives: Durlston Country Park, National Trust, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Dorset Council, Planet Purbeck, Sustainable Swanage, Swanage Landers, Beach Buddies

Frequency of Meetings: Three scheduled meetings per year, otherwise as and when required.

Member Training requirements: All Committee Members to be invited to undertake training on the climate crisis.

Sub-Committees/Advisory Committees: To receive recommendations from the Beach Management Advisory Committee.

Working Parties/Panels: The following working parties will report to the Committee (or to full Council), and can also be instructed to examine specific matters by the Committee:

- Environmental Policy & Action Plan Working Party
- Waste Management Working Party

Other Matters:

The public shall be excluded from any matter that is confidential in nature. This may include non-voting committee members.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To oversee the management, within agreed budgets, of the following Town Council services and properties: grounds maintenance, waste management, Peveril Point & The Downs Local Nature Reserve, parks, gardens and green spaces, footpaths and sustainable transport.
- 1.2 To oversee implementation of Council policies relating to the services and properties listed in 1.1, including the Environmental Action Plan, Carbon Neutral Plan 2030, and Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 1.3 To oversee the Council's relationship with Sustainable Swanage and the delivery of its objectives.
- 1.4 To determine the allocation of existing budgets where the relevant manager requires clarification or wishes to bring forward an alternative allocation of funds. N.B. Where a formal virement is required it must be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 1.5 To consider recommendations relevant to the Committee's remit from the Beach Management Advisory Committee.

- 1.6 To agree minor amendments to relevant Council policy documents.
- 1.7 To consider any other matters delegated to the Committee by full Council.

- 2.1 To consider project proposals from partner organisations and other third parties relating to the protection of the natural environment or to the management of the Council's parks, gardens and green spaces.
- 2.2 To refer matters for detailed consideration to a relevant working party.
- 2.3 To make recommendations to full Council regarding matters requiring the allocation of unbudgeted expenditure or significant changes to policy.
- 2.4 To consider relevant capital and revenue budget proposals as part of the annual budget setting process and make recommendations to the Finance & Governance Committee.
- 2.5 To consider any other matters relating to the natural environment, the climate crisis or the management of the Council's parks, gardens or green spaces.

3. Finance & Governance Committee Draft Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To oversee the Council's governance arrangements and its management of public funds, ensuring that appropriate policies are in place and that adequate arrangements are made to manage risk.

Reports to: Full Council

Outside Representatives: None

Frequency of Meetings: Six scheduled meetings per year, otherwise as and when required.

Member Training requirements: Relevant in-house training will be offered to all councillors as part of their induction process.

Sub-Committees: Capital Projects Sub-Committee.

Working Parties/Panels: The following working parties/panels will report to the Committee (or to full Council), and can also be instructed to examine specific matters by the Committee:

- Rents & Licences Panel
- Communications Strategy Working Party

Other Matters: The Committee will be comprised of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chair of each of the Council's Standing Committees (Community Services, Environment, Personnel, Planning & Consultation and Tourism & Local Economy), together with any other Member(s) appointed by Council. The public shall be excluded from any matter that is confidential in nature.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To receive quarterly budget monitoring and variance reports, and determine any response required to address urgent concerns.
- 1.2 To monitor and review Council investments, including receipt of quarterly reports on treasury activity.
- 1.3 To receive interim reports from the Council's internal auditor and approve or amend the actions proposed by officers to address the concerns raised.
- 1.4 To receive, at least annually, a report demonstrating reconciliation of the Council's bank accounts.
- 1.5 To monitor and review funding arrangements for the Council's capital works programme.
- 1.6 To consider, at least annually, a report on the Council's provision for bad debts, authorising the writing off of any such debt not exceeding £500 and agreeing actions in respect of larger sums (the write-off of which must be approved by Council).
- 1.7 To agree minor amendments and clarifications of existing Town Council policies in respect of finance and governance.
- 1.8 To appoint an appropriate person to act as the Council's internal auditor.

- 1.9 To appoint a Capital Projects Sub-Committee, agree its Terms of Reference, receive its minutes and consider any recommendations set out therein.
- 1.10 To approve any increase in budget (up to £5,000) further to a recommendation from the Capital Projects Sub-Committee.
- 1.11 To ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for carrying out rent reviews in respect of Council-owned property, and to consider any recommendations from the Rents & Licences Panel.
- 1.12 To review from time to time the adequacy of the Council's insurance cover and receive at least once a year a report regarding claims settled and lodged since the last report.
- 1.13 To monitor and review the performance of the Council's external contracts where appropriate (e.g. public toilet cleaning).
- 1.14 To review, at least annually, a report of complaints received regarding the Council's services and consider any actions required to address the concerns raised.
- 1.15 To consider periodically reports regarding the Council's compliance with its regulatory requirements (e.g. health and safety, data protection and transparency).
- 1.16 To act in a scrutiny role in respect of Council decisions, as and when requested by full Council.

- 2.1 To consider the strategic direction of the Town Council and periodically review the Town Council's Corporate Plan and Governance Arrangements, making appropriate recommendations to the Council.
- To review the Town Council's list of priorities twice yearly and monitor progress towards their achievement, making appropriate recommendations to the Council.
- 2.3 To review, at least annually, the adequacy of the Town Council's Risk Register, and recommend amendments to the Council.
- To consider in detail recommendations made by the Council's external auditor and recommend any resulting action plan to full Council.
- 2.5 To consider draft versions of Council policy documents relevant to these Terms of Reference and make appropriate recommendations to the Council.
- To consider the response to changes in legislation affecting the Town Council and recommend appropriate steps to the Council.
- 2.7 To consider the draft annual estimates each year (usually in December) and make a recommendation to the Council regarding their adoption, including the Council's parish precept for the forthcoming financial year.
- 2.8 To consider any proposed virement (transfer of expenditure from one budget heading to another) and make a recommendation to Council.
- 2.9 To consider any case for the Council entering into borrowing and make an appropriate recommendation to Council.

- 2.10 To consider the adoption or amendment of the Members' Allowance Scheme in light of the Independent Panel's Report, and make a recommendation to Council accordingly.
- 2.11 To consider any other matters relating to the Council's governance arrangements and financial management.

3.a. Capital Projects Sub-Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To monitor the delivery of projects included in the Council's Capital Programme and the one-off list of revenue expenditure contained in the Annual Budget Report, providing support and guidance to officers as required.

Reports to: Finance & Governance Committee

Outside Representatives: None

Frequency of Meetings: As and when required.

Member Training requirements: None

Other Matters: The Committee will be comprised of three or four Members of the Finance & Governance Committee, usually including the Chairs of the Community Services and Environment Committees.

Due to the routine discussion of contractual and procurement matters the meetings of the sub-committee will not be open to the public, although all meetings will be preceded by a period of public participation time.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To support officers in prioritising the capital and revenue projects agreed by Council as part of the Estimates process each year.
- 1.2 To consider matters raised by officers in respect of the management of capital projects and provide advice and guidance accordingly.
- 1.3 To monitor progress in the delivery of projects, and receive reports from officers, contractors and external advisors, as appropriate.
- 1.4 To consider any additional matters referred by another Committee or Council.
- 1.5 To approve the minutes of its meetings for accuracy.

- To advise the Finance & Governance Committee on project budgets for the forthcoming financial year, as part of the Estimates setting process.
- 2.2 To consider any requirement for additional funds in respect of a specific project and make a recommendation to either the Finance & Governance Committee (up to £5,000), or Full Council, accordingly.
- 2.3 To consider any other matters relating to the management and delivery of Council projects.

4. Personnel Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To ensure that the Town Council fulfils its objective to be an excellent employer and complies with relevant legal obligations.

Reports to: Full Council

Outside Representatives: None

Frequency of Meetings: Three scheduled meetings per year, otherwise as and when required.

Member Training requirements: All Members willing to participate in grievance or disciplinary appeal hearings should be provided with relevant training.

Working Parties/Panels: The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairperson, can convene panels of three trained committee members to hear appeals in relation to disciplinary and grievance matters. The Chairman can convene a panel to hear a disciplinary, grievance or other personnel issue in relation to the Town Clerk. All hearings will be held in accordance with the Staff Handbook and guidance will be sought from the Council's employment advisors.

Other Matters:

The public shall be excluded from any matter that would identify an individual member of staff.

Councillors who are not Members of the Committee will not automatically be sent copies of confidential agenda papers.

The Chairperson of the Committee will undertake the Town Clerk's annual appraisal, together with the mayor and deputy mayor, unless otherwise agreed with the Town Clerk.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To determine requests for the regrading of existing posts within agreed budgets, having considered recommendations from the Town Council's employment advisors.
- 1.2 To determine the detailed implementation of Council policy, where this cannot be decided by officers (for example, where there is a conflict of interest because the decision would directly impact their terms and conditions).
- 1.3 To agree changes to the Council's staffing structure, and associated job descriptions and person specifications, within agreed budgets.
- 1.4 To agree significant additions/changes to the Council's training programme within agreed budgets.
- 1.5 To agree one-off payments to Staff from within agreed budgets.
- 1.6 To agree minor changes to the Staff Handbook.
- 1.7 To consider any other matters delegated to the Committee by full Council.

Other functions:

2.1 To review at least annually the Council's staffing structure and make recommendations to full Council about any change requiring an additional budget allocation.

- 2.2 To review proposed changes to the Staff Handbook and make recommendations about significant amendments to the Town Council.
- 2.3 To review proposed changes to staff contracts of employment and make recommendations about significant amendments to the Town Council.
- 2.4 To consider matters relating to employees' health and safety.
- 2.5 To annually review the Council's training budget and make recommendations to full Council.
- 2.6 To oversee any staffing review or job evaluation process.
- 2.7 To consider any recommendation from the Town Clerk appointment panel and in turn make a recommendation to Full Council.
- 2.8 To consider any proposed changes to the Town Council's pension provision and make recommendations to Full Council.
- 2.9 To develop the Council's approach to apprenticeships.
- 2.10 To consider proposals for staff benefits.
- 2.11 To oversee the recruitment of a new Town Clerk, when a vacancy arises, and make a recommendation as to a preferred candidate to Full Council.
- 2.12 To consider any other matters relating to the employment of staff.

5. Planning & Consultation Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To comment on planning applications submitted to Dorset Council regarding development within the parish of Swanage, or that are of direct relevance to the parish; to oversee the development and review of a Neighbourhood Plan; to comment on licensing and tree work applications within the parish; and to respond to third-party consultation exercises.

Reports to: Full Council

Outside Representatives: None

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Member Training requirements: All Members are expected to attend relevant training regarding the planning system, including the making of material comments on planning applications.

Sub-Committees/Advisory Committees: Swanage Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Sub-Committee).

Working Parties/Panels: None

Other Matters: The committee may, by resolution, resolve to refer any matter of sufficient importance for consideration at a forthcoming Council meeting.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To determine the Council's response to all planning applications submitted to Dorset Council regarding development either within the parish, or that is of direct relevance to the parish.
- 1.2 Where appropriate, to determine if the Town Council will be represented at meetings of Dorset Council's Eastern Area Planning Committee, or at appeal hearings held by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.3 To determine the Council's response to licensing applications submitted to Dorset Council regarding premises within the parish of Swanage or that will have a direct impact on residents of the parish.
- 1.4 To comment on any applications for tree works within the parish that have been submitted to Dorset Council.
- 1.5 To determine the Council's response to consultation documents prepared by third parties that contain proposals with direct relevance to the parish of Swanage, residents of Swanage, or the work of the Town Council.
- 1.6 To appoint a Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee, agree its Terms of Reference, receive its minutes and consider any recommendations set out therein.

- 2.1 To consider proposals for heritage related projects.
- 2.2 To consider proposals in relation to Conservation Areas within the town.
- 2.3 To advise the Town Council as to budget requirements in connection with the Committee's business.

2.4	To consider above.	any other	matters	relevant	to plan	ning,	licensing	or I	neritage	not	mentioned

5.a. Swanage Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Sub Committee) Terms of Reference

Introduction/Background

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is a sub-committee of Swanage Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee and is referred to below as the "Steering Group".

Swanage Town Council (STC) is aiming to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that ensures the growth of our town is both sustainable and achieved within a townscape and environment that protects and enhances the special characteristics of the town as recognised by the Swanage community and which, in turn, attract the visitors who power the town's seaside economy.

1. Purpose and Objective

To ensure the production of a Draft Neighbourhood Plan, which defines the planning priorities identified by the community, taking into account all representations made during the plan making process and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence.

2. Constitutional Arrangements

- **2.1** The Steering Group is a Sub-Committee of Swanage Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee. As such its governance arrangements must be in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders.
- **2.2** STC is the qualifying body for the purposes of preparing and financing the Plan. Quarterly reports will be made to the full Council to ensure effective progress, and the Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee will receive copies of the Steering Group minutes to consider any matters arising.
- 2.3 The Steering Group has full delegated authority to manage the preparation of the Plan as set out in the objectives, and within agreed budgets, up to and including the publication of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan for public consultation.
 STC will approve the final draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to the Local Planning Authority.
- **2.4** The Steering Group will approve the minutes of its meetings for accuracy.
- **2.5** The Steering Group must seek approval from its parent committee for any changes to these Terms of Reference.

3. The Steering Group will meet regularly to:

- **3.1** Determine the overall scope and objectives of the plan based on public feedback;
- **3.2** Commission and monitor a project plan and report to Swanage Town Council on progress against key objectives;
- **3.3** Ensure that there is a continued review of the legislative requirements around Neighbourhood Planning to ensure the plan meets all requirements;

- **3.4** Make recommendations to the Town Council on resourcing the Plan, via the Planning and Consultation Committee;
- **3.5** Ensure that the wider community is involved in the Plan process;
- **3.6** Ensure that necessary evidence is gathered to inform each of the themes within the scope of the plan;
- **3.7** Ensure that all available options are identified and assessed in respect of each theme and reflected in the draft Plan for wider consultation and review;
- 3.8 Ensure minutes, reports and documents relating to the plan are made publicly accessible;
- **3.9** Agree a timescale for completion.

4. Task Teams

The Steering Group will oversee the setting up of Task Teams, which will feed evidence back to the Steering Group to support preparation of the Plan. A member of the Steering Group will chair the Task Teams. The initial theme groups are:

- Development Task Team (incorporating Housing and Community Services, Town Centre and Economic Development)
- Environment Task Team (incorporating Environment, Heritage and Conservation)

5. Membership

- **5.1** Membership of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is as follows:
 - a) Six Councillor Members of Swanage Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee, nominated by the Planning and Consultation Committee.
 - b) Up to six other members residing in the Parish of Swanage (the Steering Group having delegated authority to co-opt accordingly, dependent on skills and experience).
- **5.2** The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected by the Steering Group.
- **5.3** Representatives of ONeill Homer, Planning Consultants can attend any meeting of the Steering Group, and Theme Groups, as advisors.

6. Meetings

The Steering Group will meet regularly. Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required, in accordance with legislation each Councillor Member shall have one vote, and votes can only be made in person. The quorum is three voting members, although a minimum of five voting members shall be present at Steering Group meetings when a proposal is considered to recommend changes to these Terms of Reference. A simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chair shall have one casting vote.

Town Council administrative staff will take minutes and organise meetings of the Steering Group and reporting to STC.

7. Conduct and Interests

The Steering Group will follow the Code of Conduct as adopted by Swanage Town Council. Whilst members as individuals may be accountable to their parent organisations, the Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.

6. Tourism & Local Economy Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To promote sustainable tourism and consider measures to support the local economy.

Reports to: Full Council

Outside Representatives: Durlston Country Park, Swanage & District Chamber of Trade and Commerce (up to three members to represent retailers, hospitality and licensed premises), Swanage Railway, Swanage Fishermen's Association, Swanage Pier Trust, Visit Dorset, National Trust, RNLI, Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre, Mowlem Theatre.

Frequency of Meetings: Three scheduled meetings per year, otherwise as and when required.

Member Training requirements: None.

Sub-Committees/Advisory Committees: To receive recommendations from the Beach Management Advisory Committee.

Working Parties/Panels: The following working parties will report to the Committee (or to full Council), and can also be instructed to examine specific matters by the Committee:

- Car Parks
- Communications Strategy
- Events
- Market
- Museum
- Seafront Masterplan

Other Matters:

The public shall be excluded from any matter that is confidential in nature. This may include non-voting committee members.

Delegated Matters:

- 1.1 To oversee the management, within agreed budgets, of the following Town Council services: beach management, Beach Huts, boat park, car parks, events, festive lights, fishermen's huts, market, publicity & promotion, seafront infrastructure, Swanage Information Centre and town centre improvements.
- 1.2 To determine the allocation of existing budgets where the relevant manager requires clarification or wishes to bring forward an alternative allocation of funds. N.B. Where a formal virement is required it must be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 1.3 To consider recommendations relevant to the Committee's remit from the Beach Management Advisory Committee.
- 1.4 To agree minor amendments to relevant Council policy documents.
- 1.4 To consider any other matters delegated to the Committee by full Council.

- 2.1 To consider project proposals from partner organisations and other third parties relating to events, the promotion of Swanage, tourism and the local economy.
- 2.2 To refer matters for detailed consideration to a relevant working party.
- 2.3 To make recommendations to full Council regarding matters requiring the allocation of unbudgeted expenditure or significant changes to policy.
- 2.4 To consider relevant capital and revenue budget proposals as part of the annual budget setting process and make recommendations to the Finance & Governance Committee.
- 2.5 To consider relevant sections from the Council's scale of fees and charges as part of the annual budget setting process and make recommendations to the Finance & Governance Committee.
- 2.6 To receive reports from the Museum working party and consider any recommendations set out therein.
- 2.7 To consider any other matters relating to tourism and the local economy.

7. Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee Draft Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To advise the Council on measures required to provide a safe, clean and well-maintained beach facility, compliant with the European Blue Flag criteria. Also to provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss matters relating more widely to the management of the impacts of climate induced coastal change in Swanage and Durlston Bays and make recommendations to Council accordingly.

Reports to: Tourism & Local Economy Committee and Environment Committee.

Councillor Membership: Three councillors to be appointed at the Annual Council Meeting each May, one of which will be elected as Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

Outside Representatives: Swanage Lifeboat Crew, MCA, Coastwatch, Dorset Council, Dorset Police, Dorset Coast Forum, National Trust, Environment Agency, Swanage Pier, Swanage Sailing Club, Swanage Fishermen's Association, Swanage Angling Club, Private Beach Hut Sites Hut Owners' Group, North Beach Representative, Swanage Sea Rowing Club, local divers, Ocean Bay businesses, Seaweed removal contractor, Pierhead Watersports and Byelaw Enforcement, Durlston Country Park, Designated Bathing Zone Operator, Quay Operators, Deckchair/pedalo concessionaire, Wessex Water, and Natural England, RNLI Lifeguard team, Beach Buddies, local outdoor adventure companies, Swanage Moorings Association, Planet Purbeck, Jurassic Coast Trust, and former chairmen of Swanage Coastal Change Forum.

Quoram: Five Members, at least one must be a Swanage Town Councillor.

Frequency of Meetings: Three times a year, in February, May, and October.

Member Training requirements: None.

Other Matters: This committee has no delegated decision making powers. Any issue requiring Town Council expenditure or amendment to Town Council policy will be the subject of a recommendation to either the Tourism and Local Economy Committee or Environment Committee, which may in turn be referred to a meeting of the Town Council. The committee can provide guidance to officers to assist them in taking forward minor matters that do not require referral to a committee.

Functions:

- 1.1 To consider proposals, and make recommendations as appropriate, in respect of the following matters relating to the beach and Swanage Bay:
 - beach and water safety
 - environmental management and education
 - signage
 - events
 - accessibility
 - moorings and boat launching/landing facilities
 - management of personal watercraft
 - commercial proposals relating to the Main Beach (Mowlem to Ulwell Stream).
- 1.2 To advise on amendments to the beach rules and regulations.
- 1.3 To advise on amendments to Dorset Council's Public Pleasure Boats Byelaws.

- 1.4 To receive reports regarding sea defence works, flood prevention and beach replenishment schemes from the Environment Agency and Dorset Council.
- 1.5 To receive reports regarding water quality from Wessex Water.
- 1.6 To consider any matter referred to it by the Town Council or another council committee.
- 1.7 To provide a focus for local consultation by statutory agencies on coastal matters.
- 1.8 To encourage community engagement in the challenges posed by coastal change and other matters within the committees remit.
- 1.9 To review consultation documents that are relevant to the work of this advisory committee and advise the Town Council on an appropriate response.
- 1.10 To approve the minutes of its meetings for accuracy.

8. Traffic Management Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Main Objective/Remit: To consider proposals relating to traffic management and highway safety in the parish of Swanage, in consultation with Dorset Council, and formulate recommendations to the Community Services Committee accordingly.

Reports to: Community Services Committee.

Outside Representatives: Dorset Police, Community Highways Officer (Dorset Council).

Quorum: Three Members/Outside Representatives.

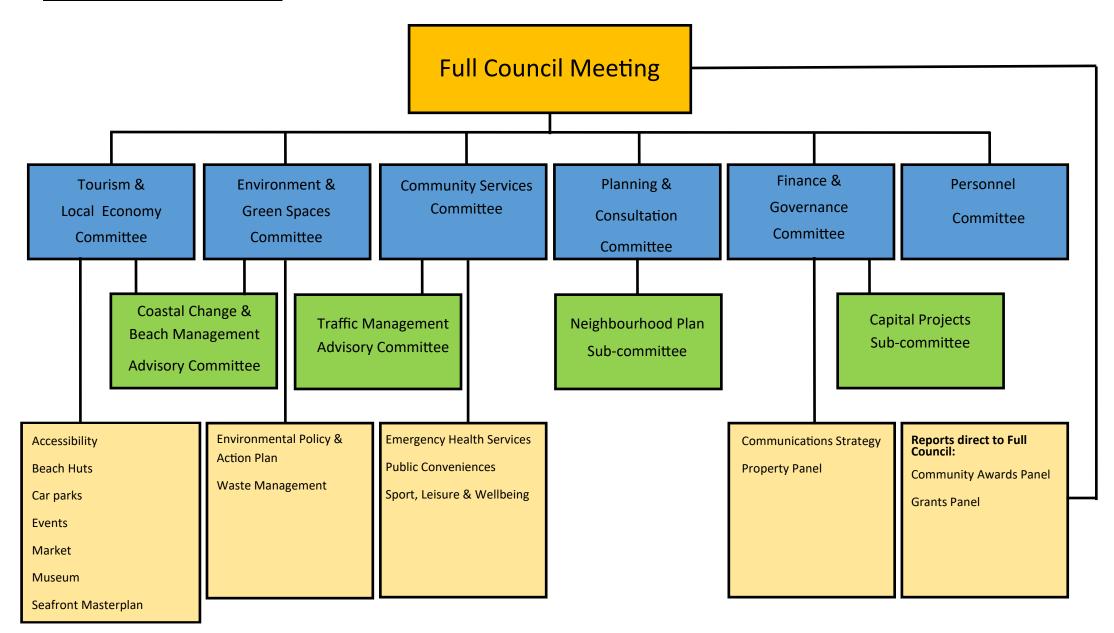
Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly, otherwise as and when required.

Member Training requirements: None.

Other Matters: Although this committee has no delegated decision-making powers, it can provide guidance to officers to assist them in taking forward minor matters that do not require referral to the parent committee.

Functions:

- 1.1 To consider the following matters, taking into account advice from a relevant Highways Officer, and where appropriate make recommendations to the Community Services Committee about a response to Dorset Council as the Highway Authority.
 - a) Proposals to improve traffic management on the public highway (e.g. parking restrictions and changes to speed limits).
 - b) Proposals to improve highway and pedestrian safety (including pavements).
 - c) Concerns regarding parking enforcement.
- 1.2 To work with Dorset Council in respect of any town-wide parking review.
- 1.3 To consider traffic management measures in respect of Town Council owned roads and highways (i.e. Station Approach, Peveril Point Road, Panorama Road, De Moulham estate service roads).
- 1.4 To consider any other traffic management measure within the parish of Swanage, not otherwise described above.
- 1.5 To consider any matter referred to it by the Town Council or the Community Services Committee.
- 1.7 To approve the minutes of its meetings for accuracy.



Working Parties - To consider criteria for assessing future role and to agree next steps

At the meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee held on 26th February 2025, Members agreed that consideration needed to be given to a review of the role of the Town Council's working parties in advance of the Annual Meeting in May. The following concerns were raised:

- There are too many working parties which may place an onerous burden on council officers and require a significant time commitment on the part of councillors.
- Some working parties address matters outside of the Town Council's jurisdiction.
- Some working parties continue to be reappointed when they should have had a narrower remit with a finite timescale, more akin to a task and finish group.

The Committee agreed that the matter should be placed on the agenda of the next meeting, at which consideration would be given to agreeing criteria which could be used to determine whether a working party should be reappointed in May. Having agreed the criteria the Committee will also need to consider how best to carry out the review of existing working parties and make a recommendation to the Annual Meeting.

Background

At Swanage Town Council, working parties perform a range of functions. Some have ongoing responsibilities such as the Property Panel whilst others are appointed to deal with one-off items, such as the recent review of the role of seafront advisors. In other councils working parties are sometimes referred to as working groups or task and finish groups. Some councils don't appoint working parties, relying instead on delegation to officers or informal input from councillors.

Working parties are intended to provide an informal venue for members and officers to work through items in detail. One of the key differences between a working party and a committee is that officers can participate in the discussion freely and on equal terms with councillors.

Working parties can be called at short notice and, because they cannot make decisions, there is no requirement for a formal agenda to be issued. They are not open to the public and provide an opportunity for open and frank discussion by all present. Such discussion leads to better informed decision-making at council or committee meetings and helps to avoid lengthy debates that might lead to meetings over-running the two-hour time limit established in Standing Orders or squeezing out time for the discussion of other items.

Although working parties cannot make decisions they are often used as a mechanism to help inform decisions to be made by council officers. They help to ensure that decisions that may in other councils be dealt with entirely by officers are fully informed by councillor input. Officers generally find these meetings extremely helpful.

In cases where decisions are delegated to officers (e.g. in respect of the operation of the market or agreement of small-scale events) the lead officer will make the decision taking into

account the discussion at the working party. Where no such delegation exists, the working party will make a recommendation to a relevant committee or council meeting.

Currently no formal record is kept of working party meetings, although an officer should always be present to take notes and a brief report is made to the next relevant council or committee meeting.

Because they cannot make decisions, Standing Orders provide relatively little formal guidance as to how they are to be managed. Section 6 simply states that:

- a. The Council or any standing committee may appoint such working parties as it considers necessary to provide detailed consideration to any matter within its remit.
- b. Any such working party shall formulate a recommendation to the Council or committee but cannot make a decision on behalf of the Council.
- c. The Council shall not appoint any member of a working party so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
- d. The Council may appoint persons other than Members of the Council to any working party.
- e. The Council may, subject to the provisions of Standing Order 9, at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a working party.

The Town Council appoints a lead councillor and officer in respect of each working party. The role of the lead councillor is principally to ensure that meetings are held as and when required, to propose matters for consideration, to chair the working party meetings and report back to Council/the parent committee. Lead officers are there to arrange the meetings, to ensure that all the business that needs to be addressed is tabled at the appropriate meeting, to help formulate appropriate recommendations and properly record them for consideration by the parent body. As stated above, officers can take decisions within their delegated authority; under the Local Government Act 1972 individual councillors have no such authority.

The Council has no statutory requirement to hold working parties; it could appoint additional committees, sub-committees or advisory committees instead, even for short-term purposes. However, were this to be the case then the administrative burden would increase as formal agendas and minutes would be required.

Criteria for determining whether or not to reappoint working parties

In advance of the meeting Members have submitted some suggestions as to the criteria by which the appointment of a working party should be assessed. These include:

- Does the subject matter fall under the jurisdiction of the Town Council?
- Is the matter an identified priority under the corporate plan?
- Does the subject matter suit a short-term 'task and finish' approach?
- Can the matter be adequately dealt with by an existing standing committee, potentially at an extraordinary meeting?
- Can the matter be put forward for consideration by an independent body, to which the Council sends an observer/outside representative?

• Would the matter benefit from in-depth consideration and contributions from both members and officers and/or input from third parties?

A suggestion has been made that a series of such questions could be visualised as a flowchart.

Decision required

To consider the criteria by which it will be determined whether or not to reappoint each working party.

To consider whether to convene a workshop/councillor briefing or an extraordinary meeting of this committee to make a recommendation to the Annual Meeting in May as to which working parties should be reappointed.

To consider whether the term working party should continue to be used and/or whether the term task and finish group should be introduced, at least in some circumstances.

Martin Ayres Town Clerk

March 2025

Proposed STC Priorities Spring/Summer 2025

Project	Urgency - H/M/L	What does success look like @ 30th September 2025?	Immediate Next Steps
Good Governance			
Budget Review	Н	Initial budget review carried out by F&G Committee prior to	F&G Committee to consider potential expenditure
		budget setting 2026/27.	reductions/increases in income.
Corporate Plan 2025-29	Н	Draft plan prepared for public consultation.	Arrange councillor workshops and plan process for consultation and adoption.
Review of Committees' Terms of Reference and	Н	Committees and Working Parties reviewed and any amendments	Consideration by Finance & Governance Committee.
Working Parties		to Terms of Reference agreed.	
Charitable Trust Review	Н	Action plan in advanced stage of implementation.	Implement recommendations from Charity Commission/legal advisors; complete transfer of James Day Trust
Asset Review	Н	Property Panel to have completed review and recommendations made to Council regarding any surplus assets identified.	Property Panel to meet to complete review of list of assets.
Implement Parking Order	Н	New signage installed and site-specific parking arrangements in place (e.g. Mowlem turning circle, Peveril Point Rd).	Signage to be installed. Engagement with residents re. Peveril Pass scheme.
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews, including North Beach & Peveril Point	Н	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.	Valuer recommendations to be presented to Council; solicitors to be instructed.
Implement Data Protection policies and procedures	Н	Significant progress made towards implementation of One West Action Plan	Tailor document retention policy and commence implementation
Communications Plan	Н	Plan to be reviewed and priorities actioned.	Adopted plan to be reviewed; newsletter to be published.
New Council website	Н	Website launched.	Finalise website design with developers.
Local Economy and Tourism			
Green Seafront Scheme	Н	Preferred option identified and next phase of public engagement completed.	Agree format and timing of public engagement.
Town of Culture Bid Follow Up	М	Plan developed to build on Town of Culture Bid.	Support partners in developing plan to build on Town of Culture bid.
Concessions Plan	Н	Procurement underway for any additional concessions.	Review concessions options for Main Beach Car Park.
Car Park Cash Collection	н	Procurement completed.	Plan procurement exercise.
Swanage Coastal Defence Scheme	Н	Agree public realm improvements to be delivered as part of scheme.	Continue to participate in Dorset Council project team and board meetings.
Private Site Beach Hut Review	M	Review completed and any amednments to agreement drafted.	Determine format of review.

Community Services, Health and Wellbeing			
Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road land	Н	Asset transfer from Dorset Council to Swanage Community Housing Group completed.	Town Council to continue to attend meetings and assist in driving project forward.
Day's Park Community Sports Facility	Н	Planning permission obtained, legal entity registered and community fundraising underway.	Continue regular meetings with S&HFC Ltd and newly registered CIO; continued partnership working with Active Dorset and Dorset Council.
Beach Gardens future plan	Н	Legal agreements drafted.	Agree draft Pavilioin Licence, amended Tennis Court Licence and Funding Agreement for Tennis Courts.
Swanage Skatepark Community Project	Н	Procurement of Phase 1 completed.	Finalise planned procurement of phase 1.
Beach Gardens Tennis Court Upgrade	Н	Procurment completed.	Finalise agreement re. future reserve contributions with Tennis Club and plan procurement.
Investigate options for footpath linking Washpond Lan and Northbrook Road	e M	Discussions concluded with stakeholders and outcome determined.	Consider advice from Dorset Council and outome of liaison with Swanage Community Housing Group.
Peveril Point Road stabilisation/improvements	М	Work commissioned	Finalise project and undertake procurement.
Town Hall services review	М	Operation of Town Hall/Police help desk reviewed and new	Liaise with partners and develop timetable for
		opening hours in place; future operation of CAB/Registration agreed.	reopening joint help desk, in consultation with communications strategy working party.
Planning & Heritage			5, 5, ,
Produce Neighbourhood Plan	Н	First round public consultation completed and draft plan under preparation.	Finalise plan for initial round of public consultation.
Station Approach Improvements	Н	Work commissioned.	Conclude negotiations with Cooperative Group and place order.
Environment & Climate Crisis			
Install additional EVCPs in Car Parks	M	Legal agreements signed and installation programme agreed.	Finalise legal documents.
Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	М	Next priorities from Environmental Action Plan agreed by Environment & Green Spaces Committee; Motion for the Ocean Action Plan agreed.	Working party to review action plan to identify priorities and finalise Motion for the Ocean Action Plan.

STC Priorities Summer/Autumn 2024 Item 7)

Project	Urgency - H/M/L	What does success look like @ 31st December 2024?	% Complete			
Good Governance			<25%	25%<50%	50%<75%	>75%
Budget Setting 2024/25	Н	Draft budget presented to F&G Committee.				
Corporate Plan 2025-29	Н	Draft plan prepared for public consultation.				
Charitable Trust Review	Н	Action plan in advanced stage of implementation.				
Asset Review	Н	Property Panel to have completed review and recommendations				
		made to Council regarding any surplus assets identified.				
Implement Parking Order	Н	New signage installed and site-specific parking arrangements in				
		place (e.g. Mowlem turning circle, Peveril Point Rd).				
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews, including	Н	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.				
North Beach & Peveril Point						
Implement Data Protection policies and procedures	Н	Significant progress made towards implementation of One West				
		Action Plan				
Communications Plan	Н	Plan to be reviewed and priorities actioned.				
New Council website	Н	Undertake process for a website fully compliant with accessibility				
		regs at an advanced stage.				
Local Economy and Tourism						
Green Seafront Scheme	Н	Preferred option identified and next phase of public consultation				
		planned.				
Concessions Plan	Н	Procurement underway for any additional concessions.				
Car Park Cash Collection	Н	Procurement completed.				
Swanage Coastal Defence Scheme	Н	Agree public realm improvements to be delivered as part of				
		scheme.				
Private Site Beach Hut Review	M	Review completed and any amednments to agreement drafted.				

Community Services, Health and Wellbeing				
Investigate options for footpath linking Washpond	Н	Discussions concluded with stakeholders and outcome		
Lane and Northbrook Road		determined.		
Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road land	Н	Asset transfer from Dorset Council to Swanage Community		
		Housing Group completed.		
Day's Park Community Sports Facility	Н	Planning permission obtained, legal entity registered and		
		community fundraising underway.		
Peveril Point Road stabilisation/improvements	Н	Work commissioned		
Beach Gardens future plan	Н	Outline 3-year plan drafted and agreed with Bowls and Tennis		
		Clubs.		
Swanage Skatepark Community Project	M	Plan for phase 1 installation completed.		
Beach Gardens Tennis Court Upgrade	M	Plan for installation completed.		
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.		
Planning & Heritage				
Produce Neighbourhood Plan	Н	First round public consultation completed and draft plan under		
		preparation.		
Station Approach Improvements	Н	Work commissioned.		
Environment & Climate Crisis				
Instal additional EVCPs in Car Parks	Н	Legal agreements signed and installation programme agreed.		
Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	Н	LED lighting, solar panels and EVCPs installed. Next priorities from		
		Environmental Action Plan identified.		