

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on
MONDAY, 16th DECEMBER 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor T. Foster – Chairman

Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor S. Brookes
Councillor J. Dorrington
Councillor J. Lejeune
Councillor D. Monkhouse
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor C. Sutton
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor W. Trite
Councillor S. Vile

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, six members of the public and one representative of the local press and media attended the Meeting.
Councillor Nick Ireland, Leader of Dorset Council, was also in attendance.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised.

Reverend Ian Bird offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

The Chairman opened the Council Meeting at 7.05 p.m.

139. **Apologies**

Apologies for her inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor Coward.

140. **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.

No declarations were made on this occasion.

141. **Minutes**

- (a) Proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by Councillor Lejeune:-
That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on
18th November 2024 be approved as a correct record
and signed.

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

- (b) Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Moreton and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 27th November 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

142. **Tourism and Local Economy Committee**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor Tomes and seconded by Councillor Dorrington:-
That the Minutes of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee Meeting held on 27th November 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

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

5) **Car Parks working party – To consider recommendation regarding Dorset Council’s Restricted Mobility Car Park Permit Scheme**

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

That Dorset Council’s Restricted Mobility Scheme be introduced in Town Council owned car parks.

6) **Events - To consider 2026 applications and potential administration charges for events**

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

That the events scheduled for 2026 be approved, subject to any relevant administration fee.

143. **Planning and Consultation Committee**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Vile:-
That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 2nd December 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

144. **Finance and Governance Committee**

- (a) Proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by Councillor Trite:-
That the Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee Meeting held on 11th December 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

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

3f) Timetable: Committee Meetings, Workshop and Estimates Meeting

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Tomes and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a change in the date of the next Finance &
Governance Committee meeting to 13th January
2025, be approved.

145. **Statement of Cash Balance**

(a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th November 2024 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

146. **Payment of Accounts**

In accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Council's Financial Regulations, the following Payment Schedule was submitted for information:-

- Payment Schedule 8, amounting to £981,757.53.

147. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Town Mayor reported on her recent engagements and expressed gratitude for the continued support received throughout 2024.

- Lewis-Manning Charity Fashion Show held at the Mowlem Theatre.
- Polar Express Event - The Mayor and her consort enjoyed a festive trip on the Polar Express train as part of a press event, where they also had the pleasure of meeting Father Christmas on board.
- Christmas Light Switch-On - The Mayor led the countdown for the annual Christmas light switch-on, marking the start of the festive season.
- Swanage Town and Community Partnership – 'Jingle Mingle' - Held on 11th December, this event provided an opportunity for representatives of local partner organisations to share updates. The Mayor commended the enthusiasm of organisations working to enhance the town's amenities.
- The Christmas Market held on 14th December had been a great success. The Mayor extended thanks to the Swanage and Purbeck Rotary Club members for their continued efforts in organising the event.
- Christmas Card Competition - The Mayor and Deputy Mayor attended a Year 9 assembly at The Swanage School to congratulate the winner of the Mayor's Christmas card design competition, Ellen Hansford.
- Budget Setting for 2025/26 - The Mayor reminded councillors of the importance of attending the upcoming budget workshops, the Finance and Governance Committee meeting, and the Annual Estimates meeting, all of which were vital for setting the budget for 2025/26.

Finally, the Mayor extended her best wishes to all, wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

148. **Working Party Updates and Recommendations**

(a) **Market, 20th November 2024**

At the meeting held on 20th November 2024, Members had discussed ways in which to make improvements and support the market traders. Councillor Dorrington had shown an interest in becoming a member of the Market working party and it was therefore proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Councillor Dorrington be appointed to the
Market Working Party.

- (b) **Car Parks, 20th November 2024**
At the meeting held on 20th November 2024, members had discussed Dorset Council's Restricted Mobility Car Park Permit Scheme and the recommendation was brought forward to the Tourism and Local Economy Committee, Minute No. 5 refers. A meeting would be held in the new year for further discussion around the Peveril Point Permit Scheme and an update would be provided to a future meeting.
- (c) **Seafront Masterplan, 20th November 2024**
Further to Minute No. 125 (d) of the Council Meeting held on 18th November 2024, Members had considered proposals to be brought forward for public consultation, anticipated to be undertaken in spring 2025.
- (d) **Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing, 5th December – Update on discussion with Bowls and Tennis Clubs re. Beach Gardens Pavilion**
Further to Minute No. 125 (c) of the Council Meeting held on 18th November 2024, it was reported that a meeting with the Bowls and Tennis Clubs had taken place on 5th December 2024 and an update would be reported under agenda item 15 (see Minute No. 155(a) below).
- (e) **Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing, 11th December – Meeting with Swanage Musical Theatre Company**
It was noted that a meeting with the Musical Theatre Group had had to be postponed and would be rearranged for the new year.
Regarding the proposed new sports hall at Day's Park, it was noted that a meeting had been held on 3rd December 2024 with representatives of local sports clubs, in order to view the submitted plans, and it was anticipated that a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) would be established imminently to take the project forward.

149. **Dorset Town of Culture 2026 – Update**

Further to Minute No. 126 of the Council Meeting held on 18th November 2024, it was reported that Swanage had been selected to proceed to round two of the process to determine the Dorset Town of Culture 2026. A meeting had been held on 17th November 2024 with neighbouring parishes, and further workshops with relevant community groups were planned for mid-January 2025. The deadline for round two of the bid had been extended to the end of January.

150. **Schedule of Meetings 2024-25 – To consider amendments to the schedule**

Members considered a revised schedule of meetings that had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that meetings of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee and the Traffic Management Advisory Committee would now take place on the afternoon of 12th February 2025.

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

That the amendments to the Schedule of Meetings
2024/25, be approved.

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

a) **Chamber of Trade**

It was reported that the Chamber of Trade had welcomed the decision at the Tourism and Local Economy Committee for the pedestrian finger posts around the town to be re-painted from black to 'Swanage blue' and the Chamber looked forward to its continued work with the council.

b) **Swanage Carnival**

It was reported that Swanage Carnival had been nominated for the Best Tourism Event/Festival category of the Dorset Tourism Awards.

152. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

The following updates were provided by Councillor Trite:

- Targeted Youth Teams – it was reported that targeted youth teams would be deployed in various towns across Dorset providing young people with the opportunity to engage with them about any concerns that they might have.
- Council Plan 2024-29 – it was stated that Dorset Council had adopted the Dorset Plan 2024-29 at its meeting held on 5th December 2024 which set out the priorities to be delivered within the next five year period. Four key strategic priorities were approved: a) Provide affordable, high-quality housing; b) Grow the economy; c) Communities for all; d) Respond to the climate and nature crisis. A fifth strategic priority had been recommended for inclusion: ‘Providing high quality universal services’, however the amendment had not been carried.
- Budget – it was reported that the budget was forecast to see a circa £13.2 million deficit by year end.
- Bournemouth-Poole Ferry Inquiry – The location for the inquiry had been confirmed as Poole Harbour Commissioners’ Terminal, North Lounge, commencing on Tuesday 21st January 2025. It was noted that an evening meeting had been scheduled for Wednesday 22nd January 2025 at the Springfield Hotel, Wareham.
- Devolution Deal – Dorset Council had been working towards a devolution deal entitled ‘Heart of Wessex’. It was anticipated that this would not see an amalgamation of councils but provide leverage for additional funding from central government.

153. **Reporting of delegated matters**

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

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

(a) **Boxing Day Dip**

It was noted that the Boxing Day Dip would be starting at 11.00 a.m. and participants would be making a splash in fancy dress to raise funds for the #Willdoes charity. First aid provision for the event would be provided by Land and Wave.

(b) **Affordable Housing**

Further to Minute No. 6) b) of the Planning and Consultation Committee meeting held on 2nd December 2024, Members reiterated concerns regarding the proposed/potential sale of housing association housing stock in Purbeck. It was agreed that any questions for the local housing associations be provided to the Town Clerk in the first instance.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Trite and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

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 item 15 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality.

155. **Property-Related Legal Matters**

(a) **Beach Gardens**

i) **Pavilion – To consider draft Heads of Terms for Licences with Swanage Bowls and Tennis Clubs**

Members considered the contents of a briefing paper which set out the historic use of the Pavilion by the Swanage Bowling Club and Swanage Tennis Club and the discussions held at the Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing working party meeting held on 5th December 2024.

During the productive discussions minor amendments had been proposed to the draft Heads of Terms for a pavilion licence and a mutually agreeable approach for the future of Beach Gardens had been identified, as follows:

1. All parties to work together to develop a long-term vision for the Sports Park as a whole, including the Pavilion, to ensure that the facility will meet the needs of the future.
2. After three financial years to consider passing the management of the site (tennis courts, pavilion, kiosk and putting green) to an organisation with an appropriate legal structure.
3. In acknowledgement of the significant investment in Beach Gardens in recent years, no further changes or major investments to be made into any of the facilities after April 2025 for a three-year period (with the exception of the current proposals for the upgrade of tennis courts 4 and 5).

An annual licence fee for each Club's use of the Pavilion had also been considered, and the sum of £2,200 p.a. had been put forward for consideration.

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

That the approach as set out in points 1-3 above, the draft heads of terms for a licence to use the pavilion at Beach Gardens (subject to contract and relevant professional advice) and the proposed licence fee of £2,200 to be charged to each of the two clubs for the current and next two financial years (2024/25 to 2026/27) be approved, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations.

ii) **Tennis Courts**

Consideration was given to a briefing paper which outlined amendments to the licence with Swanage Tennis Club regarding the use of the tennis courts, specifically in connection with the contributions made to the Tennis Court maintenance reserve. The need to further consider the adequacy of the reserve was noted, in light of the requirement to replace the artificial court surfaces that had been installed in recent years. This would be the subject of a report to a future Council meeting. It was proposed by Councillor Vile, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That delegated authority be given to officers to conclude negotiations with Swanage Tennis Club regarding an amended licence agreement for the use of the tennis courts at Beach Gardens and that the Council's contribution to the tennis court maintenance reserve be increased to match fund the Tennis Club's contribution of £3,833 p.a. from 2024/25 onwards.

(b) **Sauna Concession – Update**

It was reported that the electricity supply was in the process of being installed and that the sauna owners anticipated opening before Christmas.

The Meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.
