

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council  
held at the Town Hall, High Street, Swanage on  
**MONDAY, 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2024** at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor T. Foster – Chairman

Councillor M. Bonfield

Councillor M. Coward

Councillor J. Lejeune

Councillor D. Monkhouse

Councillor C. Moreton

Councillor C. Sutton

Councillor C. Tomes

Councillor W. Trite

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, two members of the public and one representative of the local press and media attended the Meeting.

**Public Participation Time**

There were no matters raised on this occasion.

Reverend Dave Richards offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

The Chairman opened the Council Meeting at 7.10 p.m.

52. **Apologies**

Councillors Dorrington and Vile gave apologies for their inability to attend the meeting and the reasons for their absence had been noted. Councillor Brookes attended the meeting remotely.

53. **Declarations of Interest**

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

**Agenda Item No. 10** – Councillor Bonfield declared a disclosable pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct by reason of being a regular beach hut user.

54. **Minutes**

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

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on  
24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be approved as a correct record and  
signed.

55. **Environment and Green Spaces Committee**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Monkhouse, seconded by Councillor Sutton and  
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Environment and Green  
Spaces Committee Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be  
approved as a correct record and signed.

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

12) **Review of representatives on the Committee**

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

That the Purbeck Energy Group be added to the list of outside representatives in the Terms of Reference for the Environment & Green Spaces Committee.

It was noted that the recommendation set out in Minute No. 7 regarding the Motion for the Ocean is the subject of Agenda Item 9.

56. **Planning and Consultation Committee**

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

That the Minutes of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

57. **Tourism and Local Economy Committee**

(a) In considering acceptance of the Minutes of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024, attention was drawn to the omission of Councillor Moreton's apologies in the minutes. Subject to an amendment to the Minutes being made to note apologies from Councillor Moreton, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tomes and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

7) **Events – Consideration of new event applications**

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

That the Junior Championship Sea Rowing Regatta event on 6th October 2024 be approved and that the Alzheimer's Charity Event on 7th June 2025 also be approved with delegated authority being provided to the VSBDM, in consultation with the Events working party, to negotiate an appropriate fee.

58. **Community Services Committee**

(a) Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Monkhouse and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

6) **Mowlem Turning Circle – Regulation of parking**

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

That a removeable lockable bollard to regulate access to the Mowlem turning circle be installed, and that parking be regulated, via permits, to be issued by the Mowlem Theatre in accordance with the criteria set out in the briefing note on the matter, subject to review after one month.

59. **Statement of Cash Balance**

- (a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 was submitted for information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

60. **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 3, amounting to £832,930.96.

61. **Chairman’s Announcements**

The Town Mayor reported her attendance at the following events since the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024:

- Swanage Railway – A number of councillors and officers had been invited to attend a tour of the railway assets which included the offices and Goods Shed. It was an interesting visit and provided an opportunity to learn more about the plans to improve the facilities.
- Green Flag – a proud moment to witness the Green Flag being raised at Beach Gardens for the second consecutive year and a pleasure to share this with the staff involved in the upkeep and running of the gardens and the Chair of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee.
- Coastwatch Flag – Attended the railway station to watch the Coastwatch Flag make its onward journey to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Coastwatch organisation.
- Civic Service – The service is being planned for 6<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at St Mary’s Church, Swanage to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Swanage Town Council and to honour the achievements of local organisations. Attendees were encouraged to contact the Mayor or Deputy Mayor with any suggestions that would contribute to a successful event.
- Upcoming Events – Swanage Carnival, Lifeboat week and the Folk Festival, all to look forward to.

62. **Working Party Updates and Recommendations**

(a) **Car Parks, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

It was reported that discussion included the replacement of car parking machines and further information would be provided under agenda item 15 (b).

(b) **Events, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

A report from this meeting had been provided to the Tourism and Local Economy Committee Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024, Minute No. 7 refers.

(c) **Property Panel, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

It was reported that Members had discussed the Santa Fe Fun Park and the proposed plans for a replacement ride. It was noted that this followed the park operator’s decision to remove a recently installed pirate-themed swing boat ride

following engagement with Dorset Council's planning enforcement team which had highlighted the ride's potential non-conformity with the park's permitted development rights. A further update would be provided under agenda item 13, see Minute No. 67 (a) below. Minor issues regarding the new seafront concessions were also addressed.

(d) **Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

Further to Minute No. 44 of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the working party had discussed the specialist V.A.T advice received to inform the most appropriate legal status of the body to deliver the project. An update would be provided to a future council meeting.

63. **Motion for the Ocean – To consider recommendation of the Environment & Green Spaces Committee to adopt the Motion for the Ocean**

Further to Minute No. 7 of the meeting of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Members considered the contents of a briefing paper which included the draft Motion for the Ocean declaration.

It was reported that at that meeting clarification had been sought about the implications of some of the commitments contained in the draft declaration. In light of that request the briefing note set out short descriptions of the South Inshore and South Offshore Marine Plan and the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority.

It was noted that the Environmental Policy and Action Plan Working Party had acknowledged the importance of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders such as Planet Purbeck, Greenpeace, Swanage Pier, Wessex Water, the National Trust, local schools and the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority. It was anticipated that stakeholder engagement would be undertaken in the upcoming twelve months to inform the development of an action plan that would support ocean recovery.

Some concern was expressed around the potential cost implications involved in the adoption of the declaration and it was suggested that any decision in this respect should be deferred in order for additional information to be acquired, including from Dorset Council. In response, it was stated that the draft declaration had been considered by the Environment and Green Spaces Committee and that outside representatives in attendance at the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee meetings frequently noted concerns around water quality. In addition, it was noted that at the most recent meeting of the advisory committee, held on 10<sup>th</sup> July, a representative from Wessex Water had provided a presentation highlighting the efforts of the company to reduce water pollution and better inform the public when there was a risk of contaminated water. Members expressed the importance of the ocean to the town, which included the wellbeing of residents/visitors, marine life and the potential impact on tourism of poor water quality.

Further to a lengthy discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Trite and seconded by Councillor Lejeune:-

That the draft Motion for the Ocean declaration be deferred to the next Council Meeting being held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024, in order to obtain further information and an indication of any associated costs.

Upon being put to the Meeting, FOUR Members voted IN FAVOUR of the Proposition, and there were FIVE AGAINST, whereupon the Proposition was NOT CARRIED.

It was therefore proposed by Councillor Monkhouse and seconded by Councillor Sutton:-

That the draft Motion for the Ocean declaration be approved and adopted, and that the Environment

Action Plan Working Party be tasked with the development of a Motion for the Ocean action plan within twelve months.

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

The Chairman of the Environment and Green Spaces Committee invited Members to share any concerns that they might have and to contribute to the draft action plan.

Further to his declaration of interest, Councillor Bonfield left the meeting prior to consideration of the next item.

64. **Beach Huts – To agree the scale of fees and charges for 2025/26**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee, consideration was given to a briefing paper which outlined the discussions held at the Beach Hut working party meetings and proposed changes to the structure of the Beach Hut fees, the booking procedure and the prices to be charged for the 2025/26 season.

Attention was drawn to section 3 of the paper which included the proposed changes to the fee structure, as set out below:

- The introduction of revised price periods to better meet demand for huts over the year (appendix 1 of paper).
- A reduction in fees over the Easter period for increased occupancy.
- Simplification of the current discount periods – Full year bookings at a 25% discount and winter period (1st November to 28th March) bookings also at 25% discount.
- The upper huts priced at 70% of lower huts throughout year.
- Occupancy of the ‘Artisans on the Beach’ to move from 29th November – 2nd January (5 weeks/6 weekends) to 22nd November to 14th December (3 weeks/4 weekends).

Members then reviewed section 4 of the paper which outlined proposed changes to the beach hut booking procedure, as shown in the following table:

Day	Release date	Period	Huts available
Day 1	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	52 weeks (all year)	Shore Road: 10 pre-designated huts
Day 2	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	21 weeks (winter) 1 November to 28 March	All Shore Road huts
Day 3	9 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	6 weeks (summer peak) 12 July to 29 August	Shore Road: 25 pre-designated huts
Day 4	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	1 week+	All Shore Road huts
Day 1	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	52 weeks	All Spa Retreats only
Day 2	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	31 weeks 29 Mar to 31 Oct	All Spa and Spa Retreats
Day 3	13 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	1 week+	All Spa and Spa Retreats

Finally, consideration was given to the proposed fees, circulated prior to the meeting and set out in appendices 2 and 4 (a copy attached at the end of the minutes). It was acknowledged that the increase in prices would be necessary as maintenance of the huts would be required in the future and a simplified format would be of great assistance to

beach hut customers. It was suggested that for additional clarity, discounted prices for long lets should be rounded to the nearest whole pound.

It was proposed by Councillor Lejeune, seconded by Councillor Sutton and  
**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the revised beach hut fee structure set out in section 3, the revised booking procedure as set out in section 4 and the fees as set out in Appendices 2, and 4, subject to any rounding, be approved.

Thanks were offered to the VSBDM for his work on this complicated matter.

Councillor Bonfield re-entered the meeting.

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

(a) **Swanage Carnival**

It was noted that Swanage Carnival would commence on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July. Thanks were given to the Assets and Compliance Manager, the VSBDM and their teams for their hard work in preparing for the event and the additional workload during carnival week.

66. **Report from Dorset Councillors**

The following updates were provided by Councillor Trite:

- It was reported that the Purbeck Local Plan had been adopted. It was noted that the Dorset Plan was ‘emerging’ and the Purbeck Local Plan would be referred to in the interim.
- Dorset Council had adopted a resolution in the declaration of a ‘Nature Emergency’, to go alongside the ‘Climate Emergency’, in order to make steps for the reversal of nature’s decline.
- It was noted that the recently implemented changes to library opening times across Dorset had been planned to provide the greatest availability of the service for the greatest number of residents within budget constraints. There was no indication that this would be a prelude to library closures.
- Dorset-Council run parks had achieved six Green Flag Awards, including Durlston Country Park. The park had also been awarded the Green Heritage site accreditation, an award supported by Historic England, for the management and promotion of its historic features.
- Dorset Council had launched a new housing webpage which outlined the ‘Home in on Housing’ programme, the aims and objectives of which were noted as a) Increasing housing supply, b) Building healthy communities and c) Homes for Dorset residents.

A query was raised around the ‘Home in on Housing’ programme and the implications for affordable housing allocation. In response, it was noted that a consultation regarding the strategy would commence in due course and views would be welcomed. In addition, it was stated that the Town Council would be consulted on the affordable housing element within the emerging Dorset Plan through the Planning and Consultation Committee. Members asked whether the notes regarding the Dorset Council update could be circulated prior to the meeting and that only Swanage related matters be recorded in future.

67. **Reporting of delegated matters**

(a) **Santa Fe Fun Park**

Further to the Property Panel meeting, held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024, it was reported that a new ride had been installed at the park in recent days. The Town Clerk had provided

landlord consent on behalf of the Council, subject to compliance with planning policy which was a matter for Dorset Council.

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

- (a) **Seasonal Flood Defence - Plans for deployment winter 2024/25**  
At the recent Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024, a representative from the Environment Agency had supplied a map (as tabled at the Council meeting) which showed proposed changes to the orientation and length of the concrete blocks to be deployed near to the Stone Quay over the winter period. Members noted the information.
- (b) **Coastal Flood Defences Public Engagement Event, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024**  
Members noted that an engagement event would be held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024 regarding the Flood Defence scheme and a further update would be provided to a future meeting.
- (c) **Santa Fe Fun Park Rides – Update**  
It was noted that an update had been provided under agenda item 13 (See Minute No. 67 (a) above).
- (d) **Change in Library Opening Hours**  
It was reported that a meeting had been held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024 between Town Council and Dorset Council representatives, regarding the recent change to Swanage library opening times. At the meeting, concern had been voiced about reduced opening on Saturday afternoons due to the implications for this for young people’s access to study space. It was noted that attendance figures were being gathered and could be reviewed once the new opening hours had bedded in. The following options had been put forward by Dorset Council to increase opening hours, if this was something that the Town Council wished to explore:
- a) Additional staff hours funded by the Town Council.
  - b) Volunteers to staff the library for additional hours.
  - c) Smart card entry system (a closed library system).
- It was noted that there was a ‘Friends of the Library’ group and work had commenced to make contact with members in order to ascertain the viability of volunteer led hours. An update would be provided to a future meeting.
- (e) **Swanage Pier Historic Turnstile**  
It was reported that this item of historic interest had been saved and presented to Swanage Museum where it was now on display.
- (f) **Emergency Health Services**  
Further to Minute No. 49 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the lead councillor of the Emergency Health Services working party circulated a report which contained an update from the Freedom of Information request from South-west Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWASFT). In summary the FOI response had shown the following:
- A reasonable rate of staffing had been maintained (70%)
  - Swanage continued to have more call outs than Wareham, although the percentage of Purbeck call outs that were to Swanage was less than the previous 6 months (63%), however, the highest rate yet of car call outs in Purbeck (83%) had been recorded.
  - Emergency response times were stable (Wareham), some were shorter (Swanage category 1 imminent danger of death) and some were longer (Swanage category 2 risk of death or serious disability). However, the response times remained significantly better than in 2022 when the future of the car was uncertain.
  - The number of call outs attended by the Ambulance Car increased significantly to 437 following a substantial dip in the first half of 2023.

The meeting was suspended at 8.20 p.m. due to the fire alarm sounding and all attendees left the building. At 8.25 p.m. the building was declared safe and all attendees re-entered the meeting.

A comment was raised regarding the protection of beds in care homes. In response it was stated that the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan may take into account these issues and should be referred to Dorset Council, as Adult Social Care authority, in the first instance.

(g) **Sandbanks Ferry**

Members were informed that the Bournemouth-Swanage Motor Road and Ferry Company had withdrawn their original application for an order to revise the maximum toll charges, however, a resubmission would be made in due course which would include updated financial information.

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tritte and AGREED:-

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda items 15 and 16 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality.

69. **Procurement**

(a) **Station Approach improvement works – To agree third party contribution and award contract**

Further to Minute No. 50 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, at which the budget for the Station Approach improvement works had been approved, the Assets & Compliance Manager reported on the breakdown of proposed costs for work on land leased to Co-op and land managed by the Town Council.

Consideration was given to the procurement route for these works and it was noted that Dorset Council, together with their commercial partners Heidelberg Materials, would be well-placed to both undertake and supervise this project because of their expertise in managing highway improvement schemes. Given the projected cost of the works this contract would normally be put out to tender. However, a briefing note had been circulated prior to the meeting setting out reasons for Members to consider if they wished to waive the relevant financial regulations in order to permit a direct award. The briefing note highlighted the fact that Heidelberg Materials had been procured by Dorset Council under a competitive tender via a two-stage process in 2016/17 and as part of their agreement regular meetings were held to monitor performance. The partnership had been nationally recognised at the Highway Awards 2023 for delivering improved efficiency and reduced costs.

Taking these matters into consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Tomes and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

To waive the Council's financial regulations in respect of contracts to the extent required to enable a direct contract award to Dorset Council to undertake improvement works to Station Approach and, subject to the Co-operative Group making a binding commitment to make a fair contribution towards the cost of the works, delegate authority to the Town



Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, to place an order with Dorset Council for the sum of £150,287.77 (including a 30% optimism bias).

(b) **Car Park Pay and Display Machines – To award contract**

Further to Minute No. 37 of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, at which a budget had been approved for the acquisition of replacement car park pay and display machines, it was reported that the Car Parks Working Party had considered the available options and recommended that procurement of the preferred machines should be carried out under an available Framework Agreement.

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

That a contract be directly awarded to Flowbird through the ESPO Framework 509\_23 for 5 Compact S5 Mobile, 3 Compact S5 Cashless and, subject to review by the Car Parks Working Party, 2 Access S5 machines at a cost of up to £44,000.

(c) **Green Seafront Scheme – To consider Dorset Council project management fees 2024/25**

Further to Minute No. 215 of the Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024, consideration was given to a briefing paper which set out a proposal from Dorset Council to undertake project management of the Green Seafront Scheme. It was noted that it was proposed to take a programme management approach including stakeholder mapping, risk identification and mitigation measures, project governance arrangements, project programme and communication, public engagement and consultation planning. The briefing paper highlighted that as this work constituted specialist services the contract was exempt from the Town Council's usual procurement procedures under Financial Regulation 11.1.b. It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by the Town Mayor and  
**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1.b, Dorset Council be engaged to provide programme and project management services in respect of the Green Seafront Scheme for the 2024/25 financial year at a cost of up to £20,832.

70. **Property-Related Legal Matters**

(a) **De Moulham Estate service roads – To consider arrangements for rear access to proposed redevelopment of 23 De Moulham Rd**

Further to Minute No. 51 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, consideration was given to legal advice from the Council's appointed solicitor, the content of which was noted.

(b) **Boat Park Jetty Repairs - To consider representation from RNLi**

Further to Minute No. 228 (d) of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024, consideration was given to a briefing note which set out a detailed response from the RNLi regarding a potential contribution towards the cost of the recent repair work to the boat park jetty. The content of the report was noted and it was agreed that the Town Clerk and Assets & Compliance Manager should seek to conclude without prejudice negotiations with the RNLi before reporting to a future Council Meeting later in the year.

(c) **Peveril Point Road – To consider proposal for allocated parking space for Rockleigh Cottage**

Consideration was given to a briefing note which set out a request that had been received from the owner of Rockleigh Cottage to formalise parking arrangements for that property on Peveril Point Road. During the debate it was noted that the Car Parks Working Party had agreed to carry out a wider review of parking arrangements along that road later in the year, following adoption of the Council's revised Off Street Parking Places Order in February 2024. Consequently, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Sutton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the matter be deferred for further consideration  
by the Car Parks Working Party.

The Meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

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