

Notes of an Informal meeting of the General Operations Committee held via Zoom on Wednesday 14th July 2021 at 4.30 p.m.

In Attendance:

Councillor C Moreton - Chair
Councillor M Bonfield
Councillor J Bishop
Councillor C Finch
Councillor T Foster
Councillor A Harris
Councillor C Tomes
Councillor M Whitwam
Dr M Ayres
Miss C Johnston
Mr Culvin Milmer
Miss Gail Percival
Mr D Pratten
Mr F Roberts
Mr M Jones

There was one member of the local press present at the meeting.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Monkhouse, Mr A Bennett (Prospect Allotment Association, Mr M Green (James Smith Funeral Directors) and Mr R Marsh (Swanage Fishermen's Association).

2) Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 – 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3) Matters Arising from Minutes of the Meeting of the General Operations Committee held on 31st March 2021

It was noted that the minutes had previously been approved as a correct record by full Council and there were no matters raised.

4) Allotment Matters

a) Matters raised by Prospect Allotment Association

The representative from the Prospect Allotment Association enquired when strimming will be completed for the grassed area by the lower car park which had grown quite long. The Operations Manager noted that this area may have been inadvertently missed and that it would be trimmed.

The representative also mentioned that one of the water troughs is being used inappropriately and large amounts of water are being stored on one plot. The Operations Manager advised that this would be inspected. It was also reported that thefts are continuing to be a problem and photographic evidence has been obtained. It was requested that as previously advised and noted in previous minutes any information of this nature should be passed on to the police. Another on-going

problem was discussed with regards to deer entering the allotments. It was agreed that contact would be made to the National Allotment Association to seek any advice in respect of methods of deterrent.

5) Cemetery Matters

a) Godlingston Cemetery extension – update

The Operations Manager provided an update stating that contractors have cleared vegetation, cut back overhanging trees and are now setting out the site. Some photographs of the ploughing of the area were distributed. A site meeting had taken place with the consultants and contractors and works are currently continuing as per schedule.

b) Matters raised by James Smith Funeral Directors

No matters were raised.

An additional matter was raised with regard to the sizing of kerb sets in Godlingston Cemetery. It was stated that the current cemetery regulations set out clearly maximum kerb sets sizes that are permitted, however, some time ago a kerb set was installed that was slightly larger and subsequent to this further applications have been made on the basis of this. A request was made for Councillors to give delegated authority to Officers to authorise an appropriate size of kerb set, up to a maximum of 7'x 3', for specific plots. It was AGREED:

- **TO RECOMMEND:** That Officers be granted delegated authority to authorise oversize kerb sets, up to a maximum of 7'x 3' within the existing cemetery, where appropriate.

6) Fishermen's Huts and Jetties

a) Eastern Jetty Inspection

It was reported that the jetty adjacent to the main slipway has ongoing maintenance issues. Whilst repairs have been made the durability of these has proved variable. The Operations Manager recommended that a full survey is undertaken of the jetty to include recommendations and cost estimates for repair. The Operations Manager made the request to use a portion of the boat park one off revenue expenditure budget to a value up to £3,000. It was AGREED:

- **TO RECOMMEND:** That a boat park one off revenue budget be utilised, up to the value of £3,000, for survey works.

It was noted by Councillor Bonfield that to avoid confusion this should be referred to in future as the central, rather than the eastern jetty.

b) Matters raised by Swanage Fishermen's Association

No matters were raised and it was acknowledged that the Chairman had agreed to meet with the fishermen's hut tenants at a later date.

7) Capital Projects Sub Committee

a) To note the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee held on 28th April 2021

The minutes were noted and no matters were raised.

b) Appointment of Capital Projects Sub-Committee

Councillors Harris, Bishop, Bonfield, Moreton and Tomes were appointed to the Capital Projects Sub-committee 2021/22.

Mr M Jones left the meeting at 4.50 p.m.

8) Prince Albert Gardens – to consider request for memorial stone

The Operations Committee previously granted permission for a memorial plaque and tree to be sited in Prince Albert Gardens. Subsequently a request was made to place a memorial stone rather than a memorial plaque with the tree. This was to be made of Purbeck stone and an overview of size and style was provided. The question was raised whether Councillors would permit this. It was AGREED:

- **TO RECOMMEND:** That the family be allowed to place a memorial stone at Prince Albert Gardens, in accordance with an approved specification.

9) The Queen’s Green Canopy

It was reported that the Town Council had been approached to consider planting trees to mark Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022 as part of a national campaign to form the Queen’s Green Canopy. The Operations Manager noted that a budget had been set aside for tree planting and asked Councillors to consider if they had any specific locations in mind.

10) Waste Management

a) Dorset Waste Services

The Operations Manager reported, further to the briefing note provided, that contact had been made with the Operations Manager of Dorset Waste Services who had advised that 10 additional ‘barrel bins’ were being provided imminently. He had also advised that it was possible to adapt some of the waste bins to reduce the number of apertures to prevent litter in those adjacent to the sea and beach from falling out. Plastic fringes had also been ordered for some of the bins to understand if this prevented seagulls from removing the waste. A date is awaited for receipt of these.

Dorset Waste Services had also noted they were hoping to secure a trial for two compactor solar powered bins (big belly bins) for a 4 week period and had suggested these could be located in Heritage Square. Should these prove successful then 8-10 further bins of this type may be procured. The Visitor Services Manager reported that Heritage Square bins mainly contain chip papers which can be compacted down. The on-going significant issues with waste were discussed and a request was made for Dorset Council to complete the trial correctly as a previous attempt had used faulty bins rendering it unsuccessful. It was stated that if the trial did prove successful an allocation in the next budget setting period towards these could be discussed.

It was noted the ‘Welcome Back Fund’ may provide an opportunity for the Town Council to obtain funding to employ a seasonal waste operative for the afternoons – from 1.00pm – 5.00pm. This role would include picking up litter and supporting the seafront waste collection relieving some of the burden currently placed on the Seafront Advisors. It was AGREED:

- **TO RECOMMEND:** That the Town Council seeks to recruit a seasonal Seafront Waste Operative as soon as possible.

Thanks and appreciation were given to council staff for their work to keep the seafront clean and litter free.

b) Updates from Swanage Landers and Beach Buddies

Swanage Landers

- The Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and Landers had been signed.
- Two meetings of Landers had taken place and street sweeping sessions had been undertaken along Victoria Avenue generating very heavy waste.
- Swanage Landers were asked to stop using a waste pick-up point, an area by the recycling in North Beach car park, as it was attracting fly-tipping.
- Awaiting a response from Dorset Council to identify a new pick-up point.
- Swanage Landers offered assistance to the Town Council, should the waste issue become overwhelming at any point in the season.

Thanks were given to Frank Roberts and his team for their work.

Swanage Beach buddies

- The team have been operating twice a week on a Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings with 12 volunteers in total and have carried out 52 beach cleans.
- 784kg of litter has been picked up with an average load of 15kg per litter pick. Swanage Beach Buddies receives lots of comments of appreciation and noted Swanage is often compared to other sea side resorts.
- They feel that the beach litter is reduced from previous years, however, it was reported that the two disappointing factors are that there are still a significant amount of cigarette butts being discarded and dog poo bags being left on the beach.
- A design from Litter Free Purbeck is planned to be painted around public drains to discourage cigarette butts being disposed of and stating that butts eventually end up in the sea.
- Frank Roberts noted he has 10 signs stating that all discarded cigarette butts end up on the beach.
- The Visitor Services Manager noted that the Council has been offered three boards to display on the seafront with biodegradable bags and the logo 'Grab a free bag – a beach clean is within your reach'.

Thanks were given to David Pratten and his team for their work.

c) Street Sweeping Update

The Operations Manager reported that the Town Council had been successful in obtaining funding from the Welcome Back fund to undertake additional street sweeping in the main season. The sum received would fund 3 sweeps of a route designed last year to incorporate the main seafront and town centre routes. Sweeps are scheduled every 2 weeks throughout the summer holidays.

d) Dorset Council Doorstepping Campaign – Keep Britain Tidy

The Operations Manager advised of an initiative being undertaken within Purbeck to advise residents about reducing, reusing and recycling their waste. Several members of the Committee had already received visits and provided positive feedback.

11) Health & Safety

a) Report since March 2021

The Operations Manager provided an update:

- RIDDOR – no reportable incidents.

- Incidents and accidents – Two minor non-reportable accidents were reported, one at the Depot and the other at the Tourist Information Centre.
- A range of staff training had been undertaken, including Emergency First Aid at Work, and further courses were scheduled for later in the summer.
- Ellis Whittam, the Council’s Health and Safety Advisers have scheduled a visit later this month to review the activities and associated risk assessments of the teams working on the seafront.

12) Operations Manager’s Update

The Operations Manager reported on the following matters:

- An additional Multi Trade Operative has been recruited and is in post. Recruitment is underway for a General Operative and a Grounds and Estates Manager, the latter due to a previous unsuccessful recruitment campaign.
- Events have started to occur and the Operations Manager and Visitor Services Manager are working closely together to ensure all appropriate documentation is in place.
- The summer season, and near perfect growing conditions, has meant this is a very busy period for the Operations Team and they are working hard to ensure the town is as clean, safe and attractive as possible.

13) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

None were noted.

14) Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 10th November 2021.

The meeting closed at 5.45 p.m.
