

Minutes of the Meeting of the Swanage Town Council
held at The Swanage School, High Street, Swanage on
MONDAY, 1st NOVEMBER 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor A. Harris – Chair

Councillor J. Bishop
Councillor M.P. Bonfield
Councillor T. Foster
Councillor D. Monkhouse
Councillor C. Moreton
Councillor N. Rogers
Councillor G. Suttle
Councillor C. Tomes
Councillor W. Trite
Councillor M. Whitwam

In addition to Members of the Council and officers, eleven members of the public, and one member of the local press attended the Meeting.

Dorset Police - Inspector James Offer, Neighbourhood Inspector, introduced himself to the meeting and provided an update on Police matters. It was noted that Dorset Police had reorganised its internal structure and was now divided into two Local Policing Areas (LPAs) to align with the Dorset Council and BCP Council areas, which would result in response officers being based further outside of Purbeck.

Town Councillors then had the opportunity for a ‘question and answer’ session, during which concerns were raised regarding instances of anti-social behaviour which had recently been experienced in the town, and also regarding the proposed changes to policing in the Purbeck area.

Inspector Offer encouraged attendees to visit the Neighbourhood section of the Dorset Police website which provided useful information, links, and online surveys: [Purbeck South | Dorset Police](#)

In closing, Inspector Offer advised that he would be moving on from his post as Neighbourhood Inspector. Inspector Ged Want would be taking over. The Town Council extended thanks to Inspector Offer for his regular engagement with the Council, and wished him well for the future.

Inspector Offer left the Meeting at 7.35 p.m.

Swanage and Purbeck Rotary Club - Mrs Deirdre Selwyn, President, and Mrs Maggie Hardy, then made a surprise presentation to Councillor Mike Bonfield and his wife Audrey.

Mrs Selwyn and Mrs Hardy were delighted to be able to present prestigious Paul Harris Fellowship Awards to Cllr and Mrs Bonfield. It was explained that this was the highest accolade in Rotary, being awarded in recognition of their exceptional work ‘above and beyond’ in the community.

Congratulations were extended to Cllr and Mrs Bonfield on their well-deserved awards.

Mrs Selwyn and Mrs Hardy left the Meeting at 7.45 p.m.

Wellbeing Swanage Project - Mr Bob Foster and Mrs Laura Beattie then introduced themselves to the meeting and provided a presentation on the Wellbeing Swanage Project, which included an update on the Chapel Lane Project, the Swanage

Youth Centre, Herston Village Hall and the proposals for a new hall to be built on the existing site. Details were also provided regarding further initiatives being established, which included a directory of local community groups and services, and a Community Café.

A flyer providing details of the project was handed out to those present, which would also be posted on the Town Council's Facebook page. Attendees were encouraged to visit the Project's new website and Facebook page: wellbeingswanage.org & [Wellbeing Swanage Community Response | Facebook](#)

In the absence of a member of the clergy, Councillor Moreton offered a short prayer before the commencement of the Meeting.

The Town Mayor then led tributes to the late Mr David Amess MP, and former Town Councillors Mr Bill Bradford and Mrs Gloria Marsh MBE, both of whom were past mayors of Swanage and had given outstanding service to this town over very many years. A minute's silence was observed in their memory.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised:-

- **Planning application No. 6/2021/0314** Purbeck Centre (former Grammar School), Northbrook Road, Swanage - concerns regarding works which had commenced on the new housing development site, in particular surrounding the potential for dust particles in the air, and the impact that these could possibly have on the pupils who attended St Mary's RC Primary School and Little Birds Pre-school, which were in close proximity to the site. Safeguarding concerns were also raised and comments made that improved barriers/screening should be considered. A request was made for the Town Council to make representations to Dorset Council regarding these concerns. It was noted that a petition had recently been commenced which currently had circa 100 signatures.
- **Swanage Bay** – concerns regarding waste entering the storm drains, which included cigarette butts, litter and dog waste, and which could potentially pollute the bay. A request was made for consideration to be given to improved signage and for any warnings regarding potential pollution in the bay to be advertised more widely. Details were provided regarding the Surfers Against Sewage charity, and the Beach Clean Foundation. A copy of these concerns had been forwarded to the Town Council accordingly.
- **Agenda Item No. 16 - Use of technology for future meetings** – comments in support of the use of technology for future meetings, and a request made for consideration to be given to the livestreaming of meetings to provide improved access to Council Meetings for members of the public.

The Chair opened the Council Meeting at 8.15 p.m.

75. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for her inability to attend the Meeting was received from Councillor Finch, who was present via online video link.

76. **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.

77. **MINUTES**

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

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th
September 2021 be approved as a correct record and
signed.

78. **ROADS AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Proposed by Councillor Whitwam, seconded by Councillor Foster and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Roads and
Transport Committee held on 22nd September 2021 be
approved as a correct record and signed.

Further to Minute No. 4 of the Meeting of the Roads and Transport
Committee held on 22nd September 2021, it was reported that a meeting between
representatives of the Town Council and the headteacher of St Mary's RC Primary
School had now been arranged for 4th November 2021.

79. **PLANNING AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

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

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and
Consultation Committee held on 4th October 2021 be
approved as a correct record and signed.

80. **STATEMENT OF CASH BALANCE**

(a) A Statement of Cash Balance as at 30th September 2021 was submitted for
information (a copy attached at the end of these Minutes).

81. **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

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

- Payment Schedule 6, amounting to £248,768.04

82. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Harris reported that in her capacity of Town Mayor she had attended
the following events since the last meeting:-

- **Friends of Swanage Hospital garden open day** on 15th September – and a
tour of new facilities in the basement area of the hospital, which included a
meeting room, staff room and accommodation for relatives of patients.
- **Official opening of the Trevor Chadwick Play Park** at the Recreation
Ground on 18th September – which was followed by a music event in support
of the Trevor Chadwick Memorial at the Swanage Bandstand.

A reminder was then given regarding the commemoration arrangements for
Armistice Day at the Swanage War Memorial on Thursday 11th November, and
the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Church Service on Sunday 14th November.
Invitations to these events were extended to all Town Councillors.

83. **REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS**

Updates were given on the following matters:-

- **Budget setting** – it was reported that Dorset Council (DC) was in the process of budget setting for the financial year 2022/23. It was noted that in order to maintain services to residents additional funding of £36m was being sought to cover the budget deficit.
- **Dorset Waste Services** – it was again reported that DC continued to receive complaints regarding household bin collection services. DC was currently undertaking a recruitment campaign for new HGV drivers and loaders.
- **Planning Application No. 6/2021/0314 Purbeck Centre (former Grammar School), Northbrook Road, Swanage** – further to the concerns raised during Public Participation Time, it was reported that Dorset Councillors had also received a number of concerns regarding works which had commenced on the proposed housing development site. It was confirmed that these concerns had been brought to the attention of DC’s Portfolio Holder for Planning, and the relevant DC planning officer accordingly.
- **Changes to DC’s Cabinet, Lead Members and committee membership** – it was noted that the Leader of DC had made a number of changes to his Cabinet as a mid-year reshuffle, which had come into effect from 18th October 2021.
- **Government grant of £37.5m** – Dorset Councillors were pleased to report that this grant had been secured towards DC’s plans to improve the lives of Dorset children and young people with special educational needs and/or a disability for the next five years.

84. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING – UPDATE AND TO CONSIDER**
APPLICATION TO DORSET COUNCIL FOR A DESIGNATED
NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Further to Minute No. 35 of the Council Meeting held on 26th July 2021, and Minute No. 5 c) of the Planning and Consultation Committee Meeting held on 25th August 2021 it was reported that a Neighbourhood Planning workshop had been held on 18th October 2021, which had been attended by representatives of the Town Council, Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust, and Swanage Town and Community Partnership.

Attendees had been asked to bring comments to the meeting under the following headings to help to inform discussions:

- Economy/Town Centre
- Historic/Conservation
- Environment
- Affordable Housing
- Housing Supply
- Any other comments

Attendees were also asked to consider their principal concerns, and whether they felt that these would be addressed in the new Dorset Local Plan. Attention had been drawn to the fact that the Swanage Local Plan, which had been adopted in June 2017, could face a challenge if it were found to be out of date, and would ultimately be replaced by the Dorset Local Plan.

A copy of the notes from the workshop had been provided, and it was noted that if the Town Council wished to proceed with the Neighbourhood Planning process then next steps included registering the Council’s interest in commencing the process with Dorset Council. It was also explained that a ‘neighbourhood area’ needed to be agreed by the local planning authority before a neighbourhood plan could be submitted for examination.

During the discussion Councillors were in agreement that it would be important for the Council to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan, and that the neighbourhood area should align with the parish boundary of Swanage.

It was proposed by Councillor Whitwam and seconded by Councillor Foster:-
That the Town Council registers its interest in commencing the Neighbourhood Planning process and submits an application to Dorset Council for a designated neighbourhood area, to align with the boundary of the Parish of Swanage.

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

85. **WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

(a) **Sports, Leisure and Wellbeing**

Further to Minute No. 62 (a) of the Council Meeting held on 13th September 2021 updates were given on the following matters:-

King George's Playing Field (KGPF)

A meeting had been held with Mrs Lorna Haines regarding an update on the proposed installation of the new half pipe in the skate park. Discussions had been also been held regarding the future of the skate park and the possible formulation of a five-year improvement and maintenance plan.

Former St Mark's School Playing Field/Playground

The working party had met at the playing field on 15th September 2021 to consider options for the future use of the area. An open meeting would now be held at the Emmanuel Baptist Church on 11th November 2021 at 7.00 p.m. which would provide members of the local community with an opportunity to have their say and help shape the future of the playing field and hard court. Any comments and suggestions could also be sent to the Town Council via a feedback form which was available online and from the Town Hall.

(b) **Environmental Policy**

Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Visitor Services Manager which set out details regarding the development of a Swanage Town Council 'Carbon Neutral 2030' Plan, along with a proposal for the Town Council to procure the services of an energy specialist to support the Council in the development of the plan.

It was explained that the plan would detail how this commitment would be met by the Council, and provide a detailed action plan, timescales and associated budgets for its implementation. It was estimated that the total cost of this work would be £15,000.

It was proposed that the work would be split into two 'phases', phase one – development of the plan, and phase two – implementation of the plan.

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Rogers:-

That an energy consultant be procured to support the Town Council in the development of a 'Carbon Neutral 2030' Plan (Phase 1), the cost of which during the current financial year will be met from the existing environmental projects budget.

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

(c) **Museum**

Further to Minute No. 54 (b) of the Council Meeting held on 19th October 2020 it was reported that the working party had met with representatives of the Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre to further discussions regarding possible options for the expansion of the Museum, one of which had been the potential future use of the Town Hall building. However, prior to this idea being explored further, it was agreed that the Museum would undertake an initial feasibility study.

86. **EVENTS – TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR USE OF TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTY IN RELATION TO FESTIVALS AND EVENTS IN 2022**

Consideration was given to a briefing note dated November 2021 prepared by the Visitor Services Manager (VSM) which set out details of requests for events for 2022. Provisional approval was being sought from the Town Council to allow event organisers to start the planning process. It was reported, however, that further information was being sought from two of the event organisers (the May Market, and the Roads to Rail event) before a decision could be made on these.

During the ensuing discussion comments were made that it was encouraging to see a good number of events being planned in the town for 2022, and it was noted that, in accordance with the Council's Environment Action Plan, all events after November 2021 would be required to be single-use plastic free.

It was proposed by Councillor Tomes and seconded by Councillor Moreton:-

That the Town Council provides provisional approval for the requests from event organisers for 2022, for the use of Council owned land, as set out in Appendix 1 of the VSM's briefing note dated November 2021, subject to adherence to government guidance for public events and the Town Council's requirement to demonstrate compliance therewith, including submission of the required documentation at the appropriate time.

Upon being put to the Meeting there were NINE votes IN FAVOUR of the Proposition, and there were TWO ABSTENTIONS, whereupon the Proposition was declared CARRIED.

87. **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES – UPDATE**

An update was provided on a number of funding opportunities that had been available during September 2021.

(a) **Changing Places Disabled Toilet Facilities at North Beach Car Park**

Dorset Council had identified two sites in the county to install a Changing Places facility, one of which had been the space formerly occupied by two 'pod' toilets adjoining the Coastguard building in North beach car park. The installation would be entirely grant funded, with the Town Council incurring ongoing cleaning costs. A question was raised as to whether it would be more appropriate to install these facilities nearer the town centre. However, it was reported that North Beach car park had been considered the most suitable location as any person using the facilities could park their vehicle in close proximity to the doors of the facilities.

(b) **Environment Agency – Championing Coastal Co-Ordination Fund**

The Environment Agency had launched a fund designed 'to explore how to enhance and progress coordination for coastal sustainability and resilience in England'. The fund was not open to local authorities, applications having to be

made by charitable organisations. It was reported that the Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust had lodged an application, supported by the Swanage Pier Trust, for a grant of £15,000 towards a total project cost of £30,000. The project aim would be to carry out a study to pave the way to identify, fund and deliver a longer-term sustainable solution to minimise the growing harmful impact of storm conditions on the Swanage economy, its shoreline properties and marine based activities. The town Clerk had written a letter on behalf of the Council in support of the project and the outcome of the bid was currently awaited.

(c) **Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner Operation Relentless Community Fund**

The Fund was aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour in the county and the Town Council had submitted an application for up to £3,500 to connect the town's CCTV cameras to the police control room in Winfrith. This would mean that the cameras could be accessed remotely when the police offices in Swanage were un-manned.

(d) **SALIX Phase 3 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Funding**

It was reported that The Town Council had hoped that this might fund the installation of solar panels on its building stock. However, this funding application had not been progressed as, on closer examination, the funding was focussed on the replacement of end-of-life heating systems.

88. **PROPOSED ADOPTION OF NORTHERN SECTIONS OF COW LANE AND PANORAMA ROAD**

Further to Minute No. 8 f) of the Roads and Transport Committee Meeting held on 22nd September 2021 consideration was given to the proposed adoption of the northern sections of Cow Lane and Panorama Road by Dorset Council (DC).

It was reported that DC was now ready to proceed, and had confirmed that the Town-Council owned section of Cow Lane may be adopted in its entirety. However, only part of Panorama Road would be suitable for adoption (the section from Priests Road to house No. 2 Panorama Road). Works required for adoption could be part-funded from sums allocated in the Council's approved Capital Works Programme.

During the discussion Members were in support of adoption as set out above and wished to formally commence the process. Members also confirmed that they wanted discussions to continue with DC regarding the possible adoption of the remaining part of Panorama Road. It was noted that a formal cost estimate would only be provided once this step had been taken and that this would be reported to a future Council meeting prior to a legal agreement being signed.

It was therefore AGREED:-

That the Town Council proceeds with the adoption of Panorama Road and Cow Lane by Dorset Council, as set out above, and that submission of the Section 38 notices be retrospectively approved.

It was FURTHER AGREED:

That adoption of the remaining east-west section of Panorama Road be explored further with Dorset Council.

89. **REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

(a) **Swanage Community Housing Group** – further to Minute No. 69 (d) of the Meeting of the Council held on 13th September 2021 Councillor Rogers provided an update, and details of the group's official launch and community

engagement event being held via Zoom on 11th November 2021. All were welcome to attend. Details of the event had been published on the Council's Facebook page and a poster was being circulated in the town to raise awareness of the event in the local community.

- (b) **Swanage and Herston Football Club** - Councillor Tomes reported that representatives of the Town Council, Dorset Council and the Football Club had met recently to discuss the ongoing closure of the sports hall, and an update was given regarding improvement works which had been undertaken by the Club to the clubhouse, stadium and electrics, in readiness for the 2021/22 season. Thanks were extended to the Club by the Town Council.

90. **REPORTING OF DELEGATED MATTERS**

There were no matters to report.

91. **TO CONSIDER GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AUTUMN/WINTER 2021/22 AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE REMOTE HYBRID MEETINGS**

Consideration was given to a briefing note prepared by the Town Clerk dated which set out details of actions taken by the Town Council over the last two years to adapt to changes in legislation, regulations and the prevalence of Covid-19. It was explained that as the Council headed into the autumn/winter period, and with Covid-19 cases rising, it would be appropriate for the Council to review its procedures for the holding of meetings over coming months.

The briefing note was divided into three sections:

- The first considered the latest Public Health advice regarding the pandemic and the safety measures that it was advisable to take to protect all those attending public meetings.
- The second section considered a way forward for the holding of Council and committee meetings for the remainder of 2021. Agreement on this now would provide much-needed certainty to enable officers to focus on the delivery of the Council's priorities.
- The final section outlined some possible technological changes that could be implemented to improve the experience of those seeking to access Town Council meetings remotely.

During the ensuing debate comments were made regarding difficulties which had been experienced with the sound quality from the Town Hall Council Chamber at times when taking part in 'hybrid' meetings on Zoom. A brief report was provided regarding a recent hybrid meeting 'trial' that had been undertaken by Town Councillors and officers using laptops and the TV screen in the Chambers.

Further comments were made regarding how cold it could become when meeting in person due to the requirement to maximise ventilation. However, it was acknowledged that this was a necessity in order to comply with risk assessment requirements at the current time. A question was raised as to whether heaters could be used to make it more comfortable for attendees.

Suggestions for future meetings included a possible change in the time of day, consideration of alternative venues, the use of microphones, and the possibility of procuring alternative technology for hybrid meetings. However, it was felt that a trial needed to be undertaken before a commitment to procure new equipment was made, to ensure that any changes implemented would actually improve the experience of those accessing Council meetings remotely.

The briefing note asked Town Councillors to consider allocating a budget of up to £5,500 towards the cost of such equipment, and to provide officers with delegated

authority to determine which option to pursue, in consultation with the Communications Strategy Working Party.

Councillor Rogers left the Meeting at 9.00 p.m.

It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Monkhouse:-

That the Town Council adopts the meeting arrangements as set out in the table below, for the period between 2nd November and 31st December 2021, and undertakes a further review of these arrangements at the full Council Meeting being held on 13th December 2021 to consider any changes in Covid-19 guidance.

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

Meeting	Format	Reason
Full Council	Continue in person at Swanage School Hall or other venue with adequate capacity and ventilation.	Larger venue provides capacity for potential increased number of attendees and reduces close-proximity interaction before and after the meeting.
Committee Meetings with outside representatives (Roads & Transport/Tourism/ General Operations/ Beach Management)	Hold on Zoom in an advisory capacity.	Uncertainty over numbers attending, lack of alternative venues during the day and cost of room hire. Reduce the risk of transmitting disease by limiting number of contacts and reducing total number of in-person meetings.
Committee and Sub-Committee Meetings without outside representatives (Policy, Finance & Performance Management/Personnel/ Planning & Consultation/Capital Projects)	Hold in person in the Council Chamber at Swanage Town Hall	Adequate space in well-ventilated Council Chamber for 16 attendees.
Working Parties	To meet either in person or via Zoom, as agreed by lead councillor and officer	As small informal meetings there is complete flexibility as to how these meetings are held.

It was further proposed by Councillor Bonfield and seconded by Councillor Monkhouse:-

That the Town Council allocates a budget of up to £5,500 for the purchase of equipment to improve the quality of broadcast and potentially facilitate 'hybrid' meetings, and delegates authority to the Town Clerk and Administration & Communications Manager to determine which of the options, as set out in the briefing note, to pursue, in consultation with the Communications Strategy Working Party.

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

92. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**

- (a) **Future of Swanage-based Ambulance Car – Update** – further to Minute No. 60 of the Council Meeting held on 13th September 2021 it was reported that communication had continued with Dorset Council's Cabinet to seek clarification of what had been agreed at its meeting on 5th October, regarding the formation of a Task and Finish Group. It was noted that a meeting of the Emergency Health Services Working Party would be held on 8th November 2021 to discuss next steps.
- (b) **A & E Local – Update** - there was no further update to give at this time.
- (c) **Wellbeing Swanage – Update** – there was no further update to give at this time.
- (d) **Upcoming Public Meetings:-**
- **Swanage Community Housing Group – 10th November 2021**
 - **Former St Mark's School Playing Field/Playground – 11th November 2021**

Councillors Monkhouse and Whitwam left the Meeting at 9.05 p.m.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Foster 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 18 and 19 for reasons of legal and commercial confidentiality.

93. **RENTS AND LICENCES PANEL – UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 72 of the Council Meeting held on 13th September 2021 the Town Clerk provided an update in respect of a claim that had been lodged in the County Court for the grant of a new tenancy in respect of commercial property in the Council's ownership. The Clerk would continue to consult the Rents and Licences Panel if a decision was required in the matter prior to the next Council meeting.

94. **LEASE RENEWAL – PROSPECT NURSERY**

Further to Minute No. 165 of the Council Meeting held on 15th March 2021, the Town Clerk reported on further communication with the Development Trust regarding the renewal of their lease for Prospect Nursery, in support of the Greengage Project. It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY:

To proceed with the granting of a new lease in accordance with Minute No. 165 of the Council Meeting held on 15th March 2021, taking into account any legal advice received.

The meeting concluded at 9.10 p.m.
