

Minutes of the **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** of the Parish of Swanage, held at The Centre, Swanage on **MONDAY, 16th APRIL 2018** at 7.00 p.m.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Mike Bonfield, assumed the Chair, and in addition to members of the Council and officials, approximately 44 persons were present.

Chairman – Councillor Mike Bonfield (Town Mayor)

In attendance:-

Councillor John Bishop
Councillor Caroline Finch
Councillor Gail Green
Councillor Gloria Marsh
Councillor Tim Morris
Councillor Steve Poultney
Councillor Bill Trite
Councillor Mike Whitwam

Sergeant Barry Gosling	Dorset Police
Inspector Andy Keel	Dorset Police
Mr Ian Brown	Defibrillator Project/Swanage Coastguards
Mrs Maggie Hardy	Defibrillator Project/Rotary
Mr Bob Foster	Swanage Town & Community Partnership/ Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust
Mrs Kim Gallagher	Swanage Town & Community Partnership/ Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust
Mrs Mo Andrews	Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community
Mrs Jean Gibbs	Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community
Mrs Ginny Bellard	Purbeck View School

Before the commencement of the Meeting, the Chairman explained that, with a view to attracting a wider audience, local organisations had been invited to make a short presentation on local issues and/or matters relating to their organisation, and he introduced the representatives that were present.

The Town Clerk then outlined the procedure that would be followed during the Meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillor Harris, Steve Darrington (Swanage Blues Festival), Bridget Mayes (Litter Free Purbeck), and Malcolm Turnbull (Swanage Coastal Change Forum).

2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed. (Copies of the Minutes were circulated to those present at the Meeting).

3. **PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES TO SWANAGE NOMINEES FOR THE PURBECK TOWN AND PARISH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2018**

The Chairman reported that, at the Town Council's Monthly Meeting held on 29th January 2018, Councillors had voted unanimously that Mr Ian Brown be officially nominated as Swanage's 'Purbeck Town and Parish Volunteer of the Year 2018', in recognition of his sterling work undertaken within the community over many years, including as Station Officer of the local Coastguard Team, and for all his hard work and dedication to the Swanage Community Defibrillator Project, which had helped make the project such a success. Ian had been presented with his award at an awards ceremony held at the District Council offices on 12th April 2018. Thanks and appreciation were extended to Ian.

Councillors had been in agreement that the Town Council should introduce its own scheme to recognise all nominees for this award, and that this recognition should take the form of being awarded a certificate at the Annual Parish Assembly.

The Chairman presented certificates to this year's deserving nominees as follows:

Mr Bob Foster and Mrs Kim Gallagher – nominated for all their hard work and commitment to the Swanage Town & Community Partnership and Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, and for their valued contribution to the success of The Centre Project.

Mr Dave Morton – nominated for the work he does with so many groups in the community, including Purbeck Good Neighbours, Swanage Cricket Club, Friends of Swanage Rotary, Friends of Swanage Medical Practice, computer training at Swanage Library, and as a driver for the Swanage Disabled Club bus.

Mr Mel Norris – nominated for the work he does with so many groups in the community, including Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre, Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, Swanage Jazz Festival, and Swanage Senior Forum.

Mr David Pike – nominated for the town's Pirate Festival, Christmas lights, and Rotary's Christmas Market and Santa Sleigh, all of which would not have happened in the successful way that they had without David's involvement, considerable hard work, commitment and stamina.

Litter Free Purbeck – received on behalf of the group by Mr Frank Roberts, in recognition of the group's sterling work within the community, working tirelessly to find ways of reducing the amount of litter dropped in Purbeck's towns and villages, on roads and beaches, and in the countryside. It was noted that Mr Frank Roberts had been Swanage's Purbeck Town & Parish Volunteer of the Year 2017.

On behalf of the Town Council, the Chairman gave thanks to all of the town's volunteers for their dedication, energy and enthusiasm. It was noted that volunteers are at the heart of our communities and, with ever decreasing government funding for local councils, are crucial to our local towns and villages, and truly make a positive difference from which the whole community benefits.

4. **SWANAGE TOWN COUNCIL GRANT AWARDS, AND MAYOR'S FUND CHARITY DONATION**

The Chairman acknowledged the positive and integral role played by many voluntary groups and charitable organisations in the community, and reported that the Town Council was pleased to support them in their work.

So far this year, the Council had awarded grants and donations totalling £7,190 to support the work of local groups and events. The Chairman gave details of recipients, and grant certificates were presented as follows:

- Dorset Blind Association** £300.00
 Providing support to blind and visually impaired people, helping them to adjust to living with sight loss, developing skills and confidence for independence, and reduce isolation.
- Life Education Wessex** £550.00
 ‘Helping children make healthy choices’. An independent, self-supporting charity, working in partnership with schools, parents and the wider community to help children between the ages of 3 and 13 develop the ability to make positive, informed choices about their health, and reduce the risk of drug misuse. Using a unique mobile classroom affectionately known as ‘The Life Bus’, along with Harold the giraffe.
- Purbeck Arts Weeks Festival** £500.00
 A joyful celebration of arts for all. Painters, sculptors, printmakers, jewellers, photographers, and more, open their studios across Purbeck for visitors to explore.
- Purbeck Citizens Advice Bureau** £1,000.00
 An important, vital service for the local community, which holds regular sessions in Swanage Town Hall, offering free, confidential advice for all.
- Purbeck Film Festival** £1,750.00
 Bringing films to rural Dorset, often in the form of memorable community events, such as outdoor screenings in Corfe Castle, and on Studland Beach. It also aims to expand audience choice by screening arthouse, classic, independent and foreign language films.
- Purbeck International Chamber Music Festival** £990.00
 One of the festival’s missions being to nurture young talent, and each year events for young musicians and children’s concerts are held. The festival maintains contact with Purbeck schools, through workshops and masterclasses. It was noted that a performance of ‘Peter and the Wolf’ would be given in Harmans Cross Village Hall on 2nd September 2018.
- Royal British Legion WW1 Centenary Committee** £1,000.00
 Commemoration event planning for marking the centenary of the First World War. Special events to commemorate those who served and suffered during WW1.
- Swanage Blues Festivals (October 2018 & March 2019)** £600.00
 Every March and October music lovers come to the Swanage Blues Festivals where over 100 musicians perform at 60 events in 15 indoor venues. Supported by local residents and visitors alike, and having a positive effect on the local economy in the quieter shoulder months.
- Swanage & Purbeck Rotary’s Pirate Festival** £500.00
 A new event bringing many visitors to the town. This year the event will be held on Sandpit Field.

The Chairman then reported that a donation of £2,500.00 from the Mayor’s Fund would be given to the Swanage Dementia Friendly Community, raised during Councillor Poultney’s and Councillor Bonfield’s terms of office, which was received with thanks and appreciation from Mrs Mo Andrews and Mrs Jean Gibbs on behalf of the group.

5. **MATTERS RAISED BY LOCAL RESIDENTS**

(a) **Dog Fouling – Sunshine Walk**

Concerns had been raised regarding regular instances of dog fouling seen in Sunshine Walk, and a request was made for consideration to be given to the possibility of CCTV in the area, whether additional dog bins could be installed, and for any other suggestions to combat these issues. It was felt that the notices in the area warning about potential fines did not deter fouling.

During the ensuing discussion it was reported that the matter of dog fouling was taken very seriously by the Town Council, it posed a public health hazard, and also affected the appearance of the town. It was disappointing that there was still a minority who did not pick up after their dogs. The Council continued to work in partnership with Dorset Dogs to advise dog owners about best practice and the ‘Doggy Do Code’. The Dorset Dogs officer had previously offered to undertake a survey of hot spots in the town for dog waste and would be willing to attend these areas to speak to dog owners, provide information and distribute ‘goody bags’.

It was noted that the Town Council’s Enforcement Officer did regularly pick up dog waste. However, dog waste was the responsibility of DWP and it was vitally important that local residents continued to report instances of fouling to Purbeck District Council to make them aware of any issues, and to ensure that these were brought to the attention of the relevant District Council officer.

Attendees were in agreement that it would be difficult to catch the culprits. A local resident had advised that they would be willing to sit at the entrance to Sunshine Walk and undertake a survey of dog walkers to see whether this could reduce the instances of fouling. A further suggestion was made that contact should be made with ‘Home Watch’ who had CCTV which could be hired.

(b) **Provision of affordable housing in Swanage**

A question was asked regarding what steps were being taken to address the lack of affordable housing in the town for local residents

It was noted that the Town Council was exploring the possibility of to establish a Community Land Trust as a means to deliver affordable housing. Progress had been held up whilst the District Council made arrangements for the appointment of an advisor to work with town and parish councils.

Attention was drawn to the need to ensure that any such properties would be exempt from the ‘right to buy’ so that they would remain a community resource in perpetuity.

(c) **Bournemouth-Swanage Motor Road and Ferry Company – application to the Secretary of State for Transport for an Order to revise the charges for the use of the ferry between Sandbanks and South Haven Point**

Concerns had been raised regarding the Ferry Company’s Application to the Secretary of State for Transport for an increase in ferry tolls, which were considered to be wholly unacceptable. Further concerns were raised regarding the potential detrimental financial impacts the proposed increases could have on local residents, commuters and students, and also on tourism and the local economy.

It was anticipated that, in view of the number of objections raised to the application, a Public Inquiry would be held. The Town Council would be working with the District Council, and other local councils, to compile the

information and evidence required to support the objections raised. The District Council would be taking the lead in preparing for the Public Inquiry, and would be seeking legal assistance to present the Councils' case to the Inspector.

6. **PRESENTATIONS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

Swanage Town Council

The Chairman gave a brief summary of matters affecting the Town Council during the past year.

(a) **Swanage Bandstand Project**

The Council had pledged the sum of £50,000 towards the restoration of the bandstand and surrounding area. The Council was working closely with the Friends of Swanage Bandstand and the project was progressing well. A special mention was given to Mr Alan Houghton for his tireless fundraising activities.

(b) **Consultation - NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group - Clinical Services Review**

The Council had continued to support local residents in their efforts in opposing aspects of the reorganisation of the health services in the area, which included the downgrading of Poole Hospital's accident & emergency and maternity services. Their campaign was ongoing.

(c) **Retirement of long-serving members of Town Council Staff**

During the past year the Council had seen the retirement of the Council's two longest serving staff members, both of whom had been first employed by the former Swanage Urban District Council. From the Operations Team, Mr Charlie Diffey had retired after 45 years of looking after the town's parks and gardens. From the Town Hall, Mrs Linda Burgess had retired after 54 years' service, most recently as Senior Administration & Finance Officer, and was described as having been 'a fountain of knowledge'.

The Chairman thanked them both for such loyal service, wished them well, and hoped that they were both enjoying their well-earned retirement.

(d) **The Spa Retreats Beach Huts**

In early summer, six 'Spa Retreat' beach huts had been installed at The Spa site. These high specification beach huts included double-glazed doors, insulated walls, quality seating and a table, and were available to hire throughout the year from the Swanage Information Centre. Attendees were encouraged to take a look at the new huts.

(e) **War Memorial**

In the summer, the Chairman had unveiled a plaque to commemorate the 19 civilians who had lost their lives in Swanage during the Second World War, and had been honoured to meet members of some of their families, and learn about the lives of some of those listed on the plaques.

(f) **Swanage Boat Park**

A major project had been undertaken over the winter to repair and upgrade the boat park. Unfortunately, there had been some slippage seen when the boat park was being resurfaced after the completion of the new lifeboat

station. New retaining walls and drainage had been installed as it had been evident that the main cause of the slippage had been the pooling of water in the area above the boat park. The Chairman was pleased to announce that the project had been completed on time and that the park was due to reopen in May.

(g) **Public Conveniences**

Unlike many other councils, during the year the Council had made the decision to keep all of the town's public toilets open, and had refurbished/updated the main toilets in King George's car park and Mermond Place. Both projects had been completed on time and had opened for Easter. The facilities had been described by visitors as 'a credit to the town'. It was reported that completion of the new disabled facilities at Beach Gardens had been delayed due to drainage problems, but should now be open within the next couple of weeks.

(h) **Electric Vehicles**

In January the Council had taken delivery of an electric van for its workforce, and two electric vehicle charging points had been installed in King George's car park. These were the first public electric vehicle charging points to be installed in the Purbeck area.

(i) **The 'Beast from the East'**

During February and March the UK had been adversely affected by a cold wave, which had been dubbed the 'Beast from the East', and which had brought widespread unusually low temperatures, wind, heavy snowfall and icy conditions. A special tribute was paid to Mr Geoff Brookes, Operations Manager, and his team for leading the local response. The Council's staff had been out in snow, high winds and freezing conditions, deploying flood barriers and filling sandbags over two weekends.

(j) **Swanage Information Centre**

The Chairman was pleased to announce that the refurbished Swanage Information Centre had been recognised by winning two prestigious 'gold' awards, including the best information service in the South West. Thanks and appreciation was extended to the Council's Visitor Services Manager, Culvin Milmer, and his team, for the considerable work put in to achieve these awards. Well done all.

A special tribute was also paid to Sarah Tattersall and Kathy Bangle of the TIC Team who had been amongst the first on the scene following a recent tragic incident in Shore Road, and had worked to support the emergency services.

(k) **Looking to the Future**

The Council was nearing completion of acquiring a new works depot for the town's workforce on the new Prospect Business Park. The Council would soon have a depot that would be suitable for its future needs, and the workforce would have facilities fit for the 21st Century.

In December the Council had approved a grant towards the working up of proposals to improve the town's flood defences from the sea. The Council would need to undertake stabilisation work to the Stone Quay later in the year, and a grant application was being put together to try to build on the

Council's investment to bring additional improvements.

The Council was also very close to being successful in securing European funding for improvements to the facilities for local fishermen at Peveril Point.

Work continued with the Football Club and the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust to see improvements made at Day's Park, and discussions were ongoing with the Bowls Club to upgrade the Bowling Green.

Over the next 12 months a considerable amount of work would be undertaken during the restructuring of the county's principal councils into two new unitary authorities to commence in May 2019.

The Town Council was seeking the transfer of property owned by the District and County Councils to the local community, and was likely to be asked to play a larger role in supporting the delivery of services by the new unitary authority. The Council would continue to work with the Development Trust, which had done such a sterling job in transforming 'The Centre', the venue for this evening's meeting.

The Council had already reached outline agreement with the County Council for a long lease that would see the former St Mark's School Playing Field preserved as a green space for the local community. The Council was looking forward to working with local residents to plan how the land should be used in the future.

November would see the commemoration of the centenary of the Armistice, and the Council had agreed to support the Royal British Legion in a programme of events to mark this important anniversary.

In concluding the report, the Chairman reported that the Town Council and its staff were proud to play their part in helping the community thrive, and were very much looking forward to hearing the reports from tonight's guest speakers about their work over the past year. Swanage was so very lucky to have a community that had so many groups and individuals who were willing to help maintain and improve the town. The Chairman gave thanks to them all.

The Chairman then welcomed representatives from various organisations, and invited them to make presentations on behalf of the following groups:-

(1) **Dorset Police**

PS Barry Gosling and Inspector Andy Keel introduced themselves to the meeting and gave an update on the most common types of crime committed in the town. It was noted that telephone and online scamming was increasing, and attendees were encouraged to visit the Action Fraud website (the National Fraud and Cyber Crime Reporting Centre) for up to date information and advice, and to report any crimes (<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>). Attendees were also encouraged to regularly visit the Dorset Police's Swanage page on its website, its Facebook page, and to consider joining a local 'Home Watch' scheme. The team was keen to attend local community events and meetings. However, it was reported that Swanage was considered to be a safe place to live, with very low crime rates, and had again experienced less crimes this year, compared to last year.

(m)

Swanage Rotary

Mrs Maggie Hardy provided an update and reported on the successes of the Rotary's summer fete, Christmas Market, Christmas mail service, Christmas Santa Sleigh, and Christmas Day breakfast. Funds raised in December were used to support local community projects, including the Bandstand, Besom, the Foodbank, Swanage Gymnastic Club, Little Birds Pre-school, and the Swanage Community Defibrillator Project. Street collections had also been undertaken for the Grenfell Fire Disaster, raising some £2,000.

The President's charity this year would be the Swanage Dementia Friendly Community.

Membership had increased and a new 'e group' had been set up to support those who worked and/or found it difficult to attend meetings.

The Rotary would be organising the Pirate Festival at the end of May this year, and 'Swanage Walks' on 5th May 2019, meeting at King George's Playing Field, the motto being 'turn up and walk for a good cause'.

The Rotary had also planted purple crocus bulbs around the town as a reminder that Rotary had been so instrumental in nearly ending polio across the world, and as part of a national Rotary initiative sapling trees have been planted on land near the Broad Road car park.

Next year the group would be working with Purbeck View School to become more integrated within the community, and supporting mental health initiatives in the community.

(n) **Defibrillator Project**

Mr Ian Brown and Mrs Maggie Hardy provided an update on progress of the project. The original plan had been for four defibrillators to be installed in the town, however, due to generous donations being received from members of the community, and the Town Council, there were now twenty seven installed across Swanage and the wider Purbeck area, and were saving lives. The long term project of the group was to ensure that the units were regularly monitored/maintained, and remained serviceable. Defibrillator awareness workshops/training continued to be undertaken, with over 500 people having attended so far.

(o) **Swanage Coastguard Team**

Mr Ian Brown, who had now been a member of the Coastguard Team for some 27 years, provided an overview of operations over the past year, which had seen a very busy time, from missing person searches, to assisting with the deployment of flood defences during the 'Beast from the East'. It was reported that the service currently had a number of vacancies.

It was noted that there had been a recent increase in incidents, and the Team was working with partner agencies, and mental health professionals, to help to prevent such incidents in the future.

(p) **Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust**

Mr Bob Foster and Mrs Kim Gallagher reported on a number of matters, including the following:

- The Trust had assisted in the coordination of priorities for the town, together with the Town Council. These included:
 - Working with the Town Council on its proposals for affordable housing, with the Local Listing/review of Conservation Areas in partnership with the Purbeck Society, the draft Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy Action Plan, and the Trust was currently considering proposals for 'care in Swanage' to help reduce isolation

and address mental health issues in the community.

- The Trust was looking for community transport volunteers.
- It was reported that to date twelve projects had become Trust Members.
- The Centre had now been open for over one year, and the success of Explorers Childcare was discussed.
- A new youth club for 11 to 13 year olds on Fridays had commenced.
- Planning was in progress for further community use of the building at weekends, for events, parties and exhibitions.
- There had been an open day at Herston Hall on 14th April 2018 to discuss ideas for the future use of the hall, which would now be taken forward into a business plan.
- Discussions were ongoing with the Football Club regarding its proposals for a new stand, and a project plan was being developed for new pitches and a multi-function centre.
- A special mention and thanks were given to the number of volunteers who had come forward to support the new Swanage Volunteer Bureau.

(q) **Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community**

Mrs Jean Gibbs and Mrs Mo Andrews were pleased to report that Rachel Murray had been welcomed as Purbeck's first Admiral Nurse, and that fundraising had already commenced for a second nurse for Purbeck. Rachel was currently working with 40 local families, providing the specialist dementia support that families needed, through psychological support, expert advice and information.

It was noted that the group would be holding the following events and activities:

- Dance and art sessions at Herston Hall.
- Reminiscence group in Swanage Library.
- Walk in the Park – 5th May 2018 – all welcome.
- Singing group – commencing 6th June 2018.
- Picnic in the Park – 7th July 2018 – all welcome.

(r) **Purbeck View School**

Mrs Ginny Bellard, Principal, introduced herself to the meeting and provided a powerpoint presentation 'Autism is an amazing thing'. It was reported that the school provided specialist education for children aged 7 – 19 years with diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and challenging behaviour, and had been doing so for 30 years. The school aimed to raise awareness about autism, and also wanted pupils to be more involved in community life, and contribute to community groups, including Swanage Area Dementia Friendly Community. It was noted that one pupil was successfully undertaking a work experience placement once a week at Swanage Library.

Mrs Bellard provided details about the support given to pupils, which included:

- Communication support.
- Therapeutic support.
- Learning support.
- Skills for life.
- Meeting new people.
- Learning to make friends.
- Having fun together.

The Chairman gave thanks to Mrs Bellard for the informative presentation.

7. **OPEN FORUM**

The Mayor then opened the Meeting for general discussion, and invited questions and comments from the audience.

Matters raised included:-

- **Swanage Central Beach** – management and beach regulations. A question raised regarding ‘Seafront Advisers’, incident reporting and first aid cover. It was confirmed that there would be two seasonal advisers for the 2019 season.
- **Town Council Meetings** – a question was asked as to why members of the public could only discuss agenda items during public participation time. It was noted that this was regulated by Standing Orders and that other issues could be raised by many other means, including directly to Councillors, or via the Council’s website, email address, and telephone.
- **The Purbeck Society** – a question was raised regarding problems experienced when trying to book meetings in the Mowlem Theatre – considered to be a ‘community asset’, which would benefit by utilising the whole of the premises, and the operation of a restaurant and bar. It was noted that this was a separate Charity and the Society was advised to send its request to the Trustees of the Mowlem Theatre accordingly.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was provisionally agreed that the next Parish Meeting be held in May 2019, date to be confirmed in due course.

In conclusion, the Mayor thanked those present for their attendance, gave thanks and appreciation to the presenters for the informative presentations, and closed the meeting at 9.40 p.m.
