

Minutes of a Meeting of the **TOURISM COMMITTEE**
held at the Town Hall, Swanage on **WEDNESDAY**
4th NOVEMBER 2015 at **10.00 a.m.**

Chairman: -

Councillor G Suttle

Swanage Town Council

Present: -

Councillor M Bonfield

Swanage Town Council

Councillor C Finch

Swanage Town Council

Councillor G Green

Swanage Town Council

Councillor G Marsh

Swanage Town Council

Councillor M Whitwam

Outside Representatives:-

PC K Hickman

Dorset Police

PCSO C Rosenberg

Dorset Police

Mr A Tuckey

Durlston Country Park

Mr I Brown

Maritime Coastguard Agency

Mr D Rawsthorn

Swanage Railway

Also Present: -

Dr M Ayres

Town Clerk

Miss N Clark

Management Support Officer

Miss H Lagden

Purbeck District Council

Mrs J Lowry

Tourist Information Centre

There were three members of the public present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the Meeting were received from Councillors Poultney, Morris and Trite.

2) Declarations Of Interest

Members were invited to declare their interest under the Code of Conduct as defined by regulations made under section 30 (3) of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3) Matters arising from Minutes of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on 24th June 2015

7) Tourism Reports

d) VisitEngland marketing campaign – as previously reported, VisitEngland would be promoting seaside, family and 'foodie' breaks across the UK and internationally. A gallery of images accompanied these promotions and a suggestion was made that the Town Council may wish to consider sending out a request to members of the public/local photographers to send in suitable photographs of Swanage and the surrounding areas on these themes. With due acknowledgements these may be used by VisitEngland during their promotions. The Tourism Manager advised that Purbeck District Council were also in need of photographs to use in their own

promotional material. A request was therefore made for this matter to be included in the next edition of the Town Council's Swanage Matters newsletter.

4) Matters arising from Minutes of the Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2015

a) **Inflatable tenders landing on the beach – establishment of landing areas and new Lifejacket Lockers – update** – further to Minute No. 8 c) of the Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 22nd July 2015, a copy of a RNLi news release had been circulated with the agenda paperwork for information purposes. It was reported that such a scheme had been trialled at Salcombe and Fowey and had proved very successful. A discussion ensued and it was noted that the RNLi had designed the lockers to encourage the use of lifejackets when sailors rowed ashore, and reference was made to drowning incidents that had been seen in the past. Members agreed that such facilities could also boost the local economy as visitors coming ashore from their boats brought additional income into the town. It was therefore agreed that contact should be made with the RNLi to enquire whether such a scheme was still available, and to obtain more detailed information and costings. The outcome of these discussions would be referred to a future Monthly Council Meeting for further consideration.

4) **Beach recharge – update** – a query was raised as to whether consideration had been given to the placement of sand in front of The Parade seawall to mitigate the effects of storm damage, which had previously been seen to the wall during winter months, and to adjacent properties. It was felt that this could also prolong the effects of any recharge on Main Beach. It was confirmed that this question would be raised with the District Engineer and reported back at a future meeting.

9 b) **Private beach huts** – a request was made for consideration to allow private beach hut owners to paint the existing brown beach huts to match the colour scheme of the new Shore Road Beach Bungalows. A discussion ensued and a query was raised as to whether this would be the whole beach hut or just the doors. It was therefore agreed that this should be investigated further and included as an agenda item at a future Committee Meeting.

5) Review of Tourist Information Centre – consideration of future options for the Town Council's Tourist Information Service

Further to Minute No. 97 of the Monthly Council Meeting held on 24th August 2015, a meeting of the Tourism Service Review Working Party had been held on 28th September 2015 to discuss and review the Town Council's current Tourist Information Service, and other duties operated from the Tourist Information Centre in Shore Road. A copy of the Minutes from the meeting, and a copy of the draft Option Appraisal for Swanage Tourist Information Centre, were circulated with the agenda paperwork.

An overview was given of the meeting, and initial proposals. It was reported that the Working Party was supportive of retaining this valuable service and that a preference had been expressed for it to remain in a seafront location. It was noted that the TIC building was in urgent need of repairs, estimated at a cost of £85,000. A discussion ensued and comments and queries were raised which would be taken forward to the next Working Party Meeting.

Following the discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Finch, seconded by Councillor Suttle and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That a meeting of the Council's Museum Working Party be convened to explore options for a possible joint venture, including costings for a new purpose-built building, and that the Council investigate the possible leasing of the existing TIC building to a private business.

It was further agreed that if necessary a portacabin needed to be in place in Shore Road by the end of March 2016 in readiness for the 2016 season.

6) New Leaflet to promote Swanage and the surrounding areas and attractions – update

Further to Minute No. 6) of the Tourism Committee Meeting held on 7th November 2014, it was reported that a draft copy of the new leaflet had been produced. The aim of the leaflet was to support the local economy by encouraging visitors to shop, eat and holiday in the town all year round. The draft leaflet featured the four heritage projects, Swanage Railway, the Pier, Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre, and Durlston Country Park, and it was intended to have leaflets in place for the start of the 2016 season. As well as locally, they would be placed in the Poole and Bournemouth TIC's.

A discussion ensued and it was felt that there was a 'gap' for this type of leaflet. A comment was made that there were circa 500 coach trips to the town per annum and there was no specific leaflet to hand to visitors when asked what there was to 'see and do' in the town. It was further felt that the leaflet should be a 'one leaflet does all' and include local attractions, eateries and shopping opportunities, and could also be included in trade brochures at trade shows.

It was therefore agreed that a meeting would be held between STC, PDC, Swanage Railway, Chamber of Trade and Museum representatives to finalise production of the new leaflet, and an update would be given at a future Committee Meeting. It was noted that there may be a contribution available towards publishing/printing costs from Swanage Railway.

7) Swanage Railway Project Wareham 2016 – presentation from Mr David Rawsthorn. Head of Sales and Marketing, Swanage Railway

An update and presentation on Project Wareham, was given by Mr David Rawsthorn, Head of Sales and Marketing, Swanage Railway.

It was reported that the Railway employed 35 full time staff, and almost 500 people regularly volunteered their services in a variety of roles. The Railway boosted the Purbeck economy to the tune of £14m per annum, and in 2014 carried 216,267 passengers. 2016 would see the fulfilment of recommencing services to Wareham, and Mr Rawsthorn provided background information, which would be available on request. This included:

- A 51 day trial would commence 22nd June 2016 with four trains per day between Swanage and Wareham
- Trains would operate five days per week
- Summer 2017 would see a 90 day trial service with four trains per day between Swanage and Wareham
- Timetable due to be released during November 2015, and services would connect with trains to London Waterloo and Weymouth

There would be an intensive marketing campaign in spring 2016, and an official opening ceremony by a VIP was planned during summer 2016. Updates would be available on the Railway website. The Chairman gave thanks and appreciation to Mr Rawsthorn for his informative and interesting presentation.

8) Budget Setting 2016/17

a) Review of Tourism Budgets

A brief update was given on the Tourism Budgets for 2016/17, relating to the TIC, Beach Huts, Boat Park and Beach Gardens.

A question was raised as to whether the Town Council should continue with the Blue Flag and Quality Coast Award applications, which had cost £785 this year. A

discussion ensued and it was reported that not many towns held both awards. It was felt however that the Town Council should continue to support efforts for the retention of these awards, which had been achieved/held for the past fourteen years.

It was reported that the current Pleasure Boat Byelaws Enforcement Officer would not be continuing to patrol the bay in 2016 as it was no longer viable for him to do so. A question was raised as to whether PDC had reduced funding in this respect and whether this needed to be included in STC's budget setting for 2016. As per Minute No. 6) of the Beach Management Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2015, it was reported that there would be a meeting held between all interested parties to discuss a possible solution/future enforcement services before the start of next season.

b) Scale of Charges 2016/17 – Recommendation to Estimates Meeting

Consideration was given to the scale of charges for 2016/17. It was reported that an increase of 1% had been applied to all fees and charges, excluding the Shore Road beach bungalow charges, where a significant reduction was proposed for the upper level huts to encourage increased uptake in 2016. Charges for the lower level huts remained the same. It was noted that the TIC was awaiting approval of these charges to enable them to issue booking forms and display promotional material. It was therefore proposed by Councillor Suttle, seconded by Councillor Marsh and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the following scale of charges be taken forward to the Policy, Finance & Performance Management Committee Meeting due to be held on 9th December 2015 to be considered further during the budget setting process for 2016/17, with the exception of those relating to Beach Huts which will be considered at the Monthly Meeting due to be held on 23rd November 2015.

	Proposed Fees 2016/17 (including VAT @ 20%) £/p
1. <u>BOAT PARK</u>	
Peveril Boat Park Per Grid (Trailer Included)	
Boats and trailers	
Up to 13 ft	
Summer - 1 May - 31 October	
Season	292.50
Weekly	116.00
Winter - 1 November - 30 April	121.00
Annual 1st May -30 April	413.50
Up to 22 ft	
Summer - 1 May - 31 October	
Season	545.00
Weekly	177.00
Winter - 1 November - 30 April	222.00
Annual 1st May -30 April	767.00
Pontoons (mid Sept to 30th April) minute 12 P & P 15/09/14)	444.00
Up to 29 ft	
Summer - 1 May - 31 October	
Season	747.00

Weekly	197.00
Winter - 1 November - 30 April	333.00
Annual 1st May -30 April	1,080.00

10% discount on annual ticket if purchased before 30th April

Daily Launch Fees - Throughout the year

Boats	27.00
Jet Skis	27.00
Residents Permit Holders (25% Discount)	20.25
Daily Launch Fees (Boat only - removal of Trailer)	
Boats	20.00
Jet Skis	20.00
Residents Permit Holders (25% Discount)	15.00
Trailer Only-per day	7.00

2. BEACH GARDENS

Tennis

Singles/Doubles Hourly (hourly per court)	8.40
With Club Member	5.15
Schools (per court)	5.75
Children (under 16 years)	3.05
Racket Hire	1.10
Tennis Ball Hire	0.90
Deposit for keys (Returnable)	5.00

Bowls

Hourly (per person)	4.00
Hourly (under 16 accompanied by an adult)	1.80
Hire of Slips (per pair per game)	2.90
Hire of Woods (per set of 4 per game)	2.90

Putting

Per Round - Adults	3.20
Per Round - Children (under 16)	1.50
Family (2 Adults + 2 Children)	7.60
Deposit for Ball (Returnable)	0.50

Basketball Hire

2.50

Pavilion

(Charges include heating, lighting and use of kitchen and equipment)

Per Session (1 section)	23.00
Morning, Afternoon or Evening (2 sections)	32.00

3. BEACH BUNGALOWS

SCALE OF FEES: SHORE ROAD - 2016/17 SEASON

Sat 26th March- Friday 20th May

Lower Level Huts

Daily	15.00
Weekly	55.00
Whole period	330.00

Upper Level Huts

Daily	10.00
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	Weekly	37.00
	Whole period	220.00
Sat 21st May - Fri 15th July		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	20.00
	Weekly	97.50
	Whole period	700.00
Upper Level Huts	Daily	14.00
	Weekly	65.00
	Whole period	470.00
Sat 16th July - Fri 2nd September		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	30.00
	Weekly	200.00
	Whole period	1400.00
Upper Level Huts	Daily	20.00
	Weekly	135.00
	Whole period	940.00
Sat 3rd September - Fri 16th September		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	20.00
	Weekly	97.50
	Whole period	175.00
Upper Level Huts	Daily	14.00
	Weekly	65.00
	Whole period	115.00
Sat 17th September - Fri 24th Mar		
	Daily	5.00
	Weekly	25.00
Winter whole period charges		
Sat 16th September - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	500.00
	- Upper level	335.00
Sat 29th October - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	400.00
	- Upper level	270.00
Sat 26th November - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	320.00
	- Upper level	215.00
Sat 17th December - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	250.00
	- Upper level	165.00
Sat 28th January - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	150.00
	- Upper level	100.00
Premium Huts (50% uplift on standard hut prices)		
Sat 26th March- Friday 20th May		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	22.50
	Weekly	82.50
	Whole period	495.00

Upper Level Huts	Daily	15.00
	Weekly	55.25
	Whole period	330.00
Sat 21st May - Fri 15th July		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	30.00
	Weekly	146.25
	Whole period	1050.00
Upper Level Huts	Daily	20.00
	Weekly	98.00
	Whole period	700.00
Sat 16th July - Fri 2nd September		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	45.00
	Weekly	300.00
	Whole period	2100.00
Upper Level Huts	Daily	30.00
	Weekly	200.00
	Whole period	1400.00
Sat 3rd September - Fri 16th September		
Lower Level Huts	Daily	30.00
	Weekly	146.25
	Whole period	262.50
Upper Level Huts	Daily	20.00
	Weekly	98.00
	Whole period	175.00
Sat 17th September - Fri 24th Mar	Daily	7.50
	Weekly	37.50
Winter whole period charges		
Sat 16th September - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	750.00
	- Upper level	500.00
Sat 29th October - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	600.00
	- Upper level	400.00
Sat 26th November - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	480.00
	- Upper level	320.00
Sat 17th December - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	375.00
	- Upper level	250.00
Sat 28th January - Fri 24th Mar	- Lower Level	225.00
	- Upper level	150.00
<u>SCALE OF FEES: SPA BUNGALOWS - 2016/17 SEASON</u>		
Sat 26th March- Friday 20th May	Daily	6.50
	Weekly	27.00
Sat 21st May - Fri 15th July	Daily	8.50

	Weekly	47.00
Sat 16th July - Fri 2nd September	Daily	19.00
	Weekly	118.00
Sat 3rd September - Fri 16th September	Daily	8.50
	Weekly	47.00
Sat 17th September - Fri 28th October	Daily	5.00
	Weekly	25.00

SEASON CHARGES - 2016 SEASON (For Existing holders only)

Stroke Club (40% of already discounted whole period charges)	420.00
Premier Hut - Sat 9th July to Friday 5th August (revised period)	
Prior year - 1st April-30th September	
Lions Club of Swanage (75% of weekly charge)	292.50
18th June - 15th July 2016	
Private Sites	360.00
Spa Bungalows 12 to 18 whole period (26/03-28/10)- 40% discount	997.20

4. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

Advertising Board 3ft x 4ft (Annual)	435.00
Advertising 'A' Boards	235.00
Accommodation Service - Serviced	10%
Accommodation Service - Self-catering	5%
Commission on Gross Agency Ticket Sales (unless by contractual agreement)	
- General	10%
- Charities	5%

9) Information Postcards – consideration of a new postcard to invite comments and suggestions from visitors to Swanage

A copy of a postcard used in Bognor Regis to invite comments from visitors and local residents had been circulated with the agenda paperwork. The card was titled 'Bognor Regis is listening' and was described as a Community and Tourist engagement project.

The project, which was held over the summer season, saw various 'pop-up' events, evening 'listening spots' and Community Asset Mapping, with an emphasis on hearing what people had to say about the town, and their experiences. Fifteen post-boxes with cards had been distributed around the town at a selection of B&Bs, cafes, shops and tourist hot-spots. The overall aim was to review the local tourism offer. A copy of the project findings/review document was handed out at the meeting.

A discussion ensued and Members agreed that this could be a worthwhile exercise for Swanage. It was noted that visitor comments were currently received via social media and in the 'Comments Book' held at the TIC.

It was therefore agreed that the PDC Tourism Manager would make contact with Bognor Regis to discuss the project, and look into the costs of producing such a postcard and literature for Swanage, for consideration at a future Committee Meeting.

The Tourism Manager reported that Bognor Regis was one of three finalists in the Coastal Community category of the Great British High Street of the Year Awards 2015.

10) Tourism Reports

Mrs Jayne Lowry, Acting TIC Supervisor, reported that it had been an interesting and varied season and gave updates on the following matters:-

a) Beach Huts

It was reported that positive feedback continued to be received from visitors and local residents alike. There had been a great deal of interest for the 2016 season. A total of 3,538 requests for a beach hut booking form had already been received, an increase of over 1,000 on 2014, and this had been assisted by the 'Win a beach hut' competition held from 11th June to 31st July 2015 on the VisitDorset website.

b) Events

A varied programme of festive events had been planned in the town, and a number of event organisers had already been in contact with the TIC regarding dates for events in 2016.

c) Dorset Tourism Awards 2015

The TIC was delighted to report that it had achieved a Bronze Award for the second year running at the Third Annual Dorset Tourism Awards ceremony, held in the Tank Museum, Bovington on 15th October 2015. Congratulations were also given to Discover Purbeck, Worth Matravers Tea Rooms, Bradle Farmhouse and Tankfest, The Tank Museum, who had received Silver Awards, and Lytchett Manor Caravan and Camping Park who had received a Gold Award. Huge thanks were given to the TIC team who had had a demanding summer season, and to Mrs Jayne Lowry for her hard work as Acting TIC Supervisor.

d) Tourism Manager

The TIC expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation to Tourism Manager, Miss Holly Lagden, for the support and guidance given in recent months.

Miss Holly Lagden, Tourism Manager, reported on her attendance at the recent Dorset Tourism Awards, and was delighted with the results for the TIC's. There had been an article in the local press detailing the successes. Updates were given on the following matters:-

a) Tourism Statistics

The 2014 Value of Tourism statistics for Purbeck had been received which reported that there had been over 4.133 million visits to Purbeck during the year, with a total related visitor spend of over £236.3m. Tourism represented 21% of all employment in Purbeck. The full Dorset report could be found at:

www.visit-dorset.com/dbimings/Dorset%20&%20districts%202014.pdf

b) Social Media

It was reported that Swanage social media had been performing well since the Facebook account had been re-started at the beginning of July 2015, had reached over 18,500 people for the eight weeks of the summer holidays, and now had 326 'likes'. There were also over 2,000 Twitter 'followers'.

PC K Hickman and PCSO C Rosenberg left the meeting at 11.05 a.m.

c) Cruise ships to Portland Port

On Friday 6th November 2015 the Tourism Manager would be accompanying representatives from cruise ships on a visit to Purbeck. The trip had been arranged in partnership with the Swanage Railway, Swanage & Purbeck Hospitality Association, PDC and STC, and would promote Corfe Castle and Swanage as destinations for excursions for cruise ship passengers, and highlight the excellent facilities on offer in the Purbeck area, and Dorset. Circa 26,000 cruise passengers visited Portland Port per annum and it was hoped that this partnership could also lead to links with Portsmouth and Southampton Ports.

d) Local Enterprise Partnership

It was reported that a new officer post had been created at the LEP to drive through the findings of the LEP's Destination Management Plan, which had been commissioned in 2014, and to deliver objectives within a newly-formed Destination Management Organisation for the whole of Dorset. It was hoped that this would have

a positive effect on tourism in the Purbeck area.

e) Accreditation Policy Changes

From 1st January 2016 a Dorset Accommodation Charter would be introduced by Visit-Dorset.com as an alternative to star ratings or accreditation. This would enable Visit-Dorset tourism partners to work with more businesses who did not see a business need to be accredited.

f) TIC Visits

The TIC Supervisors had visited Poole and Bournemouth TICs, as both had recently been relocated and refurbished, to find out more about how other TICs were modernising their centres. The visits had been informative and worthwhile.

11) Draft Tourism Service Level Agreement between Swanage Town Council and Purbeck District Council

A copy of the draft Tourism Service Level Agreement between STC and PDC had been circulated with the agenda paperwork. An overview of the document was given and it was reported that STC made a reasonable financial contribution to the PDC tourism budget. It was felt that some minor amendments were required, and for clarification purposes a recommendation made that the tourism services/support provided by PDC solely to STC needed to be listed separately within the document. It was therefore agreed that the Tourism Manager would effect the requested changes and an amended copy of the document would be provided at a future Committee Meeting.

**12) Updates from Outside Representatives
Durlston Country Park**

The Park had hosted a variety of high profile events and exhibitions this season, 80 of which had taken place before Easter. This included the ‘Swanage 10 mile Challenge’ on 31st October 2015, which had been the last leg of the 630 mile South West Coast Path Challenge, and which had started at Durlston Castle and finished at South Haven Point. It was noted that the South West Coast Path Association was very supportive of local coastal walks.

It was reported that Dorset County Council had supported the number five bus service again this year, however, the Park was not aware if funding would be available in 2016 and had started looking into options for next season. The Park would welcome ideas and suggestions, and it was noted that this matter would be discussed at the next Town Council Transport Committee Meeting.

It was further reported that Katie Black was settling into her new role as Senior Ranger Purbeck and was very much looking forward to discussing Park priorities at a future Committee Meeting.

Swanage Railway

A good year was reported. 2015 Christmas Luncheon trains were already sold out, and Santa Specials were selling extremely well. A request was made to shop owners to consider decorating shop windows in a festive theme, and to consider longer opening hours during the festive season. Next year’s events calendar was now on the website, and the Railway was looking forward to 2016 and Project Wareham.

Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre

It was reported that there had been circa 50,000 visitors to the Museum and Heritage Centre during 2015. There was a new team in place and the Centre would be open at weekends during November and December 2015. There would be a Family History weekend on 14th November 2015.

Chamber of Trade

The Chamber of Trade Chairman confirmed that she would discuss the possibility of a festive window display competition with business owners, and the Railway confirmed that they would be happy to consider donating prizes for such a competition if it went ahead.

13) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

- a) **Swanage Value of Tourism Summary 2014** – a copy of the 2014 summary had been circulated with the agenda paperwork for information. It was noted that there had been over 1.02m visits to the town during the year, with a total related visitor spend of over £76.9m which supported 1,500 local jobs. It was felt that this type of data may attract businesses to the area in the future. The Committee would look forward to the 2015 data to compare with the 2013 and 2014 statistics already held.
- b) **‘Welcome to the Isle of Purbeck’ signage** – further to Minute No. 56. 5) of the Monthly Council Meeting held on 6th July 2015, agreement in principle had been given to provide financial support for this new signage. PDC and DCC had agreed to make contributions of £250 and £500 respectively, and letters would now be sent to other local parishes involved to see if they could also assist with funding. It was agreed that the signs would make a positive impression. A further update would be given at a future meeting.
- c) **Swanage Museum & Heritage Centre and Swanage Pier** – Committee Members felt that Swanage Museum and the Pier should hold seats on the Tourism Committee, and a request was made for this matter to be included on the agenda for the next Committee Meeting.
- d) **Shore Road Beach Huts – ‘pop-up- shops** – further to Minute No. 141. of the Monthly Council Meeting held on 26th October 2015, it was reported that there would be a trial held from 4th December 2015 to 4th January 2016. Beach Huts No’s 15 to 27 would be offered to local crafters who made their own (non-food) goods, and could be rented for the whole period, or for weekends Friday to Monday. Full details would be advertised via poster, the STC website, the local press and social media in due course.
- e) **Christmas Parking 2015/16** – Christmas parking arrangements in the Town Council’s long stay car parks would be advertised via poster, the STC website, the Local press and social media. There would be free parking on Saturdays in December and on the first Saturday in January 2016, and a reduced fee of £1 all day every day during December (excluding Saturdays which were free) in the Broad Road and Main Beach car parks.
- f) **Main Beach - Punch and Judy Concession** – it was reported that the recruitment process for next season would be undertaken over the winter period.

14) Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting had been scheduled for Wednesday 9th March 2016 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 11.30 a.m.
