

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WAREHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, 4TH MARCH, 2008 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EAST STREET, WAREHAM AT 7.00 P.M.

Present: Councillor Mrs. S. Elmes (Town Mayor); Councillor M. Russell (Deputy Town Mayor); Councillors D. Budd; L. Burns; Mrs. D. Cleaton; K. Critchley; K. Green; E. Osmond; Mrs. A. Selby; Mrs. A. Tighe; and Mrs. M. Wainwright.

Officers in attendance – Mr. R. Curtis, Town Clerk and Mrs. A. Dominy, Admin Assistant.

Members of the public – 6 Press – 1.

124. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs. P. Bowyer Davis, Miss Cotton, Mrs. C. Turner and Mrs. J. Webb.

125. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

126. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY, 2008

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th January, 2008 were confirmed after the following amendment –

Page 49 – Minute 121 – last line delete “the”;

Page 50 delete first paragraph “position there.” Insert – 66 wayfinders at a cost of £2,808 each per annum (total £185,328 – to provide information and support in “making choices’ for their lives. Is this money well spent?

127. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

128 TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. K. Randall, 39 Worgret Road, Wareham asked whether the Town Council would be following the openness and transparency policy of Purbeck District Council.

The Mayor responded that the Town Council had such a policy and did follow it.

PAGE 52

Mr. R. Anderson, 4 Bonnets Lane, Wareham questioned the recently agreed increases in the Town Council's parking charges for Howards Lane Car Park, Wareham; the charges had in the past been in line with Purbeck District Council's charges but minute 78 of the Amenities Committee meeting of 23rd January 2008 had stated 'a straight 50p across the board' as the basis for change, which he considered was not in line with Purbeck District Council's proposed charges.

Councillor Budd, Chairman of the Amenities Committee, responded that the minutes were only in the form of draft minutes at this stage and would be amended for accuracy at the next meeting of the Amenities Committee on 5th March. He gave details of the basis of the new charges and stated that they would be held for a period of two years, unlike the District Council's proposed charges which he understood were subject to review after one year, and that the Town Council felt that this was a better option for its residents.

Mr. Anderson then questioned the legality of the Agenda for the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee meeting held on 18th February, 2008.

Councillor Russell gave a detailed response to Mr. Anderson's question.

129. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

None.

130. TO ANSWER MEMBERS QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

Councillor L. Burns; "The Notice of Meeting for 18 February 2008 meeting of Policy, Resources and Finance Committee, when first published, incorrectly gave the date of the meeting as the 18 January, 2008. An amended Notice of Meeting was subsequently published by the Town Clerk. On which date were the amended Notices of Meeting displayed on the parish notice boards?"

The Mayor asked Councillor Burns if he was happy to accept Councillor Russell's response to Mr. Anderson's question. Councillor Burns responded that he was but asked what date the notice was placed on the board. The Town Clerk confirmed that the notice was placed on the board on Thursday, 14th February, 2008.

131. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she had received a letter of resignation from Councillor Jaeger dated 26th February, 2008. His letter stated that he had been suffering from ill health and no longer felt able to carry on as a Councillor. She wished Mr. Jaeger well and thanked him on behalf of the Council for his service during the past year.

Page 53

The Mayor reminded Councillors of the protocol of Council meetings. All comments should be addressed through the Chair and Members should stand whilst addressing the Council unless given permission by the Chair to remain seated. All other members should stay silent until the member speaking had finished what they wish to say.

She reported that she had attended Wareham Middle School Gardening Club at the invitation of Holly Jones, the teacher running the club, and attended the School Assembly at the First School together with the Mace Bearer dressed in full Regalia.

The Mayor had judged the Camera Club's photo competition which was on the theme of trees, held in conjunction with Wareham in Bloom's Coffee Morning.

She had also attended a Charity Musical Luncheon at Christchurch, presented prizes and certificates to the junior entrants in the Wareham Camera Club Competition, attended the Wareham Seniors Forum meeting and the concert by the Military Band from Bovington Camp, and attended the Charity Steam Engine ride around the lanes of North Dorset in aid of the Mayor of Yeovil's Charity..

132. TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Amenities Committee – 23rd January, 2008

Councillor Budd referred to the forthcoming work to take down three chimneys at the Town Hall by contractors and the Town Clerk confirmed that work would commence on the following Monday, 10th March 2008.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(b) Human Resources Panel – 3rd December, 2007 and 24th January, 2008

RESOLVED that the reports be noted.

(c) Planning and Transport Committee – 11th February, 2008

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Councillor Budd updated members on Minute 63 and advised that Baroness Andrews had declined to meet with representatives of the District Council and that there would be a 12 week period of consultation regarding the Regional Spatial Strategy in May/June, 2008. He recommended that Wareham Town Council should delay any response until the consultation period is under way.

Councillor Budd also gave information relating to Dorset County Council regarding a SITA application for the Puddletown Road for which feedback was needed very soon.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

133. REPORTS BY DISTRICT COUNCILLORS, COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

County Councillor

Councillor Budd reported on the County Council Meeting on 14th February, 2008 which included discussions on the following:

(a) the recommendation of a 4.5% increase in Council Tax taking the County's element to £1,096 per year;

(b) the Cabinet placed the Purbeck Transportation Strategy as its 4th priority in the capital programme for the next three years with funding of £500.00 this year towards developing the major elements of the strategy;

(c) the Cabinet recommended Council not to proceed with the closure of Swanage Day Centre and most other day centres and this was accepted without debate. Staff reductions will be made at other adult services centres including £41,000 at the Purbeck Centre in Sandford Lane;

(d) the Audit Commission has carried out a new Comprehensive Performance Assessment of the County Council and judged it to be a 3 star authority, improving adequately - a drop from the previous 4 star rating and improving well. Adult Services was only rated 2 star which was the main reason for the drop in the overall rating. A peer review is underway to attempt to remedy the situation.

(e) Dorset Direct was now operational and would be able to deal with the majority of telephone enquiries; this will reduce back office costs and result in an overall saving in the medium term. The telephone number is 01305 221000.

District Councillor

Councillor Osmond reported on the following:

(a) the District Council had agreed to set a Budget increase of 4.5%. The majority group had not agreed to the continuation of a Clean Neighbourhood Officer whose work included the enforcement and control of fly tipping, litter, graffiti, dog fouling as well as many other duties;

(b) the District Council had agreed to purchase an electrical vacuum/sweep machine to sweep pavements and areas that the lorry cannot access. This machine will be operated by SITA and transported around the Purbeck area;

(c) immediately after the Leader had delivered his Budget speech, he announced that he would be standing down as Leader of the Council. This post will be covered by the Deputy Leader until the May elections

Representatives on Outside Bodies

Councillor Mrs. Tighe reported that she had attended two meetings of the Purbeck Task Force, now to be called PACT. She also advised that the Carnival would be held on 4th, 5th and 6th July, 2008 and that five Gugge bands would be in attendance for a second Guggenmusik Festival, including one from Barnsley. There were plans for the Wareham Carnival Committee to become a registered charity.

Councillor Wainwright reported that she had attended a meeting of the Wareham Area's Seniors Forum on 1st February, 2008 and the discussions included the provision of an information drop-in-service. Representatives from Weymouth had explained how this facility works.

Councillor Elmes reported that she had attended the meeting of the Dorset Association of Larger Parish and Town Councils on 29th February, 2008. Topics for discussion were Gypsy and Traveller sites and support, Post Officer closures, Parish Polls and Referendums, street lights, Connecting Dorset, and planning training. A training seminar for Purbeck was to be held on 20th March, 2008.

A new schedule for Councillor Training was on its way and a new paper by the Commission for Rural Communities had been published with the main recommendation being that Councillors should be elected and not co-opted. There was a new code of practice and a new CCTV Strategy with more information on this on the Home Office website. She also reported that someone had raised the need for Councils to be aware of Legionnaires Disease testing in public premises in such places as changing facilities and local halls. Road closures were also reported – the Canford Bridge on the Wimborne Road would be partially closed for 44 weeks between May and October and the C13 from Blandford to Shaftesbury for 13 weeks.

The Town Clerk reported that the equipment obtained for "Connecting Dorset" was in the office and awaiting connection.

Councillor Russell reported that both he and the Town Clerk had attended a meeting at Purbeck District Council on 3rd March, 2008. The meeting had been organised by the Chairman of the District Council, Councillor R Anderson, and attended by Mayors/Chairman and Clerks of Purbeck parish and town councils.

Topics for discussion had included the Regional Spatial Strategy and the increase in new homes to be built in Purbeck. It was thought that there would be a 12 week public consultation in May/June 2008 and a District Council Planning Officer would be available to answer queries raised by the Town Council. The Chief Executive of the District Council had spoken on the Pathfinder scheme and also reported on the closure of the Job Centre in Wareham at the end of March; he had advised, however, that some of its services would be taken over by the District Council.

PAGE 56

Councillor Anderson had given a report on the Volunteer of the Year scheme for Purbeck, which had so far had little support. If towns and parishes in Purbeck wished to organise the scheme then Purbeck District Council would host the presentation event.

134. CONFIRMATION OF TOWN MAYOR ELECT

On a proposal by Councillor Osmond and seconded by Councillor Critchley it was -

RESOLVED that Councillor Russell be confirmed Town Mayor Elect for the Civic Year 2008/2009.

135. NOMINATION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR ELECT

On a proposal by Councillor Burns and seconded by Councillor Mrs. Wainwright it was –

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. Tighe be nominated and accepted as Deputy Town Mayor Elect for the Civic Year 2008/2009.

136. STANDING ORDERS – PROXY PROPER OFFICER

Following the last meeting, when it was adjourned without discussion under Standing Order 77, to insert the following in Standing Orders: “During periods of absence of the Town Clerk, the substitute Proxy Proper Officer would be the next most senior Administration Officer present. This substitution would only take place with the consent of the Town Mayor.”

RESOLVED that Standing Orders be amended to include the following – “During periods of absence of the Town Clerk the substitute Proxy Proper Officer would be the next most senior Administration Officer present. This substitution would only take place with the consent of the Town Mayor.”

137. SWANAGE DAY CENTRE

Members had been circulated with correspondence from Mr. Andrew Archibald, Head of Older People’s Strategy, Adult and Community Services, Dorset County Council, in reply to the Town Clerk’s letter following the last Town Council meeting on 15th January 2008.

RESOLVED that the contents of the letter be noted and the situation monitored.

PAGE 57

138. WAREHAM FATHER CHRISTMAS AND CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMMITTEE

Members had been circulated with correspondence from the Wareham Father Christmas and Christmas Lights Committee thanking them for their support and advising that it would be the 50th Anniversary of the Father Christmas Parade this year.

RESOLVED that the contents of the letter be noted and referred to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for discussion on a suitable response with regard to the 50th anniversary.

139. REPORT OF UP TO DATE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME AGAINST BUDGET AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY MEMBERS AND PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A copy of the up to date consolidated income and expenditure showing transactions dated 4th March, 2008 was handed to and acknowledged by each member of the Council and

RESOLVED that the report of up to date expenditure and income against budget and accounts dated 4th March, 2008 be noted and that current payments totalling £19,190.20 be approved.

Councillor Osmond reported that there had been a visit that day from the Council's Internal Auditor and he was pleased to announce that the Report Sheet contained the comment "Nothing to report". He had not recalled this comment before during his time on the Town Council and he congratulated the Town Clerk and Mr. R. Jones, the Finance Assistant, on this excellent report.

123. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE MAYOR DEEMS URGENT

The Mayor announced that the Town Trust was holding a litter pick on Sunday, 9th March, 2008 commencing at the Streche Road Car Park, Wareham at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting closed at 8.12 p.m.

.....
Town Mayor