

Minutes of a meeting of the **Policy Group** of the Purbeck District Council held in the Council Chamber, Westport House, Wareham on Wednesday 19 July 2017 at 7.00pm.

Present:-

Councillor Gary Suttle (Chairman)
Councillor Barry Quinn (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Cherry Brooks, Laura Miller and Bill Pipe

Also present: Councillors Bill Trite and Mike Whitwam.

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting: Bridget Downton, General Manager – Planning and Community Services; Karen Graham, Community Safety Officer; Sue Joyce, General Manager – Resources; Rebecca Kirk, General Manager – Public Health and Housing; Steve Mackenzie, Chief Executive; Kirsty Riglar, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and Alison Turnock, Natural Heritage and Tourism Manager.

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Group).

20.17/18 **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Peter Webb.

21.17/18 **Urgent items**

The Chairman reported there were no urgent items.

22.17/18 **Public participation time**

Mrs Sandra Brown of the Dorset National Park Team welcomed the proposed recommendation in the report on the work of the Policy Development Panel set up to consider the impacts of a proposed National Park designation on Purbeck and hoped that this would be supported by the Policy Group. She expressed her thanks for the work of the officers in supporting the Panel. She drew attention to the duty of a National Park to foster the economic and social wellbeing of its communities and the genuinely additional resources that she felt would be attracted by a National Park designation. She understood that the proposal for a Dorset National Park was the only proposal for a new National Park currently under consideration by Natural England and hoped that the Council would seize the opportunity to support this.

Another member of the Dorset National Park Team, Ms Mari Larthe, echoed this, encouraging the Policy Group to support the recommendation as this would help to safeguard Dorset for local people.

Mr Nigel Hill of Moreton asked what had changed in the demographic and/or economic projections for Purbeck District between now and 2031/2033, that were not apparent in June 2016, and which now required the production of an entirely new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) so soon after the overwhelming endorsement of

the first SHMA by the Council. The Chairman asked the General Manager – Planning and Community Services to provide a response to Mr Hill’s question by email after the meeting.

Ms Colette Drayson of Langton Matravers addressed the Policy Group in relation to the increasingly urgent need for the Council to develop policies relating to second homes and the provision of genuinely affordable housing. The General Manager – Planning and Community Services provided an assurance that officers were actively working on these policies and comments on these documents would be sought as part of the forthcoming Local Plan Review consultation.

Ms Josephine Parish of the Pan Purbeck Action Campaign asked whether an update on the Local Plan Review would be included as a standing agenda item for future meetings of the Policy Group. The Chairman confirmed that this would be included, with a focus on progress against the agreed timetable. Ms Parish also referred to her request made at the recent Council Meeting that the Council lobby the Government for greater social housing and to relax the current constraints to enable this. The Chief Executive drew attention to recent press reports that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had in mind mechanisms to address the disparity between high property prices and low incomes, such as that in Purbeck. However, no detail had yet been made available.

23.17/18 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2017 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

24.17/18 **Declarations of Interest by Members**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

25.17/18 **Forward Plan for Policy Group and Council meetings**

The Policy Group considered the current Forward Plan. Officers drew particular attention to the need to update the entry relating to the Purbeck District Conservation Areas Review in the light of the recent decision made by the Council and noted that the Budget Strategy would now be presented to the Policy Group meeting in September.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be received.

26.17/18 **Results of the review into the Designated Public Places Order in Swanage**

The Community Safety Officer presented a report setting out the results of the latest review of the Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) in Swanage and seeking Council’s approval for the Order to be removed and not be replaced with a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). She explained that the DPPO was introduced in 2009 to enable the Council to restrict anti-social public drinking in the designated area and provide Dorset Police with the power to enforce this restriction. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced a requirement that all existing DPPOs be reviewed by October 2017 and either removed or replaced with a PSPO.

The Swanage DPPO had therefore been reviewed and a range of stakeholders consulted. Evidence from Dorset Police showed that the DPPO had only been enforced on one occasion since its introduction. As part of its response, Dorset Police had advised the Council that, due to the introduction of new legislation, they no longer needed the powers made available to them under the DPPO in order to tackle anti-social drinking. It was therefore proposed that the DPPO be withdrawn.

Members were informed that to introduce a PSPO, a strong evidence base was required to justify the restrictions that would be imposed. As a result of the recent consultation and the advice from Dorset Police, it was considered that there was insufficient evidence to lead the Council to believe that it was necessary to introduce a PSPO for Swanage in relation to anti-social drinking. However, it was proposed that this be kept under review.

The Local Communities Portfolio Holder expressed his support for the proposals.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending that:

- (1) following statutory consultation, the existing Designated Public Places Order in Swanage be withdrawn; and
- (2) the use of Public Spaces Protection Orders continue to be kept under review as one tool available to tackle anti-social behaviour in the district, as part of the work of the Community Safety and Anti-social Behaviour Team, in consultation with key partners via the Purbeck Partnership Co-ordinating Group.

27.17/18 **Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan**

The Community Safety Officer presented a report to seek approval of the 2017-18 Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan and to formally sign-off and note the progress of the 2016-17 Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan. She confirmed that all actions within the 2016-17 plan had been completed, with the exception of three, for which an explanation was provided. There had been an increase in incidents of anti-social behaviour and crime; a trend reflected across Dorset. Plans were being put in place to tackle trends identified through the Purbeck Partnership Co-ordinating Group.

The proposed 2017-18 Plan highlighted the Council's contribution to delivering crime and disorder reduction in Dorset and reflected the emerging work streams, such as modern slavery, and the continued focus on existing issues such as preventing violent extremism, rural crime and anti-social behaviour. Members were reminded that the document remained live and any incidents would be added, as the year progressed.

In response to a Member's question, it was explained that the trial use of a camera to tackle fly-tipping had identified the potential data protection implications of potential loss of an unencrypted memory card. This would need to be addressed should cameras be deployed in the future.

It was noted that the proposal made by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel that the Council nominate a Member Champion for mental health had not been progressed. Officers agreed to revisit this through the Panel.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending that:

- (1) progress against the 2016-17 Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan be noted; and

- (2) the 2017-18 Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan be approved.

28.17/18 **Proposed Dorset National Park**

The Natural Heritage and Tourism Manager presented a report setting out the findings from the meetings of the Policy Development Panel set up to consider the impacts of a proposed National Park designation on Purbeck. The Panel had considered a range of topics, including finance, planning and local democracy, and was provided with information from conversations with staff in existing National Parks, as well as Natural England – the body responsible for designations. The Panel also received a presentation from the Dorset National Park Team. Particular attention was drawn to the key points forming the recommendations, as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Members noted that Natural England had indicated that the proposal for the Dorset National Park would be assessed no earlier than August 2018, through a desktop exercise and field study, and that this was reflected in the Panel's recommendations.

In response to a Member's question about the definition of the area to be included within the proposed National Park, officers explained that the boundary was that put forward in the original proposal made many years ago. This included areas currently within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the East Devon AONB but also included additional areas. However, this could be subject to change through the assessment process as the area would need to fulfil the requirements of a National Park.

It was noted that other Dorset Councils had considered the proposal to support the designation of a Dorset National Park but no other authority had undertaken or intended to undertake any significant work on this.

In response to a Member's question, it was explained that there were currently too many unknowns to enable the financial implications of National Park designation to be verified and assessed with any certainty.

Members welcomed the report and expressed their thanks to the Natural Heritage and Tourism Manager and the members of the Policy Development Panel for their work on this.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending that the Council:

- (1) notes with interest the Dorset National Park proposal and the opportunities this could offer to keep Purbeck special;
- (2) keeps the proposals under review; and
- (3) looks forward to Natural England undertaking the next stage of its evaluation in 2018.

The meeting ended at 7.38pm.

Chairman