

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 MAY 2021

Present

Chairman: The Mayor, Cllr B. Larcombe, MBE

Councillors: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr J. Broom, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr K. Ellis, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr T. Webb, Cllr S. Williams

Officers: A. Mullins (support services manager), M. Russell (finance manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

21/01/C Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor

It was proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr G. Turner that Cllr B. Larcombe is mayor for the 2021-22 council year.

There being no other nominations, Cllr B. Larcombe was duly **ELECTED** mayor for the 2021-22 council year.

It was proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis that Cllr K. Ellis is deputy mayor for the 2021-22 council year.

There being no other nominations, Cllr K. Ellis was duly **ELECTED** deputy mayor for the 2021-22 council year.

21/02/C Public Forum

S. Davies

S. Davies said she was attending on behalf of the directors of LymeForward and would speak in relation to agenda item 9, Appointments to External Bodies 2021-22. She said LymeForward had submitted a complaint to Dorset Council's (DC) monitoring officer and a response had been received related to concerns about a conflict of interest in the representation of councillors to external bodies. S. Davies read out an extract of the monitoring officer's email response, which outlined his view that a conflict of interest existed between competing organisations LymeForward and Lyme Regis Development Trust, both of which Cllr B. Bawden was a council representative for. The extract also referred to the possibility of a lengthy investigation process, but the monitoring officer felt he independent person would arrive at the same conclusion; that the same person ought not to represent the council on both organisations, regardless of who the member was. S. Davies said she didn't wish to step on the toes of the town clerk, but she felt it was important to state, and she was aware the town clerk would probably update members, that the advice of the monitoring officer was that the same person should not represent the town council on LymeForward and Lyme Regis Development

Trust. She said she would be asking the town clerk to relay her view to the town council when it makes appointments to outside bodies. S. Davies said she felt it was important their position as directors of LymeForward was made clear. She said they had no confidence in the nominated representative, and they wished for immediate steps to be taken to appoint a new representative who did not hold other positions which would lead to further conflicts of interest, and who would support the work they did and LymeForward's good public standing. She said she looked forward to this being confirmed at this meeting.

Cllr B. Bawden asked S. Davies to read out the first part of the monitoring officer's email.

S. Davies said she was not prepared to do this as the LymeForward directors had submitted a further complaint and doing so may undermine any further investigations.

It was noted members had been sent a copy of the email by S. Davies although Cllr B. Bawden had not received the email. The town clerk confirmed he would forward the email to Cllr B. Bawden.

21/03/C Questions from Councillors

There were none.

21/04/C Apologies for Absence

Cllr R. Smith – working

21/05/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

21/06/C Dispensations

There were none.

21/07/C Reaffirmation of the Eligibility Criteria required to hold the General Power of Competence

The town clerk confirmed three people in the organisation were qualified clerks and two-thirds of the members were elected. He said having the General Power of Competence gave the council more freedom and scope to enter into things other councils without the power wouldn't be able to do.

Cllr R. Doney asked if the council had taken advantage of the power in any way.

The town clerk said although the council had had discussions about entering into more commercial agreements, the power hadn't been used.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members **RESOLVED** to reaffirm that Lyme Regis Town Council meets the eligibility criteria to hold the General Power of Competence

21/08/C Appointments to Council Committees

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members **RESOLVED** to appoint members to committees for 2021-22 as follows:

- Planning – Cllr G. Turner, Cllr J. Broom, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr S. Williams
- Town Management and Highways – Cllr G. Turner, Cllr J. Broom, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr K. Ellis, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr S. Williams, Cllr B. Larcombe
- Tourism, Community and Publicity – Cllr J. Broom, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr T. Webb, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr K. Ellis, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr S. Williams, Cllr B. Larcombe
- Human Resources – Cllr G. Turner, Cllr J. Broom, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr K. Ellis, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr S. Williams, Cllr B. Larcombe
- Environment – Cllr J. Broom, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr T. Webb, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr K. Ellis, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr S. Williams, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr R. Smith

21/09/C Appointments to External Bodies 2021-22

The town clerk said although advice had come from the monitoring officer relating to appointments to external bodies following a ruling he had made on a complaint, it was down to this council to determine who was appointed to each organisation.

The town clerk said he didn't believe there was a conflict of interest between LymeForward and Lyme Regis Development Trust. He added the monitoring officer had no authority over this council, except to make recommendations if a case against one of its members was proven, which wasn't the case in this instance.

Several members felt the monitoring officer's advice should be followed and appointing the same member to both LymeForward and Lyme Regis Development Trust would create more issues.

The town clerk said there were issues between LymeForward and Lyme Regis Development Trust but this was nothing to do with the council. He said it was up to the council to decide who was appointed and the monitoring officer accepted they had a difference of opinion on this matter.

It was also noted some members had previously taken on several organisations because others hadn't taken on any groups at all, which could result in conflicts of interest.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members **RESOLVED** to appoint members to external bodies for 2021-22 as follows:

Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Service – Cllr S. Williams (participating)

B Sharp – Cllr B. Bawden (participating)

Bridport and District Citizens' Advice Bureau – Cllr C. Reynolds (participating)

Charmouth Road Allotments Association – Cllr D. Sarson (participating)

Lyme Regis, Charmouth and Uplyme Coastal Communities Team – Cllr J. Broom and Cllr T. Webb (participating)

DAPTC (Western Area Committee and Larger Councils) – Cllr J. Broom and Cllr Ms B. Bawden (participating)

The Hub Strategic Group – Cllr K. Ellis (liaison)

LymeArts Community Trust – Cllr D. Ruffle (participating)

LymeForward – Cllr M. Ellis (participating) and Cllr T. Webb (liaison)

LymeForward Steering Group – Cllr M. Ellis (participating)

Lyme Regis/Barfleur Twinning Association – Cllr R. Doney (liaison)

Lyme Regis Charities – Cllr M. Ellis and Cllr K. Ellis (four-year appointment) (participating)

Lyme Regis Development Trust – Cllr D. Sarson and Cllr C. Reynolds (participating)

Lyme Regis Football Club – Cllr R. Doney (liaison)

Lyme Regis Fossil Festival – Cllr T. Webb (liaison)

Lyme Regis Harbour Consultative Group – Cllr B. Larcombe (participating), Cllr S. Williams (substitute member)

Lyme Regis Philpot Museum – Cllr D. Ruffle (participating) and Cllr K. Ellis (liaison)

Lyme Regis/St George's Twinning Association – Cllr B. Larcombe (liaison)

Lyme Regis Society – Cllr D. Ruffle (participating)

One Planet Working Group – Cllr B. Bawden (participating)

Plastic-Free Lyme Steering Group – Cllr R. Smith and Cllr G. Stammers (participating)

Regatta and Carnival Committee – Cllr K. Ellis (participating)

Royal British Legion – Cllr K. Ellis (participating)

RNLI Lifeboat Guild – Cllr M. Ellis (participating)

St Michael's Business Centre Management – Cllr J. Broom (participating)

Woodmead Halls Management Committee – Cllr D. Sarson (participating)

Youth Council – Cllr K. Ellis and Cllr C. Reynolds (participating)

Cllr T. Webb left the meeting at 7.50pm.

21/10/C Review of the Council's and/or Employees' Memberships of Other Bodies

The mayor, Cllr B. Larcombe asked why there were two subscriptions to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

Cllr T. Webb returned to the meeting at 7.51pm.

The town clerk said the membership was related to a person, rather than the organisation, so he and the deputy town clerk were members, although he felt one membership was sufficient.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members **RESOLVED** to approve the annual membership subscriptions for the council and/or employees to advisory and professional bodies, but to cancel one membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

21/11/C Contract and Service Level Agreement for Tourism Microsite

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members **RESOLVED** to approve the signing of the service level agreement and contract with Visit Dorset for the provision of a website, destination management system and related support and hosting facilities.

21/12/C Park and Ride Service for 2021

The town clerk said the capacity of the buses had increased and may be further increased from 21 June 2021; as such, First Group was confident it could run a viable service in the school summer holidays. He added First Group was proposing increasing the number of buses from two to three at weekends, which would increase the cost.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential matters relating to relating to the financial or

business affairs of any particular person within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Members discussed the cost of the service and the possibility of a profit, a loss or breaking even.

The town clerk said officers felt it was a viable option looking at all the scenarios. He added that it would be a good gesture to the traders to run the service and with the increased frequency at weekends, it would also be a better service.

Members discussed whether there was the potential to increase the fares to mitigate against potential financial losses. However, it was felt there wasn't much scope to do this as the cost would be almost the same as Holmbush and Charmouth Road car parks, which may discourage people from using park and ride.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council needed to seriously think about other potential park and ride sites, perhaps linking with Charmouth, because future use of the current site was uncertain.

Cllr B. Bawden suggested signs could be placed at town centre car parks telling people about the park and ride and the prices to encourage them to use it.

Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 8.26pm.

The town clerk said he had had conversations with Charmouth Parish Council about the future of park and ride.

Cllr M. Ellis returned to the meeting at 8.28pm.

The town clerk said there were no proposals to put to members yet but he hoped to be able to do this in a few months.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members **RESOLVED** to run a park and ride service from 24 July to 5 September 2021, with three buses at weekends.

The meeting closed at 8.34pm.