

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2021

Present

Chairman: The Mayor, Cllr B. Larcombe, MBE

Councillors: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr J. Broom, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr M. Ellis,
Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr R.
Smith, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: M. Green (deputy town clerk), J. Wright (town clerk)

21/90/C Public Forum

There was no-one in the public forum who wished to speak

21/91/C Apologies for Absence

Cllr T. Webb – prior commitment
Cllr S. Williams – unwell

21/92/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

21/93/C Dispensations

There were none.

21/94/C Co-option to the Council

The mayor thanked all applicants for the interest they had shown in being co-opted to the council. He invited each, in alphabetical surname order, to make a presentation of up to five minutes in support of their application.

Each applicant present at the meeting then made a statement in support of their written application. In the case of Owen Lovell, the deputy town clerk explained that he was unable to attend the meeting in person but read out an additional emailed statement received from him.

The mayor then explained the remainder of the intended decision-making process and invited each candidate to wait in the mayor's parlour whilst the council reduced the number of candidates to two. At that point, a final vote would be taken with all present.

21/95/C Co-option to the Council

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, 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.

21/96/C Exempt Business

a) Co-option to the Council

The town clerk explained the suggested selection process and the reasons for it, particularly the need for impartiality and fairness, both in fact and perception. Although there were no legal 'rules' which dealt specifically with the process for co-option to a local council, there were various 'good practice' guides, all of which suggested the process of elimination outlined in his report. In addition, the council's own Standing Orders (8.a) dealt with voting on appointments in a situation where there were more candidates than available places. This also prescribed the same process as he was now suggesting.

With regards to the method of voting, he explained this could be either by simple show of hands, by recorded vote or by signed ballot; that was a matter for the council to determine.

Members debated the method for dealing with co-option and concluded the elimination process outlined in the report should be followed.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr R. Smith, member **RESOLVED** that the voting at this stage of the process should be by signed ballot.

Members debated the respective merits of each candidate at length. There was a unanimous view that the quality of all candidates was extremely high, and both the town and council were fortunate to have such a wealth of experienced and committed individuals wanting to provide their support.

Members then proceeded to vote on each candidate by signed ballot. The result was that the following two candidates proceed to the final vote with all other candidates eliminated:

Caroline Aldridge
Stephen Miller

The press, public and candidates were then invited back into the chamber for the final vote between these two candidates.

21/97/C Co-option to the Council

The mayor explained that all but two candidates had been eliminated as a result of the voting which had taken place. He thanked everyone for their applications, which were of universally high quality. He hoped that any unsuccessful applicants would consider re-applying if and when the opportunity arose in the future.

A vote would now take place between the two highest polling candidates, Caroline Aldridge and Stephen Miller.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members **RESOLVED** to vote by signed ballot.

A signed ballot then took place, the result of which was:

Caroline Aldridge – 8 votes
Stephen Miller – 3 votes

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr Cllr J. Broom, members **RESOLVED** that Caroline Aldridge be co-opted to Lyme Regis town council.

There was some discussion about the need to set out a clear policy on a procedure for co-option in future, but this was not voted on.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.