

## LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2023

#### Present

**Chairman:** The Mayor, Cllr D. Sarson

**Councillors:** Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr R. Smith, Cllr G. Stammers

**Officers:** A. Mullins (support services manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

Rev. Sarah Godfrey read out the town prayer.

#### 23/108/C Public Forum

##### L. Markham

As owner of Lyme Rocks sweet shop, L. Markham said it was extremely important the town council connected with local businesses, who were facing a complete disaster, ranging from bigger businesses like St Austell Brewery to his little sweet shop. He said the road closure was killing them. He said his takings were 80% down but he couldn't let his staff go before Christmas, so he was doing the best he could with the reserves he had built up since summer. He said he couldn't plan for the future until he knew what was going on and although there were lots of rumours, nothing was known. L. Markham said there seemed to be a separation between the local council and local businesses. He said in the past five weeks, no one from the council apart from Cllr B. Bawden had gone into his shop to say they were trying their best and he felt that would at least be something. He said Cllr B. Bawden had done her best to communicate with businesses and tell them what she was trying to do. He said this wasn't good enough and the town relied on self-employed businesses, big and small. L. Markham said he had spoken to the manager of Tesco and the store was on its knees and he warned the town would lose people and businesses. He said he would like to know if the Bell Cliff building was safe as he had seen people eating and drinking in there, but if it wasn't safe, people needed to be told. He said there were engineering feats which could be tackled but people needed to work together and be pushed as it shouldn't take this long for the town to know the situation. L. Markham said he was very passionate about his shop and he would lose staff that relied on its income.

##### R. De-Voisey

As owner of the shop Paper Bird, R. De-Voisey said she had gone around shops in Lyme Regis to speak to people because she was frustrated with the lack of communication regarding the Bell Cliff. She said she had only been trading for six months and she was not a hobbyist, this was her livelihood, it paid her bills and mortgage. She said businesses in the town were devastated by the lack of footfall

and she had submitted a letter to the council signed by local businesses, although she only managed to speak to a small percentage of them. R. De-Voisey said they understood the situation was not the town council's making and that it was not responsible for highways or engineering, but there were things it was responsible for and she didn't feel the council had supported local businesses. She said Cllr B. Bawden was the only person who had come to speak to her and the only person she was aware of who had done anything proactive. She didn't feel the council had done anything proactive. She suggested the council could allow free parking and although she understood it didn't own all the car parks in the town, she said there were over 500 spaces in town council car parks and free parking would get people into the town. She said 500 free parking spaces was better than none. R. De-Voisey asked why the council hadn't done some marketing to make it clear the town was open for business. She said there had been a small amount of social media posts but it wasn't good enough. She said they wanted to be collaborative and come together as a small community of small businesses and she felt they could hold the council to account where it was failing. She said she had raised all these points with Dorset Council (DC) and she had asked for funding to start a traders' association. She said going forward there needed to be action plans put in place if there were going to be road closures that would affect businesses. R. De-Voisey said she had also spoken to Save the High Street about setting up a traders' association and if they formed a group they wanted to work collaboratively with the council. She said she hoped the town council would also be able to fund this.

### **G. Baker**

As owner of the Millside restaurant, G. Baker said she echoed what had been said by previous speakers. She said they had traded for four years, despite Covid-19, and having spoken to lots of other businesses, they were seeing the devastating effects of the road closure. She believed it would result in the closure of more businesses than the town could afford, which may be ok for some as a new wave of businesses might open but looking at a business's accounts over a period of time, she questioned who would want to buy a business in the town after seeing the way things had been handled recently. She said their staff depended on them and as they were approaching Christmas, they needed money to spend on their families and looked to them to provide that income. She said they were having to dig deep in their pockets to provide that income and not lose staff. G. Baker said even if the scaffolding on the Bell Cliff came down this week or next week, there would be a knock-on effect as the rumour mill suggested the road would be closed for six months, so people wouldn't come back to Lyme Regis until the summer and they still had to face the period between January and April. She said there were some hefty overheads which went with running a small business and a percentage of businesses would fail during this period. She asked where the council's marketing budget was being spent and felt it should be encouraging people to come to Lyme Regis to support small businesses and to keep the place alive.

### **D. Townsend**

D. Townsend, from the Rock Point Inn, said one thing he had noticed about Lyme Regis was how proudly open all the businesses were. He said some seaside places were unable to do this but Lyme Regis could boast this all year. He said he had had

his own recruitment challenges over the last year because the hours hadn't been there for the team he had worked so hard to build. He said he risked losing the confidence of the team. D. Townsend said if other businesses did well, he did well, because it was a ripple effect but without appropriate forecasting and planning on the wider part, he couldn't confidently forecast. He said the brewery only had so many resources to keep him going and he was concerned the ripple effect may not be enough.

## **N. Ball**

N. Ball said he had not received a reply to his question about who gave permission for stunt bikes to go on top of the shelters during Regatta and Carnival Week. He said it clearly said no skateboards or bikes were allowed on the shelters roof and it was only to be used as a viewing platform.

N. Ball said he felt there needed to be an extension of the railings outside the amusement arcade and this should be looked at as a health and safety issue.

N. Ball said he was aware the Environment Committee was dealing with climate change issues and was looking at traffic and travel issues in the town, such as pedestrianisation and roads, but now there was a quiet road due to the Bell Cliff issue, he was concerned about what this had done to the town. He said it was time to act now on these issues. He said he owned a business and it was 25% down on last year, partly due to a recession and people having less money in their pockets, but now local businesses had this issue with Bell Cliff. He said DC should be pressing the owner of the building and finding out what's going on. N. Ball said he didn't think the town council was responsible for the building. He said a loss adjuster should talk to the businesses and they should be recompensed. He said he didn't think the town council was turning its back on anyone, it was a difficult situation and DC should be heavily involved as this was their responsibility. He said the situation shouldn't be allowed to happen again as it had caused so much disruption to the town.

## **23/109/C Dorset Council Matters**

Cllr B. Bawden's report was included in the agenda but she gave a further update on the Bell Cliff. She said at a very senior level, DC was very alert to the situation and the road closure team would open the road as soon as they were able to do so. She said the conservation officer was looking at the proposals but it was not yet known when the road could re-open. She said she and the town council had been talking to DC and the owner of the building and had been sending out information via the business briefing, website and social media.

Cllr B. Bawden said a meeting was taking place with local businesses on Monday 18 December 2023 in the Guildhall and she had requested someone from DC attended but had not yet had a response. She said the main objective was to listen but the businesses also wanted to form a traders' association. She encouraged the businesses to submit funding applications to DC to set it up.

Cllr B. Bawden said there had been a highways meeting in Uplyme in November and they were working on some similar and complementary issues to those being worked

on in Lyme Regis, including issues with the main road outside Woodroffe School. She said she was made aware DC was looking at potential problem areas in the town, relating to traffic, but no information had been shared with her.

Cllr M. Ellis said Cllr B. Bawden's report referred to the proposed Dorset National Park and asked for clarification as she understood the town council had made a decision not to support it.

The town clerk said the issue had gone quiet for a while and although the town council had made its position clear, he suggested the council revisited it because it appeared the proposal was going ahead regardless. He said perhaps there needed to be a more concerted campaign involving the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) and DC, which he understood was also not in favour of it.

Cllr B. Bawden confirmed DC was not in favour of the proposed national park, nor was the West Dorset MP, and agreed the town council needed to have a fresh input.

Cllr B. Larcombe said as the council's representative on DAPTC, he had asked them to take up this issue as he felt it was important there was a collective response and they were the ideal vehicle for this.

Regarding the Bell Cliff issue, Cllr B. Larcombe asked if DC had considered a business rate rebate for businesses affected by the road closure.

Cllr B. Bawden said she had written to the head of revenues and benefits and asked what the process was for claiming for loss of business. She said there was some guidance available and this had been sent to all the businesses on her mailing list.

## **23/110/C Questions from Councillors**

### **Cllr G. Stammers**

Cllr G. Stammers said when the blood donation unit came to the Woodmead Halls, in the past there had been free parking for people giving blood and she asked why this was no longer the case.

Cllr M. Ellis said if people were invited to give blood, they were told to display their letter in their windscreen so the enforcement officers could see they were giving blood.

The town clerk said he didn't know the latest position and would find out more.

## **23/111/C Apologies for Absence**

Cllr P. Evans – illness

Cllr S. Cockerell – illness

Cllr G. Turner

### **23/112/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were none.

### **23/113/C Dispensations**

There were none.

### **23/114/C Traders' Letter**

The mayor, Cllr D. Sarson brought this item forward on the agenda.

The town clerk said the traders were asking for support from the council, specifically free or reduced parking and for the council to actively promote the town as being open for business. He said there had been various posts on social media and the website relating to this and the council had agreed some time ago to three free parking days in the run up to Christmas.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council was engaging daily with DC on this and Cllr B. Bawden was party to this as the ward member. He said the council could only judge footfall in the town by the effect on its own income, which was largely driven by car parks, and there hadn't been a big drop in car park occupancy.

The town clerk said car parking income was a good proxy indicator of footfall. He said there had been a reduction of 15 to 16%, whereas businesses were reporting a more material reduction in footfall. He said the weather up to mid-November had been poor and car parking income was heavily affected by this.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested there were other factors affecting local businesses, as well as the road closure, including people not having disposable income to spend, and the influence of supermarkets and what was available to purchase. He said the council would welcome talking to traders to help tackle these kinds of problems and the council was working more widely on resolving some of the bigger traffic issues in the town.

Cllr B. Bawden said East Devon District Council was offering parking at £2 all day through December and this didn't help Lyme Regis because it was right on the border. She felt having a collective voice in the town would help influence DC on the timing of road closures in future.

Cllr M. Ellis said most of the issues traders had raised were nothing to do with the town council and free parking couldn't have been agreed without calling a council meeting. She felt this road closure demonstrated that proposals to pedestrianise Broad Street would not work. She said it was lucky the closure didn't happen in the main season and this was the quietest time of the year in the town.

The town clerk said it had been difficult to obtain information from DC but the town council had met separately with the owner of the Bell Cliff to obtain updates; a third meeting was taking place this week and it was hoped a positive update could be given. He said it would be good to have a positive relationship with a business group

and discuss things like joint promotion of the town, events, and a Christmas market, and to share information and learn from each other.

Cllr C. Reynolds said the former business association folded and she had tried several times since to get one up and running, which she would still be happy to do. She said if there was a traders' association, the council should be allowed to be a part of it.

Cllr M. Ellis said the chairman of the former traders' association had been a member of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee and suggested this could be explored again.

**23/115/C To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 25 October 2023**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr R. Smith, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 25 October 2023 were **ADOPTED**.

**23/116/C Matters arising from the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 25 October 2023**

Members noted the report.

**23/117/C Update Report**

There were no updates.

**23/118/C Mayor's Announcements**

Members noted the report.

**23/119/C Planning Committee**

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2023, to note the committee's comments made on planning applications under the power delegated by Full Council and to note the recommendations made under the chairman and vice-chairman's delegated authority following the cancellation of the meetings on 31 October and 14 November 2023.

**23/120/C Environment Committee**

Proposed by Cllr R. Smith and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee held on 22 November 2023 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

### **23/34/ENV – Environment Policy**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Environment Policy, with an amendment to paragraph 11.2 to replace 'audit' and 'reviews' and an amendment to paragraph 4.2 to replace 'minimising' with 'minimise'.

### **23/34/ENV – River Lim Action Group Report**

**RESOLVED:** that the town council writes to South West Water asking them what has happened to the £20 million funding for the Lyme Regis improvement plan.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the funding request of £8,036 from the River Lim Action Group from the 2023-24 environment budget.

### **23/36/ENV – Biodiversity Baseline Assessment**

**RESOLVED:** to undertake a biodiversity baseline assessment in the town council's public gardens and green spaces, to be paid for from the 2023-24 environment budget.

### **23/37/ENV – Motion for the Ocean**

**RESOLVED:** to defer the Motion for the Ocean item to a future meeting of the Environment Committee when there is more information available from Dorset Council.

### **23/38/ENV – Funding Request from Little Green Change**

**RESOLVED:** to provide £350 from the environment budget for a future children's 'Give or Take' event/s in the next 12 months, run by Little Green Change.

### **23/39/ENV – Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

**RESOLVED:** that the council revises its current policy for electric vehicle charging and in future charges for the KWs of electricity at the equivalent cost that it pays to its provider until November 2024.

### **23/121/C Human Resources Committee**

Cllr B. Larcombe said members had been given notification a month in advance that the Human Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 20 December 2013 had been cancelled and he felt this was early notification.

The town clerk said agendas were planned well in advance but there were only two items planned for the meeting, and it was felt people would rather not attend a meeting a few days before Christmas. As such, it seemed pragmatic and expedient to bring the items directly to this meeting of the Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 1 November 2023 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

#### **23/40/HR – Wellbeing Policy**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the draft wellbeing policy, with an amendment to paragraph 5.5 to remove the examples.

#### **23/41/HR – Christmas and New Year Working Arrangements**

**RESOLVED:** to apply 1.5 days' discretionary leave over the Christmas and New Year period, so the council's services cease at 12noon on Friday 22 December 2023 and re-commence at 9am on Tuesday 2 January 2024; discretionary leave is applied from 12noon to 5pm on Friday 22 December and Wednesday 27 December; statutory days are applied on Thursday 28 December and Friday 29 December 2023; that members of the external works' team who work over the Christmas and New Year period are paid overtime and receive time-off-in-lieu for the day worked; and that the 1.5 discretionary days are not applied to the enforcement officers, cleansing operative and seafront attendant.

#### **23/42/HR – Review of Councillor Data and Information 2022-23**

**RESOLVED:** to change the format of the member attendance figures to follow the same format as principal authorities and to supplement it with an addendum to show the number of committees each member sits on.

**RESOLVED:** to look at the proposal 'to change the format of the member attendance figures to follow the same format as principal authorities and to supplement it with an addendum to show the number of committees each member sits on' and confirm to members whether this would fit with current policy and follow the principal authority's method for publishing member attendance figures.

Cllr B. Bawden said she had some information on the publishing of member information and she would provide this to officers.

#### **23/122/C Strategy and Finance Committee**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 29 November 2023 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

#### **23/53/SF – Sand Harvesting and Beach Replenishment**

**RESOLVED:** that the town council makes a one-off contribution in 2023-24 of £15,000 towards the cost of sand harvesting and beach replenishment.



### **23/55/SF – Marine Theatre Funding Request**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the request from the Marine Theatre for a grant of £25,000 to support a project to operate a cinema, to be funded from the 2024-25 budget.

Cllr R. Doney said although the town clerk said at the meeting the council could review its grant structure in September/October 2024, which could include how the council dealt with ad hoc funding requests, he felt it required discussion now as there was a weakness in the council's current grants' policy.

The town clerk said a resolution hadn't been passed at the meeting but if there was a consensus from members that this needed to be discussed earlier, he could bring a report to the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting on 24 January 2024.

Members agreed a report should be taken to that meeting.

### **23/56/SF – Town Mill Funding Request**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the request from the Town Mill Trust contribution of £10,000 towards the Town Mill Regeneration Project, to be funded from the 2024-25 budget.

### **23/57/SF – Lyme Regis Baptist Church Funding Request**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the request from Lyme Regis Baptist Church for a contribution of £10,000 towards the restoration of the old chapel, to be funded from the 2024-25 budget.

### **23/58/SF – Budget and Precept 2024-25 and Five-Year Financial Plan 2024-29**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the proposed budget for 2024-25; to approve the proposed 2024-25 priority one objectives; to approve the Marine Theatre grant, Town Mill Trust grant, Lyme Regis Baptist Church grant, Fossil Festival funding and residents' event funding from the proposed 2024-25 priority two objectives; to agree any additional surplus beyond £229k in 2023-24 will go towards additional priority two objectives; to approve a precept of £132,779 for 2024-25; and approve the five-year financial plan 2024-29.

**RESOLVED:** to maintain the reserve at £1million for 2024-25.

### **23/59/SF – Mary Anning Scholarship Legacy Fund**

**RESOLVED:** to allocate the Mary Anning Scholarship Legacy Fund budget of £5,000 to the Woodroffe School for a project linking with local primary schools and promoting women in science.

### **23/60/SF – List of Payments**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the schedule of payments in October 2023 for the sum of £161,737.79.

## **23/123/C Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee**

Cllr B. Bawden said DC had launched an Active Travel survey but as there was a short response period, she didn't know when the town council would have an opportunity to feed into it.

The town clerk said he would take a report to the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting on 3 January 2024, with a suggestion that three members were delegated to respond on the council's behalf.

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee held on 15 November 2023 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

### **23/42/TCP – Seagull Control**

**RESOLVED:** to support Max Redwood's proposal to trial drone flying on the seafront to deter seagulls and that the council provides a letter of support as evidence of its authorisation.

### **23/43/TCP – Weddings at The Guildhall**

**RESOLVED:** to instruct officers to investigate the possibility of holding weddings on the beach and to report back to a future Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee meeting.

## **23/124/C Town Management and Highways Committee**

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee held on 9 November 2023 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

### **24/49/TMH – Emergency Planning Procedure Review**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Emergency Planning Procedure and to replace the reference to Western Power Distribution with National Grid.

### **23/50/TMH – Town Management and Highways Committee – Request for use of the Langmoor Room**

**RESOLVED:** not to commit to any arrangement for the Langmoor Room until the council has determined the situation with the amenities hut and whether the room is needed for staff, and then to consider its availability to anyone else.

### **23/51/TMH – Request to Incorporate Raised Walkway Outside of Amusement Arcade Within Leased Area**

**RESOLVED:** to instruct officers to have further discussions with the tenant of the amusement arcade regarding the raised walkway and to bring a further report to members.

### **23/52/TMH – Outdoor Gym Equipment and Monkey Bars**

**RESOLVED:** to hold the outdoor gym equipment and monkey bars in abeyance until the council has an idea of the expenditure it is committing to.

### **23/53/TMH – Parking Issues and Anti-Social Behaviour In-and-Around Queens Walk**

**RESOLVED:** to support the request from residents of Queens Walk to provide better lighting and parking controls in Queens Court car park and to implement residents' on-street permit parking in Queens Walk and advise Dorset Council and Magna Housing accordingly.

### **23/125/C Budget and Precept 2024-25**

Cllr B. Larcombe said although the council was approving the budget, which included different levels of objectives, he believed by the time the council was in a position to carry out the lower priority objectives, it would want to re-visit some of them. He didn't feel the council should commit the money at this point.

Cllr P. May clarified that the priority two objectives would be considered if the council had enough funds at the end of the 2023-24 year to carry them out.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, members **RESOLVED** to maintain the council's reserve at £1million for 2024-25; for 2024-25, approve an income budget estimate of £2,159,761 and an operational expenditure budget estimate of £1,797,965 in 2024-25, i.e., surplus of £361,795, and allocate £322,361 from the budget surplus to the funding of the objectives; to approve up to £551,680 for projects and objectives in 2024-25, which are funded from £229,319 from the forecast reserve at 31 March 2023 and £322,361 from 2024-25 budget surplus (the overall 2024-25 budget surplus is £24,435); to approve the 2023-24 precept at £132,779; to note the five-year financial plan; and to agree if the council's total reserve exceeds £1,229,319 at 31 March 2024, members will consider allocating the additional sum to unfunded priority two objectives.

### **23/126/C Preparing for the Election and a New Administration**

The town clerk said the council would promote the election in various ways, including video clips of current members and a workshop to share information about what the council did; he would run this and provide an independent view, with no political input. The residents' newsletter would include an article about the council's achievements and investment in the community and tourism economy over the last five years, and he would write an end-of-term report for members.

The town clerk said the Civility and Respect pledge had not yet been made by this council but he felt this was something for the new administration to consider very early on. He intended to do more detailed training with new members, breaking down sections of the business, and he would try to engage a consultant to work with the council early in the administration.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the DAPTC was promoting the Civility and Respect agenda and there was county-wide support to sign up to the pledge.

Cllr P. May asked if an elected member was not able to attend the first meeting of the council in May, whether they would still be allowed to stand for office.

The town clerk said the rules were silent on this issue but the council had tended to adopt the approach that a member had to be at a meeting to be elected. However, he felt officers should do more research on this as he wasn't sure if this was the correct procedure. He said he could speak to the relevant bodies and bring a report to the Full Council meeting on 7 February 2024.

Cllr B. Bawden said members should be encouraged to do the training offered by the DAPTC, as it was often free and members had the opportunity to go outside the town and look at other perspectives.

Cllr R. Doney asked how voters would know who was standing in the election. He said he had asked if it was possible for the candidates to provide their election leaflets and the council posted them out, but this was not allowed.

Cllr B. Larcombe said most towns and parishes didn't have a local newspaper and how it was up to the candidates to decide how to promote themselves.

Cllr C. Reynolds agreed and said it was up to each candidate to produce and deliver their own election flyers and to speak to people while delivering them.

### **23/127/C Annual Health and Safety Audit**

Cllr C. Aldridge asked what the issues were between 2017 and 2019 to cause low scores on the audit.

The town clerk said the council was seriously lacking at that time and a lot of the processes which helped achieve a high score were not in place, but this was picked up as an issue and a lot of work had taken place since to improve the situation. He said at that time there was no significant health and safety policy in place so experts were brought in to help and the score had improved each year.

Cllr P. May asked that the council's congratulations were formally passed to the team.

### **23/128/C Investments and Cash Holdings**

The town clerk said the finance manager had suggested the council invested £300,000 on short-term investments where it could generate some interest, rather than it sitting in the current account.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to invest £300,000 for a three-month fix with NatWest Bank.

**23/129/C Valuation and Insurance Cover of the Town Crier's Civic Regalia**

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, 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.

**23/130/C Request to Assign Lease**

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, 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.

**23/131/C Administrative and Community Engagement Assistant, Six-Month Probation Review**

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, 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.

**23/132/C Exempt Business**

**a) Valuation and Insurance Cover of the Town Crier's Civic Regalia**

The town clerk said there were three potential ways of treating this risk; to treat, tolerate or transfer. He said the town crier did a huge amount of work for the council and if he was required to collect the regalia from the office every time he did an official engagement, it would make things very difficult for him. He said the storage of the regalia had never been an issue for the council but it was a valuable asset so it needed to be formally considered. His suggestion was the council acknowledged there was a risk in the storage of the regalia and it tolerated that risk.

Cllr M. Ellis suggested the council took a mold of the regalia, so if anything happened to it, there would be a copy. She also suggested the council looked into getting a safe for the town crier to store the regalia at home.

The town clerk agreed these were good suggestions but clarified the regalia would not be insured, even if it was stored in a safe, although this would protect against theft or fire.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr P. May, members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge there is an insurance risk in not storing the town crier's civic regalia in the council offices, to look into getting a cast of the regalia and purchasing a safe for the regalia to be stored securely at the town crier's home.

**b) Request to Assign Lease**

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members **RESOLVED** to assign the lease in respect of Jane's Café, Marine Parade, Lyme Regis to Victor Pelaou.

**c) Administrative and Community Engagement Assistant, Six-Month Probation Review**

Members agreed the administrative and community engagement assistant had worked well with the rest of the front desk team, she had supported the mayor well as his secretary and she was efficient with the Planning Committee's work and meetings.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve the administrative and community engagement assistant's (post holder 106) continued employment with the council, effective from 19 December 2023.

*The meeting closed at 9.01pm.*