

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018

Present

Chairman: Cllr S. Miller

Councillors: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr D. Hallett, Cllr P. Hicks, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, Cllr J. Scowen, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: Mrs A. Mullins (administrative officer), Mr J. Wright (town clerk)

Guests: Mr J. Hodnett (Kitson and Trotman)

Absent: Cllr P. Ridley

17/83/SF Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

17/84/SF Apologies for Absence

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis – family commitment
Cllr S. Larcombe – personal commitment
Cllr O. Lovell – personal reasons
Cllr S. Williams – holiday

17/85/SF Minutes

Cllr S. Miller requested an amendment as his apologies had not been recorded in the minutes.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2017, with the above amendment, were **ADOPTED**.

17/86/SF Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

17/87/SF Dispensations

There was no grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

17/88/SF Matters arising from the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting held on 29 November 2017

Members noted the report.

17/89/SF Update Report

Natwest Bank

The town clerk said the option to move the council's valuable items to the Bridport branch may no longer be feasible for the bank, so they may have to be stored at Honiton.

The town clerk said officers were looking into options with Lloyds and Natwest banks as the council held accounts with both.

17/90/SF Minutes of the West Dorset District Council Service Review working group meetings held on 6 December 2017, 20 December 2017, and 18 January 2018

The minutes of the working group meetings held on 6 December 2017, 20 December 2017, and 18 January 2018 were **RECEIVED**.

17/92/SF Internal Audit Report, Visit Two 2017/18

Cllr S. Miller said the report was a good reflection of the operation and structure of the council and its officers with only two medium recommendations.

Members noted the internal auditor's report and the management responses.

17/93/SF Tourist Information Centre

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Scowen, 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of a 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.

17/94/SF Lister Gardens' Boundary Dispute

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Scowen, 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of a 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.

17/95/SF Renewal of Leases for Marine Parade Retail Units

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Scowen, 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of a 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.

17/96/SF The Three Cups, Broad Street, Lyme Regis and Council Offices

Cllr D. Hallett questioned the need to discuss this item as exempt business.

The town clerk advised discussing this item confidentially as it involved another organisation's business.

It was proposed by Cllr J. Scowen and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of a 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.

This motion failed and the item was discussed in open session.

Members agreed it was too premature to discuss the potential for the town council offices to be re-located to the ground floor of the Three Cups, as work on the development had not started.

It was clarified that work currently taking place on the building were maintenance and stabilisation works, and not part of the wider redevelopment.

It was agreed officers would keep members updated on developments and report back to members when more information was available.

17/97/SF Budget Performance, 1 April-31 December 2017 and Full-Year Forecast

Cllr S. Miller said the report showed prudent budgeting and forecasting had put the council ahead of its figures and in a healthy position.

17/98/SF Procurement

The town clerk reassured members that the three breaches of financial regulations were not major, and they dated back to before the council had strengthened its procedures.

17/99/SF Investments, Cash Holdings and Loans

Members discussed the interest earned on the council's funds and the potential to achieve higher rates.

The town clerk said the council would need to think about what it wanted to do with its money going forward to achieve a better return.

17/100/SF List of Payments

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the schedule of payments for December 2017 for the sum of £105,729.94.

17/101/SF Debtors' Report

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Scowen, 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of a 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.

17/102/SF Exempt Business

(a) Lister Gardens' Boundary Dispute

Mr J. Hodnett from Kitson and Trotman summarised the latest response from the assistant land registrar. He said he believed there was merit in challenging the decision on certain grounds.

Mr Hodnett said if the council wished to continue pursuing this matter, he would advise writing to the Land Registry to challenge the points raised by the assistant land registrar and to make a request to a local land registrar that a more senior official reviews the decision.

Mr Hodnett outlined the potential advantages and disadvantages of pursuing this matter, including the potential cost implications. In considering whether to pursue the matter, he advised members to evaluate if the costs were worth the benefit.

Mr Hodnett said in going to the next step, the only costs which would be incurred would be his time, and the cost of instructing a land surveyor to prepare additional plans to support the application.

Members discussed whether to continue pursuing this matter, based on Mr Hodnett's opinion.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested two minor amendments to the proposed letter, which were agreed.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct Kitson and Trotman to write back to the Land Registry regarding the Lister Gardens boundary dispute, based on the draft letter prepared by the solicitor and incorporating two minor amendments, and to

agree that Kitson and Trotman will instruct David J Powell Surveys Ltd to prepare Ordnance Survey plans and to comment on the Land Registry's points regarding the survey and mapping issues.

Cllr R. Doney left the meeting at 8.07pm.

(b) Tourist Information Centre

Cllr R. Doney returned to the meeting at 8.09pm.

Members considered the draft proposal regarding the possible transfer of the tourist information centre (TIC) to the town council.

It was agreed to remove the fifth bullet point of the proposal regarding existing West Dorset District Council (WDDC) employees.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve a proposal to West Dorset District Council to transfer the tourist information centre to the town council, based on the proposal outlined by the town clerk but with the removal of point 5, and to authorise the town clerk to submit an outline proposal to West Dorset District Council, subject to final confirmation of any proposal by the Full Council on 14 February 2018.

(c) Renewal of Leases for Marine Parade Retail Units

Members discussed whether the concession for paddle boarding should be incorporated into the lease for Boylos Watersports.

Members agreed it should remain separate to the lease as there was no automatic right to the concession, which the tenant had applied and paid for separately in 2017.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the revised rental arrangements put forward by the tenant of Boylos Watersports, but to keep the paddle boarding concession separate from the lease for a nominal sum of £100 for 2018, to be reviewed again in 2019.

(d) Debtors' Report

Cllr S. Miller said debtor 004 had produced considerable information on their business which proved it was a reasonable claim. As such, he believed the council should not pursue this debt.

Cllr S. Miller said a letter had been sent to debtor 003 with a deadline of 14 February 2018; if requirements were not met by this time, the opportunity would be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked for further information on how debts 001, 002 and 005 were resolved.

The town clerk said this information could be included in the members' briefing.

Proposed by Cllr S. Miller and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to pursue debtor 004.

The meeting closed at 8.38pm.