

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOURISM, COMMUNITY AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present

Chairman: Cllr J. Scowen

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr J. Broom, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr Miss K. Ellis, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr Ms G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr S. Williams

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

Absent: Cllr L. Howe

Guests: Mr W. Dowell (Coastline Creative), Mrs G. Rabbitts (LymeArts Community Trust)

19/13/TCP Public Forum

Mr D. Lawrence

Mr D. Lawrence said he owned Lewesdon B&B and was speaking on behalf of the hospitality industry. He said he used a town map with his guests and at the moment they were referring to the old map the business group produced several years ago. He asked the council to bear hospitality businesses in mind when they were choosing the design of a new map as guests wanted something they could fold away and put in a pocket or bag, not a brochure. He said the previous brochure had never been used by any of his guests.

19/14/TCP Apologies

There were none.

19/15/TCP Minutes

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2019 were **ADOPTED**.

19/16/TCP Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Ms B. Bawden declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 11, Grant Agreement Review, LymeArts Community Trust, as she worked in the bar at the Marine Theatre.

19/17/TCP Dispensations

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

19/18/TCP Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 July 2019

Sculpture trail in Langmoor and Lister Gardens

Cllr B. Larcombe asked when the council would see how The Arts Development Company were match funding and how it was carrying out community engagement.

The town clerk said it would be reported back to this committee through the update report.

19/19/TCP Update Report

Seafront wi-fi

Cllr J. Scowen said he believed the wi-fi should be advertised more. He said the system also didn't remember a user's login details, which was off-putting. Members agreed this should be looked into further.

19/20/TCP Lyme Regis Marketing Proposal

The administrative officer said this was the first of a suite of documents, along with the next two reports on the agenda, as each had a budgetary impact on the other.

The chairman invited Mr W. Dowell, of Coastline Creative, to present ideas for a map-based marketing idea.

Mr W. Dowell said he felt the existing printed town map and the map at Bell Cliff needed an overhaul, which could be accompanied by a digital offering. He said the new map would use an updated version of Keith Robinson's illustration, as used on the Bell Cliff map. Mr W. Dowell said it would be a fold-out A2 map, creating a 'time trail', telling visitors a story of what Lyme Regis had to offer. He said nodes around the town would have QR codes, which could be scanned, taking people to an app or a website with an online version of the map, more information and links. He said the map would split the town into 10 areas and would include a list of events and advertising for businesses, as well as advertising opportunities on the website and app.

Without providing specifics, Mr W. Dowell said this concept would cost less than the town guide.

The town clerk reiterated that no costs should be discussed as three quotes would need to be sought if members supported the concept.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he welcomed the idea as a map could be updated easily and it allowed the council to move on from the guide, which he didn't believe was producing value for money for the town.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis liked the idea but said it was aimed at people already in the town, whereas the guide was aimed at attracting people to the town and advertising places to stay. She believed the map could be supplementary to the guide.

Mr W. Dowell said there was also a good listing of businesses on the existing tourism website, and he would also suggest a section on the website where people could order a map to be sent at the cost of the postage. He said online listings could be included in a pamphlet, which was cheap to print and could be updated easily.

Cllr Ms G. Stammers asked how people currently requested a guide, as not everyone would be able to go online to order a map.

The administrative officer said adverts were placed in printed publications and people requested them from a fulfilment company or in some cases, the Lyme Regis tourist information centre (TIC).

It was acknowledged that anyone who could not go online could contact the TIC to request a copy of the map.

Mr W. Dowell said he would propose the map was printed annually but there could be a short print run after six months, and the online map could be changed at any time.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr Ms G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to support the concept of a new map-based marketing proposal and agree to officers obtaining three quotes for its production with a view to it being introduced prior to the 2020 season.

Cllr J. Broom asked what specification companies would be asked to quote against.

The town clerk said the council needed to finalise its specification to provide some guidance, but it probably didn't need to be too specific to allow for some creativity.

19/21/TCP Social Media Marketing

Cllr B. Larcombe said the success of the 2019 social media campaign demonstrated that online marketing was the way to go.

The administrative officer said a revised proposal had been received from RH Advertising, which extended the social media campaign to run from October to June. She said this would cost £12,500, which was above the £10,000 guide provided to RH Advertising.

The administrative officer said RH Advertising felt running a campaign from October to June would stretch the budget thinly, and had suggested the campaign could go from an 'always on' approach to instead focus on certain months or events, such as December for Christmas and New Year, or in January for people starting to think about summer holidays.

Cllr Ms B. Bawden said she didn't believe the campaign should focus only on couples and there were lots of single people who also came to Lyme Regis. She said the green and plastic-free initiatives also needed to be reflected in publicity.

The administrative officer said it was within the council's gift to decide which groups it targeted and which events, messages or themes it publicised, so these ideas could be incorporated into the marketing.

Proposed by Cllr J. Scowen and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve a social media campaign with RH Advertising up to a budget of £10,000, and the final details of the campaign are approved by officers, in consultation with the chairman of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee.

19/22/TCP Lyme Regis Guide 2020

Cllr J. Scowen said he felt the guide was a waste of money and although there was the budget available, he would rather spend the marketing budget on other projects.

Cllr B. Larcombe said there was no way of knowing how effective the guide was, and the only way to do this was to pursue a map and social media marketing, scrap the guide for 2020 and see if this affected visitor numbers. He said if it was a bad year in the absence of the guide, the council could always decide to produce one the following year.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to no longer produce a printed tourism guide.

19/23/TCP Grant Agreement Review, LymeArts Community Trust

Mrs G. Rabbitts, director of the Marine Theatre, gave a presentation on the performance of the theatre. She said it regularly attracted full houses, entertainment was wide-ranging and inclusive, and there were regular free events. She gave statistics demonstrating a large proportion of people came from Lyme Regis or within five miles.

Mrs G. Rabbitts said the theatre had taken part in several festivals in 2019 and would be hosting a literary festival in 2020. She gave statistics on frequency of visits, age of audience, the reasons people went to the theatre, and how they rated performances.

Mrs G. Rabbitts outlined the external funding the theatre received, much of which was ring-fenced for capital projects, comparing the Marine Theatre other venues in the South West. She said all theatres in the country were subsidised and they were working hard to increase income, which meant they were close to breaking even this year.

Mrs G. Rabbitts said the consequence of bringing forward £15k of the council's grant meant the theatre had been left with only 50% of its grant funding this year and although it had been a challenge, the trust was resolute to honour that agreement. She said they were now trying to build up reserves and in future, the town council's grant needed to continue at a minimum of £30k, especially due to concerns the Dorset Council funding might disappear.

Cllr D. Sarson asked why the theatre didn't receive Arts Council funding.

Mrs G. Rabbitts said it was quite a restrictive relationship to enter into, which the theatre would resist if possible.

Given the council was reviewing the level of grants it made, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis asked if the theatre was looking for other funding.

Mrs G. Rabbitts said they would look to the town council to be the main funder, as every arts venue was funded by a town or county council. She said it wasn't easy to obtain grants for core funding but they were constantly looking.

Cllr R. Doney asked if the trustees had considered the business risk if the cinema was re-opened, given the success of the National Theatre screenings and the agreement between the two venues regarding cinema screenings.

Mrs G. Rabbitts said there was a discussion to be had as the theatre was screening live theatre, and the agreement with Scott Cinemas was more to do with moving images and cinema.

Several members felt the theatre was an asset to the town, providing an essential service and contributing to the life of the town and its wider economy.

19/24/TCP Publicity Meetings

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr Ms G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to re-establish publicity meetings between members and officers on a monthly basis, and appoint Cllrs J. Scowen, B. Larcombe, B. Bawden and D. Ruffle to that group.

It was agreed the group would meet at 3pm on one Wednesday each month.

19/25/TCP Guitars on the Beach – Change of Date

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr S. Williams, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve Guitars on the Beach taking place on 27 June 2020.

19/26/TCP Committee Objectives

Members were unsure what a signed walking trail would involve. The town clerk said members needed to identify exactly what it wanted from a walking trail and the other objectives for this committee, and officers would attempt to put some ideas together.

19/27/TCP Managing Consultation Exercises

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 9.02pm.