

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2019

Present

Chairman: Cllr J. Broom

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

Officers: Mr M. Adamson-Drage (operations manager), Mr M. Green (deputy town clerk) Mrs A. Mullins (administrative officer)

19/45/TMH Public Forum

Mrs Z. Patrick

Mrs Z. Patrick spoke in relation to agenda item 8, Dorset Council Dog-Related Public Space Protection Order. She said she spoke on the same topic at a meeting about a year ago to support the town council's stance on the issue, as she was aware in the past the council had supported a dog ban on Front Beach all-year-round. She said sadly nothing had changed since then but she understood Dorset Council (DC) would be consulting on this again. She said as far as she could see, the situation had gotten worse. Mrs Z. Patrick said she didn't wish to repeat everything she had said previously and she thought councillors were probably aware of the problems that those who wished to enjoy Front Beach had endured. She said it was a well-known fact wild-water swimming and open-sea swimming were good for mental and physical health, but for people who wished to swim all-year-round there was no dog-free space between 1 October and 31 April, which included several school holidays, including Easter and Christmas. Mrs Z. Patrick said it had become quite stressful for people with young families and grandchildren who wanted a safe space on the beach to swim or dig in the sand, as it was normally overrun with dogs. She said this was the case all the time, except peak season, when the beach was full of holidaymakers. She said she would rather swim in the summer with all the holidaymakers there than in the winter. Mrs Z. Patrick said one of the nice things about living in Lyme Regis was appreciating the peace and quiet on the front in the winter, but it had now been replaced with noisy dogs, racing around, out-of-control. She said that in itself detracted from the whole ambience of the peace of Lyme Regis. Mrs Z. Patrick said the proposed consultation document on the agenda referred to an on or off-lead situation, rather than a complete ban. She said although a complete ban would be preferable and easier to enforce, she had never understood the off-lead scenario in Lyme, as dogs were allowed to roam anywhere at all times of the day and night. She said she had noticed people walking dogs off the lead after 4.30pm who were happy to let their dogs wander off into the dark onto the sandy beach and conveniently couldn't see what they were getting up to. She said it was impossible to police that situation. Mrs Z. Patrick said there was also the issue of protecting against infection, including toxocariasis. She said the evidence was well-documented but it was well-known if a child woke up with searing pain which turned out to be an infection leading to blindness, it may only be one child but it was one child too

many. She said no one would know which dog it was or where it was from and action needed to be taken to prevent such an event happening in Lyme Regis. She said supporting a dog ban all-year-round could help solve that problem. Mrs Z. Patrick said Lyme Regis was a special place and it needed to be kept that way and as a safe and clean space to enjoy.

19/46/TMH Apologies

Cllr R. Doney – personal commitment
Cllr R. Smith – personal commitment
Cllr J. Scowen – personal commitment

19/47/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr S. Williams and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 October 2019 were **ADOPTED**.

19/48/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

19/49/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

19/50/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 16 October 2019

Winter boat storage

Cllr S. Williams was concerned no action had been taken yet against DC regarding the accreted land at Monmouth Beach and said members needed answers to many questions.

Cllr J. Broom said this matter would be dealt with by the Strategy and Finance Committee at its next meeting.

Section 106 money for play parks

Cllr B. Larcombe said some members of the public had suggested a boules area in the seafront gardens.

As it had already been resolved how the remaining section 106 funding would be spent, it was agreed this could be considered as a future council objective.

Gardens' lighting

Cllr G. Turner said some lights were still not working and asked if the electrician who had installed them would repair under guarantee.

The operations manager said the electrician who had installed them would be engaged.

Highways

Cllr D. Sarson asked if a date had been set for a meeting with a highways' officer and who the officer was.

The operations manager said he had requested a meeting with Mike Westwood, DC's community highways manager, but no date had been set yet.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the town council had previously asked for bus stop markings at the Clappentail roundabout to prevent vehicles parking there but this had not been actioned. He asked if this could be on the list of issues to raise at the meeting.

19/51/TMH Update Report

Blue Sea Café

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis asked when the panel would be choosing the preferred tenant.

The deputy town clerk said he would write to the panel members again to ask for their availability.

Trees

Cllr B. Larcombe said it had been suggested in the past trees could be planted on the top edge of Anning Road playing field and asked if there was any reason this couldn't be done.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said the gardeners had advised in the past the soil wasn't good enough.

It was agreed a report would be brought to a future meeting.

Roof of the amusement arcade, SWiM and antique and craft centre

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if the council was considering delaying the work and doing patch work in the meantime as it was unlikely there would be a long enough window of good weather. He suggested delaying the work until autumn 2020.

The deputy town clerk said a significant delay would create major contractual issues.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if bad weather delayed progress, would there be a point at which work stopped and continued in the autumn.

The deputy town clerk said the work would continue regardless. He said it was almost impossible to pick a period which had very little impact for anyone, but the best period for the tenants was January to April.

Office refurbishment

Cllr S. Williams asked if an architect had been appointed.

The deputy town clerk said a structural survey would be carried out on 9 December 2019 and he was in the process of writing the specification for procuring an architect.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked that the procurement went as far afield as possible.

The deputy town clerk said the contract had to be advertised on the Contract Finders website, as per the council's financial regulations, and there were a number of architectural practices he would encourage to bid for this work.

Cllr S. Williams asked what the architect would be paid.

The deputy town clerk said it was standard practice to charge a percentage of the contract value, which could be as high as 16%, depending on various factors. He said it was intended to ask for expressions of interest and a likely fee, as well as hourly rates, named individuals and the number of hours those individuals would expect to input.

Park and ride

The deputy town clerk confirmed the Charmouth Road landowner was happy to extend the arrangements for next year. He confirmed the park and ride would operate during the fossil festival.

19/52/TMH Dorset Council Dog-Related Public Space Protection Order

Most members agreed with the speaker in the public forum that dogs should be banned from Front Beach all-year-round as there were several other beaches they could be exercised on. They also agreed with the need to protect public safety, especially as the pebbles were above the high-water line and therefore didn't get washed by the sea.

However, there was some concern the proposed consultation didn't give respondents the opportunity to show support for a year-round dog ban on Front Beach.

Cllr J. Broom suggested a letter was sent from the town council, in addition to responding to the consultation, to show the strength of feeling.

Cllr Ms B. Bawden said dogs should be allowed on Front Beach during the winter but kept on leads.

Cllr Miss K. Ellis agreed and said people with mobility issues may have difficulty accessing the other beaches.

It was proposed by Cllr Miss K. Ellis and seconded by Cllr Ms B. Bawden that the town council's response to the Dorset Council dog-related PSPO consultation should be to allow dogs on leads on Front Beach during the winter.

This motion was not carried.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** the town council takes all opportunities available to express its wish to see a dog ban on the Front Beach all-year-round and express it by any means possible, including contacting officers on how this might best be achieved.

19/53/TMH Cemetery Path Fencing

Cllr J. Broom said he didn't think the fencing would be effective as dogs could jump over it.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he had asked for this matter to be brought to the council as residents were disgusted dogs were defecating on graves. He agreed a dog could jump over the fence but he felt it would be a reminder to owners to control their dog.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis was concerned the fencing could be easily pushed over, it could create a trip hazard, and elderly people visiting graves may have difficulty in stepping over it.

It was agreed the council would request an order for dogs to be kept on leads in the cemetery as part of the Public Space Protection Order consultation and if this failed, to bring this item back to the committee.

19/54/TMH Memorial Benches

Cllr D. Sarson asked why the old-style benches had been suggested rather than the new style which had been installed this year.

The operations manager said the area where the new benches would be located already had the old-style benches so it was for consistency.

Proposed by Cllr S. Williams and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to add 16 memorial benches to the Marine Parade as the provision for 2020.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis abstained from voting.

19/55/TMH Cadet Hut

The operations manager said the council's geotechnical engineer had suggested it would be more cost-effective to knock down the building and re-build.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there was an alternative location which could be considered as a base for the external works' team and suggested the old fire station on Hill Road.

Cllr J. Broom asked if the cadet hut was considered to be safe for the next five years.

The operations manager said he would need to refer back to the geotechnical engineer.

It was also agreed costings would be obtained for the re-building of the cadet hut, including a metal-framed building.

19/56/TMH Free Christmas Parking in Lyme Regis

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to allow free parking in the Woodmead car park on 14/15 and 21/22 December to compliment an agreement by Dorset Council to allow free parking in its Cobb Gate, Broad Street and Holmbush car parks in Lyme on the same weekends.

19/57/TMH Unit 1A, St Michael's Business Centre – Lease Renewal

Proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis 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.

19/58/TMH Complaints and Incidents

The operations manager confirmed a log of any sharps found was being kept.

19/59/TMH Exempt Business

a) Unit 1A, St Michael's Business Centre – Lease Renewal

The deputy town clerk explained the history of the lease and the council's position with regards to the building as a whole. He said the lease was protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act and Lyme Regis Development Trust (LRDT) was willing to renew the lease. He added LRDT had suggested terms which included a higher rent and a reduced lease term from 21 to seven years, although it was not entitled to ask for a shorter term.

The deputy town clerk said Unit 1A would be ideal decant space during the office refurbishment, although use by local organisations remained low.

Several members felt Unit 1A was not advertised well enough and this should be improved.

The deputy town clerk said members should consider whether another 21-year lease was necessary as there would be the opportunity to renew the lease after seven years because it was protected.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr Ms B. Bawden, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to renew the lease in respect of Unit 1A at St Michael's Business Centre for a seven-year term and to give the deputy town clerk discretion to negotiate the rent sum.

The meeting closed at 8.18pm.