

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021

Present

Chairman: Cllr M. Ellis

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

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

21/32/HR

Public Forum

P Thompson

P. Thompson spoke in relation to agenda item 10, Request for Access across Woodmead Car Park to carry out works in the rear garden of Overjordan, Mill Green, Lyme Regis. He said he was the landscape designer helping to design and co-ordinate the project on behalf of the owners of Overjordan. He explained the details of the proposed project and the access it would require across Woodmead car park for two to three weeks in January, which would be the quietest time of year and therefore would cause the least disruption.

R. Finch

R. Finch spoke in relation to agenda item 8, Parking, specifically in relation to Springhill Gardens. He referred to a letter he wrote to Dorset Council (DC) in June asking for help with the parking situation. He said since double yellow lines had been installed in Anning Road and South Avenue, it seemed to have made an improvement there but had caused increasing problems in Springhill Gardens, with around six to eight people working in Lyme Regis parking there between 8am and 5pm and around 15 tourists between 10.30am and 7pm. He said most days in the summer there were around 25 cars parking there, circling around the close making it difficult and upsetting for residents, most of whom were over 75. R. Finch said it was also making it difficult for visits from carers, food deliveries, gardeners and waste vehicles. He said cars parked opposite the junction also made it impossible for emergency vehicles to drive through, while cars parking at the corner of the entrance to Springhill Gardens made it impossible to see vehicles coming from Roman Road. He said DC should realise if people parked in the car parks at £5 per day, it would make £20,000 over 200 days, which was about the average they parked for. He said a lot of people who parked at Springhill Gardens were staying at bed and breakfasts but they didn't have parking so they were told to park there. He said people visiting the beach didn't bring anything into Lyme Regis and went home afterwards. R. Finch said when collecting their cars, one family had had a picnic in one of the gardens, while another family had thrown the contents of a potty over another garden. He said the traffic going around the close added around 400% to the wear of the road. He said the Highway Code stated there should be no parking within 10 metres either side of the junction and he had told the parking attendant and police but no action was ever taken. He said when vehicles were parking on corners, residents had to be very careful when they came out because they couldn't see either way and

one day there would be an accident. R. Finch asked if DC Highways could go to Springhill Gardens to talk to the residents with a view to introducing residents' parking.

R. Crabbe

R. Crabbe spoke on the same agenda item and said he had written to the DC ward member some time ago about the problem. He said he had written to say the residents of Springhill Gardens were requesting assistance in introducing parking restrictions in the street. He said with one exception, all residents were senior citizens and were experiencing increasing problems with visitors parking there. He said visitor cars were blocking driveways or parking opposite them, making resident access difficult. R. Crabbe said visitor cars had been responsible for dropping litter in the road and on one occasion visitors had had a picnic on someone's lawn. He said residents had evidence of bed and breakfast establishments telling guests to park in Springhill Gardens. He said the problem had been worsening each year and now restrictions had been introduced on Roman Road, the situation in Springhill Gardens had deteriorated further, to the point where they needed to find a way of bringing in residents' only parking restrictions. R. Crabbe said he was aware of DC's budgetary limitations but this would do much to increase the quality of life for the residents.

D. Nott (read out by an officer)

D. Nott spoke on the same agenda item. He said he wished to raise his concerns about parking in Springhill Gardens and Roman Road from the end of Springhill Gardens to the junction with Windsor Terrace on safety grounds. He said residents of Springhill Gardens generally had sufficient parking in the form of driveways, however in the absence of any parking restrictions, the roads were increasingly being used by people using the beach and the town. He said he was concerned about daily parking of cars on and around the corner of Springhill Gardens and Roman Road, where the road was steep and narrow and visibility was severely restricted by parked cars and a hazard to vehicles and pedestrians turning into or crossing the entrance to Springhill Gardens. D. Nott said he was also concerned about non-resident parking further up Springhill Gardens, which narrowed the road and obstructed visibility for vehicles driving both up and down as they negotiated the two sharp bends in the road. He said he was concerned that at busy times of the year, particularly during summer holidays or during popular events, cars parked along both sides of Springhill Gardens, limiting access for residents and making it difficult for larger vehicles such as deliveries and refuse collections, as well as emergency vehicles should they be required. He said a high proportion of the residents were elderly. D. Nott asked the council when considering long-term solutions to the wider issue of vehicular access and parking in Lyme Regis to take these matters into account. He said he, along with other concerned residents, would be pleased on the type and extent of restrictions that may be implemented. Meanwhile, he said he urged the council to introduce some form of parking restrictions at the bottom end of Springhill Gardens to prevent the dangerous and sometimes careless parking that happened there on a daily basis.

R. Hudson

R. Hudson spoke on the same agenda item. She said she was speaking with regards to the vastly increased amount of parking in Springhill Gardens. She said until recently, a small number of visitors parked there, but this had increased enormously and had coincided with a large increase in the cost of parking in the large car parks and the introduction of residents or one-hour parking in South Avenue. She said the parking restrictions in South Avenue had pushed the parking problem around the corner into

Springhill Gardens. R. Hudson said she fully acknowledged Springhill Gardens was a public road and as such, anyone was entitled to park there, but the sheer volume of the parking was causing problems. She said cars had been parking across driveways, and at the entrance to Springhill Gardens, which made it difficult to pull out into Roman Road as it was difficult to see oncoming traffic and she believed it was illegal. She said people were parking on the turning circle and double parking, making it very difficult to drive through to their house. R. Hudson said too many people wanted to come to Lyme Regis and unless there was a restriction on parking in residential roads, visitors would seek out and clog up those roads. She said she felt all residential roads should have restrictions, so once all car parks were full, there was no available parking, and residents could have permits to give to visitors. R. Hudson said although the town council may not agree and may feel the needs of visitors should be considered, it was important to take into account the needs of residents.

21/33/TMH Apologies

Cllr J. Broom – holiday
Cllr C. Reynolds – personal commitments
Cllr R. Smith – attending Cop-26 conference
Cllr S. Williams – illness

21/34/TMH Minutes

Cllr D. Sarson said he was not included in the list of attendees.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council needed to seriously look at a canopy or some form of cover to protect against anything which may fall from the seafront roof and it was agreed this would be a future agenda item.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, with the above amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 September 2021 were **ADOPTED**.

21/35/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

21/36/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

21/37/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 22 September 2021

Roof balustrading

Cllr B. Larcombe asking if there was any update on the damage to the glass panels and whether the police had done anything to apprehend those responsible. He said there needed to be a clear message that this kind of mindless vandalism would not be tolerated.

The operations manager said the police were informed and the CCTV was supplied but he was not party to the police investigation.

The deputy town clerk said the panels were likely to be replaced later this month because the lead-in time was quite long.

21/38/TMH Update Report

Guildhall works

Cllr B. Larcombe wanted to formally thank the contractor for doing a brilliant job so far on the Guildhall maintenance and repair, which had been done to the time and cost estimate, and also the operations manager and deputy town clerk for overseeing the work. He asked that the original oak door received some attention.

The deputy town clerk said he recently met with the architect and contractor for the works to the oriel window and although they would minimise the amount of dust going into the chamber, they would prefer if the council used an alternative venue for meetings. He said the Pine Hall at the Baptist Church had been provisionally booked for this purpose.

Office works

The deputy town clerk said the contractors had looked at the works required in more detail, specifically to the window in the meeting room, the tile hanging underneath it and the structure that supported it. He said there was real concern they may not be able to do all the work during the road closure because it was more extensive than originally envisaged. He added that conversations were ongoing and they would do everything they could to resolve it.

Cllr G. Stammers asked if it was deemed unsafe, whether remedial works were required and when the contractors expected to be able to carry out the works.

The deputy town clerk said the window was not unsafe and the sash windows were secure. He said the windows probably shouldn't be opened but the extent of the work was likely require the entire replacement of the window.

Cllr M. Ellis asked if the work could be done without closing the road.

The deputy town clerk said some of it could be but scaffolding would be required.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there were any other road closures scheduled when the works could be timed to take place.

The deputy town clerk said a number of other property owners in Church and Bridge Streets had expressed a wish to put up scaffolding during the January and February closure and were refused because of the nature of the works being carried out by DC so he believed there would be considerable pressure for a further closure.

New Harbourmaster's Store for Dorset Council

The deputy town clerk said the town council would be serving notice on DC to vacate the store and the expiry would be 31 March 2023. However, he said the store should be available to the council well before that date.

Water leaks at Monmouth Beach

Cllr B. Larcombe asked what the chalet leases said about water leaks.

The deputy town clerk said it was the council's responsibility to deal with water leaks as none of the services were adopted. He said South West Water was not interested in adopting the services.

21/39/TMH Parking

Members were informed the DC officer who was expected to be at this meeting was unable to attend as he was ill.

Cllr D. Sarson said the residents of Springhill Gardens were suffering and something had to be done about it. He said he was also aware of issues in Anning Road as people with permits were unable to park outside their houses or anywhere near as DC were issuing permits to holiday companies. He said a letter from Paul Hutton, DC's parking services manager, said local councillors and the DC councillor should canvas local residents to determine if there was enough support for a review of parking permits for holiday companies.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he had previously raised concerns from residents of Springhill Gardens and he would welcome the input of DC. He said he felt the council owed its support first to residents and should support them in any request to DC. He said there was also an issue with parking at the roundabout near Clappentail Lane, where the bus stop could be delineated without a parking order being required.

Cllr G. Stammers said it was illegal to park on a junction so it required proper enforcement to move people on or issue fines as people would continue to park there while they got away with it.

Cllr B. Bawden said there needed to be a more holistic view of the whole issue of parking in Lyme Regis, not just the places mentioned and the council needed to ask DC for a proper review. She said Sidmouth Road was very dangerous and pedestrians were in danger walking down there.

Cllr M. Ellis said the first thing to do would be to get someone from DC highways to Lyme Regis for a walkabout around the town.

The deputy town clerk said officers did suggest to DC a comprehensive review last year but it didn't seem to have made any progress so the council needed to find some way of engaging with them.

Cllr B. Larcombe said there was also an issue with large delivery lorries coming into the town at any time of the day and some towns had set hours when deliveries could be made.

Cllr M. Ellis said there were set delivery times but they were not being adhered to.

It was agreed officers would request a DC highways officer attends the next meeting of this committee and also meets separately with the residents of Springhill Gardens.

21/40/TMH Emergency Planning Procedure Review

Cllr M. Ellis said the telephone numbers for the Woodmead Halls were incorrect.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the following amendments were required: the Highways Agency was now known as National Highways; the foodbank location needed to be changed from The Hub to Unit 1A, St Michael's Business Centre; LymeForward should be mentioned; and fire, GPs and police should be included.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the Emergency Planning Procedure, with the following amendments: amend the telephone numbers for the Woodmead Halls; amend the Highways Agency to National Highways; change the foodbank location from The Hub to Unit 1A, St Michael's Business Centre; reference LymeForward; and reference fire, GPs and police.

21/41/TMH Request for Access across Woodmead Car Park to carry out works in the rear garden of Overjordan, Mill Green, Lyme Regis

The deputy town clerk said the council was not under any obligation to agree to the request but it wouldn't be possible for the owners to do the work through any other route. He said the owners were investing a significant amount of money to fundamentally retain the council's land, an obligation that normally stood with the owner of the higher land, i.e. the council.

The deputy town clerk said if members were happy with the request in principle, he would suggest the detailed terms should be delegated to the town clerk in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman of this committee. He also suggested if the council agreed to the access, it should be absolutely without prejudice to the future use of the council's land; the future potential development of the land could not be constrained in any way that disadvantaged the council.

Cllr M. Ellis said if there was any damage to the car park during the works, the applicant would need to put it right, and also wash down the car park regularly.

The deputy town clerk said this was the kind of detail that could be agreed upon later. He said in terms of damage to the main car park, there would be a banksman to see lorries in and out.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree in principle to a request for access across Woodmead car park to facilitate works in the rear garden of Overjordan, Mill Green, Lyme Regis; to delegate authority to deal with the detailed response to this matter to the town clerk in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee, together with the council's legal and technical advisors; that this agreement is without prejudice to the determination of any future requests for access in this area and the council reserves its right absolutely to use its own land in the future in a way which may preclude future access for works or maintenance to either Overjordan or any other neighbouring property; and agreement from this council is entirely without prejudice to the need for the applicant to obtain either planning permission or building regulations approval.

21/42/TMH Roof Management Plan

Cllr M. Ellis said the extra money was spent on the roof so that events could be held but she wouldn't like to see vehicles on there. If there were gazebos on the roof, she felt they should be towards the back so they could be tied down to the points installed for that purpose.

Members generally agreed they would not want to see vehicles or trailers on the roof.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he wouldn't want to see the following on the roof: skateboards, ball games, music concerts, trailer, marquees, or gazebos unless they were at the back of the roof. He said it was a roof first and an open space second and there were safety issues the council shouldn't ignore, not to mention aesthetic issues of the area and some events and activities being too intrusive and inappropriate for the area.

Cllr G. Stammers said she would like to see the roof used for managed events that were safely controlled. She said there were gazebo tie-down points and if they were used appropriately, events should be allowed.

Cllr B. Bawden it would be a shame to waste the money spent on the roof not to use it for the benefit of residents as an open and inclusive area to have affordable or free events, providing safety considerations were fully satisfied.

Cllr D. Ruffle said as long as it was used wisely and managed well, he couldn't see why the roof couldn't be used for events.

Cllr G. Turner asked what sort of guarantee there was on the roof and the kinds of activities that could take place on it.

The deputy town clerk said the material and roof were structurally sufficiently sound to take the weight and turning movement of vehicles. Sharp, penetrating objects presented a much greater risk, such as a marquee using ground pegs. He said most uses would be acceptable and would not invalidate the warranty but it would require proper management, such as putting boarding under high load points to 'spread' the load.

Members discussed skateboarding on the roof and there was discussions around picnic benches and planters being installed to deter skateboarders. Cllr M. Ellis said she would like the council to speak to DC about the possibility of introducing byelaws more widely in the town to ban skateboarding in other areas.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he was concerned about objects falling over the edge of the roof onto people beneath and therefore anything that was allowed on the roof needed to be away from the edge. He was also concerned about damage to the surface from sharp objects, chemical spills and heat. He said he also wanted to see businesses being charged a going rate to use the area.

The operations manager said every event was discussed at an event planning meeting, attended by the chairman of this committee and the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee so these kinds of details could be managed in the way they currently were.

The deputy town clerk said what he was hearing from members was that they didn't want any vehicles or trailers on the roof, other than perhaps vehicles that may be required to deliver equipment related to an event or to carry out maintenance. He said with that exception, all other events that may be requested would go through the normal

process, which would involve scrutinising a management plan, showing evidence of insurance, a risk assessment, etc.

The deputy town clerk said some of the issues event organisers would have to address would be different for an event on the roof to an event on the parade, but the range of issues would be similar. For that reason, he questioned whether a roof management plan was necessary, or whether it should just be picked up as part of the wider event management process.

The operations manager said picnic benches and planters would need to be picked up as part of the budget-setting process.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if it would be possible to investigate if chippings could be put down to deter skateboarding.

The deputy town clerk said he had discussed this with the designer and roofing contractor and although it was possible, putting sharp gravel on the surface was not advisable.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested rounded gravel instead.

The deputy town clerk said the roofing contractor had advised the council to be aware of issues of liability and health and safety because the surface that was chosen was sufficiently abrasive to provide good grip. He said rounded gravel would significantly increase the likelihood of people slipping or falling.

Cllr M. Ellis said putting gravel on the roof in the past had prevented it being used for some events and she didn't want to deter local groups from using it. She said it was also the only step-free route for wheelchairs and gravel may prevent them from using it.

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson not to introduce a roof management plan but to look to manage what takes place on the roof through the normal event management process, to look to incorporate deterrents for skateboarding and balls games, and no vehicles or trailers are allowed on the roof unless required in connection with essential maintenance or to deliver equipment.

However, several members were concerned about banning ball games as small children may play with a ball in the gardens or on the roof and this would prevent them from doing so.

Cllr B. Larcombe felt there was a risk of a ball going over the edge of the roof and hitting someone below.

The other members felt the risk was no greater than a ball hitting someone if it was being played with on the beach or the parade and that the roof was one of the few flat spaces on the seafront children could go to and enjoy the space.

Cllr D. Sarson withdraw his seconding of the proposal.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to introduce a roof management plan but to look to manage what takes place on the roof through the normal event management process, to look to incorporate deterrents for skateboarding, and no vehicles or trailers

are allowed on the roof unless required in connection with essential maintenance or to deliver equipment.

21/43/TMH Solar Panels on Chalets and Day Huts

Cllr B. Larcombe said as the chairman, Cllr J. Broom, couldn't attend the meeting, he had asked him to impress on the meeting that he was not in favour of solar panels on chalets or day huts as he felt it was out-of-keeping with the area. He said personally he wasn't in favour of day huts but maybe chalets as he didn't believe the roofs were up to taking panels and it started to invite a different kind of use.

The operations manager reminded members about the paragraph at the beginning of every agenda which asked them to take into consideration the climate emergency declaration in reaching decisions.

The deputy town clerk said the office had received enquiries about solar panels from several chalet owners and one day hut owner. He said day huts currently had no electricity. He said if the council agreed in principle to the requests, he had no feel for how many owners might chose to install panels.

Cllr B. Bawden asking if they would need planning permission.

The deputy town clerk said they probably wouldn't but the site was in an area of outstanding natural beauty so that might be an issue.

Cllr M. Ellis said she didn't see how the council could justify turning the requests down after declaring a climate emergency. She said the owners would need to check if there were any planning issues first. However, she didn't think day huts should have panels because they didn't have electricity and were not for sleeping in.

Cllr B. Bawden said people needed to move away from fossil fuels and if people were prepared to pay for solar panels to generate renewable energy, the council should be supporting them.

The deputy town clerk said if members were minded to support in principle requests for installation of panels on chalets, requests to replace and change the design of chalets were normally brought to this committee. He said the council could introduce support in principle but individual requests could come to this committee.

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree in principle to allow solar panels to be installed on chalet roofs but individual requests are considered on a case-by-case basis by the Town Management and Highways Committee; and not to allow solar panels to be installed on day hut roofs.

21/44/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.56pm.