

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

Present

Chairman: Cllr B. Larcombe

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr P. Evans, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: M. Green (deputy town clerk), A. Mullins (support services manager), P. Williams (acting operations manager)

23/21/TMH Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr G. Stammers that Cllr C. Aldridge is chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee.

Cllr C. Aldridge said she did not wish to be chairman.

It was proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr P. Evans that Cllr B. Larcombe is chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee.

Cllr B. Larcombe was duly **ELECTED** as chairman.

23/22/TMH Public Forum

N. Russell

N. Russell spoke in relation to agenda item 12, Traffic and Travel Working Group. She wanted to bring to the council's attention, and probably Dorset Council (DC) too, the concerns residents had about road safety on Timber Hill and the need for traffic calming measures. She said on 27 June 2023, there was a serious accident but luckily no one was seriously injured and it involved all the major emergency services and the air ambulance. She said she had spoken to Cllr B. Bawden as the DC ward member, who had asked her to canvass the opinions of the residents on Timber Hill, so a petition was put to them. N. Russell said the volume and speed of traffic was a concern, there was little respect for the 30mph speed limit and no enforcement, which was a particular concern as families from Garmans Field walked along the road to school, etc. She said the South West Coast Path included Timber Hill and since Covid, the number of walkers had increased, plus there were no pavements. She said there were 21 properties on Timber Hill and there was a 72.6% response rate to the petition, with no one disagreeing with the proposals. Properties which didn't respond were either second homes or residents were away on holiday. N. Russell said she also went to Garmans Field and nine properties supported the proposals and felt there were dangers. She said residents would like the town council and DC to consider the situation and undertake a survey, leading to some sort of traffic calming. She said the building of houses at the top of the hill was always going to mean more people walking up and down the road. She said pedestrians were very vulnerable and the road was increasingly narrowed by hedges encroaching onto it, as well as two blind corners. She said if pedestrians were walking facing traffic, they could find themselves in a worse position so would cross the road,

which was very dangerous. N. Russell said the number of walkers changed significantly, depending on the time of year. She said people drove up and down the hill at high speed and it was used as a rat run, with vehicles seeing an obstruction and veering off and cutting off the corner. She also believed some sat navs directed people up the hill. She said she would like the town council and DC to consider this to see if they could come up with some recommendations to improve the situation.

N. Ball

N. Ball spoke in relation to agenda item 12, Traffic and Travel Working Group. He said at the council's consultation event Time to Talk in 2017, people were asked what they wanted for the future and chose the things that mattered most to them. He said there was significant support for a free-to-use town bus service for all Lyme Regis residents and he believed this was the most supported of all the statements. He said six years on and there had been little mention of this specific vision; there had been suggestions of other improvements, such as extending the service, but not free to use for all Lyme residents. N. Ball said he thought now would be an ideal time to bring this vision to life and the council needed to get past the negativity of officers regarding technicalities and go for it, even if the initial roll-out was council funded and then reconsidered with the provider. He felt the service would cut unnecessary traffic into town for short trips, reducing pollution, congestion and parking, cut the use of parking spaces to increase spaces available for income, and create conversations on the bus for residents to meet and discuss all things local. He said he would be grateful if members could discuss, consider and implement this request from residents. N. Ball said perhaps the longer serving members could inform newer members about this idea supported by a public consultation, as he was sure there were some members unaware of the results of earlier consultations, and then some ideas were omitted in more recent ones. He said actions would speak louder than words and residents would look forward to a free ride soon, after showing their Gateway Card. He thought a couple of weeks to get this in place would be an ample timescale.

N. Ball also spoke in relation to agenda item 13, Parking Places Orders, Monmouth Beach and Woodmead Car Parks. He said there needed to be better spacing in the car parks for modern cars and the electric car charging spaces were a waste of time because they were in the wrong place and at a pinch point in the car park. He asked if he could park his van in the car park because it was over-sized and whether he was in breach of the parking order.

In relation to the suggested pedestrianisation of Cart Road, N. Ball said this was a great area and pedestrianisation would have very little benefit. He said it would create more problems with access, parking, deliveries and visits. He also asked how many times the hedge cutter had been used on the back of the tractor, whether it had been serviced and what its current condition was. N. Ball asked who had given permission for a bike show on the roof of the shelters during Regatta and Carnival Week when the council stated no skateboards or bikes in this area. He felt it was dangerous.

B. Overton (read out by Cllr B. Bawden)

B. Overton said she was writing on behalf of the majority of residents living in Queens Walk, numbers 5 to 18, who had shown 100% interest in residents' parking, as was the case in Anning Road, South Avenue, and King's Way. She said the parking in the road was dreadful, with holidaymakers and people working in the town parking for days. She said there was a post on Facebook about dustbins being put out in the street by desperate residents. She said she understood any request to Dorset Council had to go

through the local council and asked for help to do this. B. Overton said the parking area at the back of Queens Walk was used by people working in the town, by visitors and often visitors of King's Way residents so little space was left for residents. She said it was also unlit, known to have drug dealings and was felt to be unsafe. She said the police and crime commissioner and local MP visited various Queens Walk residents and were made aware of both the street and car park problems. B. Overton asked that their request was put to the town council at the earliest possible opportunity as this would put the lower part of Queens Walk in line with the surrounding streets that had the convenience of residents' parking.

23/23/TMH Apologies

Cllr P. May – holiday
Cllr C. Reynolds – illness
Cllr D. Ruffle – illness

23/24/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 June 2023 were **ADOPTED**.

23/25/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr P. Evans declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 18, MUGA at Anning Road Playing Field as he lived close to the proposed site.

Cllr B. Bawden declared the same interest.

23/26/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

23/27/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 21 June 2023

Gazebo removal

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if the gazebo could be removed as soon as possible as it was out of season.

The deputy town clerk said there was a cost associated with this and it had not been budgeted for, although officers had discussed whether the costs could be met under this year's budget. He said it was intended to discuss this as part of the budget report to the Strategy and Finance Committee.

23/28/TMH Update Report

Drainage issues at SWiM

Cllr M. Ellis was concerned the council's contribution of £10k was plus VAT as the council had only agreed £10k.

The deputy town clerk said as the payment was towards work on a building owned by the council, it would be able to re-claim the VAT.

Drainage at Woodmead car park extension

Cllr B. Larcombe asked what the timescale was for the drainage work and what had drawn the council's attention to the issues.

The deputy town clerk said the council would need to set a budget first and would then look at doing the work early in the next financial year. He said the issues were brought to light following bad weather which led to surface water flooding in an adjoining property.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he felt this should be funded from the council's reserve because it was an unforeseen issue.

Cllr S. Cockerell agreed as the council could have some liability.

Post Office

The deputy town clerk said confirmation had been received from the Post Office that it no longer had an interest in running a service in Lyme Regis, despite being approached by at least two people who were interested in running it. He said he would send the statement to members.

CCTV Project

The deputy town clerk said he had a meeting with the chosen supplier later in the week.

Trailer Park at Monmouth Beach, Accreted Land, Phase V Cobb Works

The deputy town clerk said DC had instructed consultant engineers to prepare a submission for continued use of the accreted land. He said the engineers had committed to share their work with the town council before it was submitted to Natural England, as the council had to be content with the submission as landowner. He said the engineers intended to have the submission ready by the end of September.

The deputy town clerk said an email had been received from DC about the Phase V works, indicating that the project couldn't be delivered within the original budget of £3million and could cost 50% more.

Invertebrate garden and other 'garden ideas'

Cllr C. Aldridge said several groups and committees were working on ideas that affected the gardens so there needed to be a way it was all pulled together. She said it had been suggested to have a group of all the committee chairmen to tie all the ideas together.

Jubilee Pavilion

The deputy town clerk said the contractors working on the roof were off site due to the bad weather but were hoping to be back on site on 25 September 2023.

Amenities Hut Building and Plans

The deputy town clerk said it was expected the cost of the replacement hut would be closer to £75k if green measures were incorporated. He said members would also have to consider whether to close the facility while the work was taking place.

Office and options feasibility study

The deputy town clerk suggested members may wish to secure Unit 2 at St Michael's Business Centre as decant space while the office refurbishment was taking place. He said it had been empty for some months and if a decision was delayed, it was unlikely to be available when the council required it.

Park and ride 2023

The deputy town clerk said the bus operator Dartline had provided passenger, cost and income information relating to the 2023 service. He said the shortfall was £11,900, which was less than in 2022, which meant the overall cost, including the cost to rent the land, could be met within the existing park and ride budget.

Monmouth Beach garages

The deputy town clerk said legal advice had been taken about the council's options and responsibilities in clearing a garage following the death of a tenant. He said it was a sensitive matter but the council needed to be able to re-let the unit.

Roof works to cemetery store

The deputy town clerk said the works cost £17.6k, slightly under the £18k budget.

Cllr B. Bawden left the meeting at 7.51pm.

Repairs to Fascia above SWiM, Antiques and Craft Centre, Amusement Arcade and Public Toilets

The deputy town clerk said the contractors were off site at the moment due to bad weather but were due back on site on 25 September 2023.

Cllr B. Bawden returned to the meeting at 7.53pm.

Filming on seafront

The deputy town clerk said the film company had suggested some alterations to the original proposals and he would circulate the programme via the members' briefing.

Waste collection at Monmouth Beach

Cllr M. Ellis asked if any of the properties affected by the changes in waste collection arrangements were those who had been involved in disputes over site licences, as she was concerned this could add to the issues.

The deputy town clerk said the historic issues with collection of rent had been almost entirely resolved and the current debt was virtually zero.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked what impact the changes in waste collection arrangements would have on the town council.

The deputy town clerk said there was a chance the council would be contacted by owners with complaints but the matter was entirely in the gift of DC. He said when there had been larger bins on the site in the past, it had led to fly-tipping and businesses trying to dispose of their waste. He said DC was introducing the changes now because it was a quieter period when there was less pressure on the service and said it would be responsive to any issues that arise.

23/29/TMH Town Management and Highways Committee – Objectives

Members noted the report.

23/30/TMH 2024-25 Budget Proposals

Following on from the update report, Cllr M. Ellis suggested drainage at Woodmead car park should be put forward as an objective.

Cllr B. Bawden suggested there be an objective to carry out recommendations from the traffic and travel working group, although it was noted there were no identified costs at the moment. She said in reality, she didn't think 20mph speed limits would be introduced until 2025-26, although it was acknowledged some expenditure may be required while proposals are developed.

It was noted there were several recommendations from the working group, which included enhancing the town bus service, and an overall budget could be set aside for this.

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr P. Evans, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to identify Woodmead car park drainage and implementation of the traffic and travel working group recommendations as potential objectives for 2024-25.

23/31/TMH External Works Budget Performance, 1 April – 31 August 2023

The deputy town clerk said expenditure was mainly on budget and income was over budget so it was predominantly good news.

Cllr B. Bawden asked if signs in the gardens would come under the budget for signs, which was significantly underspent.

The deputy town clerk said he wasn't sure what the signs' budget covered specifically but there was an item later in the agenda about parking places orders, which would almost certainly require new signs and would probably come from this budget.

Cllr M. Ellis asked if members would have a detailed breakdown of car parking income at any point and asked if the town council's income had gone up as a result of DC increasing its parking charges.

The deputy town clerk said further analysis of parking income would go to the Strategy and Finance Committee.

23/32/TMH Traffic and Travel Working Group

Cllr C. Aldridge said the group had met four times and developed some short-term suggestions that demonstrated to residents the council was tackling local traffic and travel issues but they also wanted to develop a long-term vision, which would involve consultation with residents and visitors.

Cllr M. Ellis felt it would be difficult to enforce delivery times in the town and it would upset local businesses, and pedestrianising Cart Road would upset a lot of disabled people who were unable to walk along the seafront but enjoyed sitting in their car to enjoy the area. She said the suggestion to pedestrianise Broad Street would kill the town. She added that any consultation about highways issues should be much wider than just Lyme Voice. She was also concerned about the frequency of the working group meetings as four had taken place, therefore decisions were being made by the working group, rather than coming through to the committee for discussion by all members.

Cllr B. Larcombe said Cart Road was a safety issue, with people sitting on the road and cars trying to go up the narrow stretch of road.

Cllr B. Bawden said the aim was to take a strategic and holistic view of traffic, transport and parking issues and although some of the issues were long-term, the council needed to consider them now because the Local Transport Plan process was underway. She said the government guidance on the plan was there would be a change of approach to be vision led, and she felt the town council should be in charge of creating that vision.

Cllr B. Bawden said the council had previously agreed to fund speed surveys in the town and DC was waiting for confirmation of the precise locations. The suggested locations were: Sidmouth Road, Queens Walk, King's Way, Silver Street, Charmouth Road, and Anning Road. She also suggested Timber Hill be added to the list, at an additional cost of £200 plus VAT, given the issues in the area.

Cllr D. Sarson was concerned about the amount of work which would be involved and how many resources it would take up.

Cllr C. Aldridge said although there had been a lot of meetings, the working group had been working up proposals to bring to this committee and the list from the most recent meeting on 4 September 2023 was the group's suggested projects, which had been pared back from earlier meetings. She felt the council should work up some proposals in detail and consult with the public, rather than deciding the issues were too difficult to tackle.

Cllr G. Stammers said the pedestrianisation of Cart Road and Cobb Gate car park being dedicated to disabled parking had been discussed before but as it was a road, there would be legal issues involved with this.

The deputy town clerk said Cart Road was also intended to be the road used by HGVs because there was a weight restriction on Cobb Road. He said at this point, it was suggested the council did a bit more work on what could be achieved and what work would be involved in delivering the suggestions.

Proposed by Cllr B. Bawden and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the speed survey locations as Sidmouth Road, Queens Walk, King's Way, Silver Street, Charmouth Road, and Anning Road and to add Timber Hill as an additional location, at a cost of £200 plus VAT.

23/33/TMH Parking Places Orders, Monmouth Beach and Woodmead Car Parks

The deputy town clerk said the council would be considering parking charges for 2024-25 at the Strategy and Finance Committee on 12 October 2023 and if new charges were introduced, it would make sense to implement the orders at the same time so the signs would be replaced with all the new information.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to support the introduction of new parking places orders for Monmouth Beach and Woodmead car parks and authorise the town clerk, in conjunction with the chairman of the committee, to approve the draft orders prior to public and stakeholder consultation.

Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 8.59pm.

23/34/TMH Energy Performance Certificates and Let Commercial Buildings

The deputy town clerk said it may be that the pressure to obtain Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) for all council buildings had gone away but he would still recommend the council pursued this because it was a relatively low-cost measure and it was useful to have information about energy performance and measures the council could take to improve this. He said whether or not the council needed to make changes by a certain date, improving the energy performance of its let buildings seemed to make sense.

Cllr M. Ellis returned to the meeting at 9.01pm.

Cllr B. Bawden said she had met with engineers from Low Carbon Dorset about what they could do in general to help so she could ask if they could help the council with expertise or to access funding.

Proposed by Cllr S. Cockerell and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to authorise obtaining Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) for all qualifying council-owned and let commercial buildings, together with recommendations for improving their performance, where required, in order to enable proper planning and investment to safeguard the council's long-term commercial income and to help meet the council's agreed environmental targets.

23/35/TMH Use of Personalised Water Craft (PWCs) from Lyme Harbour

As the council's representative on the Harbour Consultative Group, Cllr B. Larcombe said this was an issue that had been raised in that forum previously and this council had, in the past, voted against supporting use of PWCs from the harbour.

The deputy town clerk said the harbourmaster had received a request to issue up to 10 licences for PWCs to launch from Lyme harbour on a trial basis, which would be considered by the Harbour Consultative Group on 5 October 2023. He said he felt it would be useful for anyone attending the meeting on the council's behalf to have a clear and up-to-date mandate to express a view.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to re-state the council's position that it opposes the launching and use of personalised water craft from Lyme Regis harbour or any other

location along the seafront at Lyme Regis and to oppose the licensing, for a temporary/trial 12-month period in the first instance, by Dorset Council of personalised water craft launched from Lyme harbour.

23/36/TMH Voluntary Beach Cleans

The deputy town clerk said it was made extremely clear to any group wishing to do a beach clean that there were risks and it was their responsibility to provide appropriate personal protective equipment. He said the council couldn't provide insurance for voluntary groups that were not under its control and management and this was made very clear to any groups.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree the suggested position on requests for voluntary beach cleans and to prepare a basic handout to give to those wishing to carry out a beach clean.

23/37/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Members noted the report.

Cllr G. Turner left the meeting at 9.21pm.

Cllr P. Evans and Cllr B. Bawden left the meeting at 9.22pm in line with their declaration of pecuniary interests.

23/38/TMH MUGA at Anning Road Playing Field

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, 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.

23/39/TMH Exempt Business

a) MUGA at Anning Road Playing Field

Members discussed the proposed new location for the multi-use games area (MUGA) within Anning Road playing field.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the play equipment was already on the northern side of the field so the suggested location for the MUGA would be an extension of this.

Cllr G. Turner returned to the meeting at 9.23pm.

The deputy town clerk said there were numerous benefits associated with the proposed location; there were no services in the area and although it wasn't level, it would involve a lot less engineering work than in the previously proposed location.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to support locating the multi-use games area on the northern side of Anning Road playing field, adjacent to the children's play area.

The meeting closed at 9.29pm.