

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3 JANUARY 2024

Present

Chairman: Cllr B. Larcombe

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: M. Green (deputy town clerk), A. Mullins (support services manager), J. Smith (property and projects assistant) P. Williams (acting operations manager)

23/55/TMH Public Forum

N. Ball

N. Ball said he was still very concerned about the railings outside the amusement arcade and it was said at the previous meeting the deputy town clerk would look at the legislation on this. He felt the railings should be extended and said a relative had fallen off the ramp and banged her head. He accepted it was a good move to put a yellow line along there, but this needed to be remarked two or three times a year if the railings were not extended. N. Ball said he had previously raised the issue of who had given permission for stunt bikes on top of the shelters but he had not had a reply. He said it was clearly stated there were no bikes or skateboards allowed on the roof and it was a viewing platform. He was concerned the town council would be called out on this and there could be an accident. He said the contractor who worked on the roof told him there should be 18mm plywood on the roof if anything was on it.

23/56/TMH Apologies

Cllr C. Aldridge – holiday
Cllr P. Evans – illness
Cllr D. Sarson – illness

Cllr D. Ruffle and Cllr G. Stammers arrived at 7.06pm.

23/57/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 November 2023 were **ADOPTED**.

23/58/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr B. Bawden declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 15, MUGA at Anning Road Playing Field as she lived close to the proposed site.

23/59/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

23/60/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 8 November 2023

Parking Issues and Anti-Social Behaviour In-and-Around Queens Walk

As ward member, Cllr B. Bawden asked for copies of the emails sent to Magna Housing Association and Dorset Council (DC) about these issues.

23/61/TMH Update Report

CCTV

Cllr C. Reynolds said it would be good to know when the planning permission for the skatepark camera was granted as the skatepark committee had contributed almost £11k to the project.

The property and projects assistant said he needed to establish how high the camera had to be, which would determine whether planning consent was required, although it was highly likely to be the case. Once submitted, the application should be determined within 12 weeks.

Antiques and Craft Centre leaks

Cllr M. Ellis said she understood the roof above the centre was as strong as a car park roof and she asked for clarity about what was allowed on it.

The deputy town clerk said the material used on the roof could withstand traffic and was used in multi-storey car parks, but the issue was point loading and damage to the material.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council had previously agreed what was and wasn't allowed on the roof and any uses must be consistent with that policy.

Drainage at Woodmead car park extension

The deputy town clerk said he was meeting with the owner of Beau Sejour and South West Water on site the following week.

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

The deputy town clerk said Natural England had confirmed it would take three to four months to determine the application for consent from DC.

Amenities hut

The deputy town clerk said he had had the first indication of price for a new hut from one contractor, which was substantially in excess of the agreed budget. He said requests had been received from all interested contractors that the tender return date was extended and this had been agreed, with a new deadline of 5 January 2024. If, when the tenders were returned, there was an issue with cost, a report would be taken to the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting on 24 January 2024.

Office and options feasibility study

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if the Strategy and Finance Committee could have a breakdown of the price quoted for the office refurbishment as he didn't know how the figure was arrived at.

The deputy town clerk said the quantity surveyor's report was attached to the agenda when the matter was considered and it included a breakdown of the figure.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council needed to keep its options open because if the alternatives could not be pursued, members needed to know as much information as possible to make a decision.

The deputy town clerk said there would be a report to the Strategy and Finance Committee about alternative office accommodation but this would not include the existing office because it had been ruled out by the council. He said the report would give a clear indication of the options and the indicative costs and officers would be looking for an instruction to proceed with further work on one of the options.

23/62/TMH Town Management and Highways Committee – Objectives

Cllr B. Larcombe said he felt a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) report would be useful to members to see what was behind or on schedule.

The deputy town clerk said unless members looked back at the previous agenda, it would be difficult to track changes in statuses using a RAG report. He said it would also need to be agreed what represented red, amber or green, whether it related to budget or programme, for example.

It was agreed the deputy town clerk would look into this and report back to members.

23/63/TMH To receive the minutes of the Traffic and Travel Working Group meetings held on 22 November and 13 December 2023

Cllr B. Bawden said the next meeting of the working group would be discussing a longer term vision and the following meeting a DC traffic planning officer would attend to explain some of the things DC was working on.

Cllr C. Reynolds said the town council could do very little about the issues which were in DC's control.

Cllr B. Bawden said the aim of developing a long-term vision was to enable the town council to influence things through the Local Transport Plan. She said the government and DC were asking for a vision-led approach and the town council should help to shape that vision.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr S. Cockerell, the minutes of the Traffic and Travel Working Group meetings held on 22 November and 13 December 2023 were **RECEIVED**.

23/64/TMH The Management of Marine Parade and Cart Road Motor Vehicular Access

It was noted this was an existing council policy that required updating and if anything came out of the Traffic and Travel Working Group that changed the arrangements on the seafront, the policy could be reviewed at that point.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Bawden, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the amended Marine Parade and Cart Road Motor Vehicular Access policy.

23/65/TMH Cart Road

The deputy town clerk said it was clear the Traffic and Travel Working Group wanted to make Cart Road more pedestrian friendly. However, when the council was last asked to formally consider the pedestrianisation of Cart Road, it rejected the idea. He said officers wanted the council, as opposed to the working group, to state its position before a lot of work was done to achieve this objective.

Cllr M. Ellis said she was not in favour of pedestrianising Cart Road as it was used by many disabled people.

Cllr C. Reynolds agreed and said there were very few places in the town for disabled people to park.

Cllr P. May said DC was discussing a proposal to give over Cobb Gate car park to disabled parking, which would reduce traffic on Cart Road. He said the working group was looking at ways to make Cart Road more pedestrian friendly, rather than to completely ban vehicles, because they recognised there were needs for access and deliveries.

Cllr G. Stammers said she would like to see Cart Road pedestrianised but it wouldn't work unless Cobb Gate car park was just for disabled parking and there would also be access requirements. She said it would take a lot of investigation and work.

Cllr B. Larcombe said drivers got close to people sitting on the Cart Road and there had been incidents of cars going over the edge of the road. He said parking wasn't allowed on the Cart Road in the past, this was a fairly recent introduction.

Cllr B. Bawden said the aim was to make Cart Road safer for people to walk on by not allowing vehicles to park there, but maintaining access for deliveries, etc. She said DC transport planners agreed designating Cobb Gate car park for disabled parking and a taxi rank was a good idea.

Cllr C. Reynolds said the council had a responsibility to consider equality and diversity in its decisions.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council also had a responsibility to protect public safety.

Cllr M. Ellis said she didn't think preventing parking would solve the problem as cars would still drive on the road.

Cllr B. Larcombe said signs could be placed at the entrance to make it clear there was no parking on the road. He said during Covid when parking was prohibited, this was extremely popular with the public.

Cllr B. Bawden said not having parked cars would provide extra width, which would make the road safer. She said she had also asked DC for disabled parking in Broad Street car park.

Cllr M. Ellis requested a recorded vote on the following motion:

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree the town council would like Cart Road to be made safer and more pedestrian friendly, including further restrictions to vehicle access and for Cobb Gate car park to be given over to disabled parking and limited taxi ranks, only.

Voted for – Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr B. Bawden

Voted against – Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr M. Ellis

Abstentions – Cllr G. Turner

23/66/TMH Improving Routes for Walking, Cycling and Wheeling

Cllr B. Bawden said there was various government legislation on de-carbonising transport and active travel and everyone was expected to make provision to better enable walking and cycling where possible, especially on shorter journeys so it was important for the council to be involved. She said there was talk of a cycle route between Lyme Regis and Bridport so the council could show its support for this. She added that DC had a traffic team looking at ways to improve pedestrian safety and access so there were suggestions the town council could make relating to this.

Cllr C. Reynolds said it wasn't possible to make pavements wider or create cycle routes in Lyme Regis.

Cllr B. Larcombe said there was no reason the council couldn't give its support to broader ideas and concepts in principle and it would then be for the highway authority to make them fit in appropriate areas.

Cllr B. Bawden said there were lots of barriers to walking and cycling in Lyme Regis so this could form part of the council's response to provide the evidence for DC to look into it.

Cllr M. Ellis was concerned improvements would be done piecemeal but what was really needed was a scheme for the whole of the town, as smaller solutions had a knock-on effect on other things. She felt each member should respond to the consultation as individuals, rather than three members responding with views that might not be those of the whole council.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to delegate the completion of the Active Travel Infrastructure Plan survey to the town clerk in consultation with three members from the Town Management and Highways Committee.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that Cllrs B. Bawden, P. May and B. Larcombe are delegated to work with the town clerk to complete the Active Travel Infrastructure Plan survey on behalf of the council.

23/67/TMH Monkey Bars

Cllr D. Ruffle said although monkey bars were deemed to be a high risk piece of equipment, there would presumably be safety matting on the ground. He said he had never seen the spider's web being used and he thought monkey bars would be well used.

Several members agreed it would be well used by children and it was noted this was requested by local schoolchildren when the council consulted on its objectives.

Cllr B. Bawden asked if there was scope to retain the spider's web and also have the monkey bars as it seemed a shame to lose a piece of equipment to accommodate a something that only children of a certain age would be able to use.

The acting operations manager said any piece of equipment needed to be 6ft clear of another so there would need to be a further budget allocated to do this. He said the spider's web could be kept in storage and could be reinstated in future if members wished.

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to proceed with the installation of monkey bars at Anning Road play park and to keep to spider's web in storage in case it can be reinstated in future.

23/68/TMH Outdoor Gym Equipment

Cllr C. Reynolds said there wasn't enough for young people to do in the town and as the council had already agreed to this project, it was just a matter of deciding where it should go. She knew of other places with this equipment and it was well used.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he knew of other places which had gym equipment but it was no longer used. He said the town had a remarkable amount of things for young people to do and he wasn't sure if this would represent good value for money.

Cllr M. Ellis said the equipment could be used by people of all ages and the focus was very much on keeping active.

Cllr B. Bawden said Woodroffe School had gym equipment in the playing field but it was now closed off to the public, although she was going to ask if people could continue to use this equipment as well.

Cllr G. Stammers said the council needed to consider whether the equipment should be in one location or on a trail.

Cllr B. Larcombe said this was a secondary objective for 2023-24 and it concerned him there was growing expenditure for other projects.

Cllr P. May said this report was not to allow members to decide whether to have the gym equipment, it was to decide its location. He said members needed to find a process for deciding where it would be located and he suggested three members should investigate this and report back.

The acting operations manager said there were only two possible locations: the lower side of the basketball court in Anning Road playing field or the putting green in Lister Gardens.

Cllr D. Ruffle said the perfect place for the equipment would be the gardens as it would be accessible to both residents and visitors and would be well used in this location.

Proposed by Cllr D. Ruffle and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to proceed with the installation of outdoor gym equipment on the putting green in Lister Gardens.

Cllr B. Bawden left the meeting at 8.12pm in line with her pecuniary interests.

23/69/TMH MUGA at Anning Road Playing Field

The deputy town clerk said the consultation showed there was overall support for the multi-use games area (MUGA) and the sports that were most widely supported were football, netball and basketball, although there were suggestions for other sports including hockey and tennis. However, there were also comments from people who didn't want the MUGA. He said if the council was going to achieve this objective, it needed to get on with it as it was already at the point where it was not going to be delivered in this financial year.

The deputy town clerk said the MUGA was likely to require planning permission because of the location, proximity to the highway and the height of the fencing. If the council agreed to proceed, he suggested inviting prices from experienced providers on a turnkey basis as the council wanted to avoid getting involved in the individual aspects of the project. However, he said it probably made sense for the BMX humps to be removed by a local contractor.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if any concerns had been raised by neighbouring residents.

The deputy town clerk said there were some people who didn't want the MUGA and also concerns about noise and parking.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked what the booking arrangements would be for the facility.

The deputy town clerk said the council should avoid complicated booking arrangements and this was probably the reason not to accommodate tennis. He said it either needed to be a facility that was free for all to use or it potentially needed to be picked up as part of the wider discussion on the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion and how it was managed more generally.

Cllr C. Reynolds said she had spoken to residents who had said they didn't want the MUGA because they thought it was going to be building so they had said no for the wrong reasons. She said most of the people who complained lived near the playing field but if this was the case, they must expect to hear children playing. She said football was played at the field every week so parking was already an issue.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there were any age restrictions on the facility.

The deputy town clerk said there were covenants affecting part of the pitch, which did not affect the area proposed for the MUGA. He said when the former borough council changed the use of the land proposed for the MUGA from housing to recreation, it said

it wanted it to be used for children up to the age of 15. However, this was a self-imposed restriction, not an external covenant.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to proceed with the project to build a multi-use games area at Anning Road playing field and instruct officers to obtain formal quotes from contractors on a turnkey basis.

Cllr B. Bawden returned to the meeting at 8.25pm.

23/70/TMH Candles on the Cobb Pavilion

The deputy town clerk said one of the concerns officers had was around the running costs of the building and there was very little effort from the principal users of the building to control these costs. He said it was suggested there needed to be a more comprehensive management agreement between the council and the users of the building.

Cllr C. Reynolds said when the building was constructed, it was done by voluntary labour and there was no damp course put in, which was why there were so many problems with it. She said the agreement signed by the council meant it had to repair and maintain the building but the council needed to be in control of what happened to it.

Cllr G. Stammers said the use of the building should be extended to other groups so it could be regularly used as a community space.

It was proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds that:

- the Guidelines for Future Support relating to the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion is replaced with a more detailed management agreement that oversees the use of the pavilion and any agreement should be supported by an oversight mechanism, such as an annual report to a council committee, and a management mechanism to ensure routine inspections and repairs are undertaken
- the use of the Candes on the Cobb Pavilion is broadened by actively promoting its use in the community.
- the use of electricity at the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion is capped and any additional cost above that cap is met by pavilion users.

Cllr B. Larcombe said there needed to be a representative group that was responsible for the pavilion and he suggested a voluntary group could take on the administration of the building. He said the council didn't have a firm grip of who was using the building and what they were doing in it.

The deputy town clerk said only youth football were using the pavilion.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that:

- the Guidelines for Future Support relating to the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion is replaced with a more detailed management agreement that oversees the use of the pavilion and any agreement should be supported by an oversight mechanism, such as an annual report to a council committee, and a

management mechanism to ensure routine inspections and repairs are undertaken.

- the use of the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion is broadened by actively promoting its use in the community.
- the use of electricity at the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion is capped and any additional cost above that cap is met by pavilion users.
- the council should seek engagement with a voluntary group to assist with the management of the building.

23/71/TMH Gazebo in the Gardens

The acting operations manager said if the gazebo was removed, the existing seating could be left in situ. He pointed out there was so budget to replace the gazebo or the seating.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to confirm the in-principle decision to remove the gazebo in the Langmoor Gardens and to leave the existing seating in situ for the time being with a suggestion to improve it in future if the budget allows.

23/72/TMH Bell Cliff Advertising Boards

Cllr C. Reynolds said the advertising spaces should be reserved for businesses in the DT7 area, which would mean the removal of two taxi boards.

Cllr G. Stammers asked when the taxi boards would be taken down as presumably they had paid for a full year.

The support services manager said the year would end on 31 March 2024 so they could be taken down at that point.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he didn't think it was fair for businesses to have an advertising space indefinitely and there should be an annual allocation like the council did for grants or beach huts.

Cllr M. Ellis said businesses invested in the boards when they had them made.

Cllr C. Reynolds suggested the boards could be rotated every three or five years, rather than every year.

It was proposed by Cllr P. May that companies with advertising boards on Bell Cliff must have a DT7 postcode, including taxi companies, companies may only have one board, and three spaces are allocated for taxi companies.

Cllr G. Stammers said as there would only be two taxi companies with boards, this would mean the third space would be empty if there wasn't another taxi company in the DT7 area.

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe that companies with advertising boards on Bell Cliff must have a DT7 postcode, including taxi companies, and companies may only have one board.

Cllr B. Bawden said there was another Lyme Regis-based taxi firm and suggested asking them if they wanted the space.

The acting operations manager suggested giving the third space to another business and if a taxi company then requested a space, it would be given priority.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that companies with advertising boards on Bell Cliff must have a DT7 postcode, that two spaces on the Bell Cliff railings are allocated to taxi companies and the third space is reserved for taxi companies but may be taken by another business for at least 12 months, and if a taxi company wishes to take the place, they will take priority and the other business will return to the top of the waiting list.

23/72/TMH Energy Performance Certificates and Let Commercial Buildings

The property and projects assistant said most of the council's let commercial buildings were achieving very good energy efficiency. He said if the council made improvements to enhance energy efficiency and therefore reduce energy bills, perhaps the tenants should be contributing to those improvements. He said the best time to have these conversations was at the time of lease renewal and four renewals were taking place this year.

Cllr B. Bawden asked if the council's commercially let buildings were classed as public buildings or commercial buildings as there was funding available to improve energy efficiency of public buildings.

The deputy town clerk said he didn't believe the commercially let buildings were classed as public buildings.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr R. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct officers to keep a watching brief on government legislation concerning energy performance and environmental targets insofar as it applies to the council's commercial buildings and to report back to the Town Management and Highways Committee should any changes be proposed that might impinge on the council's long-term commercial income.

Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 8.59pm.

23/73/TMH Beach and Badger, Lister Room, Request for Canopy over Patio Area

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if the proposed canopy would require planning permission.

The deputy town clerk said it was likely to require planning permission and the tenant had been informed of this. He clarified that the screen shown at the side of the canopy in the image could be pulled down to different levels on all sides.

Cllr B. Bawden said the council made the decision to allow commercial activity in the Lister Room at a time when it was worried about its finances and since then, the council had stated the use of that area should be for community use. Therefore, she wasn't comfortable about extending the commercial use in a physical way.

Cllr P. May said umbrellas would be adequate and it was up to the tenant to find a solution which didn't involve a permanent structure in the gardens.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he was concerned about the design as it didn't have any guttering or run-off. If agreed, he asked if this would be reflected in the rent the council charged the tenant.

The deputy town clerk said it wouldn't affect the rent as it would be deemed a 'tenant's improvement'.

Cllr C. Reynolds said members should remember they agreed to rent the space commercially to the tenant. She said if the tenant wanted to protect the outside space, perhaps the council could request something that didn't require planning permission.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Bawden, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to refuse the request from the commercial tenant of the Lister Room to install a canopy over the outside patio area.

23/74/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Cllr B. Bawden said there had been many complaints around the town about dogs, not just on the beach but in all areas and about people not picking up after them.

The acting operations manager said he had sent a log of complaints to DC and would continue to do so regularly.

Cllr B. Bawden said she had asked DC to send dog wardens to Lyme Regis because at the moment they didn't come as a matter of policy.

It was agreed any members of the public who complained to members should be told to complain directly to DC.

23/75/TMH Commercial Properties – Lease Renewals and Rent Reviews

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, 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.

23/76/TMH Exempt Business

a) Commercial Properties – Lease Renewals and Rent Reviews

The property and projects assistant said negotiations had gotten to a point where a rent had been agreed with the Kiosk, subject to member approval.

The deputy town clerk said it was very unusual to see a rent increase and members couldn't expect to see this on a routine basis because this wasn't happening in most places.

Cllr B. Bawden said she was concerned about the amount of litter in the area around the Kiosk and felt the council should make tenants more responsible for litter. She said lease renewal time could be the time to address this.

The deputy town clerk said there would be provisions in the lease not to cause litter and nuisance of any kind so in some respects it was a management issue but also a capacity issue with the bins.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note ongoing negotiations in respect of lease renewals at the Amusement Arcade, National Trust Shop, and Lyme Rocks, and a rent review at Boylo's and approve agreed terms for a rent review at the Kiosk.

The meeting closed at 8.51pm.