

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH 2023

Present

Chairman: Cllr R. Smith

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: M. Adamson-Drage (operations manager), C. Austin (administrative and community engagement assistant)

Guests: J. Besley (eRIB Round Britain Project), L. Davis and V. Elcoate (River Lim Action Group)

22/49/ENV Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

22/50/ENV Apologies

Cllr D. Ruffle - holiday

22/51/ENV Minutes

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, the minutes of the meeting held on 01 January 2023, were **ADOPTED**.

22/52/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr P. May declared non-pecuniary interests in agenda item 11, River Lim Action Group – Update Report as he was a member of the group, and item 12, Community Energy Champions, as he was a community energy champion.

Cllr B. Bawden declared non-pecuniary interests in the same agenda items for the same reasons.

22/53/ENV Dispensations

There were none.

22/54/ENV Matters arising from the previous meeting held on 01 January 2023

Cllr B. Bawden gave updates on the carbon literacy organisation accreditation and said a carbon toolkit was to launch the following week alongside a national launch of a parish, town and community council toolkit.

The operations said the second bathing water quality meeting had taken place as planned and the minutes would be presented at the next committee meeting.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked whether the tide times had been added to the water quality noticeboard.

The operations manager said this was still being investigated.

22/55/ENV Update Report

Cllr B. Bawden said more electric vehicle charging points had been installed at Holmbush car park

Members discussed public access to information on electric vehicle charge point locations.

22/56/ENV eRIB Round Britain – Update

The chairman invited J. Besley from the eRIB Round Britain project to give a presentation to members. She said there would be a start and finish event in Lyme Regis co-ordinated with the harbour master and the operations manager.

22/57/ENV Designation of Church Cliff Beach as a Bathing Beach

Cllr B. Larcombe said he had concerns over Church Cliff Beach being a dog-friendly designated beach.

Concerns were also raised over the safety of the beach without a lifeguard station.

Cllr R. Smith said Church Cliff Beach would be regularly tested for harmful bacteria.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the RNLI lifeguard station currently based on the main sandy beach should also cover Church Cliff Beach. He said he would take a proposal to the harbour users' group to enquire about availability from the RNLI.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the draft letter to be sent to the committee for the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in support of the designation of Church Cliff Beach as a bathing beach.

22/58/ENV River Lim Action Group - Update

The chairman invited L. Davis and V. Elcoate from the River Lim Action (RLA) Group to give a presentation to members.

V. Elcoate said South West Water had responded quickly and were dedicated to resolving the problems regarding illegal pollution into the river. Several properties in Woodmead Road had been tested for misconnections.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the results from the Town Mill hotspot area, tested in February were alarming. He said the Town Mill area of Lyme Regis was the oldest part of the town and questions on whether old pipes could be the cause of the problem were raised and discussed.

V. Elcoate said the River Lim Action Group had been testing the river for levels of E-Coli, and the results had been backed up by the reports from the Environment Agency. She said the main concern was the presence of ammonia, which indicated sewage pollution and regular monitoring of the river would be carried out. She said the town council was funding a river corridor survey of the Lim and the contracted ecologist had done an initial survey of the area. She said the work would be carried out in the spring and the River Lim Action Group expected to have the full survey report by the end of September 2023.

L. Davis said Monmouth Beach pumping station pipe was shortened due to a degrading pipe and reports of combined sewer overflow release at Monmouth Beach had raised concerns. She said the Environment Agency had agreed to investigate the issue.

L. Davis said the harbour dredging undertaken by Dorset Council had found no E-Coli present in the sediment and was being tested for heavy metal content.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he was concerned about bad publicity for a tourist hotspot.

L. Davis said the success of the collaborative working between South West Water, the Environment Agency and the River Lim Action Group would create positive headlines.

Cllr R. Smith thanked the River Lim Action Group for all the hard work and dedication put in to resolving the river pollution problems.

V. Elcoate said the River Lim Action Group would launch Riverfly monitoring in May, which involved training by Dorset Wildlife Trust.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the funding request of £400 from the environment budget to pay for Riverfly training in May 2023, if the River Lim Action Group cannot secure funding elsewhere.

22/59/ENV Environment Policy Review

Members discussed the current policy and raised concerns over whether it was comprehensive enough.

Cllr P. May suggested the current policy was more of a work in progress and should take into account the wider environmental issues that were present.

Cllr B. Bawden said she did not want to approve the current policy as it did not mention the net zero policy or carbon literacy.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested the policy should be renewed annually.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the environment policy is adopted, however members recognise the policy needs updating and should be reviewed at the earliest opportunity.

22/60/ENV Proposed budget for Invertebrate Garden

Cllr P. May said the proposal did not currently have funding and the funding would need to come from the environment budget.

Cllr B. Larcombe said there was a balance of unspent monies from the environment budget.

As the recommendation from the Town Management and Highways Committee to create an invertebrate garden had yet to be approved by the Full Council, any recommendation to approve a budget for the project would need to be 'in principle'.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** approve, in principle, £3,000 for the element of the Plan Bee project by the table tennis from the environment budget.

22/61/ENV Community Energy Champions

Cllr P. May asked members to consider booking a 40-minute survey for their own homes so they could understand the process and could recommend the benefits of a consultation to others.

Cllr P. May said the Lyme area Community Energy Champions had received funding from several sources including Lyme Regis Town Council, 2030 Vision and Dorset Community Energy to provide thermal imaging surveys to households in the community. He said the funding from Dorset Community Energy required the group to work across communities.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to recognise the Lyme area Community Energy Champions deploy resources, including those funded by the town council, flexibly across Lyme Regis and the neighbouring parishes, in the interest of efficiency and volunteer availability.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.