

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2017

Present

Chairman: The Mayor, Cllr M. Ellis

Councillors: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr D. Hallett, Cllr P. Hicks, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr O. Lovell, Cllr S. Miller, Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, Cllr S. Williams

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

Guests: Mr R. Hussey (John Stark and Crickmay Partnership)

17/114/C Public Forum

Mr K. Gollop

Mr Gollop said he was pleased to see the council was going to talk about traffic issues in the town, but he hoped the public would be involved. He asked if there would be a public consultation to give the public a chance to give their views. He said there were plenty of experienced drivers in Lyme Regis who could identify pinch points and they needed to be involved. Mr Gollop said buses and lorries had to come into the town, but there were lots of small things which could be done to improve the situation, such as moving the Broad Street bus stop a few yards up the road and widening the pavement to create a bus stop, and altering signage.

The mayor, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said she believed there would be public consultation.

Mr R. McLaughlin

Mr McLaughlin said he was a director of Lyme Regis Community Land Trust (CLT), a charity run by local volunteers trying to achieve affordable rented housing for local people. He said he was sure councillors would be sympathetic to the plight faced by many people in the community who experience difficulty in finding a home to buy or rent affordably, partly because Lyme Regis is a desirable place to live or spend holiday time in, with many houses being holiday lets demanding high prices. He said this was exacerbated by the physical situation of the town, with very little land available to develop new homes. Mr McLaughlin said when a piece of land became available where housing could be built, market rates would apply and affordable units were unlikely to be built if the development was small, and this was likely to be the case in Lyme Regis. If affordable units were included, he said they may not be taken up by local people. Mr McLaughlin said in many rural and seaside towns and villages, the cohesion and viability of established communities was being eroded as local people were forced to move away from friends and family because they couldn't afford to live there. He said when young people moved away, it was unlikely they would come back, school rolls may fall, and other services may find it hard to survive. He said Lyme Regis was in danger of that vital element being eroded and needed local people to stay in the town. Mr McLaughlin said when a CLT was involved, it

could ensure those homes were allocated to local people. He said there were very few opportunities for providing housing in the town, and any opportunities that did arise should be considered. He said the CLT was asking to explore an opportunity with no obligation on or expense to the council, other than to ask for its support in principle.

Mrs L. Jenkin

Mrs Jenkin said in around 2008, Cllr O. Lovell brought a novel idea to the council; to build affordable housing on grass verges of car parks. She said for several reasons, including the financial situation at the time, nothing could be progressed beyond early plans. Mrs Jenkin said the climate for providing affordable homes had improved and the CLT had the experience and contacts to make a scheme work. She said the suggested scheme should be tested by a feasibility study, which the council would be able to scrutinise before any decisions were made. Mrs Jenkin said there were 43 Lyme Regis applicants on the Dorset Home Choice list for one-bedroom homes. She said this was a section of the local population that had been disadvantaged and ignored by a lack of suitable affordable homes, and they could be the target tenants of the proposed development at Woodmead car park. She said they were not seeking any commitment or financial outlay, just the nod that the CLT could start enquiries.

Mr N. Ball

Mr Ball said it was a shame more people didn't attend council meetings or supported the public consultation event Time to Talk. He said people didn't have the right to complain if they didn't support the council. He thanked the council for the £100 he won on the prize draw at Time to Talk.

Mr Ball said he wasn't convinced about the proposed café and toilets in the gardens as he was concerned about the finances involved, especially with the unitary proposals progressing, as the town council would need to have healthy finances.

Mr Ball thanked the operations manager for his report on public toilets, which highlighted what was really needed in the town.

Mr Ball said he understood the CLT's position on the proposed affordable housing development on Woodmead car park but he questioned whether more housing was needed in the town.

Mr Ball said he would like the public to have the opportunity to make comments at the end of council meetings, as well as the beginning, to respond to what councillors had said. He said if the council wanted the public to keep coming to meetings, they needed to be able to voice their opinions as taxpayers.

D. Turner – Dorset County Council (DCC)

Cllr D. Turner gave an update on local government reorganisation. He said East Dorset District Council had met and voted to approve and support, by a small margin, the Secretary of State's position on creating two unitary authorities. He said Purbeck District Council, had supported it with a good margin. This meant all the authorities who would come under the Dorset area had approved the proposal.

Cllr D. Turner said Christchurch Borough Council was holding a ballot, but it was intended the council would be joined with Bournemouth and Poole, as far as the Secretary of State was concerned.

Cllr D. Turner said two signs requested by Mr K. Gollop had been installed, although they had been put in the wrong places, as it didn't give HGVs the opportunity to turn around. He said he had a meeting in the New Year to decide where they should be placed.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds – West Dorset District Council

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said she had visited some of the CLT houses in the district, but unfortunately no one from Lyme Regis Town Council was invited, even though it was a custodian trustee, and she had complained about this. She said the visit included Marshwood, Symondsburry, and the houses at Garmans Field in Lyme Regis. She said the Lyme Regis homes were well-finished and would hopefully be well allocated.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said she had met with Magna Housing Association's director to discuss problems experienced by Magna residents. She said she was awaiting responses to the points she raised.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said WDDC's Strategy Committee the following day would discuss the reduced train service to London, and it appeared officers supported reduced services from Axminster to London, from two an hour to one, but had not supported changes to services in Dorchester.

Cllr D. Turner said the South Western Railway consultation ended on 22 December 2017 and anyone could respond to this.

Also on the agenda for the meeting was transfer of WDDC toilets to Bridport Town Council. She said the transfer of assets was a continuing part of devolution and it would be interesting to see the outcome.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said there was also an item on the agenda regarding harbours, with a proposal for WDDC to charge more for winter boat storage to offset the increased charge levied by Lyme Regis Town Council.

17/115/C Questions from Councillors

Cllr D. Hallett

Cllr D. Hallett thanked all those who signed his get well soon card.

17/116/C Apologies for Absence

Cllr R. Doney – illness
Cllr S. Larcombe – family matters
Cllr P. Ridley – family matters
Cllr J. Scowen
Cllr G. Turner

17/117/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr O. Lovell declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 16, Business Case: Café, Toilets and Facilities for Amenities' Staff in Lister Gardens, as he had commissioned the architect involved to do work for him and he would leave the meeting for this item.

17/118/C Dispensations

There was no grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

17/119/C To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 1 November 2017

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. Hicks, the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2017 were **ADOPTED**.

17/120/C Matters arising from the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 1 November 2017

Cllr S. Williams asked if WDDC and DCC had agreed to match fund the grant agreed by the town council for the making of the Mary Anning Film.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said she was hopeful WDDC would provide funding, but DCC would not. She said if she could generate funding from within the town, she hoped the town council would still agree to the funding.

Cllr S. Williams asked for an update on the Sidmouth Road park and ride.

The town clerk said the planning application had been submitted to East Devon District Council and a meeting was taking place between the town council and Uplyme Parish Council on 18 December 2017.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there would be an update to the next Town Management and Highways Committee on the Lister Gardens' boundary dispute.

The town clerk said the solicitor was still awaiting a response from the Land Registry, and had chased this up, and the response would be reported to the committee when it was received.

In response to a member question, the town clerk said he intended the following day to appoint Club WiFi to install seafront wifi, with a provisional implementation date of 30 and 31 January 2017.

17/121/C Update Report

Members noted the report.

17/122/C Mayor's Announcements

Members noted the report.

17/123/C Planning Committee

Cllr D. Hallett said he was concerned that Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds had abstained from voting on a planning application at the meeting, but had then spoken in favour of the application, on the town council's behalf, at WDDC.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds she represented the views of the town council to WDDC and believed she had acted legitimately. She said she had taken advice on this matter previously but she would take further advice.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 14 November 2017.

17/124/C Human Resources Committee

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 8 November 2017 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

17/51/HR – Christmas and New Year Working Arrangements

RESOLVED: to close the office at 12noon on Friday 22 December 2017 and re-open at 9am on Tuesday 2 January 2017: discretionary days 12noon to 5pm on 22 December and all day 27 December, and statutory days on 28 and 29 December.

Cllr B. Larcombe said an update report on the proposed new contracts of employment and a copy of the new contract would be taken to the next committee meeting on 10 January 2017.

In response to a member question, Cllr B. Larcombe said the report would include the impact of the proposed changes on every member of staff and the financial impact on the council.

The town clerk said a progress report and issues arising out of collective consultation would also be reported to the committee in January. He stressed that no decisions had been made on the contracts and individual consultation with employees would start in the New Year.

17/125/C Strategy and Finance Committee

Proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 29 November 2017 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

Cllr O. Lovell asked who arranged for Michael Potter from DCC to attend the meeting.

The town clerk said it was at members' request that Mr Potter was invited to a future meeting to answer questions. He said this would normally be dealt with by the Town Management and Highways Committee but Mr Potter couldn't attend the previous meeting.

The town clerk said it was an oversight that it was not included on the agenda but the decision was taken to allow Mr Potter to answer questions at the meeting.

Cllr O. Lovell believed an apology should be sent to Mr Potter.

There was some concern that members who were aware he was attending the meeting had time to prepare, and others hadn't. Cllr B. Larcombe requested a further meeting with Mr Potter.

The town clerk agreed a further meeting was required but suggested the town council needed to be properly prepared for it. He suggested a single item Town Management and Highways agenda to allow the council to agree its position.

Members agreed that once the council had agreed on some issues, these could be consulted on with the public.

17/71/SF – Internal Audit Report, Visit One 2017/18

RESOLVED: that the internal auditor's report and management responses relating to visit one 2017/18 be noted, and the existing provision of internal audit services with Darkin Miller be extended for a further two years to include 2018/19 and 2019/20.

17/72/SF – Financial Regulations

RESOLVED: that the reported breaches of financial regulations be noted and that the management actions set out below be approved and reviewed in 12 months' time:

- The threshold for obtaining three quotes is raised from £250 to £500 for goods and to £1,000 for services.
- For regular purchase items, the council enters in to a relationship with a preferred supplier for a period of up to three years in order to remove the requirement to continually obtain quotes for routine purchases and to maximise the opportunity to obtain discount for bulk orders.
- To consider purchase requirements alongside routine maintenance activities and programmed work and to store products locally where possible.
- To review major purchase decisions before orders are placed to help ensure the council doesn't inadvertently enter into a contractual relationship or unreasonably raise an expectation with a supplier.

17/74/SF – Budget and Precept, 2018/19 and Medium-term Financial Plan 2018-2022

RESOLVED: that the proposed 2018/19 budget be approved, the precept for 2018/19 be set at £120,708, and the medium-term financial plan for 2018-2022 be noted.

17/75/SF – Unitary Authorities

RESOLVED: that the remit of the council's working group on West Dorset District Council's assets and services be extended to include Dorset County Council assets and services and that the working group has monthly scheduled meetings.

17/76/SF – Bowling Club Lease

RESOLVED: that consideration of the bowling club lease be referred back to the Assets-on-and-around Monmouth Beach Car Park Working Group for further and more detailed consideration to include the current capacity and configuration of the car parking area and the number of public spaces which could be achieved within that area at current recommended space standards and having regard to the existing and potential layout of the wider area, including any constraints imposed by the adjoining footpath; and that a further meeting be arranged with the bowling club, to include member representation.

17/77/SF – West Dorset District Council Programme Board

RESOLVED: that this council's participation in the West Dorset District Council Programme Board be approved and its terms of reference be noted, and this council sets up a working group, to meet monthly in the first instance, to consider this council's position on relevant issues and to inform the engagement of the town clerk and Cllr S. Miller with the programme board.

17/80/SF – List of Payments

RESOLVED: to approve the schedule of payments for October 2017 in the total sum of £124,440.39.

17/126/C Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr P. Hicks, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee held on 22 November 2017 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

17/54/TCP – Jubilee Pavilion Future Management and Use

RESOLVED: that alternative uses for the touch screen at the Jubilee Pavilion be looked at but that a solution to link it to the current tourism website is not pursued; that the events' screen and projector are left turned on and active for the time being; and that the position with regards to the volunteer co-ordinator and volunteers be noted and reviewed regularly, having regard to progress with other issues.

17/127/C Town Management and Highways Committee

Proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee held on 15 November 2017 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

17/63/TMH – Automatic Number Plate Recognition Cameras (ANPR)

RESOLVED: not to proceed with the project to install Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras and to re-consider the issue at a future meeting, with a proper examination of the need for any surveillance system and the options.

17/65/TMH – Langmoor and Lister Gardens, mobility

Although there was no recommendation from the committee on this item, Cllr S. Miller wanted Full Council to review the committee's position as he felt some members didn't fully understand the issue at the meeting.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the matter should go back to the committee for re-consideration, rather than at this meeting.

The town clerk advised that the matter should go back to the committee when members had the full report available, but further information would need to be made available to justify the committee re-considering the issue.

The mayor, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis advised Cllr S. Miller to discuss this with the committee chairman, with a view to taking the matter back to the committee if new information was available.

17/67/TMH – The Red Arrows Visit to Lyme Regis 2018

RESOLVED: to note the application to bring the RAF Red Arrows to Lyme Regis in 2018, and underwrite the cost up to a sum of £15,000.

17/68/TMH – Proposals for a Replacement Chalet at 7 Bowling Green

RESOLVED: to approve the designs for a replacement chalet at 7 Bowling Green.

17/71/TMH – Proposals to Amend Frontage Details at The Bay Restaurant, Marine Parade, Lyme Regis

RESOLVED: to support proposals to amend frontage details at The Bay Restaurant, Marine Parade, Lyme Regis as owner of the property, prior to the submission of a planning application to West Dorset District Council by the tenant.

17/128/C Financial Regulations

Proposed by Cllr S. Miller and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, members **RESOLVED** to approve the tracked changes to sections 5, 6, 10 and 11 of the council's financial regulations.

Cllr O. Lovell left the meeting at 8.06pm in line with his declaration of pecuniary interests.

17/129/C Business Case: Café, Toilets and Facilities for Amenities' Staff in Lister Gardens

Mr R. Hussey, of John Stark and Crickmay Partnership (JSCP) was invited to join the discussion for this item. In response to members' comments at previous meetings regarding the possibility of a timber-framed building, he said this would generate a saving of between £16,000 and £18,000 on the quoted costings.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he did not support this project for various reasons, including the high costs associated with the project amid the formation of a unitary authority which

would create demands on town council finances, the long pay-back period, the issue of constraining the new council administration with this level of commitment, and the risk that external grants may not be forthcoming.

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr S. Williams to hold the project to develop a café, toilets and facilities for the amenities' staff in Lister Gardens for 18 months until the new administration has the opportunity to consider the project, with the benefit of understanding the pressures of the new unitary authority on the town council and its finances.

This motion was not voted on at this point while debate continued.

Cllr S. Miller said he was in favour of the project for various reasons, including the need to provide toilets in this area, the need for a new amenities' hut, the need for the council to find new revenue streams to set against costs the town council might be asked to bear in future with the formation of a unitary authority, and the potential for the project to improve Lyme's offering to residents and visitors.

Several members said they were not against the idea of the project in general, but believed this was the wrong time and it should be put on hold until more was known about the impact of the unitary authority.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis to make provision in the 2018/19 budget for the project to develop a café, toilets and facilities for the amenities' staff in Lister Gardens.

As another motion had already been proposed and seconded, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis withdrew her proposal to allow the other motion to be voted on.

Cllr D. Hallett requested a recorded vote on the following motion.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr S. Williams, members **RESOLVED** to hold the project to develop a café, toilets and facilities for the amenities' staff in Lister Gardens for 18 months until the new administration has the opportunity to consider the project, with the benefit of understanding the pressures of the new unitary authority on the town council and its finances.

Voted for: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. Hicks, Cllr D. Hallett, Cllr S. Williams

Voted against: Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis, Cllr S. Miller

Abstentions: None

Cllr O. Lovell returned to the meeting at 8.18pm.

17/130/C Public Toilet Provision

Cllr S. Miller said he was concerned a lengthy tender process would delay the project, and was not entirely necessary as three quotes had been obtained, two of which were below the tender threshold set out in the financial regulations. He suggested members agreed one of the quotes for Marine Parade toilets at this meeting, and consider Candles on the Cobb Pavilion toilets at the next Town Management and Highways Committee meeting.

Cllr O. Lovell asked that the Town Management and Highways Committee considered the opening times for the toilets.

The town clerk advised that the council should go out to tender. He said this would allow members to refine exactly what they wanted, agree a proper specification, and to seek competitive tenders. He said if that meant a delay in starting work and the provision of temporary toilets in the summer, it was worth it to get the project right.

Proposed by Cllr O. Lovell and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve a way forward for public toilet provision in Lyme Regis to allow works to be completed by 30 June 2018, which based on the British Toilet Association report, may include refurbishing Marine Parade public toilets and/or installing public toilets in the Jubilee Pavilion and updating the Candles on the Cobb Pavilion toilets, and to commence a formal tender process for the works, which may include consultancy services for drawing up a tender pack with full specifications and may also include project management services.

17/131/C Budget and Precept, 2018/19 and Medium-term Financial Plan 2018-2022

The town clerk said the £400k identified in the 2018/19 budget for the café and toilets in the seafront gardens was no longer required due to the earlier decision not to proceed with this project. He said this changed the financial position from a deficit of £495k to a deficit of £95k.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there was a budget allocation to cover any financial implications of the new contracts of employment.

The town clerk said it was intended to meet any expenditure out of the 2017/18 budget.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve the 2018/19 budget, with a £95k deficit after an adjustment to remove £400k of expenditure identified for the project to provide café and toilets in the Lister Gardens, to approve a precept of £120,708 for 2018/19, and to note the medium-term financial plan.

17/132/C A Proposal for Housing on Woodmead Car Park

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said she was not prepared to support this project until the CLT homes at Garmans Field were allocated and it was known if they had been allocated to people with Lyme Regis connections.

This view was supported by other members, who were concerned that issues identified by WDDC's planning department in 2014 were still relevant, i.e. the proposal to build in a car park, the conflict between residents and car park users, the loss of parking, and the impact of the development on the character of the area. Members were also concerned there was a lack of understanding of what 'affordable' really meant.

Cllr B. Larcombe stressed the council was not against encouraging affordable homes, but said this was not the right location and there were concerns around allocations.

Cllr O. Lovell said the council had expressed an interest in the land identified for this project several years ago and had asked that the council was given priority if the land was disposed of. He said the council had to look after its own interests.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said other CLTs in West Dorset had representatives from local councils on their boards, and she asked that this could be looked into for the Lyme Regis CLT.

Proposed by Cllr S. Miller and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members **RESOLVED** not to support Lyme Regis Community Land Trust's outline proposal to develop affordable housing on Woodmead car park.

17/133/C Request to Locate a Defibrillator on Council-Owned Land

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members **RESOLVED** to approve the request to locate a defibrillator on Monmouth Beach adjacent to the council's parking machine.

17/134/C Renewal of Leases for Marine Parade Retail Units

Proposed by Mrs M .Ellis and seconded by Cllr O. Lovell, 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of a 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.

17/135/C List of Payments

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments for November 2017 for the sum of £200,919.91.

17/136/C Exempt Business

(a) Renewal of Leases for Marine Parade Retail Units

The town clerk informed members of a change requested by one of the tenants to the existing terms of the lease for their retail unit, specifically in relation to provisions contained in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr O. Lovell, members **RESOLVED** not to make the requested alteration to existing terms for the two principal retail units within the town council-owned Marine Parade Shelters.

The meeting closed at 9.16pm.