

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 AUGUST 2025

Present

Chairman: Cllr P. Evans

Councillors: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Caddy, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr M. Denney, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, Cllr D. Holland, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr A. Wood

Officers: A. Mullins (support services manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

Guests: Cllr B. Bawden (Dorset Council ward member), Rev Fi Budden, J. Cuff (rural housing enabler for Dorset)

The Rev Fi Budden gave a prayer.

25/27/C Public Forum

D. Hopper

D. Hopper said he and his business partner had an electric tuk tuk they would like to put to use. They would like to do shuttle runs between the seafront and car parks and wanted the council's thoughts on this.

25/28/C Dorset Council Matters

Members noted the report.

25/29/C Questions from Councillors

There were none.

25/30/C Apologies for Absence

There were none.

25/31/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr M. Ellis declared a pecuniary interest in planning application P/2025/02522 as it related to her place of work, and in minute number 25/13/TCP as her husband was a fire co-responder. She would leave the room if these items were discussed.

25/32/C Dispensations

There were none.

25/33/C To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council meeting held on 21 May 2025, adjourned to 28 May 2025

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council meeting held on 21 May 2025, adjourned to 28 May 2025 were **ADOPTED**.

25/34/C To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 18 June 2025

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Holland, the minutes of the extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 18 June 2025 were **ADOPTED**.

25/35/C Matters arising from the minutes of Annual Meeting of the Council meeting held on 21 May 2025, adjourned to 28 May 2025 and the extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 18 June 2025

The town clerk clarified that all references to September in the update about the Annual Governance and Accountability Return should be June.

25/36/C Update Report

Members noted the report.

25/37/C Presentation – Jacqui Cuff, Rural Housing Enabling Officer

The mayor, Cllr P. Evans invited J. Cuff to give her presentation, in which she spoke of the upcoming housing needs survey for Lyme Regis and asked if the town council and members would support the process. She said the survey would open on 5 September 2025 and would run for six weeks. She asked if the council would help to promote the survey and encouraged members to contact her to share their views.

Members agreed the council should support the housing needs survey and help to promote it.

Cllr G. Stammers arrived at 7.41pm.

25/38/C Planning Committee

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to minutes of the meetings held on 3 June, 24 June and 15 July 2025, to note the committee's comments made on planning applications under the power delegated by Full Council, and to note the recommendations made under the chairman and vice-chairman's delegated authority following the cancellation of the meeting on 13 May 2025.

A member asked why the election of the chairman and vice-chairman did not take place at the first committee meeting of the council year on 3 June 2025.

It was explained that members wanted to give Cllr P. May the opportunity to continue as vice-chairman, but was not present at the meeting on 3 June 2025, so the election was postponed until the following meeting on 24 June 2025. However, the minutes of 3 June 2025 incorrectly stated Cllr P. May was present at the meeting so it was noted this would need to be amended at the next Planning Committee meeting.

25/39/C Environment Committee

Proposed by Cllr S. Cockerell and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2025, and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

25/10/ENV – River Lim Action Group Report

RESOLVED: that the town council facilitates a meeting between the Environment Agency, Town Mill, River Lim Action Group and Lyme Regis Town Council to discuss issues with the fish passage in the river.

25/13/ENV – Appointment of Members to the Net Carbon Zero Emissions Working Group

RESOLVED: that the working group to oversee the action plan to obtain net carbon zero emissions by 2030 is continued.

RESOLVED: that V. Elcoate and J. Breeze be invited to sit on the working group together with Cllr P. May and Cllr S. Cockerell.

25/16/ENV – EcoVend Reverse Vending Recycling Machines

RESOLVED: that an EcoVend machine is considered as part of the 2026-27 budget-setting process and instruct officers to undertake a feasibility study.

24/18/ENV – Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy

RESOLVED: to delegate the response to Dorset Council's draft local nature recovery strategy to the town clerk in consultation with Cllr P. May and V. Elcoate.

25/40/C Human Resources Committee

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2025, and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

25/12/HR – Health and Safety Committee Membership

RESOLVED: to appoint Cllrs P. May and G. Stammers to the Health and Safety Committee.

25/13/HR – Health and Safety and Compliance Paperless System

RESOLVED: to approve the implementation of My-Compliance Management System to support the council's ongoing operations, compliance and health and safety responsibilities.

25/14/HR – Flexible Working Request

RESOLVED: to be open to the flexible working request from postholder 208 but to ask officers to have further discussions with the employee to try and reach a compromise that would allow the council to maintain service delivery and meet the employee's request for flexible working, with an update to be brought to the Full Council meeting on 6 August 2025.

25/41/C Strategy and Finance Committee

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2025, and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

25/11/SF – The Annual Review of the Communications/PR Policy and Procedure

RESOLVED: to approve the amended Communications/PR Policy and Procedure.

25/12/SF – Information Policy

RESOLVED: to approve the Information Policy.

25/15/SF – Investments and Cash Holdings

RESOLVED: to note the cash position at the end of June 2025 and to close the NS&I Wilkinson's investment account.

25/16/SF – List of Payments

RESOLVED: to approve the schedule of payments in April, May and June 2025 for the sums of £246,191.87, £355,697.70 and £254,406.16, respectively.

25/42/C Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee

Proposed by Cllr P. Evans and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2025, and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

25/12/TCP – Lyme Regis Post Office

ORIGINAL MOTION: to allow the Waffle House to divert £7,500 of the council's 2025-26 revenue grant allocated to part-fund a post office clerk to fund capital infrastructure works required for the provision of the post office.

ORIGINAL MOTION: that the council underwrites and, if necessary, fund further capital works up to £10,500 for the remaining post office infrastructure works, subject to satisfactory assessment of The Waffle House's financial viability by the finance manager and town clerk.

Cllr G. Stammers left the meeting at 7,47pm in line with her pecuniary interests.

The town clerk said he had been provided with details of the Waffle House's finances, as per the committee's instruction, and he would provide an update in exempt business.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, 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.

25/13/TCP – Fire Co-responder Service

RESOLVED: that the council sends a letter to South Western Ambulance Service Trust to express concern about the phasing out of the Fire Co-Responder role.

25/14/TCP – The Dorset Local Business Awards

RESOLVED: to approve £400 of unbudgeted expenditure to become the premier sponsor of the Dorset Local Business Awards in Lyme Regis.

25/15/TCP – Further Enhancing Weddings at the Guildhall

RESOLVED: to put forward beach weddings forward as a possible objective for 2026-27.

25/16/TCP – Midsummer Party in the Park 2025 and Planning for 2026

RESOLVED: to delegate Cllrs G. Caddy, S. Larcombe and N. Hampton-Rumbold, the assistant town clerk and the communications officer to the working group to plan Party in the Park 2026.

25/17/TCP – Housing Allocation Policy Consultation

RESOLVED: to delegate the final online survey response to Dorset Council's draft Housing Allocation Policy to the town clerk in consultation with Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr M. Ellis, and Cllr M. Denney.

25/18/TCP – Pleasure Boat, Vessel and Boatperson Licencing Policy

RESOLVED: to delegate the final online survey response to Dorset Council's Pleasure Boat, Vessel and Boatperson Licencing Policy to the town clerk in consultation with Cllr D. Holland and Cllr G. Caddy.

25/42/C Town Management and Highways Committee

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Caddy, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2025, and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

25/11/TMH – Traffic and Travel Strategy Working Group membership

RESOLVED: to appoint Cllrs C. Aldridge, S. Cockerell, P. May, G. Caddy, M. Ellis and C. Reynolds to the Traffic and Travel Strategy Working Group.

25/12/TMH – Bridport Household Recycling Centre

RESOLVED: to write to Dorset Council to register Lyme Regis Town Council's objection to any future introduction of a booking system at Bridport Household Recycling Centre.

25/13/TMH – Café in the Gardens

RESOLVED: not to take forward the proposal for the provision of a council-run café facility serving the Lister and Langmoor Gardens.

25/15/TMH – Public Electric Barbecues on the Beach

RESOLVED: not to pursue the proposal to install fixed public-use barbecue units on Lyme Regis beach.

25/16/TMH – Seafront Signage

RESOLVED: to agree a review of town-wide signage, including the seafront, be considered as part of the 2026-27 budget-setting process.

25/17/TMH – Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Clothing Banks

RESOLVED: to agree in principle to the request from the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Charity (DSAA) to place clothing donation banks on Lyme Regis Town Council land, subject to agreeing the specific locations at Anning Road Playing Field and Woodmead car park, but to review the situation if no suitable locations can be found.

25/18/TMH – Use of the Former Lister Room (now Terrace Café) – Outside Seating and Licensing Requests

RESOLVED: that authority is delegated to the town clerk in consultation with the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the Town Management and Highways and Planning Committees to consider the Terrace Café's requests for a covering over the outside

seating area and to sell a limited range of alcohol, on condition that if a unanimous position cannot be agreed, the matter be brought back to members for further consideration, and with the restriction that alcohol cannot be consumed off the premises.

25/21/TMH – Charity Collections on Council-Owned Land

RESOLVED: to maintain the current policy and restrict charity collections to the Marine Parade Shelters, other than when collections take place as part of a major event.

25/43/C Appointments to Council Committees

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Graham Turner to the Tourism, Community and Publicity and Town Management and Highways Committees.

25/44/C Gardens' Working Group

Members discussed whether the working group was still required, with a suggestion its work be incorporated into the Town Management and Highways Committee.

However, it was noted the working group was set up to allow it to have an oversight of issues in the gardens which affected several of the committees. The working group itself had agreed meetings should be held only twice a year and it was suggested the group continued on this basis.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members **RESOLVED** to approve the continuation of the Gardens' Working Group.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, members **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs C. Aldridge, N. Hampton-Rumbold, P. May, P. Evans, M. Ellis and C. Reynolds to the Gardens' Working Group.

25/45/C The Annual Review of the Complaints' Policy and Procedure

A member asked what the formal complaint was about. It was agreed more details would be provided in exempt business.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, 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.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve the complaints' policy and procedure and note the volume and nature of complaints received since May 2024.

25/46/C Location(s) for Council Meetings

Members considered whether to hold council meetings in the meeting room at the new council offices or to continue having meetings at the Guildhall.

Members acknowledged that the new meeting room was more comfortable, better for public participation and had better acoustics so people could hear proceedings. However, it was acknowledged that the Guildhall provided a level of formality and tradition for Full Council meetings and it was suggested committee meetings were held in the new meeting room and Full Council meetings were held at the Guildhall.

There was concern the new meeting room was smaller and wouldn't be able to accommodate large numbers of the public on the occasions there was a big audience. It was suggested a meeting could be moved from the new meeting room to the Guildhall if the council became aware of a large attendance, but the town clerk said this would not be possible as the council was required to advertise the location of a meeting three clear days in advance.

The town clerk said the new meeting room could accommodate around 20 people seated and there would be room for people to stand, although the public would be very close to the members.

It was proposed by Cllr P. May that all future council meetings are held in the meeting room at the new council offices, including Full Council.

This motion was not seconded.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that all council meetings except Full Council are held in the meeting room at the new council offices and Full Council meetings will continue to be held in the Guildhall.

25/47/C SW Councils – What Next?

The town clerk asked members to decide where to take this project next as he didn't think there was anything more officers could do and he sensed there was no appetite among members to take it forward.

Some members were concerned about abandoning the project because of the amount of time and money already invested in it and felt the issues between members were still present and required them to move forward as a collective group.

There was also concern about the impact it would have on staff to know members were unwilling to pursue the project.

The town clerk said it would have a bigger impact on the council as a collective body. Although he had seen an improvement in behaviour in recent months, he asked how

members would resolve issues in future. He was also concerned about how abandoning the project would look to the public and said members would have to justify the decision both individually and collectively.

It was pointed out that when the council initially agreed to engage South West Councils, half of the members were not on the council and therefore had not voted for it. Several members who had joined since said their feeling was there were no major problems and the perception in the town that members were constantly arguing was not accurate.

Although money had already been spent on the project, several members felt it would be best to save the rest of the money earmarked for the project.

It was suggested members would benefit from training on how to react to and deal with poor behaviour when it happened, as it often escalated very quickly. Although it was the responsibility of chairmen to stop the behaviour, this didn't always happen so it was felt other members should know how to do this.

Although some members felt the project should be pursued, it was acknowledged there was no point if some members were not willing as it needed to involve the entire membership.

The town clerk said there were some issues which had still not been addressed, including there being no mechanism for resolving conflict internally or identifying the council's values and purpose. He said the council had undertaken to do a governance review, involving the committee chairmen, and suggested some of these issues could be picked up as part of that review.

It was suggested vice-chairmen should also be involved in the review.

Members agreed they were committed to making things work between them but the current project was no longer feasible.

Proposed by Cllr M. Denney and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, members **RESOLVED** that the process so far with organisational development work had been beneficial but the council should save a significant amount of ratepayers' money and no longer pursue the project with South West Councils so it can be spent on something more beneficial, and to refer any outstanding issues to the previously agreed governance review to take forward, to also include vice-chairmen of committees.

25/48/C Red Arrows' Display

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members **RESOLVED** to approve an application to bring The Red Arrows to Lyme Regis and approve underwriting the project up to a sum of £10,000 from the 2026-27 budget.

25/49/C Woodroffe School Proposal

Some members were concerned about the level of the council's involvement in this project as it would increase the workload for staff and require the council to employ more staff.

Some members were also concerned about the viability of the project and the impact and reputational damage to the council if the facilities were suddenly closed to the public, as they had been in the past.

There was concern about how the member of staff would manage all the facilities at once and the level of training required, such as first aid and use of exercise equipment and machinery.

The town clerk said the school's contribution was to provide the assets and the council's contribution would be to pay for someone to manage the facilities. An online booking system would be required but this wouldn't take much management. He said the £30k contribution was an estimate and a more detailed proposal would be required, if members agreed it should be further developed.

Proposed by Cllr M. Denney and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members **RESOLVED** that the council sees merit in the The Woodroffe School's proposal to open its facilities to the public in the evening, weekend and school holidays in partnership with the council and to instruct officers to undertake the necessary investigation to bring a more detailed proposal to members.

25/50/C Dorset Local Plan

Members noted the report.

25/51/C Cadet Hut and Site

It was noted there was the potential to work with South West Water to determine the future use of the site but more details would be provided at the Full Council meeting on 10 September 2025 about South West Water's plans.

25/52/C Flexible Working Request

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, 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.

25/53/C Exempt Business

a) Flexible Working Request

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members **RESOLVED** to approve the flexible working request from postholder 2028 and the revised rota and hours, following further consultation with postholder 208, in line with the 'minded to decision' position adopted by the Human Resources Committee.

b) The Annual Review of the Complaints' Policy and Procedure

The assistant town clerk provided more details about the one official complaint received by the council within the last year.

c) 25/12/TCP – Lyme Regis Post Office

Cllr G. Stammers left the meeting at 9pm in line with her pecuniary interests.

The town clerk gave his assessment of the Waffle House's financial situation.

Members were concerned about the risk to the council in investing further funding in the post office but were mindful that the town was in need of the service. There was a suggestion the council defers a decision until the financial situation was more stable.

However, the town clerk said the Waffle House was intending to start work on the post office counter in August, to be ready to open in September; delaying a decision would mean it would not go ahead according to this schedule and there was a risk it wouldn't go ahead at all.

The town clerk suggested he met with the Waffle House directors to discuss the issue in more detail, along with the finance manager, mayor and chairman of the Strategy and Finance Committee, and responsibility is delegated to him to make a final decision.

It was suggested an extraordinary meeting could be called so the final decision was not left to the town clerk.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr M. Denney, members **RESOLVED** that the town clerk, the mayor and chairman of the Strategy and Finance Committee have a meeting with The Waffle House to get more details about the post office project and, if necessary, to have an emergency meeting of the Full Council to make a decision before the end of August.

The meeting closed at 9.19pm.