

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2026

Present

Chairman: Cllr P. Evans

Councillors: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Caddy, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr M. Denney, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr D. Holland, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr A. Wood

Officers: C. Austin (communications officer), H. Dyson (administrative assistant), M. Green (deputy town clerk), A. Mullins (assistant town clerk), AM Shepherd (administrative and community engagement officer), J. Wright (town clerk)

Apologies: Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, Cllr P. May

26/01/C To formally install a chairman of the council (Town Mayor)

Cllr D. Holland nominated Cllr P. Evans as mayor for the 2026-27 council year, seconded by Cllr A. Wood.

There being no other nominations, Cllr P. Evans was **ELECTED** as mayor for the 2026-27 council year.

26/02/C To formally install a vice-chairman of the council (Deputy Town Mayor)

Cllr G. Caddy nominated Cllr A. Wood as deputy mayor for the 2026-27 council year, seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge.

There being no other nominations, Cllr A. Wood was **ELECTED** as deputy mayor for the 2026-27 council year.

Proposed by Cllr D. Holland and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, members **RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting until 7pm on Wednesday 27 May 2026.

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Present

Chairman: Cllr P. Evans

Councillors: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Caddy, Cllr M. Denney, Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr A. Wood

Officers: C. Austin (communications officer), M. Green (deputy town clerk)

The Rev Fi Budden gave a prayer.

26/01/C Public Forum

The chairman said he was prepared to allow members of the public to speak on matters on the agenda for a period of no longer than three minutes and up to a maximum of 20 minutes, on this occasion, despite there being no public forum on the agenda.

S. Lloyd

S. Lloyd said she had questioned the council by email regarding the decision to suspend the public forum and had received a response by email prior to the meeting. She understood there were issues that needed to be worked through and she was disappointed to be excluded from speaking following on from the previous meeting of the Full Council. She said she wanted to understand the decision, and she hoped it could return to a point where the public could start speaking again.

26/02/C Questions from Councillors

There were none.

26/03/C Apologies for absence

Cllr D. Holland – illness
Cllr S. Larcombe – illness
Cllr P. May - holiday
Cllr C. Reynolds – illness

26/04/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

26/05/C Dispensations

There were none.

26/06/C To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 13 May 2026

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 13 May 2026 were **ADOPTED**.

26/07/C Matter arising from the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 13 May 2026

Sale of former offices

The deputy town clerk said progress on the sale was continuing at pace with, with the purchaser eager to proceed so he could carry out the proposed works to the building.

Public representation at council meetings

A member asked for clarification on whether responses would be given to questions or comments raised in the public forum.

The deputy town clerk said this would be addressed as part of the ongoing discussion of the standing orders.

26/08/C Update Report

There were no updates.

26/09/C Reaffirmation of the Eligibility Criteria required to hold the General Power of Competence

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members **RESOLVED** that Lyme Regis Town Council meets the eligibility criteria to hold the General Power of Competence.

26/10/C Appointments to Council Committees

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members **RESOLVED** to suspend standing order 5.j.vii which requires the appointment of members to existing committees at the annual meeting, and to leave the committee membership as it was currently, until the new governance arrangements are in place.

26/11/C Appointments to External Bodies 2026-27

As there were vacancies on the A35 Parish Group and the Rural Market Towns Group, members asked for more information about them.

The deputy town clerk said it was unknown how often the A35 Parish Group met, but he thought it would benefit the council to be represented as there were ongoing discussions about sections of the A35 and road closures that may affect services or events in the town. He said he was the officer representative for the Rural Market Towns Group and received email notifications regularly but was unaware of how often the group met.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr M. Denney, members **RESOLVED** to make appointments to external bodies for 2026-27 as follows:

- **A35 Parish Group** – Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold (participating), Cllr A. Wood (substitute)
- **B Sharp** – Cllr P. Evans (participating)
- **Bridport and District Citizens Advice Bureau** – Cllr S. Cockerell
- **Charmouth Road Allotments Association** – Cllr S. Larcombe (liaison)
- **DAPTC (Western Area Committee and Larger Councils)** – Cllr C. Aldridge (participating), Cllr P. May (substitute)
- **Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue** – Cllr A. Wood (participating), Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold (substitute)
- **LymeArts Community Trust** – Cllr M. Denney (liaison)
- **Lyme Regis/Barfleur Twinning Association** – Cllr P. Evans (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Charities** – Cllr M. Ellis and Cllr G. Caddy (five-year appointment) (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Christmas Lights Committee** – Cllr M. Ellis (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Development Trust** – Cllr C. Aldridge and Cllr S. Cockerell (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Foodbank Community Interest Company** – Cllr C. Reynolds
- **Lyme Regis Harbour Consultative Group** – Cllr D. Holland (participating), Cllr C. Reynolds (substitute member)
- **Lyme Regis Museum** – Cllr G. Caddy (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Museum (Fossil Festival)** – Cllr P. May (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Regatta and Carnival Committee** – Cllr P. Evans (participating)
- **Lyme Regis/St George's Twinning Association** – Cllr P. Evans (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Society** – Cllr C. Aldridge (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Town Mill Trust** – Cllr M. Denney (participating)
- **Lyme Regis Town Band** – Cllr C. Reynolds
- **RNLI Lifeboat Guild** – Cllr G. Turner and Cllr G. Caddy (participating)
- **Royal British Legion** – Cllr G. Stammers (participating)
- **Rural Market Town Group** – Vacant
- **The Community Waffle House CIC** – Cllr D. Holland (participating)
- **The Lyme Regis 'Visitor Hub'** – Cllr M. Ellis (participating)
- **Turn Lyme Green** – Cllr P. May and Cllr G. Stammers
- **Woodmead Halls** – Cllr P. May
- **Youth Council** – Cllr C. Reynolds (participating)

26/12/C Review of the Council's and/or Employee's Memberships of Other Bodies

The deputy town clerk said the only membership he was not sure whether the council needed to have was the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). He said he would investigate whether it was necessary.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr M. Denney, members **RESOLVED** to approve the annual membership subscriptions for the council and/or employees to advisory and professional bodies and requested more information about the subscription to the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

26/13/C Community Safety Accreditation Scheme

The deputy town clerk said there were huge benefits to this scheme, with two full-time posts now in place. He said the electric bicycles would benefit their jobs and officers would aim for best value for money.

Members supported the idea of electric bicycles and emphasised they needed to be fit-for-purpose.

Proposed by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members **RESOLVED** to change the job title of enforcement officer to town ranger and approve unbudgeted expenditure of £4,000 to purchase liveried bikes for the officers.

26/14/C Beach Cleaning

The deputy town clerk said the work had previously been undertaken by the external works' team, typically starting work as early as 5am. However, there had been changes in the staff team recently that had affected the ability to cover this work so the proposed seasonal tractor driver role would provide dedicated cover.

Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 7.19pm

Proposed by Cllr A. Wood and seconded by Cllr G. Caddy, members **RESOLVED** that the council approves the employment of a seasonal tractor driver to undertake early morning beach cleans.

Cllr M. Ellis returned to the meeting at 7.20pm

26/15/C Relationship with the Cobb Traders and Others

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, 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.

26/16/C Outside Seating

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, 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.

26/17/C Future Use of Langmoor Room and Proposal for Summer Use

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, 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.

26/18/C Exempt Business

a) Agenda item 14 - Relationship with Cobb Traders and Others

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Caddy, members **RESOLVED** to formally determine its relationship with the Cobb Traders as follows:

- to retrospectively approve the statement issued on 21 May 2026
- to retrospectively approve the suspension of the public forum at council meetings, to be reviewed in autumn 2026.
- to consider legally banning or excluding individuals from attending council meetings if their behaviour causes distress, intimidation or disruption to council staff, given the council's legal duty of care to protect their employees from harassment and unsafe working environments
- to consider abandoning meetings if deemed necessary
- to review the situation in the autumn, with a view to reinstating the public forum at that point
- a cessation of contact with the Cobb Traders and those seeking to unreasonably disrupt the business of the council, to be reviewed in September 2026
- to suspend any projects agreed with the Cobb Traders and they may be withdrawn by future resolution of the council
- when the public forum is reinstated, to require any person or organisation submitting a question to the Full Council or one of its committees to do so at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting, which will allow responses to be prepared for the meeting
- to not accept repetitive, abusive, intimidatory and vexatious questions, along with questions that are aimed at bringing down or paralysing the council and/or are at the detriment of service delivery to the town's electorate

- to keep a log of retrospective and future incidents of harassment, intimidation, bullying, hostility and abuse, with all councillors and staff encouraged to record incidents
- to review the council's standing orders to these reflect changes in operation
- to review the council's policies that refer to intimidation, bullying, hostility, abuse and general lack of respect, including the possible introduction of a dignity at work policy
- to seek provisional legal advice on the measures the council can take to address harassment, intimidation, bullying, hostility and abuse and/or any other forms of aggressive and/or inappropriate behaviour
- to formally notify the police of the actions and behaviours the council has experienced recently, which will also function as a marker for any repeated or escalation in adverse behaviour
- to consider issuing further statements based on future events
- to consider lobbying external organisations, including the press, trade and professional bodies about the extent and intensity of harassment, intimidation, bullying, hostility and abuse experienced by the council and its staff
- to consider the possibility of live streaming council meetings to encourage openness and transparency, improve inclusion, accessibility and democracy, and to force people to modify their behaviour if they know they are being watched

b) Agenda item 15 – Outside Seating

Cllr G. Stammers left the meeting at 8.18pm in line with her pecuniary interests.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve the unbudgeted expenditure of £17,908 to refund an additional proprietor for outside seating charges, to remove the unspent and uncommitted element of the council's £25,000 2026-27 budget to undertake repairs to Bell Cliff steps and railings and to note the latest position regarding outside seating at Lyme Fish Bar and the Swim.

Cllr G. Stammers returned to the meeting at 8.33pm.

c) Agenda item 16 – Future Use of Langmoor Room and Proposal for Summer Use

Proposed by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members **RESOLVED** to use the Langmoor Room as a 'pop up' shop selling watersports goods during the months of June, July and August 2026, subject to the use of the room by the Regatta and Carnival Committee and other bookings.

The meeting closed at 8.38pm.