

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2017

Present

Chairman: Cllr S. Miller

Councillors: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr O. Lovell, Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, Cllr P. Ridley, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr S. Williams

Officers: Mrs A. Mullins (administrative officer), Mr J. Wright (town clerk)

17/40/SF Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

17/41/SF Apologies for Absence

Cllr D. Hallett – illness
Cllr P. Hicks
Cllr J. Scowen

17/42/SF Minutes

Cllr J. Broom said Cllr S. Williams was shown as being absent and present, and he did attend the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, with the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2017 were **ADOPTED**.

17/43/SF Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr R. Doney declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 14, Review of Charges, relating to Bell Cliff advertising boards, as the Town Mill Brewery had a board. He said he would not take part in the discussion or vote.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis declared a pecuniary interest in anything relating to the Woodmead Halls.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 21, List of Payments, as her brother had received a payment.

17/44/SF Dispensations

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

17/45/SF Matters arising from the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting held on 6 September 2017

Members noted the report.

17/46/SF Update Report

West Dorset District Council, Assets and Services

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there was any sense of what would be discussed at the next meeting between clerks and mayors/leaders and the position being adopted by the town council.

Although there were no specific proposals made yet, the town clerk said the areas West Dorset District Council (WDDC) would want to consider included toilets, tourist information centre, street cleaning, local economy, and grants to organisations.

Members agreed all towns in West Dorset should be treated equally in terms of asset and service transfers.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said this issue was due to be discussed by WDDC's Strategy Committee and she would speak on it at the meeting.

17/47/SF Assets-on-and-around Monmouth Beach Car Park Working Group

In response to a member question, the town clerk said a follow-up meeting to consider the bowls club had not yet been arranged but members would be notified of the date.

17/48/SF The Process for Approving the 2018-19 Budget and the Medium-Term Financial Plan

The town clerk explained how the following six budget reports had been put together to guide members through the budget-setting process.

17/49/SF Statement of Internal Control, Risk Management Policy and Annual Risk Assessment

Members discussed some areas of concern, which included breaches of confidentiality by members, breaches of financial regulations, and loss of cash through theft or dishonesty.

The town clerk gave several examples of where financial regulations had been breached in the past year. He said the finance manager had put together a list of possible breaches, and a report on this would be brought to the next meeting on 29 November 2017.

The town clerk said in any organisation that dealt with cash, there would inevitably be a risk of money going missing, despite that organisation having processes in place to minimise the risk.

Cllr R. Doney said it was important members considered the risks and how they could improve their behaviour and actions. He also questioned how members could factor these risks into the council's business when making decisions. He said it might be helpful if members were alerted to issues that were high on the risk register when they were being considered.

The town clerk said future risk registers could show the score of the 'raw' risk, and the mitigated risk.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he was concerned about the high scores given to non-compliance of health and safety and staff morale.

The town clerk said there was a health and safety policy in place but there were gaps. However, this was something the operations manager had been asked to focus on.

The town clerk said there had been incidents in the past year which had affected staff morale, and he expected there to be some angst surrounding the introduction of new contracts and terms and conditions.

Cllr O. Lovell asked why member-member relationships had been identified as a risk, but staff-staff relationships were not.

It was agreed staffing issues, including staff-staff relationships, should be factored into the risk register.

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the statement of internal control and the town clerk's observations; to approve the risk management policy and the standard annual risk assessment; and to approve the draft risk register with the inclusion of staffing issues, including staff-staff relationships.

17/50/SF Procurement

The town clerk said there had been a significant amount of scrutiny of the council's business activities to make savings. He said over the next year he intended to focus on the external works' budget, where officers believed savings could be made and procedural anomalies resolved.

Cllr S. Williams said it seemed the council no longer put much work out to tender.

The town clerk said large jobs had gone out to tender, but there were instances where the work was specialised and suitable contractors were therefore limited. He said the press advert inviting local tradespeople to register an interest in carrying out repairs' work for the council had received no response, but this would be repeated.

The town clerk said the council may want to consider how it buys in services, and possibly bring in a contractor that could provide a range of services, which would also help with out-of-hours' cover.

Cllr O. Lovell said he hoped the scrutiny of the external works' budget would go to the Town Management and Highways Committee, as members should see a regular maintenance programme to decide how to budget for this over five years.

The town clerk said it was intended to implement a proper asset management strategy, which would outline a long-term strategy for investment, broken down into the required annual repairs and maintenance.

17/51/SF Budget Performance, 1 April – 31 August 2017 and Full-Year Forecast

The town clerk said the forecasted 2017/18 surplus was £97k, which was a healthy position, and broadly in line with where the council hoped to be at this point in the year.

17/52/SF Draft Medium-Term Financial Plan

The town clerk said the draft budget for 2018/19 was a base position, not taking into account any increase in income or costs.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked why office administration expenditure had decreased in 2018/19.

The town clerk said he would check the reasons for this and report back to members.

Cllr O. Lovell said when the council was setting its budget, it should be made clear what the council was spending on services previously provided by WDDC and Dorset County Council (DCC).

Cllr J. Broom said the council should consider increasing the precept to prepare for the impact of the formation of a unitary authority in Dorset.

The town clerk said the council had made a policy commitment not to increase the precept for the life of this administration, although it was sensible to start thinking about this for 2019/20 and beyond.

It was agreed the council would stand by this policy commitment, but would consider an increase in 2019/20, when the situation with a unitary authority would hopefully be clearer.

Members noted and endorsed the report and agreed officers would prepare the detailed 2018/19 budget for consideration by this committee on 29 November 2017.

17/53/SF Review of Charges

Cart Road beach hut hire

It was proposed by Cllr S. Williams to increase 2019 Cart Road beach hut hire charges by 5%.

This motion was not seconded.

Members discussed whether to decrease charges where occupancy was low, particularly January to Easter.

It was proposed by Cllr O. Lovell and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe to increase 2019 Cart Road beach hut hire charges by 2%.

The town clerk said although officers had proposed decreasing some charges, the proposed rates represented a c.7% increase overall.

Cllr O. Lovell withdrew his proposal, with the consent of Cllr B. Larcombe as seconder.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve 2019 Cart Road beach hut hire charges as follows:

	Proposed rates 2019
January– Easter	£10
Easter Holiday	£45
April– Spring Holiday	£25
Spring Holiday	£50
June	£45
July- August	£120
September	£45
October	£25
November- December	£16
Christmas and New Year	£35
Winter season	£150
Summer season	£950
Annual	£1,500

Alfresco licences

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr S. Williams to increase alfresco licence charges for 2018/19 to £130 for covers and £13 for single chairs.

This motion was not carried.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Miller, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold alfresco licence charges at £125 per cover and £10 per single chair for 2018/19.

Cllr S. Williams requested a recorded vote.

Voted for – Cllr R. Doney, Cllr Mrs M. Ellis, Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, Cllr P. Ridley, and Cllr S. Miller

Voted against – Cllr G. Turner, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr S. Williams, and Cllr J. Broom

Abstentions – Cllr O. Lovell

Website advertising

Cllr O. Lovell left the meeting at 8.26pm in line with his declaration of pecuniary interests.

Members acknowledged the continuing decrease in adverts, due partially to there being no-one available to find new advertisers and the increase in businesses having their own websites.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold website advertising charges for 2018/19 as follows:

	Excl VAT	Incl VAT
Bronze listing	£50.00	£60.00
Silver listing	£100.00	£120.00
Gold listing	£150.00	£180.00
Small advert subpage	£150.00	£180.00
Medium advert subpage	£300.00	£360.00
Large advert subpage	£780.00	£936.00
Small advert overview/webcam page	£200.00	£240.00
Medium advert overview/webcam page	£480.00	£576.00
Large advert overview/webcam page	£1,020.00	£1224.00
Advert + 2 nd advert (same size or smaller)	2 nd advert at half price	
Advert + listing	Listing at half price	
Listing + 2 nd listing (same price or less)	2 nd listing at half price	

Cllr O. Lovell returned to the meeting at 8.28pm.

Bell Cliff advertising

Cllr B. Larcombe said the rates were too low and an increase was justified as the charge hadn't been increased since the boards were introduced in 2014.

It was also noted there was a waiting list for the boards.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to increase bell cliff advertising charges to £110 inclusive of VAT for 2018/19.

Marine Parade Shelters

Cllr O. Lovell suggested the discounted rates for DT7 postcodes should apply to only Lyme Regis DT7, which members agreed.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold Marine Parade Shelters' hire charges for 2019/20, as follows, with an amendment that discounted rates for DT7 postcodes only apply to Lyme Regis DT7:

Charites, Schools and Not-for-Profit Organisations – per area, per day

Categories	2019/20 Proposed
Lyme Regis DT7 postcodes	£10
Within a 10-mile radius of the offices	£15
Outside a 10-mile radius of the offices	£20
National charities (per hour)	£15
Not-for-profit community events and festivals hiring the shelters	At the discretion of the town clerk

Other organisations

Area		Categories	2019/20 Proposed
Langmoor and Lister Room and Jubilee Pavilion	Per room, per hour	Commercial or private hire	£15
Market area	Per day	Commercial or private hire	£100
Performance area/ top of shelters	Per day	Commercial or private hire	£150

Members discussed the charges for the market area for commercial businesses and events which had more than one stall in the area.

It was agreed the charges applied to events should be reasonable and events should not be compressed into the main season.

Amenities

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold amenities charges for 2018/19 at adult mini golf and putting, £3; child mini golf and putting, £1.50; table tennis, £1.50, and to amend the group discount to 33%.

Weddings and civil marriages

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis asked why Langmoor and Lister Rooms had not been brought back into use for weddings.

The admin officer said the licence had expired but it was proposed to re-introduce this if members decided whether to allow beach and seafront weddings, which would mean adding other areas to the licence.

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold wedding and civil marriage charges for 2019/20 as follows:

	2019/20
Monday – Friday	£300
Saturday	£400
Sunday	£400

Car parking permits

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said she was not in favour of issuing three-year residents' concession permits as people may move out of the town or change their vehicle during that time. Members agreed to retain one-year permits.

Members discussed whether to increase the charge for holiday accommodation permits. Cllr B. Larcombe suggested increasing the charge to £650.

Cllr B. Larcombe left the meeting at 9pm.

The town clerk said an increase could be implemented over a number of years, starting with £50 for 2018/19 and a further £50 the following year, so there wouldn't be such a significant jump in prices.

Cllr B. Larcombe returned to the meeting at 9.01pm.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree car park permit charges for 2018/19 as follows:

	2018/19
Residents	£175
Non-residents	£300
Holiday accommodation	£600

Car parking

It was proposed by Cllr R. Doney to hold car parking charges for 2018/19.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis suggested decreasing parking charges in the winter to encourage more people into the town and there was general support for this idea.

Cllr R. Doney withdrew his motion.

The town clerk said this was a sound idea but he would like the opportunity to do some research on what other seaside towns did. He said car parks provided a valuable income, and if reduced winter charges were introduced, he would like the opportunity to understand the impact this would have on the budget.

Cllr R. Doney said the re-programming of the parking machines to reflect new prices and hours was not cheap, and this should be considered in any analysis.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said WDDC was considering seasonal charges for Holmbush and Charmouth Road car parks and she could report back on this.

Cllr O. Lovell said he wouldn't want discounted winter charges to apply at weekends and he wanted the council to consider re-introducing overnight parking charges.

The town clerk suggested members agreed parking charges for 2018/19, so the figures could be fed into the budget, but he would carry out a more fundamental review of parking charges for 2019/20 to take into account members' suggestions.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold car parking charges for 2018/19, as follows:

	2018/19 (per hour)
Cabanya	1.20
Monmouth Beach	1.20

Woodmead	2018/19
1 hour	1.00
3-day ticket	20.00
Weekly ticket	40.00

Brochure advertising

Cllr O. Lovell left the meeting at 9.10pm in line with his declaration of pecuniary interests.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold brochure advertising rates for 2018, as follows:

Back cover	£1,575
Inside back over	£1,050
Full page	£525
Half page	£290
Quarter page	£215
Eighth page	£160
Line listing	£25

Cllr O. Lovell returned to the meeting at 9.12pm.

Cemetery

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold cemetery charges for 2018/19, as follows:

Inter still born child or under 2 years	Inter child under 16 years	Inter over 16 years	Inter cremated remains	Exclusive right of burial in earthen grave	Exclusive right of burial of cremated remains	Installation of headstone/footstone/tablet
No charge	No charge	£225.00	£50.00	£455.00	£276.00	£90.00

Installation of vase	Additional inscription on memorial	Scattering ashes on existing graves	Scattering ashes beneath turf of existing graves	Genealogy searches	Double interment fee
£45/£60	£30.00	£20.00	£20.00	£25.00	No extra charge

The meeting was adjourned for a break at 9.14pm.

The meeting resumed at 9.21pm

17/54/SF Objective Setting

Cllr B. Larcombe returned to the meeting at 9.22pm.

Members discussed previously agreed objectives. Cllr R. Doney said he didn't anticipate £1k ongoing funding being required until 2021/22 for tackling the seagull problem and he suggested this was removed.

Cllr R. Doney said he didn't anticipate the project to improve experiences for disabled people would be completed in 2017/18, so the £5k funding would not be required. In addition, he requested that the 2018/19 funding for this project was increased to £10k so an accessibility audit could be carried out.

Cllr R. Doney said he didn't anticipate the project to promote Lyme to various groups of people would be completed in 2017/18, so the £5k funding would not be required.

Members discussed the possible objectives for 2018/19 and 2019/20, which ones should be removed from the list, and which objectives to ask officers to cost and factor into the budget, which would be brought back to this committee on 29 November 2017.

Members discussed the Marine Parade and Candles on the Cobb Pavilion toilets. The town clerk said for budget purposes, he had assumed the toilets would be refurbished. He said members may wish to consider paying for this out of reserves, which would allow the work to be done in early 2018.

Members discussed the town council website. The town clerk said the existing website was unable to accommodate the requirements of the transparency code. Members agreed that as this was required to comply with the code, and this project should be funded from office expenditure, rather than as a 2018/19 budgeted objective.

It was noted expenditure for the refurbishment of the war memorial was already assumed in 2017/18 so would not be a 2018/19 objective.

Members discussed whether to introduce beach and seafront weddings and decided not to pursue this project at this point in time.

Members were concerned with the high cost estimated for the ramp in the gardens and agreed the town clerk should re-visit the brief with the council's geotechnical engineer before discussing it further.

Members discussed the proposed café and toilets in Lister Gardens. The town clerk said a more realistic budget would be £400k, although this could be off-set with section 106 funding and Coastal Communities Funding. It was also noted there was already £60,000 allocated in the 2018/19 budget for this project.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Miller, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to:

- Remove £1k ongoing funding allocated until 2021/22 for tackling the seagull problem

- Remove £5k funding in 2017/18 for the project to improve experiences for disabled people
- Increase the 2018/19 budget for the project to improve experiences for disabled people to £10k to pay for a disability audit
- Remove £5k funding in 2017/18 for the project to promote Lyme to various groups of people
- Re-affirm all other previously agreed objectives
- To instruct officers to obtain more detailed costings for the following possible objectives for 2018/19 and 2019/20: seafront caretaker; replacement of Cart Road beach huts on a three-year programme; employ a second lengthsman; introduce a supervisor role in the external works' team; wet weather facility; find land for park and ride on north and west of town; extend period of operation of Charmouth Road park and ride; events to commemorate centenary of end of First World War, with an amended budget of £5k; asset management review; implement parking orders; and café and toilets in Lister Gardens.
- In principle, to pursue the following objectives with no associated costs: establish chamber of commerce; find alternative council offices; and explore uses for Strawberry Field.

17/55/SF Appointment of John Stark and Crickmay Partnership as architects for the design and project management of a café and toilets in Lister Gardens

Cllr J. Broom said the council shouldn't commit at this point to John Stark and Crickmay Partnership (JSCP) carrying out the project management.

The town clerk said if the council committed to JSCP for the design only, the council would have to re-appoint them, or another organisation, to undertake the project management.

It was proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe to approve the appointment of John Stark and Crickmay Partnership as architects for the design and project management of a café and toilets in Lister Gardens.

This motion was not voted on.

Proposed by Cllr O. Lovell and seconded by Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to appoint John Stark and Crickmay Partnership as architects for the design and, if pursued, the project management of a café and toilets in Lister Gardens.

17/56/SF Funding Request from The Royal British Legion

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve a grant of £500 to the Lyme Regis branch of the Royal British Legion towards the cost of sending the branch standard and bearer to Ypres in August 2018.

17/57/SF Renewal of Leases for Marine Parade Retail Units (National Trust and Boylos)

Proposed by Cllr Mrs 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 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.

17/58/SF Grant Review, Lyme Regis Football Club

Members noted the report.

17/59/SF Investments, Cash Holdings and Loans

Proposed by Cllr S. Miller and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to pursue investment opportunities with Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA).

17/60/SF List of Payments

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the schedule of payments for August and September 2017 for the sums of £109,027.39 and £117,332.90.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis did not vote due to her pecuniary interests.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds did not vote due to her non-pecuniary interests.

17/61/SF Debtors' Report

Proposed by Cllr Mrs 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 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.

17/62/SF Exempt Business

(a) Renewal of Leases for Marine Parade Retail Units (National Trust and Boylos)

Proposed by Cllr S. Miller and seconded by Cllr O. Lovell, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the renewal of the leases for the two principal retail units, i.e. National Trust and Boylos, within the town council-owned Marine Parade Shelters, with effect from June 2018, on terms to be agreed, and authorise the service of the necessary notices to commence the process.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis did not vote due to her non-pecuniary interests, as her mother volunteered at the National Trust shop.

(b) Debtors' Report

Cllr O. Lovell left the meeting at 10.36pm due to his pecuniary interests.

Members discussed the debts and how officers were dealing with them.

The meeting closed at 10.42pm.