

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2019

Present

Chairman: Cllr Mrs M. Ellis (vice-chairman)

Councillors: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds, Cllr J. Scowen, Cllr S. Williams

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

Absent: Cllr P. Ridley

18/90/SF

Public Forum

Mr G. Symonds

Mr Symonds spoke in relation to agenda item 14, Events' Management, regarding events on the seafront and on the roof of the amusement arcade, antiques and crafts centre and Swim. He said when commercial organisations rented out areas and trade stands, they were operating a business and should comply with conditions. He said they should pay a deposit to ensure they complied with the conditions the council set and they would forfeit their deposit if they did not. Mr Symonds said some of the organisations who ran events last year left rubbish, dismantled equipment on a busy Bank Holiday, and on a busy Sunday afternoon turned the Marine Parade into a car park when people were trying to walk along it. He said as most events took place at weekends, there were no council officers to intervene when these issues arose so there was no deterrent for event organisers. He said management of these issues was left to council staff on the ground, who often had no information about the event taking place or what had been agreed. Mr Symonds said some event organisers were nuisances and had no regard for businesses on the seafront, blocking entrances and blocking the council's toilets. He asked how the new roof of the amusement arcade and other two units would be protected from damage from events using it. He suggested there should be no vehicle movements by event organisers between 9am and 6pm, when there were likely to be less pedestrians. Mr Symonds also suggested a one-way system so vehicles were not reversing, and staggering the arrival and leaving of vehicles. He said he had brought these issues to the council's attention in the past. Mr Symonds said he didn't believe this would put organisations off wanting to run events in Lyme Regis, including commercial organisations. Referring to the report on the agenda, he said he understood the council had a money laundering policy in place already.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said a manager had been in attendance for major events last year and the same would happen this year.

Mr N. Ball and Mr N. Gear spoke in the public forum about items not on the agenda.

18/91/SF Apologies for Absence

Cllr D. Hallett – holiday
Cllr O. Lovell
Cllr S. Miller – holiday
Cllr G. Turner – coastguard training

18/92/SF Minutes

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2019 were **ADOPTED**.

18/93/SF Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

18/94/SF Dispensations

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

18/95/SF Matters arising from the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting held on 30 January 2019

Audio recording of council meetings

In response to member questions, the town clerk said before spending money on upgrading the existing system to achieve good quality sound recordings, officers were trying to find a low-cost alternative, which would be trialled at a meeting.

Hydrock report

Members were concerned the report had taken so long to compile and asked why it had not yet been circulated to them.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if the report could go straight to the Full Council instead of via this committee, although this was not agreed.

The town clerk said officers also had concerns about the time taken to complete the report, despite regular chasing up, and were not satisfied the company had not carried out public consultation. He said although the report had been marked 'final', officers were not satisfied it was the final draft until consultation had been carried out.

The town clerk said the report would be circulated to members this week, after officers had had the opportunity to review it.

Members asked if Hydrock had been given a deadline for completion, if there was a penalty for not meeting a deadline, and whether the company had been paid.

The town clerk said he would find out this information and report back to members.

Election 2019

Several members were concerned existing councillors had not been allowed to attend the open event for prospective candidates.

Cllr J. Scowen was concerned the council was not doing enough to promote the election.

The town clerk said the event, and the election in general, had been publicised on the council's website, social media and newspaper column, and the event had been included in the election report to the last meeting of this committee. He said the event was aimed at people who wanted to stand for council, not existing councillors.

The town clerk said the council was doing all the publicity the guidance suggested. However, he was aware of several people who were interested in standing for council and they would be invited to meet with officers to talk through the process. He said if there was a sufficient number of people, he would organise an event for them to receive that information.

18/96/SF Update Report

Members noted the report.

18/97/SF Minutes of the Dorset Council working group meeting held on 26 February 2019

Cllr S. Williams said he had asked the town clerk for details of the area the town council leased to West Dorset District Council (WDDC) but he had not received this.

The town clerk said the details had been discussed many times by the assets-on-and-around Monmouth Beach working group and the issue was scheduled to be further discussed at the next meeting of the Dorset Council working group on 30 April 2019.

18/98/SF Corporate Plan 2018-23

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if agreeing this plan would bind the new administration to it.

The town clerk said when the council first started producing a corporate plan, it had agreed the council would think four years ahead and make decisions that would impact on the first year of the new administration. He said objectives had been set for 2019/20, but there was nothing beyond 2020 the new administration couldn't review.

Members discussed the possibility of no longer charging a precept.

The town clerk said the issue of whether to reduce or remove the precept was discussed by this administration, but the council chose to retain it. However, this was something he anticipated the new administration would consider early in its term.

Cllr J. Scowen asked how the plan would be publicised.

The town clerk said it would be available at the council office, tourist information centre and library, on the council's website and social media, and it would form the basis of the annual report to electors.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the Corporate Plan 2018-23.

18/99/SF New Policies – Environment and CCTV

Cllr R. Doney said he had some minor re-wording to suggest to the CCTV policy, which would not alter any meanings. It was agreed these would be discussed directly with the operations manager.

Cllr R. Doney said he believed the council could be more ambitious in its environment policy and hoped the new administration would consider this further. He referred to other councils in the country making a declaration of climate emergency, guidance from the Local Government Agency on communities becoming resilient to climate change, and the possibility of installing electric car charging points in town council car parks.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he hoped when Guildhall Cottage was refurbished, solar panels would be installed.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the following policies: environment and CCTV, with minor amendments to be made to the wording of the CCTV without changing its meaning.

18/100/SF Plastic Products

Cllr B. Larcombe said it should be made a condition of any new concession or lease that plastic products should not be used.

Cllr S. Larcombe asked if there could be bins specifically for recyclable plastics.

Cllr J. Scowen wanted the council to consider water refill stations so people could fill up their own bottles. Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said there were numerous outlets in the town which were part of the Refill scheme.

Cllr R. Doney said it required a cultural change in the way people thought about things and a heavy approach towards businesses and forcing them to increase their costs was not necessary. He said the council should let Plastic Free Lyme Regis (PFLR) get on with its campaign, and only get involved if a stronger approach was needed.

The town clerk said PFLR was a voluntary group which had developed an approach and policies, and if the council introduced policies which cut across this, it would undermine their work.

Cllr R. Doney said he had obtained information from Dorset Waste Partnership about what happened to the waste collected from the town and he was happy to circulate this to members. He said in places where public recycling had been tried, the waste was contaminated, but the most valuable recyclable products were plastic bottles and glass bottles, which the council may wish to give further thought to.

Cllr J. Scowen asked what PFLR's policy was on water stations.

Cllr R. Doney said PFLR didn't have a policy on this, but it did support the Refill scheme.

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr J. Scowen, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the council takes its lead on the use of plastic products from Plastic Free Lyme Regis; to support Plastic Free Lyme Regis's seafront action plan; and to reinforce the non-use of plastic products through the council's events' management policy and procedure.

18/101/SF Dorset and East Devon National Park Proposal

Members shared some of their concerns about how a national park would impact on the town, including on planning matters, housing prices and the Local Plan. Concerns were also raised about how the national park authority would be elected.

Cllr B. Larcombe said it was important to have a collective view on whether a national park was right for the area and asked Cllr J. Broom what the view of the Dorset Association and Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) was.

Cllr J. Broom said the DAPTC had not formed a view, but he was aware only Weymouth and Purbeck councils had given their support to the national park so far.

The town clerk said the matter had been brought to this meeting because the national park team was eager for the council to send a letter of support to the Glover Review, as the council's support had already been assumed.

Members agreed they didn't have enough information to form a view at this point, and the public should be consulted before the council confirmed its position or contributed to the Glover Review. They agreed a response of this nature should be sent to the national park team.

Cllr R. Doney asked what the timetable and process was for submitting views to the Glover Review.

The town clerk said he would write a more detailed report for members including the pros and cons of a national park, any deadlines for comments, and cost implications, and if time allowed, a public meeting could be organised to help inform the council's decision.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to send the following response to the Dorset and East Devon national park team: 'to avoid any misunderstanding, the council's expressed support so far has only been for further information; this does not indicate any level of support the council has yet to declare. The council wishes to consider the matter further and will respond to the Glover Review by the deadline'.

18/102/SF Grant Review, Lyme Regis Football Club

The town clerk confirmed the council was not being asked to provide any more money; this was a request to alter the schedule of works, to agree a project variation, and to extend the period of the grant agreement to allow works to be completed.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Scowen, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the request from the football club to defer the build of its grandstand from 2018 to 2019; to approve the football club's proposal not to widen the football pitch and undertake drainage works, only, in 2020; and to approve the extension of the grant period from 31 March 2020 to 31 August 2020 to allow drainage works to the football pitch to be completed and that any remaining grant allocation following the erection of the grandstand is allocated to this project.

18/103/SF Events' Management

Several members were in support of introducing a deposit scheme, which should apply to all areas the council rented out on the seafront, and not complying with the council's conditions should result in losing a deposit and not being allowed to hold the event again.

Members generally agreed the one-way system and vehicle restriction times on the parade should be better enforced.

The town clerk advised members that if they were inclined to introduce a deposit scheme, it should be applicable from 2020, as discussions had already started taking place with organisations for 2019.

The town clerk advised members to be cautious of introducing a deposit scheme as decisions to withhold deposits would be contentious. He suggested those decisions should involve the chairmen of the Town Management and Highways and Tourism, Community and Publicity Committees, who were already involved in event planning meetings.

Several members understood the problems involved when major events were held on the seafront, but were concerned small organisations and charities would not have the means to pay a deposit. It was suggested better enforcement of the events' policy and procedure would be more effective.

It was suggested a deposit could be paid only by large events/organisations and commercial organisations, but some members were concerned about how a large or small event/organisation would be determined, leaving the council open to claims of unfairness.

Cllr B. Larcombe said it was not beyond the capability of a small organisation to raise a £500 deposit as it would go back to them if they complied with the council's conditions.

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe to introduce a deposit of £1,000 to be paid for by event organisers using the Marine Parade.

This motion was not seconded.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis suggested a scale of deposit charges for various size organisations.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested any decision to withhold a deposit should be considered by the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee.

Members agreed further consideration needed to be given to a policy for a deposit scheme, with a clear distinction made between commercial and non-commercial events.

Members agreed the chairmen of the Town Management and Highways Committee and the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committees should work with officers on this.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.