

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2022

Present

Chairman: Cllr M. Ellis

Councillors: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: N. Cleal (finance manager), S. Cox (finance assistant), A. Mullins (support services manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

22/17/SF Public Forum

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

22/18/SF Apologies for Absence

Cllr J. Broom – illness
Cllr B. Larcombe – illness
Cllr D. Ruffle – holiday
Cllr R. Smith – work commitment
Cllr G. Stammers – holiday
Cllr T. Webb – work commitments

22/19/SF Minutes

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 were **ADOPTED**.

22/20/SF Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr M. Ellis declared a pecuniary interest in any matters related to the Woodmead Halls and she would leave the room if discussed.

22/21/SF Dispensations

There were none.

22/22/SF Matters arising from the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting held on 13 July 2022

Members noted the report.

22/23/SF Update Report

Members noted the report.

Statement of Internal Control, Risk Management Policy and Annual Risk Assessment

Cllr M. Ellis said she felt the probability of member relationships as a risk should be reduced from the suggested 4 in the risk register as relationships had been a lot better in the last few months.

Cllr C. Reynolds agreed and felt there had been some good council meetings.

The town clerk said when the risk register was formulated, he tried to take a long-term view of what had happened and as there hadn't been many council meetings due to the summer recess, he felt it would be optimistic to reduce the rating. If the same discussion took place in several months and the situation was the same, he would be happy to reduce the rating, although this was up to members as it was their risk register.

Cllr B. Bawden said she didn't feel the risk rating should be reduced as it was too early to have a view and she felt things hadn't improved.

Cllr C. Aldridge agreed the rating shouldn't be reduced, especially as the members' away day was yet to take place.

Cllr B. Bawden said she felt climate and environmental risks should be included in terms of the long-term risk to the seafront car parks and the caravan and chalet park due to storm damage.

The town clerk said the risk register was focused on the town council, not on events that might happen on a wider scale. He said officers felt it wasn't warranted to include environmental risks on the basis there had been land movement in the past and the chalets were reinstated and one bad storm when the damage and impact was minimal.

Cllr P. May said he agreed the council should start to think about environmental aspects in its risk management, even if it's not on this occasion.

The town clerk agreed a broad discussion was important but this was specifically about the risks the council faced and it wasn't necessary for climate change in general to be included in the register. He said this seemed to be a good discussion for the Environment Committee.

Cllr B. Bawden said climate change could have an impact on the council's main sources of income over the next five years because storms were increasing in intensity and due to rising sea levels. She felt it wasn't a general risk, it was specific to the council's income.

Cllr M. Ellis said this was a financial risk due to income interruption, which was already included in the risk register.

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the 2022 risk register.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the risk management policy and the standard annual risk assessment.

22/25/SF Budget Performance, 1 April – 31 August 2022

The finance manager said the council was forecast to have an end-of-year surplus of £226k, which when added to the reserve at the start of the year, would give an end-of-year reserve of £1.552million.

Cllr D. Sarson asked for clarification on the costs of the office refurbishment as £62k had been spent but the architect had estimated £100-150k.

The town clerk said the total office refurbishment cost would be around £500k but the work had been broken down and some had already been carried out. He said it was planned to replace the first-floor front windows this financial year but a contractor could not be secured because of the time restrictions on the required road closure. The town clerk said further discussions would take place on the office later in the agenda.

Cllr M. Ellis said she was concerned about unbudgeted expenditure, particularly for the tractor and lengthsman's vehicle which had been agreed at the Town Management and Highways Committee. She knew they needed to be replaced but she questioned whether there were cheaper alternatives. She said the plan was to replace one vehicle each year and now there were two unbudgeted vehicles.

The town clerk said although there would always be unbudgeted expenditure, as best as it could, the council should identify expenditure through the budget-setting process because it was poor management to expect to get in-year expenditure agreed on the nod.

Cllr C. Aldridge said she chaired the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting when large amounts of expenditure were committed and in the case of the Ware Cliff access road, it was something that couldn't have been expected. She said the meeting received a schedule of the vehicle fleet, showing their age and expectations for the future so this was part of the effort to plan for the future and ensure all the expenditure didn't come at once.

Cllr P. May said the committee was led to believe the condition of the tractor had deteriorated more quickly than expected and there was a chance it would break down on the beach; with that in mind, the expenditure was unforeseen and had become more urgent.

Cllr R. Doney said he also had concerns about unbudgeted expenditure as it wasn't good management, although he accepted there was always the potential for unexpected things to happen. He asked if any of the assets were due for replacement in the forthcoming year.

The town clerk said officers looked at all the major assets and tried to plan for the forthcoming years and a good example was vehicles. He said the tractor was planned for replacement in 2023-24 but as there was a 12-month lead time, the operations manager had asked the Town Management and Highways Committee to approve the deposit in this financial year. In the case of the lengthsman's vehicle, the council had said it would start to move towards electric vehicles by 2030, so members could have looked at purchasing a second-hand vehicle to get to that point, and then look to

replace it with an electric vehicle. However, the committee had decided to purchase a new vehicle.

Cllr C. Aldridge said the committee had decided on a new vehicle as it had to be customised for the council's needs.

The town clerk said a second-hand vehicle could be customised. He suggested further discussions took place at the Full Council meeting when the recommendation was put forward.

22/26/SF Budget and Precept 2023-24 and Five-Year Financial Plan 2023-28

The finance manager said the 2023-24 budget assumed a surplus of £239k, with some reasonable assumptions built in, including 'default' inflationary increases at 10% and a salary increase at 6%. She said known costs and income increases had also been included.

Cllr C. Reynolds left the meeting at 7.30pm.

Cllr R. Doney said the council was predicted to make a substantial surplus each year and it needed to have a plan about why it was raising that money. He said with the way interest rates were going, having money in the bank in substantial amounts was not a good idea.

The town clerk said officers estimated if the reserve was dropped to £1.2million, and budgeting for a reserve of £100k would leave the council with almost £500k to invest in projects in 2023-24. He said the council increase the amount available to £700k if it decided to reduce the reserve to £1million, which would be in line with its policy position, and leave the £100k surplus in the budget to allow the council to deal with any unforeseen events, provided it didn't get spent on unbudgeted items through the year.

Cllr C. Aldridge said the council needed to think carefully about what it spent as she believed over the next 10 years the country would be in a bad financial situation and visitors would not be spending in the same way. She felt it would be unwise not to have reserves and the council should spend on things that were essential and investments.

The town clerk said this was the reason the council budgeted prudently; car parking income was budgeted at pre-Covid levels, for example. He said the council needed to spend its money on meaningful things that would benefit the community or look for opportunities to get some return on its money. He said he would bring a report on treasury management to this committee early in 2023.

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the 2023-24 base budget and assumptions and approve the base five-year financial plan.

22/27/SF Review of Charges

The town clerk said the charges members were being asked to consider generally affected either local people or visitors and he felt the council should be leading by example by not increasing the burden on local people.

Cllr M. Ellis said equally, if holidaymakers didn't come to Lyme Regis this affected local people as the majority of jobs in the town were tourism related and were taken up by local people, so perhaps other charges needed to be protected too.

Precept

Cllr R. Doney said he liked the idea there should be no increase in charges that fell on residents. As such, he suggested charging no precept for 2023-24 but it would be made clear it was temporary.

Cllr G. Turner said charging no precept was appealing but when it was re-introduced, it would be an even bigger shock.

Cllr B. Bawden said she didn't agree with taking the precept away but she didn't think it should be increased. She said the public consultation showed most people were against or unsure if the precept should be removed or reduced, so not increasing it was recognition that people were having difficulties. She said the principle of people paying for their local services was important and it would be difficult to re-introduce the precept if it was removed.

Cllr C. Aldridge said the precept was quite low but perhaps the council could think of that money being used to help people who needed it. She didn't feel removing it would make much difference to a lot of people.

Cllr M. Ellis was in support of temporarily removing the precept as it would be a way of giving something to everyone in the town, although she would only agree to it for one year.

It was proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis to charge no precept for 2023-24 on a temporary basis and with the presumption it will be reinstated.

This motion was not carried.

Proposed by Cllr B. Bawden and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to increase the precept for 2023-24, set at £132,779.

Cart Road beach hut hire

Cllr R. Doney suggested giving a bigger discount to residents.

The support services manager said members had considered this last year but when officers had provided rough calculations of how much income would be lost, members had changed their position.

The town clerk said members were looking at charges for 2024 so any discount would not be immediate. He said while the residents' discount was at only 10%, some misuse of the scheme by non-residents was expected and could be tolerated but any greater discount and it would encourage people to play the system to obtain the discount.

Cllr P. May suggested increasing the charges for the summer months as that would be the time when visitors would use the huts more and to leave the packages at their current rates.

Cllr R. Doney said due to inflation, it was going to cost the council more to service the huts, although the impact on visitors was also unknown. He supported an increase in the charges but felt it should be across the board, rather than restricted to specific times.

Cllr M. Ellis said the charges hadn't been increased for two years so it seemed reasonable to do so now.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to set Cart Road beach hut charges for 2024 as follows:

	Daily Rates 2023	Weekly Rates 2023
January– Easter	£5	
Easter Holiday		£60
April– Spring Holiday	£12	
Spring Holiday		£65
June		£60
July (before summer hol)		£90
July (start of summer hol)- August		£160
September	£14	
October	£8	
November- December	£6	
Christmas & New Year		£90 (2-week booking)
Winter Season	£185	
Summer Season	£1,200	
Annual	£1,850	

Alfresco licences

The town clerk said the council charged for single chairs, as well as covers, currently at £12 per chair and if members agreed to a licence for the Kiosk, he felt £12 per chair seemed too low because it was of significant benefit to the business. He felt it should be dealt with through a separate process and he would come back to members with a realistic figure.

Members agreed the council should be supporting businesses in any way it could.

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold alfresco licence charges for 2023-24, as follows:

Covers	£130
Single Chairs	£12

Bell Cliff advertising boards

Cllr C. Aldridge noted there was a long waiting list for the boards and therefore any new businesses were at a disadvantage because once a business had their space, they could keep it for as long as they wanted.

The town clerk confirmed this was how it currently worked and advised leaving things as they were.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold Bell Cliff advertising charges for 2023-24 at £120, inclusive of VAT.

Marine Parade Shelters

Cllr R. Doney asked how much income the council received from commercial hirers.

The finance manager said income from commercial traders was £20k per annum but some refunds had been made this year because the traders said the prices were too high.

Cllr M. Ellis said although losing commercial traders would be loss of revenue to the council, visitors may then spend their money in local shops, instead of with the shelters' traders who were coming from out of town.

Cllr C. Aldridge said some local businesses had complained about trading in the shelters because they felt it took away from them, plus feedback from the community consultation was that people wanted to use the area for shelter but couldn't when traders were there. She felt if the council could go without the income, it should think of other ways to use the shelters.

The town clerk said one of the conditions of the funding for the shelters' regeneration was that there was a market area so this would need to be carefully considered.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold Marine Parade Shelters charges for 2024-25, as follows:

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

Categories	2023-24
DT7 postcodes	£15
Within a 10-mile radius of the offices	£20
Outside a 10-mile radius of the offices	£25
National charities (per hour)	£20

Not-for-profit community events and festivals hiring the shelters	At the discretion of the town clerk
---	-------------------------------------

Commercial or private hire

Area		2023-24
Langmoor Room	Per room, per hour	£15
Market area	Per day	£250
Performance area/ top of shelters (Commercial)	Per day	£300
Hire of Performance Area for Performance	Per Half	£60
Hire of any section on top of the shelters	Per Day	To be set as part of roof management plan

Amenities

Cllr C. Aldridge noted the putting green wasn't open and there was no attempt to market it.

The town clerk said the last time it was fully open, revenue was around £600-£800 for the year so it was decided it wasn't worth keeping it open. He said the area could be used for other activities but the council was yet to determine what that could be.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold amenities charges for 2023-24, as follows: adult mini-golf, £4 and putting, £3; child mini-golf, £2 and putting, £1.50; table tennis, £2 per person.

Weddings and civil marriages

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold weddings and civil marriages charges for 2024-25, as follows:

Monday-Friday	£400
Weekends/BHs	£500

Car parking permits

Cllr M. Ellis suggested no increase to residents' permits but to increase the non-residents and holiday accommodation permits. She said the cost of a holiday accommodation permit was equivalent to one week's rental in the accommodation and they benefited from a whole year of their guests using the car park.

Cllr B. Bawden didn't feel the council should be increasing charges for people who worked in the town and would use the non-residents permits.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to set car parking permit charges for 2023-24, as follows:

Residents	£175
Non-residents	£400
Holiday accommodation	£700

Car parking

Cllr G. Turner said times were difficult for people at the moment so any increase should be moderate.

Cllr M. Ellis said she would rather people stayed longer and spent more in the town. She said increasing charges would have a knock-on effect on residents as more people would look for parking in residential areas.

The town clerk said if car parking charges were not increased, the council would lose 10% of its income value in a year..

Cllr R. Doney said increasing parking charges by 10% would mean the council was standing still and this was the biggest income stream.

Cllr B. Bawden felt the council could afford to put charges up by 10p at the beach car parks because if someone stayed for seven hours, it would currently cost them £10.50, which was only 50p more than Dorset Council (DC) car parks but they were much closer to the beach, which had some value.

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr R. Doney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to increase car parking charges for 2034-24, as follows:

Cabanya	£1.60 per hour
Monmouth Beach	£1.60 per hour
Woodmead	£1.20 per hour
Woodmead three-day ticket	£35
Woodmead weekly ticket	£65

Penalty charge

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold the penalty charge for 2023-24 at £60, with a reduced fee of £40 if paid within seven working days.

Cemetery

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to hold cemetery charges for 2023-24, 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	Certified copy of entry in burial books	Double interment fee
£45/£60	£30.00	£20.00	£20.00	£25.00	Not Offered	No Extra Charge

Memorial benches

Cllr M. Ellis asked if the cost of purchasing the benches would increase.

The town clerk said the cost of the benches could be tied to the cost of the purchase. He said there wasn't any space for memorial benches but the council had historically traded off the amenity value with the maintenance cost.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the charge for a memorial bench in 2023-24 should be the same as the purchase cost.

Monmouth Beach garages

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to increase the charge for Monmouth Beach garages for 2023-24 to £1,375.

The meeting adjourned for a break at 8.31pm.

The meeting resumed at 8.36pm.

22/28/SF Objectives and Projects 2023-2025

The town clerk said the main project for discussion was what the council did with its offices. He said it would require c£500k to bring the building up to a proper office standard and even then, it was still a cottage. He said there needed to be a clear steer from the council about whether to stay in the building or move; moving would release £500k that would have otherwise been spent on refurbishing the building and probably a further £500k from the sale of the building.

Several members said they were aware staff didn't like working in the offices and felt they should be listening to this because if they were not content about where they were working, it would affect their quality of work; as such, they felt the council should move its offices.

However, several members felt it would be difficult to find alternative suitable premises in the town.

Cllr R. Doney said he felt the time had come for members to seriously consider this. He said if he was running a business and he had a wasting asset which required a £500k investment to bring it up to standard, he would be considering if that was the right thing for the business. He suggested there needed to be a business plan, on the presumption the council was looking for other premises, and part of that exercise would be determining what else was available. He added that the money saved in moving offices could be invested in things which benefited the community.

Cllr G. Turner felt the building could be greatly improved with £500k investment.

The town clerk said the building was c140 years old and it currently cost £30-40k to run it, With permitted development, it would increase the value of the site significantly. He said he was looking for an in principle decision from the council to move from the building and further discussions could then take place. He said the offices could potentially move to Unit 1A and use adjacent office space. As the council already owned Unit 1A, so it wouldn't have to pay any rent and the building was already serviced. Operating costs would reduce from £30-40k to £10k per year and the council would have an additional £500k to spend.

Cllr C. Aldridge said she would like to see a business plan with all the options before making any in principle decisions.

The town clerk said he wasn't suggesting members rushed into anything but he was asking for an in principle decision to move out of the offices so there was a real commitment to doing it; otherwise, he felt the issue would keep getting deferred. He urged members to talk to staff about what they thought about working in the building and about health and safety concerns.

Cllr M. Ellis said as the council owned a share of St Michael's Business Centre, she would like to consider negotiating to buy a bigger share of the building as one of the proposals.

Cllr C. Aldridge said any business plan should also include the option of staying and enhancing the current building.

Cllr R. Doney said he couldn't agree that staying in the building was an option as the council had been having these discussions for years and nothing had happened.

Proposed by Cllr R. Doney and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the council states its intent to leave the current office premises and instruct officers to work up a business plan about how that can be achieved.

Members discussed the nine projects that residents were consulted on and noted the following:

- Determine the future use of Strawberry Fields – get the options appraisal done and then do a separate public consultation on the future use of the land

- Explore the options for a post office service in the town – it was noted the Post Office building had been purchased and the new owners intended to open a Post office within a shop
- Improve the town bus service – a group of members had already been set up to explore the options with Damory
- Install gym equipment in the seafront gardens – the equipment would be better placed in another location, with Anning Road playing field suggested. Officers were asked to find out what the situation was in other places with regards to vandalism. Church Cliff Walk was also suggested, although it was noted this belongs to DC.
- Use the seafront gardens for outdoor entertainment – officers were already talking to the Marine Theatre about events they could help put on in the gardens
- Support a repairs' café or community workshop – partnerships could be formed with The Hub, Boat Building Academy and others. Repairs' cafes elsewhere tended to run monthly or fortnightly and people volunteered their skills to help out
- Introduce covered eating areas – there may be issues with managing these areas as people might sit under them and stay there all day in the shade. Canopies or similar would also spoil the view and change the look of the seafront. It was noted there was no perfect solution to seagulls.

Members agreed not to pursue an annual town event for residents or covered eating areas. Officers were asked to explore options for the gym equipment in another location. The budget for a post office was retained, although it was noted it might not be needed if a buyer had been found.

Members discussed the other ideas which had come from the public.

Cllr M. Ellis said she supported the idea of a children's play area and splash area on the putting green and a basketball court in the bottom corner of Anning Road playing field. She also liked the idea of a volleyball court.

Cllr B. Bawden supported the idea of more Refill stations, monkey bars in the play park, and e-bikes and scooters. She said Seaton, Axminster and Bridport were installing e-bike stations and she felt Lyme Regis should be doing the same in the near future to link up with those other towns.

The town clerk said if it was a private sector initiative it would be driven by the market and demand for the product and that was the time the council would want to engage with it. He said the council shouldn't be subsidising private sector organisations.

Cllr P. May suggested the operations manager could familiarise himself with what was going on in the market with e-bikes and see what was possible.

Cllr B. Bawden felt bins were also an issue and thought they should be made to look more attractive because people wanted to know they were recycling.

From the list of the public's ideas, members agreed to prioritise and pursue the following:

- A multi-use games area to include a basketball court
- Children's play area and splash area in the gardens

- Monkey bars in the play park
- Beach volleyball court
- More Refill stations in the gardens and Anning Road playing field

Members went through the list of suggested projects and operational projects and removed any they felt should not be pursued.

Members discussed the remote-controlled mower, which the Town Management and Highways Committee had recommended be purchased but was yet to be resolved by Full Council.

Cllr P. May said the committee was told it was a health and safety issue but if that wasn't the case, members should re-think.

The town clerk said there had been one incident in the gardens related to mowing with no resulting absence, although there had been other incidents of slipping not related to mowing. He said if there were thorough risk assessments and method statements that determined the way people operated, maybe that would further mitigate the need to have any other equipment to do the job. He said gardeners were already employed to cut grass and he questioned whether a remote-controlled mower would increase productivity.

Members agreed to remove the following projects:

- Remote controlled mower
- Electronic noticeboard at Bell Cliff
- Greenhouses
- Green bus stops
- Urinals
- Extra Guildhall car parking – this would not be required if the council moved its offices

Members also agreed to increase the budget for family bursaries from £10k to £20k.

The town clerk said £50k had been put in the budget for repairs to the Ware Cliff access road, but officers hoped it could be done for £10k. However, £50k was left in the budget as a precaution.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct officers to build up medium-term programme of projects and objectives for the Strategy and Finance Committee on 30 November 2022, based on the following projects:

- Explore the options for a post office service in the town
- Improve the town bus service
- Use the seafront gardens for outdoor entertainment
- Determine the future of Strawberry Fields
- Support a repairs' café or community workshop
- A multi-use games area to include a basketball court
- Children's play area and splash area in the gardens
- Monkey bars in the play park
- Beach volleyball court
- More Refill stations in the gardens and Anning Road playing field

- Coronation weekend
- Replace car park machines
- Repairs to chapel roof
- Replace tractor
- Refurbish harbourmaster's store and cemetery lodge
- Mobile hoist for disabled wheelchairs
- Tarmac cemetery paths
- Repair woodland bridge in the gardens
- Replace handrails in the gardens
- Repairs to Bell Cliff steps and railings
- Replace west and east store doors
- Replace Langmoor Room door
- Memorial to the Queen
- Employee benefits' package
- Repairs to Ware Cliff road
- Electronic car parking noticeboards
- Enhance the wedding packages
- Vacate the council offices – to be further investigated
- Solar panels on council buildings
- Footpath repairs in the gardens
- Improve CCTV
- Improve 'welcome to Lyme Regis' signs
- Family bursaries – budget increased to £20k

22/29/SF Outside Seating

Cllr D. Sarson said the council should be supporting local businesses and that the temporary outside seating provision should be extended until the end of September 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr D. Sarson to extend the temporary outside seating provision in the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licence) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 from 30 September 2022 to 30 September 2023.

This motion was not seconded.

Cllr C. Aldridge said the council should start charging the normal rate again as some businesses had done quite well over the last few years and the council had had very little return for that.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council had made a decision to start charging the normal rate again and it should stick to that decision. As a compromise, she said she would support charging the reduced rate until March 2023 and then to return to the normal charging structure.

The town clerk said if it were not for issues with inflation and the cost of living, he would suggest charging the normal rate as businesses had done well over the last year and the council had taken a hit on the income. However, he agreed extending the temporary provision until 31 March 2023 would be a good gesture.

Cllr D. Sarson withdrew his earlier motion and proposed an amended motion.

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to extend the temporary outside seating provision in the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licence) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 from 30 September 2022 to 31 March 2023.

22/30/SF Investments and Cash Holdings

The town clerk said he would bring a report to the first meeting of this committee in 2023 about the council's investments and interest rates. He said if the council had a reserve of £1.5million, the council could decide to have higher risk investments on around £500k.

22/31/SF List of Payments

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the schedule of payments for July and August 2022 for the sums of £121,715.83 and £199,932.61, respectively

22/32/SF Debtors Report

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr P. May, 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.

22/33/SF Exempt Business

a) Debtors' Report

Cllr M. Ellis asked if legal proceedings had begun in relation to unpaid parking permits.

The finance manager said officers were awaiting contact details from Cllr J. Broom to be able to pursue the matter.

Cllr M. Ellis noted there was a debt in relation to Monmouth Beach garages and as they were in such high demand, if people were not paying their rent, they should have their garage taken away.

The financial manager said there had never been an issue with payments for Monmouth Beach garages and her impression was that someone had forgotten to pay their bill.

The meeting closed at 10.12pm.