

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOURISM, COMMUNITY AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 JUNE 2022

Present

Chairman: Cllr C. Reynolds

Members: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr R. Smith, Cllr G. Stammers

Officers: A. Mullins (support services manager), M. Green (town clerk)

22/01/TCP Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson that Cllr C. Reynolds is chairman of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee.

There being no other nominations, Cllr C. Reynolds was duly **ELECTED** as chairman.

There were no nominations for vice-chairman.

Proposed by Cllr R. Smith and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members **RESOLVED** to defer election of a vice-chairman to the next meeting.

22/02/TCP Public Forum

M. Redwood

M. Redwood spoke in relation to agenda item 9, Seagull Control. He said he didn't know if flying a drone would be a long-term solution to tackling seagulls but he felt it was worth testing. He said normally when he flew drones it was to create footage, not to upset seagulls. However, he had lived in Charmouth Court for eight years, where the seagulls were a nuisance, and he had been doing some drone testing which had resulted in 60% less seagulls on the roof and they were also quieter. He said if he were to fly his drones, he would do it over the sea so they wouldn't defecate over people. M. Redwood said he generally flew where there was less housing, such as Eype and Branscombe, but there were also less people eating fish and chips and therefore less seagulls. He said seagulls didn't like things that moved and suggested there could be distinct areas where people could eat their food under something that flapped or moved. He said it would be helpful to have a financial contribution from the council towards some of the flights, although he didn't think it was a long-term solution. M. Redwood said one of his bigger drones had a PA system on it and he suggested it could play a bird of prey sound to further scare the seagulls. He said he wasn't looking to sign up to a maintenance contract but he believed flying the drones could help.

22/03/TCP Apologies

Cllr C. Aldridge – personal commitment
Cllr B. Larcombe – personal commitment
Cllr D. Ruffle – illness
Cllr D. Turner

22/04/TCP Minutes

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022, with the above amendment, were **ADOPTED**.

22/05/TCP Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

22/06/TCP Dispensations

There were none.

22/07/TCP Seagull Control

The chairman brought this item forward on the agenda.

Cllr R. Smith asked if the council was in touch with other councils, such as St Ives, which has similar seagull problems, or with the RSPB.

Cllr M. Ellis said the town clerk was part of a group of seaside town councils so it might be worth speaking to that group or even going further afield and speaking to other councils about their experiences. She said she didn't think the council had anything to lose by trialling the flying of drones and although birds of prey were suggested regularly, the cost was excessive and it was only effective for the time they were present.

Cllr D. Sarson said he would be interested to know how the noise of the drones affected the seagulls and although he wasn't sure if it was a long-term solution, he felt it was worth trying.

The chairman invited M. Redwood to speak.

M. Redwood said he didn't need to fly aggressively to scare the seagulls; the Air Navigation Order applied which said drones were not to be flown in such a manner to cause harm to people, property or wildlife. He said seagulls tended to circle things they didn't like and flew to a higher elevation.

Cllr J. Broom asked how long a flight would be.

M. Redwood said it would be between 30 minutes and one hour.

Cllr C. Reynolds said trialling the use of drones would show residents the council was trying to do something about the seagull problem.

M. Redwood suggested someone from the council came and observe his flights so there could be feedback on how effective it was.

It was also agreed M. Redwood's suggestion for some sort of canopy where people could shelter from the seagulls was considered by the Town Management and Highways Committee. The deputy town clerk said it might be that something flying on a flagpole might be just as effective and this could be considered too.

Cllr J. Broom suggested new signs could be installed on the seafront warning people of seagulls stealing food, instead of warning people not to feed seagulls, and that they could be quite graphic to grab people's attention.

It was agreed a report would be brought to the next meeting to allow members to consider this.

It was proposed by Cllr J. Broom to agree a budget of £250 to fly a drone during the summer to deter seagulls.

Cllr M. Ellis said she would have suggested £350 as this would allow for 10 flights at £35 each. Cllr J. Broom said he would take this as a friendly amendment.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree a budget of £350 to fly a drone during the summer to deter seagulls.

22/08/TCP Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 April 2022

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Members thanked the staff who worked over the weekend, some of them through the night, and also the members of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee working group for putting the programme together.

Cllr C. Reynolds said her only issue was that other events were taking place elsewhere on the Sunday and if there are similar events in future, the day should be entirely dedicated for that purpose.

22/09/TCP Update Report

Community engagement

Cllr C. Reynolds said it was disappointing that a visit to the Powder Monkeys Explorer Sea Scouts had to be cancelled because only two members were able to attend. She said it was really important to get members involved and getting out in the community talking to people they didn't normally talk to.

Cllr M. Ellis said there used to be a staff and members' bowls night and civic nights for performances at the Marine Theatre, which she was keen to reinstate as she felt it was important for the community to see the whole council doing things together.

Cllr D. Sarson confirmed a bowls evening was being arranged.

Gateway Card

Cllr M. Ellis said she felt the council needed to do more to communicate with businesses in the town to get them involved.

The support services manager said when the card was relaunched, it would be widely promoted with local businesses as some had closed down and others had opened since the scheme was first launched. She said it was planned to go around and chat with all the businesses about getting involved in the scheme as part of the council's community engagement efforts.

22/10/TCP Seafront WiFi

The deputy town clerk said when this committee agreed to review the seafront WiFi in May 2022, he believed at this point in time he would be recommending to terminate the existing arrangements, but things had changed; the line speed had picked up to roughly what it should be. He said the WiFi was still well used, mainly because people didn't want to use up their own data.

The deputy town clerk said the council had paid for the WiFi until the end of March 2023 so there would be no financial saving to terminating the contract now, although he felt it should be reviewed at the beginning of 2023 because there was a planned hardware upgrade which was likely to cost £3-5,000.

The deputy town clerk said the other important thing for members to consider was the benefit of the WiFi to the mini golf due to the increased number of card payments being made, which the amenities staff also felt had increased business. He said it was also beneficial to the council as an employer as the amount of cash previously being held on site was a risk to staff safety.

The deputy town clerk said unless officers could find a more cost-effective way of taking card payments, it was worth keeping the WiFi just for this purpose alone. He said it was possible to take payments on a smart phone but it wasn't as reliable. He said Starlink was currently available for domestic use but not yet for business use in this area, so this could be explored when it became available as it would be cheaper than a leased line and have significantly faster download and upload speeds than a normal fibre connection.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council needed to be mindful of staff safety in making its decision. She said the council needed to consider this matter again in January 2023 so there was time to put any arrangements in place before the end of the financial year.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to bring a report to the first meeting of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee of 2023 to allow members to consider the way forward for the seafront WiFi.

22/11/TCP Managing Consultation Exercises

Members noted the report.

22/12/TCP Seafront and Beach Concessions

Cllr M. Ellis said she had no objection to the proposed fitness and exercise concession as long as it didn't operate at the same time as the existing concession on the beach. She also said the operator should not be allowed an A board as there were already too many in the town.

Cllr G. Stammers supported the proposal as the council's policy on concessions said multiple operators were allowed and it offered something different to the existing concession.

The support services manager said the proposal was to operate on different days to the existing concession and if approved, she would ensure they were not operating on the same day.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to award the concession for a fitness and exercise concession to Rosie Jackson for 2022-2024, to be backdated to March 2022, and to confirm the days of operation so it doesn't operate on the same days as the existing fitness and exercise concession.

It was agreed members would discuss the financial information in exempt business.

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

22/13/TCP Sculpture Trail Insurance

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

22/14/TCP Exempt Business

a) Seafront and Beach Concessions

Members were satisfied with the sum offered for the concession.

Cllr R. Smith suggested all the council's concessionaires could be encouraged to get involved in the Gateway Card scheme.

b) Sculpture Trail Insurance

Cllr R. Smith asked if the council was able to outsource part of the insurance for the trail to the Arts Development Company, which the council could then pay for so if there was a claim, it would not be on the council's insurance.

The deputy town clerk said the Arts Development Company was funded by Dorset Council but its funding and staffing had been cut dramatically. However, if the council said it wanted to make a grant to the Arts Development Company to specifically obtain insurance for the sculptures, this could be explored. However, he wasn't sure if the Arts Development Company would be able to insure them as it wasn't their land or their sculptures.

Cllr G. Stammers said she felt the gardens were beautiful enough without the sculptures.

Cllr M. Ellis said the plinths would be ideal for local schools to display their artwork. She didn't feel the council should be paying artists to display their sculptures and then paying for any breakages.

The deputy town clerk said it may be that the council moved away from high value sculptures and instead put some money into the Arts Development Company working with Woodroffe School for the pupils to produce artwork.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council went out to tender for concessions so why couldn't it do the same for people to use the gardens as an exhibition space, for which they would pay the council. She said this could be accompanied with sculptures from the school.

The deputy town clerk said he intended to bring a report to the next meeting of this committee to allow members to make a clear decision on whether they wanted a trail in the gardens in future and how to deliver it. He said how the council dealt with insurance would be largely influenced by how it dealt with the sculpture trail going forward.

Members generally favoured the idea what Woodroffe School could use some of the plinths and the rest could be used for artists to hire from the council, but agreed this should be discussed further at the next meeting.

Cllr J. Broom suggested keeping the current insurance arrangements in place until anything more long-term was agreed.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to continue with the current insurance arrangements for the sculpture trail but to instruct officers to take a report to the next meeting of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee about the future of the trail.

The meeting ended at 8.19pm.