

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOURISM, COMMUNITY AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2022

Present

Chairman: Cllr C. Reynolds

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr D. Sarson

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

Absent: Cllr R. Smith, Cllr G. Turner

Other members: Cllr B. Bawden

Guests: M. Redwood

22/15/TCP Election of Vice-Chairman

There were no nominations for vice-chairman.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members **RESOLVED** to defer election of a vice-chairman to the next meeting.

22/16/TCP Public Forum

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

22/17/TCP Apologies

Cllr J. Broom – illness
Cllr D. Ruffle – holiday
Cllr G. Stammers – holiday

22/18/TCP Minutes

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2022 were **ADOPTED**.

22/19/TCP Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

22/20/TCP Dispensations

There were none.

22/21/TCP Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 June 2022

Seafront wifi

The deputy town clerk said a proposal had been received relating to Starlink, which was a much cheaper option than a leased line and it offered considerably faster speeds. He said he would bring the proposal to the next meeting.

22/22/TCP Update Report

Members noted the report.

22/23/TCP Mobile Hoist for Beach Wheelchairs

Cllr C. Reynolds said Ruby Walker, who was due to attend the meeting to speak to members about the need for a mobile hoist, had been unable to attend but had sent some information to be read out.

R. Walker said she felt the beach wheelchairs needed to be advertised better, perhaps on a dedicated Facebook page, and they would be a life-changing piece of equipment for disabled people of all ages. However, she said providing a mobile hoist to enable a person to be safely lifted in and out of a beach wheelchair was essential, as otherwise it was unsafe for the disabled person or the member of council staff helping.

R. Walker said she didn't feel the shelters were the best place for the collection of the wheelchairs as it was undignified and she suggested using the Lister Room, which could possibly incorporate the seafront lift.

R. Walker also put forward the idea of a 'changing places' toilet, which would help with all the issues already raised regarding beach wheelchairs and it would also provide a suitable place to change disabled people, the nearest currently being in Seaton. She recommended going to the changing places website for more information.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if R. Walker had written to Dorset Council (DC) about a changing places toilet as it owned most of the toilets in the town.

Cllr C. Reynolds said she had advised R. Walker to also contact DC. However, the changing places toilet was not on the agenda for discussion, but this was something she would like the committee to look at in future.

Cllr C. Aldridge asked if the council would need to provide a trained member of staff to help with the hoist.

Cllr C. Reynolds said the people accompanying disabled people would be trained to lift them.

The support services manager said the hoist would be much the same as many disabled people would already have in their homes so their families or carers would already have experience in using them. She said the council would require its staff to be as hands-off as possible because although they were all trained in manual handling, this was a risk to the staff and the person being lifted that should be avoided.

Cllr M. Ellis said there was no point in having the disabled wheelchairs if they couldn't be used by people who needed hoisting so she felt the council should look into purchasing one. She agreed the wheelchairs needed to be advertised better and they needed to be stored in a more prominent place, such as near the disabled beach hut or in one of the council's beach huts.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council needed to be as clear as possible about what the purchase of a mobile hoist really meant as he felt the council shouldn't underestimate what commitment was involved. He questioned whether the space in the current disabled toilet was inadequate if using a hoist.

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct officers to obtain more information about cost, storage of the hoist, operational requirements, and maintenance of a mobile hoist to improve accessibility to the council's beach wheelchairs.

22/24/TCP Quarterly Newsletter

Cllr D. Sarson said he was not in favour of a quarterly newsletter as it would outdate itself quickly and it would be meaningless to residents. He said he would prefer to continue the newspaper column in Lyme Online every four weeks.

Cllr B. Larcombe agreed and said the newspaper column represented good value for money, it was delivered to some households, it was in the context of other news, and people naturally looked to the newspaper for council updates.

Cllr C. Aldridge agreed and said the printing of the newsletter was not environmentally friendly. However, she noted the newspaper was not delivered to every household and asked if it could be established where it was delivered as some people couldn't view it online.

Cllr M. Ellis said she was in favour of a newsletter as she had been approached by residents who said they didn't realise the column in the newspaper was written by the council and they wanted to know what was going on in the organisation. She said even a six-monthly newsletter would be helpful to let people know who the members were, what the council had been doing and what services the council ran in the town. She added that it could also be available in holiday homes as information for visitors.

Cllr C. Reynolds said she was also in favour of a newsletter and the volunteers for Lyme Regis Community Support said they would be prepared to deliver them to their own street. She said residents were not aware of which council carried out which services and the newsletter could be used to inform people of this. She agreed even twice a year would be helpful.

Cllr B. Bawden said DC was producing a guide of who provided which services so this might address that particular issue.

Cllr C. Reynolds said Max Redwood said he would help with typesetting and photos for the newsletter.

Proposed by B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree, in principle, to produce a six-monthly newsletter in addition to the monthly newspaper column, and to instruct officers to obtain quotes for the printing of the newsletter and investigate how the newsletter would be distributed.

22/25/TCP Seagull Control

Cllr C. Reynolds invited Max Redwood to speak to his report.

M. Redwood said he learned a lot about seagulls in terms of their patterns and their favourite locations but drones were not the way forward as a way of controlling them. However, drones did move the seagulls around so they could be effective if they needed to be moved away for a short period. He said he noticed fast food boxes attracted the seagulls and suggested stickers could be put inside the boxes to warn people of the dangers. He added that putting flags up along the seafront to deter seagulls might also have some merit.

Cllr B. Larcombe said even if people were conscious of the problem and read the warning signs, they could still have their food stolen by seagulls so he felt none of the solutions would really solve the problem. He said the number of takeaways did seem to make the problem worse and the council needed to consider this every time another takeaway wanted to open on the seafront. He added that the council should encourage indoor seating.

Cllr C. Aldridge said she observed some of the drone flights and while the idea of flags might be interesting to try, there were already quite a lot along the seafront already; any more would change the look of the seafront and she wasn't sure how successful it would be. She agreed the issue was the number of takeaways and she wanted the council to have a stronger policy on working with them to change their packaging. She also felt signs with more aggressive images would help but this needed to be looked at in conjunction with other signs on the seafront to ensure there weren't too many.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council did provide stickers to takeaways in the past to put on their packaging to warn people about feeding seagulls and she agreed it was down to education. She wasn't sure if any more signs would work as people didn't tend to read them.

Cllr B. Bawden agreed stickers on takeaway boxes would be effective and suggested they referred to the £100 fixed penalty notice a person would have to pay if they fed the seagulls as a further deterrent.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council also needed to ensure it had gull-proof waste bins.

The support services manager said the council had already agreed to buy flap kits for the bins to make them gull-proof and these were being installed on a rolling programme within each year's budget for waste bins.

The deputy town clerk said it would be unlikely the council could put flags on lampposts as most in the town were owned by DC, which had previously refused permission to install CCTV cameras on lampposts.

Cllr C. Reynolds said as there was no chamber of trade or business group in the town, it was difficult to get any of these messages out to businesses or to get them involved in any initiatives.

Members noted there was an issue with the takeaway boxes as seagulls now recognised them and they also filled up the bins quicker which meant they regularly overflowed and seagulls could pull the rubbish out.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested traders could be encouraged to return to bags and paper packaging and messages about seagulls and disposing of waste properly could be printed on the paper.

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe not to install additional signage on the seafront to warn people of seagull attacks.

This motion was not seconded.

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the report from Max Redwood regarding the drone flights aimed at deterring seagulls and to change some of the existing seagull signs on the seafront, with half of the existing signs warning people not to feed the seagulls to remain, and half to be replaced with 'beware of the seagull' signs with a more aggressive image.

22/26/TCP Town Bus

Cllr C. Reynolds said although he was not on the committee, Cllr R. Doney wished to be appointed to the panel as he used the town bus.

Cllrs B. Larcombe and M. Ellis said they would also like to sit on the panel.

Cllr B. Bawden asked to be kept in the loop as DC ward member as she might be able to have some input.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to appoint Cllrs R. Doney, B. Larcombe and M. Ellis to work with the deputy town clerk and service operator to identify and cost preferred options for improving the town bus service.

22/27/TCP Totally Locally's Fiver Fest

Cllr B. Bawden explained what Fiver Fest was and said in previous years, businesses had said they felt part of the community and it brought them together. She said it would now be done once a year in October, having previously also taken place in February, but many businesses in Lyme were not open in February or it just wasn't the right time of year for them. She said Charmouth was joining the initiative this year.

Cllr C. Reynolds said she supported the request to fund the printing of the map as it would demonstrate to local businesses that the council was doing something to support them.

Cllr M. Ellis asked that the council's crest was printed on the map to show it had supported the scheme.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the request to fund the printing of the Fiver Fest map at a cost of £166 plus VAT.

22/28/TCP Sculpture Trail

The deputy town clerk said he had had further discussions with the Arts Development Company, whose view was that without some financial input from the council, an ongoing sculpture trail in the gardens was unlikely. He said the arts development officer had some ideas about how it could be done differently and more cost-effectively; in Bridport, for example, the sculptures were hired from the sculptors for £500 per year, which reduced if the sculpture was retained for a second year.

The deputy town clerk said the arts development officer also had ideas for further work with Woodroffe School and ideas to provide sculptures on a permanent basis but this would involve some up-front costs. He said he had arranged a further meeting with the arts development officer in early October and he suggested a small number of members could join the meeting to look at various options for retaining some kind of trail.

The deputy town clerk said all the sculptures that currently remained were unfunded and sculptors had not been paid for their presence in the gardens this year. Several had been removed and the rest would inevitably be removed by spring at the latest if agreement wasn't reached to continue the trail.

Cllr C. Aldridge asked if the issue of insuring the sculptures had any bearing on whether it would continue.

The deputy town clerk said the sculptures at Bridport were both hired and insured by the town council. He said if the council was unwilling to insure the sculptures, the artists would not loan them as they would be taking on the risk of having a sculpture of significant value being on display in a public place.

Cllr C. Reynolds said since working in the community garden, she had been surprised by the number of people who came to see the sculpture trail.

Cllr B. Larcombe said he was in favour of Woodroffe School students exhibiting their works but less enthusiastic about professional sculptors using the gardens as their exhibition space. He asked why the number of sculptures in the gardens had reduced.

The deputy town clerk said the number had reduced because no funding had been agreed; there was limited access to external funding, business sponsors were not coming forward in the same way they were before Covid, and the council had not agreed any funding in the last two years.

Cllr C. Aldridge asked how much the sculptures had cost in the past and the cost of the insurance.

The deputy town clerk said the highest contribution the council had made in one year, excluding insurance, was £5,000 and this was for around 10 sculptures. He said the council didn't pay an additional premium to insure them; the problem came if there was a claim as the council was put on notice several years ago that if it didn't reduce the overall number of claims, there was a risk cover would be withdrawn or the premium would increase significantly. He added that there had been incidents of vandalism to the sculptures which had not been put through insurance to avoid that risk.

Cllr M. Ellis said it would be nice to keep the trail but she would rather see more work from local artists, particularly from Woodroffe School, than professional artists. She was also concerned with the costs and the issue of insurance as the council was paying for the sculptor to repair their own sculpture.

The deputy town clerk said the council could stipulate that it didn't want any more professional artwork and ask the Arts Development Company and professional artists to work with Woodroffe School and the council could pay them for that.

Cllrs B. Larcombe, C. Aldridge and D. Sarson agreed to join the meeting with the deputy town clerk and the Arts Development Company to look at the options for retaining a trail.

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that Cllrs B. Larcombe, C. Aldridge and D. Sarson meet with the deputy town clerk and the Arts Development Company to look at options for retaining a sculpture trail in the gardens.

22/29/TCP Community Engagement

Cllr D. Sarson suggested a councillors' surgery as a way of engaging with the public.

The support services manager said the council had tried this in the past and they had not worked; people didn't tend to attend council events, it was more effective if councillors went out into the community.

22/30/TCP Grant Review, Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride

Cllr M. Ellis said the organisation was not complying with all the terms of its grant application and grant agreement as it was not publicising that it received funding from the town council.

The support services manager said she would ask that the organisation did this.

22/31/TCP Grant Review, B Sharp

Members noted the report.

22/32/TCP Grant Review, Bridport and District Citizens Advice

Members noted the report.

22/33/TCP Grant Review, The Hub

Cllr M. Ellis said the organisation was not complying with all the terms of its grant application and grant agreement as it was not publicising that it received funding from the town council on its website or social media. She said she was also concerned the youth club was not operating frequently enough as the application said it would run twice a week and the organisation was not carrying out outreach work.

The support services manager confirmed a youth club was being run, which was attended by 25 to 30 young people and the Hub was also running other youth sessions such as arts club and drama club. She said youth detached work was taking place, using funding of £3,800 from Dorset Council, where a targeted youth worker and contextual safeguarding lead was going out and talking to young people.

Cllr M. Ellis said she was also concerned the Hub was not providing the service the council thought it was going to get for the funding and by letting the building out to other clubs and using it for offices, it was not being used by the youth. She felt there was some confusion between whether the funding was going to Lyme Regis Development Trust or the Hub.

The support services manager clarified that the funding was specifically to contribute towards the core running costs of the building, so the Hub was the building itself, which was run by Lyme Regis Development Trust.

Cllr M. Ellis said she was concerned specific questions hadn't been asked at the grant review meeting and all organisations in receipt of grant funding should be closely scrutinised, as another organisation had had its funding withdrawn because the council felt it wasn't meeting the objectives in its grant application.

The support services manager said at the grant review meetings officers asked high level questions about governance, finance, risk, health and safety, safeguarding and any major changes or developments; they didn't micromanage the organisations and go through the grant applications line by line. She also clarified that the other organisation referred to by Cllr M. Ellis did not have a grant agreement in place so it could not be compared to organisations that did have a grant agreement.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that officers have further discussions with the Hub to express members' concerns about how the grant funding is being spent to ensure it

is used for youth activities and to ensure it advertises on its website and social media that it receives funding from the town council.

22/34/TCP Grant Review, The Philpot Museum

Members noted the report.

22/35/TCP Managing Consultation Exercises

Members noted the report.

22/36/TCP Gateway Card

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, 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.

22/37/TCP Exempt Business

a) Gateway Card

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to accept the quote from Advantage Digital Print for the printing of the Gateway Card and stickers.

Members discussed if residents should go into the office to collect their Gateway Card or if they should be posted to everyone on the electoral register as they were previously.

The support services manager said there was money left in the budget to post them.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to post the new Gateway Cards to every Lyme Regis resident on the electoral register and all other residents can obtain one from the office with proof of an address in the town of Lyme Regis.

The meeting ended at 9.07pm.