

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 JUNE 2021

Present

Chairman: Cllr J. Broom

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr K. Ellis, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr S. Williams

Officers: M. Adamson-Drage (operations manager), M. Green (deputy town clerk) A. Mullins (administrative officer)

21/01/HR Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson that Cllr J. Broom is chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee.

There being no other nominations, Cllr J. Broom was duly **ELECTED** as chairman.

It was proposed by Cllr K. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson that Cllr M. Ellis is vice-chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee.

There being no other nominations, Cllr M. Ellis was duly **ELECTED** as vice-chairman.

Cllr B. Bawden arrived at the meeting at 7.04pm.

21/02/HR Terms of Reference

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, the terms of reference were **RECEIVED**.

21/03/HR Public Forum

N. Ball (read out by the chairman)

N. Ball said he was deeply disappointed in the way he had been treated by the council having asked for information through the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. He said he had asked two questions over two months ago and had not received a written reply, only a phone conversation with the deputy town clerk which did not answer his questions. He said he had asked for all letters sent to architects to tender for work relating to the shelters and roof work, and for a copy of the pre-risk assessment from the architect and glazier. N. Ball said the roof looked the part but it would be expensive to put things right, including potentially more expenditure for an independent glazier's report. He said the roof surface was shocking and ponds badly, and with modern levelling methods this should have been perfect. He said the contractor needed to come back and address the problem as the surface would not last if it was sat in water. N. Ball said he had taken great interest in the roof project but felt he was rarely listened to or acknowledged. He said it was a great shame £660,000 had been wasted on a job that left the council in a mess and a risk to everyone. He said the council was lucky people couldn't meet close together in numbers as although

the roof glass would stick pressure of people under load, it wouldn't if it was hit by a hard object, which had already happened showering glass onto the Marine Parade and the general public. N. Ball said the council needed to resolve the problem of the glass, especially as there was a busy season ahead and the council had known about the problem since the incident of the glass breaking. He said the clock was ticking and he was watching what the council's next move would be. He asked what other options were brought to council regarding alternatives to glass as he wasn't aware of any other suggestions. N Ball asked the council to refrain from replying to any of his comments at this stage as it was clear freedom of information was not adhered to by the council. He said the system allowed for 20 working days for a FOI response but he had been waiting just under 70 days, which the Information Commissioner's Office would be informed about. He said things were being hidden about the roof project and he didn't feel the council was showing transparency. He said maybe the councillors showed this, but it was certainly not evident from some officers. N. Ball said he looked forward to reading extracts of the above in the local press, highlighting a few more issues originating from the depths of the office, which were out of councillors' control.

Members were concerned N. Ball had not received a response to his FOI request and it was agreed this would be discussed further in exempt business.

21/04/TMH Apologies

None.

21/05/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 April 2021 were **ADOPTED**.

21/06/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

21/07/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

21/08/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 28 April 2021

Volunteer ambassadors

Cllr D. Sarson asked what the volunteers would be doing and whether it would include toilet cleaning and emptying bins.

The operations manager said they would only be providing tourist information and the council would have to arrange and pay for extra toilet cleaning and emptying of bins by some other means.

Weldmar memory jars

Cllr M. Ellis asked if there was any further information about how this would be managed.

The operations manager said the jars would now be going on the putting green. On the basis that members were in favour of this location at the last meeting and because Weldmar were pushing for confirmation, he had agreed it.

21/09/TMH Update Report

Monmouth Beach Residents' Association meeting

The deputy town clerk said it was a constructive meeting and after a difficult period, a letter had been sent by the association to residents, encouraging those who hadn't returned their leases to do so.

Cllr B. Larcombe thanked the deputy town clerk and his colleagues for their work on the leases.

Parking

Cllr B. Larcombe said he had been contacted by a resident of Springhill Gardens about problems with parking, which were getting progressively worse with people parking on Horn Bridge and now into Springhill Gardens. He said the resident would be bringing a request to Full Council for residents' parking.

The operations manager said he had received several emails about parking in various areas of the town and he intended to bring a report to the next meeting.

Cllr M. Ellis said many residents had been complaining about visitors parking on the streets but she felt it was something the town had to live with for this year at least, especially as there was currently no park and ride. She said putting double yellow lines in streets would lead to residents complaining they couldn't park themselves.

Several members agreed the town had to put up with the parking issues for this year as more people were holidaying in the UK.

Cllr B. Bawden felt the council shouldn't accept it couldn't do anything and should be discussing something more radical with Dorset Council (DC) as the problem was only going to get worse. Her suggestions for addressing the problem included stopping traffic coming into the town centre except for blue badge holders and residents who could use the two car parks at the bottom of town, a shuttle bus to the main car parks, and stopping lorries coming into town.

The deputy town clerk said when the council had recently received a request for residents' parking, members felt it would push the problem onto other streets without residents' parking. At that time, the council said there needed to be a proper review of parking and traffic management but he didn't think anything had been progressed by DC. He added it had to be an exercise primarily for DC as the highway authority.

The deputy town clerk said he would try and get someone from DC to attend the next meeting.

Replacement of section of seafront railings

Cllr D. Sarson asked if was normal procedure for DC to request a fee to consider if the like-for-like replacement constituted permitted development.

The deputy town clerk said the fee was £120 and DC was treating it as pre-application advice. He said it would be necessary to do this as confirmation was needed that DC was willing to accept the clear view of this council and its advisor that it constituted permitted development. Without this confirmation, there were likely to be issues with DC further along the line.

21/10/TMH Garage 8 at Monmouth Beach

As the rental income was fairly low and there was a long delay on the harbourmaster's store being returned to the council by DC, members agreed the garage should not be rented out and instead used for storage for the external works' team.

Cllr M. Ellis said if the garage was no longer needed when the harbourmaster's store was returned, it could always be rented out at that point.

Cllr G. Stammers asked if it was likely someone on the waiting list would have seen a garage had become vacant and would be expecting to be able to rent it.

The deputy town clerk said it was doubtful as the list was dated and some people had been on it for 15 years. He said if a garage became available, the office would need to check with those on the list if they still wanted one.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to confirm that garage 8 at Monmouth Beach be not relet but, instead, be retained for use by the council as secure and undercover storage.

21/11/TMH Art for the Cinema Wall in the Gardens

Cllr C. Reynolds said Scott Cinemas fully backed the project but permission was required from the council for A Level students from Woodroffe to stand on its land to do the artwork. She showed sketches of the proposed artwork, which would be painted directly onto the wall in the shape of a wave. She said some local companies had agreed to supply some materials and it would be a nice gesture if the council could also provide funding.

Cllr B. Larcombe felt it would be easier for the students to paint on the boards at the school and then attach them to the existing hoarding instead of standing in the gardens, and it would also make it easier to remove a single panel if it was defaced.

However, several members felt it would be better for the students to paint in-situ as it would allow the public to see them working and the project developing.

Cllr K. Ellis asked if members could see all the designs as not all were available to see at the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr K. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to allow access across the council's land in the gardens for establishing artwork on the cinema's temporary boarding wall at the entrance to the gardens.

21/12/TMH Roof Balustrading

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, 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.

21/13/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Cllr B. Bawden asked if there was anything that could be done about the remains of barbeques on the beach, as the majority of wildfires were caused by disposable barbeques.

It was noted there were areas within national parks where disposable barbeques had been outlawed and that this might become more widespread in future.

Members acknowledged open fires were also a problem on Monmouth Beach and as the majority of these incidents took place at night, enforcement officers were not on duty to be able to deal with them.

Cllr K. Ellis suggested the barbeque bins could be moved closer to the beach and made more visible as they were currently black and perhaps unnoticeable.

21/14/TMH Exempt Business

a) Roof Balustrading

The deputy town clerk updated members on the reasons Mr N. Ball had not yet received a substantive response to his FOI response, although he had received an acknowledgement and further emails to clarify his request. He said he was taking legal advice about what information the council was required to release as it was held by third parties involved in the project and may prejudice a future position.

Members welcomed the suggestion to obtain advice from an independent expert about the suitability of the current design and materials specification of the roof balustrading.

Cllr D. Sarson said he hoped the expert would be made aware it was an area of high footfall with people walking below and suggested the Glass and Glazing Federation would be able to suggest a suitable person. He asked if the council was offered an alternative to the current materials and whether the architect was aware that on a previous project on the shelters, laminated and toughened glass was used.

The deputy town clerk said the council was not offered an alternative specification of glass and it only became an issue after installation, although there was a discussion about an alternative form of balustrading. He said on the previous project on the shelters, a different architect was involved but it was the same sub-contractor who dealt with the balustrade and glazing, and they were acknowledged experts in this field.

Cllr D. Sarson asked why the same glass was not used in that case as it was in a more dangerous environment.

The deputy town clerk said it was unknown to what extent the council's budget drove the specification, although it was normal for companies to mould a specification around the maximum budget. He said the question was whether the risks associated with the type of glass used were reasonable or not; if not, what steps could be taken to mitigate those risks.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to:

- agree to obtain the detailed advice of a completely independent 'expert' about the suitability of the current design and materials specification of the roof balustrading above SWiM, the antiques and craft centre, the amusement arcade and the public toilets on the Marine Parade taking into account the location and the known and likely use of the roof space at the time the design and specification was prepared
- agree that approval of the brief and procurement process for this work be delegated to the town clerk in consultation with the deputy town clerk, the chairman and vice-chairman of this committee and the mayor and deputy mayor
- agree the work be procured as soon as possible, funded from the existing 'professional fees' budget and approved retrospectively by Full Council on 28 July 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm.