

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Present

Chairman: Cllr J. Broom

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

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

Guests: Richard Kells, Crossley Consult

21/15/HR

Public Forum

N. Ball (read out by the chairman)

N. Ball said he was writing in the hope the council would consider changing the glass on the shelter roof project and also consider the limitations of use on shelter roof. He listed the reasons why he felt the glass should be changed. He said architects' drawings provided to him by the clerk clearly showed 10mm clear glass, which was then contradicted by the specifier. He said this should have been questioned from the start but he doubted if the councillors knew what glass was actually fitted, they were just told by the town clerk. N. Ball said the glass fitted was 12mm toughened glass and it had acted as the council hoped it would, although he didn't think this was true as four panels has been broken in one summer season. He asked who would be responsible if the glass broke and someone fell on to the Marine Parade. He said he understood the glass fitted could withstand load, with people using the roof as a viewing platform, but not if being hit by sharp objects under force. N. Ball said there had been discussions about protecting the glass, from suggestions of hedges, fences, film on glass, to putting picnic benches or flower tubs on roof. He said there were now where glass panels had been broken and not only did this look bad, but people had also been asking why they were there. He said the council needed to change the glass to toughened laminated glass before a more serious accident happened. N. Ball said limitations had come to his attention since he met and spoke with a representative from the manufacturer of the roof coating material, explaining the roof could be used but he doubted if the council staff had told the members about these criteria. This included the requirement for 18mm ply board if there is a function on the roof, the warranty would be affected if the surface was punctured or drains were not cleared, and the warranty of the roof coating was 15 years. N. Ball felt a byelaw should be pursued to prevent skateboards and bikes on the roof to prevent it being punctured and to prevent accidents happening. He said the contractor wanted more run on the roof to prevent ponding and this was not allowed at the time as it would have cost more money. As such, he believed the project had been all about cost over safety and quality. He said if toughened laminated glass had been used and the base layer had been fully prepared, it would have been more expensive. He said the council breached its own rule on getting three estimates for works as it continued with the same architect which didn't require three quotes. N. Ball said he believed the staff and chairman of this committee did not keep the members informed as to what was happening and he looked forward to seeing what became of this meeting

as it was a shame it would not involve the public. He said as he was always told, if it involved people's wrong doings or too much money involved, the council would always exclude the press or public. He urged the council to change the glass and limit use of the roof as just a viewing platform.

21/16/TMH Apologies

Cllr K. Ellis – work commitments
Cllr C. Reynolds – illness
Cllr D. Ruffle – prior commitment
Cllr R. Smith – family commitments
Cllr S. Williams – illness

21/17/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 June 2021 were **ADOPTED**.

21/18/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

21/19/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

21/20/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 16 June 2021

Parking issues

Cllr D. Sarson asked if the relevant officers at Dorset Council (DC) would be attending the next meeting of this committee.

The operations manager said at least one officer was scheduled to attend.

Replacement of a section of seafront railings

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if everything was in place to hit the target date for the start of the works.

The deputy town clerk said DC had confirmed the works fell under permitted development and had confirmed its contribution to the cost of the works. He said the contractor was lined up and was aiming to start immediately after the October half term. The deputy town clerk said the only outstanding issue was to agree with DC how to prohibit parking while the contractor was working on each section, although it was likely to be managed informally with barriers and cones.

21/21/TMH Update Report

Guildhall works

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if everything was in place for the works to begin on 5 January 2022.

The deputy town clerk confirmed everything was in place and there were no outstanding issues.

Request for taxi ranks

The deputy town clerk said there were no further updates on the progress of the request, which was still in a process with DC.

New Harbourmaster's Store for Dorset Council

The deputy town clerk said legal advice had been obtained, confirming the council would need to serve 12 months' notice on DC to vacate the harbourmaster's store. He said he was due to meet with DC's head of service and the harbourmaster within the next week and it was proposed to serve notice immediately after that meeting.

21/22/TMH Car Park Ticket Machines

The operations manager said there was a significant issue with the machines in terms of cash and members were being asked to consider replacement machines or the possibility of removing machines completely and switching to phone and app parking. He said the current machines were not marine coated.

Members agreed there still needed to be the option to pay with cash as not everyone had smart phones or even mobile phones.

The deputy town clerk said big savings would be made in moving to pay by phone or app and a lot of other places had stopped accepting cash in their machines because it was unreliable and it was an increased focus for theft.

Cllr M. Ellis suggested just one machine accepted cash so people would still have the option to pay this way but it would reduce the potential for the machines to break down.

The operations manager said if only one machine accepted cash, it would become full too quickly and would be out of use until the cash was collected.

Cllr M. Ellis said officers needed to look at cash collection times if the machines were becoming full too quickly. She said if there were more frequent collections, it wouldn't be necessary for every machine to accept cash and she suggested three machines could accept cash and the rest could be card only.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct officers to obtain quotations for car park ticket machines that can withstand a marine environment, three of which can accept cash and two of which are card only.

21/23/TMH Lyme Regis CCTV connection to the pan-Dorset CCTV Control Room

Cllr D. Sarson asked if the cameras would cover the gardens and above the Marine Parade.

The operations manager said the deployable CCTV camera, as per the following report on the agenda, covered that area and could be incorporated into the wider system. He

said if the deployable camera was included in the system, it would increase the project cost from £52,000 to £61,000.

Cllr M. Ellis asked if extra cameras could be added to the system once it was installed.

The operations manager said once the fibre link to the Dorset control room was established, extra cameras could be added, but it would come at a cost.

The operations manager said in applying for funding from the office of the Dorset police and crime commissioner (OPCC), the council may be required to have cameras from a particular provider, and the camera in the gardens was on loan from a different provider. He said there might be an option to keep the deployable camera on loan for longer.

The deputy town clerk said officers could get a price for leasing the deployable camera. He said whatever option members went for, it would be unbudgeted expenditure but there would be less cost if it was included in the OPCC project.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr B. Bawden, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct officers to seek quotes for the proposed CCTV system, to look into options for including the deployable CCTV camera in the gardens within the new system, and to apply for 80% grant funding from the office of the Dorset police and crime commissioner (OPCC).

21/24/TMH Roof Glass CCTV Camera

Members did not need to consider this item as it was incorporated into the previous item.

21/25/TMH 5b Bridge Street – Impact Protection Request

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to support a request from the owner of 5b Bridge Street to request impact protection to protect the overhanging windows (opposite the Guildhall).

21/26/TMH Cart Road Day Huts' Condition

The operations manager said although he had sent a letter to some private hut owners about their deteriorating huts, he had not had to send a letter to say the council would remove the hut if they didn't comply with the maintenance requirements.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the only way the council could have control over the condition of the huts was to own them.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council did have control as there were agreements with the owners. She said the council needed to be firm to make sure people were complying with the requirements as the huts were in high demand and if owners didn't comply, there had to be consequences.

Cllr D. Sarson asked if owners had been told they could potentially lose their hut if they didn't meet the requirements.

The operations manager said it had been referred to in the first letter which was sent out in November 2020 but it had not been explicitly said. He said four of the huts which had previously been in poor condition were still not up to standard; huts 7, 27, 19 and 30.

Cllr J. Broom said the council should inform the owners if their huts were not up to standard by Easter 2022, the council would revoke their licence, remove the hut and charge for the removal.

Cllr M. Ellis felt the date should be earlier so it wasn't so close to the main season.

Cllr J. Broom suggested a deadline of 1 January 2022.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to write to owners of Cart Road beach huts in an unacceptable condition that they must bring their hut up to standard by 1 January 2022 or their licence will be revoked, the council will remove the hut and charge for its removal.

21/27/TMH Dorset Council Proposed Future Parking Strategy Report

Members noted the report.

21/28/TMH Dorset Council and Lyme Regis Town Council Agency Agreement Review

The operations manager confirmed the town council did not get paid for any work it carried out on DC's behalf under this agreement.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council needed to be mindful of not carrying out too much work on DC's behalf as DC might not carry out any work at all in Lyme Regis if it felt it was already being done. She suggested keeping a log of how much it was costing the town council to carry out DC work and to consider if there should be any recompense from DC.

The operations manager said DC was not relinquishing responsibility for what it did and he saw it as a benefit that the town council was allowed to carry out jobs to keep the town tidy, although he didn't feel it would be required very often. He added town council staff could choose to do the work or not.

The operations manager said the agreement allowed the town council to manage pavement licences for the whole town, not just the seafront. He said the amount the council could charge for pavement licences was currently restricted to £100 due to Covid-19, but the agreement did not state that the income had to be paid to DC.

It was noted the agreement was subject to annual review so it would allow the council to assess how much DC work it was doing.

The deputy town clerk clarified specific provisions in the Highways Act meant the council could only charge an amount for pavement licences to cover admin costs, so the income wouldn't be as much as the council receives for the seafront alfresco licences.

21/29/TMH Footpath 21

Members noted the report.

21/30/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Members discussed the seagull problem in Lyme Regis as there were several complaints about them and noted the problem seemed to be much worse than in neighbouring seaside towns, probably due to the amount of takeaway food outlets in Lyme Regis.

The operations manager said a report would go to the next Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee meeting to allow members to consider employing a falconer to tackle the issue. He said the number of complaints received suggested the council should consider the idea again.

Further to complaints about people not being able to sit in the gazebo in the gardens due to anti-social behaviour, Cllr B. Larcombe said the PCSO should be asked to pay particular attention to what goes on there. He said if it continues, the council should consider taking the gazebo away, as it was also a maintenance cost to the council.

Cllr M. Ellis said the council needed to deal with the problem rather than take away the gazebo and other people's enjoyment.

The operations manager said the gazebo would need to be replaced at some point so this could be a discussion for that time.

21/30/TMH Roof Balustrading

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr JG. Turner, 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.

Cllr B. Larcombe left the meeting at 8.26pm.

21/31/TMH Exempt Business

a) Roof Balustrading

Cllr B. Larcombe returned to the meeting at 8.27pm.

The deputy town clerk said if there was a mind to replace the current balustrading, it would not be straightforward to replace it with something that was compliant. He said the previous railings had to be replaced and it was difficult to imagine what else they could have been replaced with, other than the current balustrading. He said if the council replaced what was already there, it would almost certainly be at the council's cost, not someone else's.

The deputy town clerk invited Richard Kells, the specialist glazing consultant from Crossley Consult, to speak.

Mr Kells said the barrier system was fully compliant and if the council was minded to change the glass, he would urge any decision to be delayed as laminated glass in barrier systems was banned following the Grenfell fire. He advised the council not to waste money putting laminated glass in, then possibly falling foul of building regulations which might change.

In answer to members' questions, Mr Kells said post-Grenfell, the only option was what the council currently had and it was very good barrier system compared to other buildings he had inspected. He confirmed high-rise buildings in London would use the same type of glass.

Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 8.38pm.

Cllr M. Ellis returned to the meeting at 8.40pm.

Cllr D. Sarson asked about the effectiveness of the tie-down points to be able to support and hold down large marquees in strong winds.

The deputy town clerk said this would be an issue for the contractor as Mr Kells was a glazing expert. However, he said the posts were specifically designed as marquee strap down points. He said he could ask Taunton Fabrications for the structural calculations related to this.

Members discussed whether it was necessary to look at ways of protecting the public on Marine Parade. A canopy or apron on the front of the roof to catch or deflect anything was suggested.

Mr Kells said so far, in the experience of his company, there hadn't been a fatality from falling glass and injuries from falling glass were quite rare.

Mr Kells offered to help formulate a response to Mr N. Ball's points raised in the public forum and members took up this offer. It was also agreed Mr Kell's inspection report could now be made public.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.