

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 JANUARY 2023

Present

Chairman: Cllr C. Aldridge

Members: Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

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

Absent: Cllr T. Webb

22/51/TMH Public Forum

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

22/52/TMH Apologies

None.

22/53/TMH Minutes

Cllr B. Bawden said the date on the minutes was 11 November 2022 but it should have been 9 November 2022 and her apologies were not recorded.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 November 2022, with the above amendments, were **ADOPTED**.

22/54/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

22/55/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

22/56/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 9 November 2022

Jubilee Pavilion

Cllr D. Sarson asked if any detailed quotes had been received for the work to the Jubilee Pavilion.

The deputy town clerk said one quote had been received which gave a range of prices depending on the various scenarios and the range was within the budget.

Trailer Park at Monmouth Beach, Accreted Land and Harbourmaster's Store

Cllr B. Larcombe said he didn't feel the council could support the extension of land for boat storage.

The deputy town clerk said officers were waiting for a response from Natural England (NE) on the request from Dorset Council (DC) that the area of town council-owned accreted land available for the storage of boats be slightly extended beyond what NE had said they would be willing to support. He said NE had concerns about motorised craft being parked on the accreted land and the risk of oil and fuel contamination, although those concerns had been largely addressed.

The deputy town clerk said NE also had concerns about public access to Monmouth Beach from the Cobb and therefore wanted to ensure a wider margin between parked boats and the steps down from the high wall. He said the request from the harbourmaster still allowed access from the high wall to Monmouth Beach.

The deputy town clerk said the council should wait to hear NE's views and then consider its position. If NE was happy, he couldn't see why the council couldn't support the request but it might affect the rent DC was charged because it would be a much bigger area.

Cllr B. Bawden said there was a desire among people in senior positions in DC for negotiations about the whole harbour area to move on more quickly.

Perimeter wall – Churchyard and Insurance Claim

Cllr B. Larcombe said he had previously raised concerns about the wall and asked if there were any updates on the insurance claim.

The deputy town clerk said the insurance claim didn't relate to the collapsed wall; it related to someone tripping on the pathway in the churchyard and this was being looked at by the council's insurers and the claimant's solicitor.

The deputy town clerk said the town council's responsibility for the closed churchyard was clear, which included boundary walls and fences. He said there was also historic correspondence which indicated sections of the wall had collapsed previously and been repaired by the council. There was little doubt the council would have to pay for the repair of the wall and there was provision in the budget for this.

However, the deputy town clerk said the length and height of the wall was considerable and it may not be possible just to repair the collapsed section. He said the amount in the budget was enough to repair the collapsed section but once the building surveyor's report was available, it was likely work would also be required to the section that had not collapsed.

Cllr B. Bawden said the fence on the pathway on the seaward side of the churchyard was falling down so this also needed to be addressed.

22/57/TMH Update Report

Garden paths

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if the compacted gravel option was chosen, whether the colour could match the existing tarmac colour for aesthetic purposes.

The operations manager said he could investigate this.

Lister Room

Cllr D. Sarson asked if there was an estimate of the cost of the works to the Langmoor and Lister Room roofs created by excessive rain.

The deputy town clerk said temporary repairs could be carried out by council staff, which would not be too costly, but there were other options which could be more costly. He said he was having a meeting later that week to discuss the issue.

The deputy town clerk said there were flaws in the original design of the roofs and the historic issues that related to the method of construction needed to be addressed. He said he believed this could be done within the amount identified in the budget.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if future proofing this kind of maintenance could be investigated.

The deputy town clerk said this could be investigated but it would add significantly to the cost.

Three Phase supply for Monmouth Beach car park and Woodmead car park

Cllr M. Ellis asked if this was a budgeted item and if not, why it wasn't being brought as a report first for members to consider.

The operations manager said it was not a budgeted item but because of the lead times involved, he was looking at the feasibility in the first instance and then a report could be brought back for members to consider a future budget item.

Cllr C. Aldridge said her understanding was Western Power Distribution (WPD) had said it was impossible to install a three-phase supply.

The operations manager said WPD was installing a new substation at Monmouth Beach so it may now be possible in that area, although he wasn't aware of any changes at Woodmead Road which would make it possible.

22/58/TMH Car Park Permits' Administration

Cllr D. Sarson asked if there was a three-year permit and a person changed their vehicle within that time, how the enforcement officers would know whether the person had a permit.

The operations manager said the person could log into their account and change their permit to a new vehicle.

Cllr B. Larcombe said people could change addresses at any point and asked if it was incumbent on them to let the council know if this was the case.

The operations manager said it was incumbent on the owner to let the council know if they changed vehicle or address. He said if they used a permit and it was found they were not entitled to use it, it would be withdrawn.

Cllr M. Ellis said if someone moved out of Lyme Regis within the three years, they would still have a permit. She said she would be more willing to support a two-year permit.

Cllr B. Larcombe said if it was an administrative burden to issue the permits every year, it should be made an online system.

The operations manager said it was already an online system but due to the demographic of people living in Lyme Regis, many people didn't or couldn't go online and went into the office for their permits, which was the time-consuming element.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to allow residents' concessionary car parking permit renewal every two years and to keep this under review.

22/59/TMH Parking Issues

Cllr B. Bawden, the DC ward member, said she had been following up various highways requests with DC which had been raised and supported by this council. With regards to the county-wide highways and parking review, she had been informed this had been delayed because DC was carrying out its own overall parking review. However, Lyme Regis and Charmouth was on the list for a review but a lot of other towns were also on the list so she agreed the council should go ahead with making requests for specific problem areas.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the Clappentail bus stop was becoming more dangerous and the council had been told in the past a traffic regulation order was not required to mark out the bus bay. As such, he didn't want this to be delayed by the wider request for a traffic regulation order if this could be progressed separately.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instruct officers to request Dorset Council Highways commences the traffic regulation process to consider road markings on sections of Sidmouth Road, Springhill Gardens and Roman Road to control parking, to include the bus stop bay by the Clappentail/Lyme Road roundabout.

22/60/TMH Drainage Issues at SWiM

The deputy town clerk explained the drainage issues at SWiM and said the improvements were in the council's interests and would benefit both the council and the tenant in the long run.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the ongoing drainage issues at SWiM and approve making a financial contribution of 25% (up to a maximum of £10k) towards the tenant's cost of repairing and improving the current drains and associated works.

22/61/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Cllr D. Sarson referred to a complaint about the Marine Parade Shelters lift being out of order. He said the council knew the lift had been broken for several years but if the same person came back and found it was still broken, this would be an issue. He asked if there was any intention of fixing it and if not, would this be a problem where accessibility legislation was concerned.

The operations manager said he had brought a report to this committee some time ago about the lift and he had obtained quotes for a replacement for £70-100k. He said the lift only serviced the Langmoor Room and the upper level of the shelters, not the rest of the gardens, and as such, members decided to leave the lift as it was.

Cllr G. Stammers asked if the lift wasn't providing full access even when it was in use, whether it was possible to remove it.

Cllr C. Reynolds felt the council should either repair it or take it away, which several members agreed with.

Members asked the operations manager to investigate the accessibility implications in removing the lift and that a report be brought to a future meeting.

Cllr B. Larcombe referred to a compliment received about the enforcement officers. He said it was nice to read something positive about them and wanted to give credit to them.

22/62/TMH RNLI Lifeguard Service

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, 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.

22/63/TMH Procurement of Electrical and Plumbing Services

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, 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.

22/64/TMH Advertising Boards

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, 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

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22/65/TMH Trailer Park, Accreted Land and 'Harbourmaster's Store'

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, 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.

22/66/TMH Exempt Business

a) RNLI Lifeguard Service

Cllr B. Larcombe said the lifeguard station was in the middle of one of the safest beaches in the south of England and if there was deemed to be a need for a third lifeguard, why was it located in the safest part where they had no visibility of the most dangerous areas at Broad Ledge and Back Beach. He said he couldn't understand why a lifeboat service was needed to help with missing children. He added that it wasn't about saving lives, it was about promoting the RNLI in the most congested area of Lyme Regis.

Cllr M. Ellis said Back Beach wasn't a designated bathing beach so the lifeguards wouldn't observe there. In considering funding for the lifeguards, she said the council had always come back to the conclusion that if someone was to drown and the council had not funded the lifeguards, it would not reflect well. She said she would find it hard to withdraw funding and there was already an agreement in place which she felt the council should stick to.

Cllr B. Larcombe said if the RNLI widened the service to other beaches in Lyme Regis, he would possibly support a third lifeguard.

Cllr G. Turner said lifeguards wouldn't go too far from their post to deal with lost children but both the coastguards and the lifeboat would go as far as required on land and at sea to find them.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to continue with the existing contract for the RNLI lifeguard service.

b) Procurement of Electrical and Plumbing Services

Cllr M. Ellis said the council had previously put an advert in the local newspapers to ask if local contractors were interested in providing these services and this would also provide a register of available contractors.

The deputy town clerk said when the council went through this process previously, lots of companies were invited to submit proposals but almost none did. He said he wasn't advising against advertising the opportunity but maybe not to expect much of a response.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to select Topsparks Ltd as the council's preferred supplier for electrical and plumbing services but to also open invitations to other suppliers with a view to reviewing the position in six months.

c) Advertising Boards

Cllr B. Larcombe felt the council could continue to pursue enforcement against a specific business without the need for a solicitor. He asked why the council couldn't take away the advertising board if it was on its land.

The operations manager said the council could take the board away but it had to be returned within a 'reasonable' time and couldn't be disposed of.

Cllr P. May asked if there was any other way the council could enforce the rules around advertising boards, such as insisting businesses had a certain level of public liability insurance, introducing a fee to put boards out, or fining businesses who don't adhere to the rules.

Cllr C. Reynolds felt the council should be taking the same approach to all businesses in the town, rather than singling out this one business. She said in the past when DC had enforced the A board policy and businesses were told to take their boards in, they were put back out the following day.

Cllr M. Ellis agreed there needed to be a consistent approach across the whole town and suggested a letter was sent to all businesses informing them of the rules.

Cllr B. Bawden suggested there could be something in the council's business briefing.

Cllr B. Larcombe said if the council's solicitor wasn't minded to pursue action with the one particular business, the council needed to look for another solicitor to take it forward. He said removing boards and returning them days or weeks later would also act as a deterrent to businesses due to the inconvenience.

Cllr P. May agreed the council should extend as far as possible the amount of reasonable time the council could retain advertising boards, which might encourage people to be more sensible with them.

The deputy town clerk advised members that trying to tackle the issue of advertising boards could harm relationships with local businesses and he felt DC should be dealing with the issue.

Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 8.25pm.

Cllr G. Stammers said it was unfair on staff to continue to remove advertising boards and have the potential for confrontation with business owners.

The deputy town clerk said neither DC nor its predecessor Dorset County Council had ever brought a prosecution against a business for advertising boards.

Cllr M. Ellis returned to the meeting at 8.27pm.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to pursue the prosecution of a business refusing to move an advertising board, and to remove boards from any businesses which do not comply with the A board policy and to keep them for as long as is reasonably possible.

Members agreed the A board policy should be sent in the business briefing.

d) Trailer Park, Accreted Land and ‘Harbourmaster’s Store’

Members discussed the request from the harbourmaster to phase the increase in rent for the trailer part and accreted land.

The deputy town clerk said if members were minded to support the request, it should be stipulated that the benefit of the phasing directly went to the local harbour users instead of being used by DC to offset the subsidy it currently put in to the harbour.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the council had never had the money it was owed for the land and as such, it was indirectly subsidising DC. He felt the council should be paid what it was owed immediately.

It was proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle to refuse the request from the harbourmaster to phase the increase in rent for the trailer park and accreted land over three years.

This motion was not carried.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Bawden, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to phase the increased rent to Dorset Council for the trailer park and accreted land over two years.

Members discussed the request from the harbourmaster that the notice period to vacate the store at Monmouth Beach be extended from 31 January 2023 to 31 July 2023.

Cllr M. Ellis said she did not support the extension as the council had plans for the use of the store and there was no guarantee the work would be completed on DC’s new store by the end of July. She said the council needed to do what was in its best interests and ensure its equipment was stored safely.

Cllr G. Stammers said DC had had a year’s notice to vacate so they must have a plan in place.

It was noted that the vacation date of 31 January 2023 was before the Full Council meeting on 15 February 2023 when any resolution could be agreed, so retrospective approval would be given by the Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to refuse the request from the harbourmaster to extend the notice period to vacate the store at Monmouth Beach from 31 January 2023 to 31 July 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.58pm.