

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 JULY 2025

Present

Chairman: Cllr M. Ellis

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Caddy, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr P. Evans, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr A. Wood

Officers: M. Green (deputy town clerk), A. Mullins (assistant town clerk), S. O'Connell (operations manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

25/01/TMH Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe that Cllr M. Ellis is chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee.

Cllr M. Ellis was **ELECTED** as chairman.

It was proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds that Cllr G. Caddy is vice-chairman of the Town Management and Highways Committee.

Cllr G. Caddy was **ELECTED** as vice-chairman.

25/02/TMH Terms of Reference

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, the committee's terms of reference were **RECEIVED**.

Cllr G. Stammers arrived at 7.03pm.

25/03/TMH Public Forum

J. Edmonds

J. Edmonds spoke in relation to agenda item 13, Café in the Gardens. She said she had been asked by the local newspaper for a comment on the proposal, due to her association with the gardens. She had provided a comment to the press in relation to a story about the town 'booming', but she didn't feel the town was booming in terms of community, although it was in terms of tourism. She said there needed to be more local shops for local people, and acknowledged businesses couldn't be forced to open, but she encouraged the council to think about the community when considering change of use for units.

Cllr B. Bawden

As the Dorset Council (DC) ward member, Cllr B. Bawden said DC had reconsidered its decision on the booking system for the household recycling centre in Bridport and decided on a phased introduction. She said this was the sensible compromise she had

asked for at the outset, because Bridport doesn't experience the problems that the booking system was to be used for. The phased introduction at other sites in Dorset would allow DC to gather real world data to assess the system's impact in Dorset.

With regards to the parking review at agenda item 14, Cllr B. Bawden said she had sent a list of parking issues to the relevant DC officer, but she was now aware the remit of the review was car parks, to determine the highways' budget. However, she would still pursue the long list of issues in the meantime.

Cllr B. Bawden said DC was working on the Lyme Regis traffic and travel 'vision', as determined in 2024, and there would be public consultation on this in August. She said DC would explain the possible options and timescales to town councillors to understand the potential long-term outcomes.

With regards to Phase 5 repairs to the Cobb, Cllr B. Bawden said there was no change from DC, Historic England was still being chased for a response and the consultant's reported was awaited to draw down funding. It was hoped construction work would start in winter 2026/spring 2027. The project team would do quarterly updates and would update the harbour advisory groups. Public awareness sessions would take place later in the year.

With regards to beach replenishment, Cllr B. Bawden said DC was still waiting for a reply from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). There had been too much of a delay to carry out the work before summer, so DC was now targeting the autumn, which fitted better with the need to bolster the beach before the winter storms.

S. Burns

S. Burns said he was the tenant of The Terrace Café, as per the request in the agenda for outside seating and licensing, and he would be happy to answer any questions about the request.

T. Mayers (read out by an officer)

As chairman of the Cobb Traders, he said the group wished to object to item 13 on the agenda, the proposal for a council-run café facility serving the Lister and Langmoor Gardens. He said Cobb Traders questioned whether constructing and operating a café was an effective use of public money, particularly when the town was already well served with cafes, restaurants and takeaway businesses. He said in doing so, Lyme Regis Town Council would be running a café in direct competition with existing local businesses, some of which were council tenants paying rent, while others paid fees to the council, for instance pavement licence charges. He said the council would have an unfair commercial advantage, particularly if the café benefitted from privileged access to funds and resources for operation and marketing. He said a precedent was set by the council when it forced Mark Hix to remove his outside decking area, and the council was on record saying, 'the public gardens should be kept free of commercial development for the enjoyment of local residents and visitors.' He said the construction and operation of a café would be in contravention of this position.

R. Thomas (read out by an officer)

R. Thomas spoke on the same agenda item and said he was opposed to the provision of a council run café serving the Lister and Langmoor Gardens. He understood the gardens were gifted to the town to provide a tranquil green space and this was largely

the case at the moment, which was well received in what was understandably an otherwise commercial bustling town. He felt it would be wrong for the council to go against the terms of the gifting. He said despite this, there was already a cafe in the gardens, Lyme Terrace Café. He said there were many excellent cafes all over the town, many of which were local businesses and would obviously suffer with the additional unnecessary competition, with the Good Food Café having already closed down. He said cafes invariably led to litter. He said the council workers did a remarkable job picking up litter all year round and currently coped even when it was holiday season, with the gardens being pretty litter free. Everyone he had discussed this proposal with was against it and he felt he was expressing the views of the silent majority. He hoped councillors would do the same and represent their constituents' views by rejecting the proposal.

J. Breeze (read out by an officer)

J. Breeze spoke in relation to the same agenda item and said she was opposed to the proposed café in the gardens. She said it would encroach on a public area of green with the potential for yet higher levels of littering. She said there was an excess of food outlets in town, around 25 plus, and the town did not need another, especially when there were already some in the near vicinity. She said the council should be supporting local businesses, not competing against them.

25/04/TMH Apologies

Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold – work commitments
Cllr D. Holland

25/05/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr G. Caddy, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 April 2025 were **ADOPTED**.

25/06/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

25/07/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

25/08/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 9 April 2025

Broad Street Bin Store

A member asked officers to chase this up again with DC as the bins on Gun Cliff looked unsightly.

The town clerk clarified that the bin store would not replace the bins on Gun Cliff, it would provide extra capacity.

Suggestion for Revised Traffic Arrangements in Lyme Regis

Members discussed whether the report with proposals and costings from DC should be considered by the Traffic and Travel Strategy Working Group or this committee. It was agreed the report would be brought to this committee.

The deputy town clerk said he had spoken to DC's transport team, who were keen to provide the town council with more context to the proposals; they didn't want to present them as two schemes in isolation, but rather how they fitted into their vision for the town.

25/09/TMH Update Report

The Three Cups

The deputy town clerk said Palmer's property agent said progress had been made with a potential development partner and planning permission and Listed Building Consent had now been granted for the replacement of the main entrance pillars.

MUGA

A member asked if netting would be installed around the field to stop balls going into surrounding gardens.

The deputy town clerk said officers were looking at options, with the intention to bring this to members and then to consult with local residents. If the majority of residents were in favour of having netting, this was the likely outcome.

Harbour Store

A member asked if biodiesel, which was stored at the Harbour Store, was being used in council vehicles yet.

The operations manager said a third quote had to be obtained but officers were now in a position to proceed.

Day Hut Site at Monmouth Beach

The deputy town clerk said the replacement hut would cost £3,790 + VAT, which was below the £6k budget.

Signage from A35 and other related transport issues

A member said the sign on the traffic island in Cobb Square was damaged and she had asked DC to rectify this, who said it was the town council's responsibility. She asked if officers could look into this.

Chalet Site at Monmouth Beach

The deputy town clerk said the council was in a dispute situation and solicitors were involved on both sides.

Lyme Link

The deputy town clerk said the town bus had incurred about £35k expenditure to date, which was below the £55k budget.

Footpath Repairs in Lister and Langmoor Gardens

The deputy town clerk clarified that the total budget for the proposed works was £200k, as £100k had been deferred from a previous financial year as well as the similar amount in the 25/26 budget. However, the project was expected to come in significantly under budget.

25/10/TMH Town Management and Highways Committee – Objectives

Disposal of the council's Church Street office

The deputy town clerk said the office would be marketed via property agents Alder King, chosen because of their regional and national reach, as well as their local knowledge. He said officers needed to clear some remaining things from the office before it could be marketed. The method for disposal – tender or auction – had not yet been agreed but commencement of marketing would start at the end of July.

Undertake joint works to the Lynch with Dorset Council

The deputy town clerk said this project had been discussed with the DC property manager but there wasn't an agreement about how the project might be taken forward. He said as an adjacent landowner, the Town Mill might have some responsibilities but the previous scheme was jointly funded by the former Dorset County Council, the former West Dorset District Council and the town council. It was hoped a similar agreement could be reached again.

Cllr P. May declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of the Town Mill.

The town clerk said he and the mayor were meeting with the leader of DC on 18 July 2025 so this issue would be added to the list of issues to discuss.

25/11/TMH Traffic and Travel Strategy Working Group membership

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr G. Caddy, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to appoint Cllrs C. Aldridge, S. Cockerell, P. May, G. Caddy, M. Ellis and C. Reynolds to the Traffic and Travel Strategy Working Group.

25/12/TMH Bridport Household Recycling Centre

It was noted DC had reversed its decision on the Bridport Household Recycling Centre (HRC) and the booking system would be phased in at some sites in Dorset.

However, some members were concerned DC would decide to introduce the booking system at Bridport HRC further down the line, so it was important for this council to agree a formal position on the issue.

There was also concern there had been no public consultation on the changes.

Members were concerned DC was considering the system for all HRCs in Dorset, and although it was acknowledged it might benefit some sites, they felt it was unnecessary at Bridport HRC, where the current arrangements worked very well. There was concern

there seemed to be a drive from DC to introduce blanket policies across the area, without looking at the specifics.

The town clerk said the council had previously raised with DC that every town was different and suggested this could also be discussed at the meeting with the leader of DC.

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to write to Dorset Council to register Lyme Regis Town Council's objection to any future introduction of a booking system at Bridport Household Recycling Centre.

25/13/TMH Café in the Gardens

Cllr M. Ellis said this proposal was following a suggestion for a takeaway outlet, so parents could get a drink or snack while their children were using the amenities area, which would create additional revenue to put back into the town.

Several members agreed a small takeaway outlet would be acceptable but were not in favour of a café.

Members were generally not in favour of a café because of issues around potential littering, the desire to maintain the area as a peaceful space, competition with existing businesses, concerns around further commercialisation of the gardens, and the council's previous decision not to allow the Oyster and Fish House to extend into the gardens.

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to take forward the proposal for the provision of a council-run café facility serving the Lister and Langmoor Gardens.

25/14/TMH Review of Parking Issues by Dorset Council

The deputy town clerk said the scope of DC's review had been clarified; while the council could still feed back general comments about other parking issues, the scope of this review was off-street parking charges. He said if members had specific parking issues or ideas, to let him know and he would relay them to the ward member and the relevant DC officer.

25/15/TMH Public Electric Barbecues on the Beach

Members had several concerns about the barbecues, including who would be responsible for cleaning and maintaining them, that they might be subject to vandalism, they would create a safety issue for children, they would take up space, they didn't look very attractive, and that the council would be liable for any accidents.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to pursue the proposal to install fixed public-use barbecue units on Lyme Regis beach.

25/16/TMH Seafront Signage

Members agreed signage around the town could be improved and made more accessible and cohesive.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree a review of town-wide signage, including the seafront, be considered as part of the 2026-27 budget-setting process.

25/17/TMH Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Clothing Banks

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr P. May, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree in principle to the request from the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Charity (DSAA) to place clothing donation banks on Lyme Regis Town Council land, subject to agreeing the specific locations at Anning Road Playing Field and Woodmead car park, but to review the situation if no suitable locations can be found.

25/18/TMH Use of the Former Lister Room (now Terrace Café) – Outside Seating and Licensing Requests

The deputy town clerk said DC had granted the café a licence to sell alcohol without going through the normal consultation process, which meant it had not come to the town council to comment as the local authority. Under the terms of the lease, he said there were two separate provisions: the premises shouldn't be open beyond 11pm and the prohibition of the sale of alcohol, unless specifically approved by the town council. He said the town council's consent for the sale of alcohol was still required, despite the granting by DC of a licence.

The deputy town clerk said the requested gazebo or shading would not involve the gardens and would be on the private terrace, which is within the tenant's leased area. The tenants were looking to have a discussion with the council about what kind of structure might be acceptable and he therefore suggested authority be delegated to the town clerk, in consultation with the chairmen and vice-chairmen of this committee and the Planning Committee to agree something acceptable.

A member asked if the sale of alcohol would be limited to those eating at the café or whether customers would be able to have just a drink.

The chairman invited S. Burns to respond. He said they didn't want to open as a bar full-time, but people had asked them to hold events at the café, so they would like to open two evenings a week between May and September until 10pm or for planned events. He said they would like to be able to serve drinks, even if a customer wasn't having food.

Members were concerned that customers would be allowed to take away alcoholic drinks and didn't feel this was necessary, with concerns including littering and use of plastic cups.

There were concerns any permanent cover would spoil the view and several members felt umbrellas would be sufficient.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr S. Cockerell, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that authority is delegated to the town clerk in consultation with the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the Town Management and Highways and Planning Committees to consider the Terrace Café's requests for a

covering over the outside seating area and to sell a limited range of alcohol, on condition that if a unanimous position cannot be agreed, the matter be brought back to members for further consideration, and with the restriction that alcohol cannot be consumed off the premises.

25/19/TMH Outcome of Tender Submission – Woodland at Dragon’s Hill

Members noted the report.

25/20/TMH Ground Monitoring at Monmouth Beach and Lister and Langmoor Gardens

Members noted the report.

25/21/TMH Charity Collections on Council-Owned Land

Members were in favour of charity collections in the gardens if it was part of a wider event, such as the fireworks, but did not agree with people standing on town council land with collection pots.

It was clarified that charities could currently book the Marine Parade Shelters for a charity collection, but they would be restricted to this area and would have to pay for the use of any areas.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to maintain the current policy and restrict charity collections to the Marine Parade Shelters, other than when collections take place as part of a major event.

25/22/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.26pm.