

## LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS HELD ON FRIDAY 20 APRIL 2018

#### 1. **Introductions and welcome from the mayor – Cllr Mrs M. Ellis**

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis welcomed all those attending the meeting and introduced Cllr Cheryl Reynolds of West Dorset District Council (WDDC), and Cllr Daryl Turner of WDDC and Dorset County Council (DCC).

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said apologies had been given by Richard Doney, Brian Larcombe, Audrey Vivian and Keith Vivian.

#### 2. **To receive the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 7 April 2017**

Proposed by Jo Robinson and seconded by Jeff Scowen, the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting on 7 April 2017 were **APPROVED** by the majority as a correct record of the meeting.

#### 3. **To receive the Report to Electors 2017/18**

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis presented the report to the meeting.

#### 4. **Feedback from local organisations in receipt of grants and support from Lyme Regis Town Council**

##### **Marcus Dixon – Lyme Regis Gig Club**

Mr Dixon said the gig club was fortunate to receive a grant last year, which was very gratefully received and enabled them to continue to develop the junior rowing section with the purchase of junior rowing oars. He said the club was set up 11 years ago to enable people of all ages to participate in sea rowing, to have fun, keep fit, meet people and compete in probably the fastest growing sport in the south west. He said the club was flourishing, with 200 members and 50 junior members.

Mr Dixon said the club wouldn't be where it was if the town council hadn't supported it from the beginning. He said people were waiting to join the club but they would like to find some way of developing more of a facility for the club. He said if the council was looking at the Monmouth Beach area being developed, the club hoped there was scope for providing more land for a facility.

##### **Ray Waspé – Lyme Regis Sea School**

Mr Waspé said the organisation was a charity run by volunteers, and a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) approved sea school which taught children and adults to sail. He said last year the council gave a grant to help to replace some of the old boats, with four bought last year and a further four to be replaced this year.

Mr Waspé said the sea school taught about 200 children and 50 adults a year to sail through the RYA programme, and how to respect the sea. He said children who learned to sail could go on to become assistant instructors or instructors, which gave them a certain level of responsibility at a young age.

Mr Waspé said they used the council grant to buy two Pico dinghies, which were used by Woodroffe School to teach up to 40 pupils, and by the sailing club and sea school in the summer. He said the club appreciated the support, which was part of an ongoing fundraising programme.

### **Rovarn Wickremasinghe – Bridport and District Citizens' Advice Bureau**

Mr Wickremasinghe thanked the council for its grant, which was essential to provide an outreach service in the town, operating at St Michael's Business Centre on Wednesdays. He said over the last year they had seen just over 2,000 people and dealt with 5,000 problems, of which 130 people were from Lyme Regis. He said they helped with a range of problems, including benefits, debt problems and housing.

Mr Wickremasinghe said the CAB was trying to do more in Lyme Regis and was holding sessions at the medical centre on Mondays through April, and hoped to be able to continue beyond that. He said the grant had been invaluable to train volunteers, including supervision costs and travel expenses, and there were currently 80 volunteers. He said it had been a busy year, with a lot of changes especially due to Universal Credit.

### **Stan Williams – Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride**

Mr Williams said the organisation was run by a small committee. He said when the service started, they didn't think Lyme Regis would be a big user of the service, but there were high passenger numbers and virtually every trip out of Lyme Regis was full. He said the service was well used by people who were not on a bus route and by disabled people. He said the passengers made friends with each other so it also helped them socialise. He thanked the council for its support.

### **Philip Sankey – Western Area Transport Action Group (WATAG)**

Mr Sankey said the council's grant had enabled WATAG to produce timetables, crossing the gap in Lyme Regis between different operators and links with trains. He said lots of timetables were given out in Bridport, which may have encouraged people to come to Lyme Regis. He said the group was on fairly good terms with the bus management, so people could raise issues with the group and they could take them up with the bus companies.

### **Adrienne Mullins – St Michael's Primary and Pre-School PFA**

Mrs Mullins thanked the council for its grant of £2,500 and said the PFA was grateful to receive the whole award as it allowed them to purchase four sheds as planned. She said they were used in the primary school to securely store outdoor PE equipment, where it was protected from the weather, no longer covered in mould, easily accessible and in good working order. She said in

the pre-school, one of the sheds was used as a construction area as part of the children's outdoor learning.

Mrs Mullins said the PFA raised thousands of pounds for the school but there was a high demand on funds for things like swimming lessons, IT equipment and school trips so the funds had to be prioritised. As such, the PFA was grateful for the council's support in enhancing the children's learning. She thanked the council on behalf of the PFA, staff and governors, and the children of St Michael's.

#### **4. Open Session**

##### **(a) Questions from young people**

There were none.

##### **(b) Questions from Lyme Regis Electors**

###### **Ken Gollop**

- i) Mr Gollop asked why there was no notice in the press advertising the meeting and asked if this was a legal requirement. He said the noticeboard in Broad Street was crowded and perhaps the middle section could be kept clear for council business.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said there was no legal requirement to put a notice in the press, but notification had been sent to the press, as well as the meeting being advertised in the noticeboards, and on the town council's website and social media.

- ii) Mr Gollop asked what could be done to get the bus stop moved up Broad Street to relieve congestion from traffic and pedestrians. He asked if there would be a public consultation on traffic problems.

Cllr D. Turner said requests could be sent to Amanda Evans at DCC, and all requests would need to be assessed by the community highways' officers. To determine a suitable location for the bus stop, he said DCC would look at existing junctions and traffic regulation orders. He said DCC had a petitions' system but it must get the approval of the town council as well.

The town clerk said the council had appointed a company called Hydrock to do a traffic survey, which would include public consultation.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said the town council was waiting to see if Highways England would agree to signs on the A35 to prevent HGVs coming into the town.

- iii) Mr Gollop asked as there were now deckchairs on the pavements in Broad Street, would the town ever be rid of the A boards congesting the pavements and causing a danger to pedestrians.

Cllr D. Turner said enforcement of the rules regarding A boards was carried out by Simon Roberts at DCC. He said there was an A boards policy and

leaflets had been sent to local businesses numerous times. He said trading on the highways was not allowed under the Highways Act and the business in question had been informed of this.

Cllr D. Turner said enforcement of various issues was carried out by the town, district and county council enforcement officers, but as Dorset was moving towards a unitary authority, he hoped all three councils would be able to work to the same legislation and have officers who were capable of carrying out all enforcement.

Cllr D. Turner said the A board policy stated businesses were able to have one board and he would ensure businesses were informed again. He said he would inform Simon Roberts of a business in Drake's Way which had several boards.

### **Mrs B. Holmes**

- i) As a former volunteer at the Jubilee Pavilion, Mrs Holmes asked what the council's plans were for the pavilion this season and its long-term future.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said at the end of the last season, there were only seven volunteers so the spaces couldn't be filled, especially at weekends. She said she was meeting with Alan Vian to see if there was any way it could be opened just at weekends, but it would depend on there being enough volunteers. She added that the council now had a seafront attendant who was based at the pavilion.

Mrs Holmes said the council needed to employ a marketing person to professionally run the shelters, to commercially let the rooms and make the space in the Jubilee Pavilion attractive. She said the volunteers felt they were not supported by the council and there were numerous problems, including the building being dirty and issues with the projectors. However, the volunteers would support the council if it was run professionally and on a commercial basis.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said the council did advertise for a marketing person several years ago but there was no response.

Mr N. Ball added that the canopy over the performance area was missing but he understood it was on order, and banners were missing, leaving poles sticking out of the walls.

There were suggestions to move the council office and the tourist information centre to the Jubilee Pavilion.

- ii) Mrs Holmes asked how Dorset Waste Partnership and the town council were going to resolve between them the big problem of waste bin collections along the seafront during major events.

The town clerk said the council had invested a lot of resources on the seafront this year and last year, including appointing a seafront attendant, and scheduling staff rotas so they work 47 hours a week in the summer. When there are events, he said resources were focused on supporting the events

and conversations were also taking place with event organisers, who had a responsibility to take their rubbish away. He said Dorset Waste Partnership employees finished on the seafront in the early evening, so the council would be making sure it provided cover later in the day.

Cllr D. Turner said Turn Lyme Green (TLG) was working on a Plastic Free Lyme initiative and he praised Vic's chip shop as they had stopped using plastic wrappings and containers. He said if other businesses did the same, this would make a big difference in the town.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said the council was supporting TLG in this initiative, which included a display in the Jubilee Pavilion in the near future.

### **Mr S. Williams**

Mr Williams asked why the beach cleaning tractor hadn't been used since last year as there was a lot of rubbish on the beach.

The administrative officer said as there had been a large ridge on the beach, it had not been possible to get the tractor on the beach, but it had been used more recently than last year. She said Mr Williams had contacted the operations manager about it that day, after which, the external works' team had removed some of the rubbish and driftwood by hand.

In response to a question about beach replenishment, Cllr D. Turner said WDDC didn't have funding to do this; funding was only available for harbour dredging, when material was deposited on the beach. He said the beach was replenished during the dredging but storms had washed it away.

Mr D. Hallett said there was £248,000 available in Section 106 funding for coastal protection works and he suggested it could be used for beach replenishment.

### **Mr K. Gollop**

Mr Gollop asked if there had been any discussions with WDDC about the town council taking over the harbour.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said it had not been discussed.

### **Adrian Robinson**

Mr Robinson said with the formation of a unitary authority, a lot of the powers available to Weymouth and Portland Borough Council were going to disappear, and there were now plans to form a town council in Weymouth with 49 members. He asked what provisions were being put in place to ensure the weight of that body didn't drown out the rest of Dorset.

Cllr D. Turner said there was a question mark hanging over the unitary status as Christchurch Borough Council had found a way into judicial review. He said powers would be devolved to Weymouth Town Council in the same way as to other town councils. However, he said WPBC had a huge asset base and it wasn't yet known what the new town council would take across with them. He

said the key issue was funding, but there were no answers yet. He said personally, he didn't believe anything would be devolved to town councils until May 2019.

### **Mrs G. Lang**

Mrs Lang asked how the refurbishment of the Marine Parade toilets was getting on.

Cllr J. Broom said the work would start on 23 April 2018.

### **Mrs Jane Robinson**

Mrs Robinson asked for an update on the installation of cash machines.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said Western Power would be installing the electricity supply in two to three weeks and it was expected to take four to six weeks for BT to install a line. She added that it was not the council's responsibility to provide cash machines.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said they were due to be installed in January but this was delayed as there was no electricity supply or phone line. She said Tesco had said it would provide cashback. She said a cash machine was due to be installed at Fordhams at the end of May and this had also been delayed.

Mrs Robinson said she worked in Tesco and employees had not been told the store would be providing cashback.

### **Mrs Jo Robinson**

Mrs Robinson asked for an update on the proposed puffin crossing in Broad Street.

Cllr D. Turner said the proposal had to go to public consultation, which would also involve speaking to local businesses. He said the resident who had originally requested the crossing now had a guide dog, so DCC would also need to consult with her.

Mr A. Robinson said he had done guide dog training and Royal National Institute for the Blind training, and in his opinion, there would be nowhere a guide dog would currently choose to cross.

### **Mr K. Gollop**

Mr Gollop asked if there had been any progress with the listed building officer regarding the Guildhall window.

Cllr Mrs C. Reynolds said a meeting had taken place with the listed building officer, and DCC Highways was discussing with Highways England the possibility of more signs on the A35 to deter HGVs from coming into the town. She said it had to be proven the signs had not improved the situation before the listed building officer would consider any structural changes to the Guildhall window.

Mr Gollop said there was a proposed restructuring programme for the Cobb, which was due to go to public consultation in June. He said the plans, which included tarmacking the surface and removing the cobbles in some places, had been given the approval of listed building officers. He said if they were willing to compromise over the Cobb, perhaps they would be willing to compromise over the Guildhall.

Cllr D. Turner said Natural England had climbed down considerably. However, a public consultation would take place and the funding would need to be in place first.

### **Mrs G. Lang**

Mrs Lang asked if there was any update on the refurbishment of the Regent Cinema.

Cllr D. Turner said there had been no planning application or pre-application submitted.

Cllr O. Lovell said he understood the cinema wanted to have two screens but there was a funding gap.

### **Mr A. Robinson**

Mr Robinson thanked the town council for funding the town bus, which he said had been a lifesaver and was much appreciated, especially by those who felt isolated at times and couldn't get to appointments.

### **Mr L. Loveridge**

Mr Loveridge said the cemetery was in disarray. Recently, he had to pull grass off his family's gravestone, and as dogs were allowed in the cemetery on leads, faeces were regularly found on graves. He asked why the gates were open 24 hours a day.

The town clerk said grounds' maintenance had been difficult over the last few weeks because of the bad weather, but he would ensure the external works' team tidied it up the following week. He said he sympathised with the issue of dog fouling.

The administrative officer said WDDC had recently introduced a dog related Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). She said although the town council had requested a dog ban in the cemetery, the PSPO allowed dogs in the cemetery, provided they were on a lead.

Mr A. Robinson requested the wild flowers were not decimated when the cemetery was maintained.

### **Mr N. Ball**

- i) Mr Ball asked why all those who had attended the meeting didn't attend council meetings.

- ii) Mr Ball said there were a lot of blocked drains following recent bad weather, and despite reporting issues on the Dorset For Your website on 4 January 2018, there had been no action taken. He said drains were blocked from the golf club, through Garmans Field, and down Charmouth Road and Colway Lane. He said in situations like these, he had requested to speak to the director of highways and he urged others to do the same, as this wouldn't be possible when the unitary authority was formed.
- ii) Mr Ball said the council could be more interactive at its meetings. He suggested a screen to show agendas, rather than large paper agendas. He added that people needed to work together with the council and if they wanted to discuss something, to request a meeting.
- iii) Mr Ball said he was concerned about weeds outside shops, which should be dealt with by shopkeepers.
- iv) As the council had extended the period of operation of Charmouth Road car park, Mr Ball believed the council should no longer pursue the Sidmouth Road park and ride.
- v) Mr Ball thanked the town council for giving grants to deserving organisations and he was pleased some organisations had attended the meeting to give their thanks.

Cllr D. Turner said when an issue was reported on Dorset For You, a unique reference number would be provided and a date when the issue should be completed by. He said if the issue was not resolved within that timescale, people should email him and he would chase it up.

#### **Mr A. Robinson**

Mr Robinson said if a unitary authority was formed, the first post allocated should be a qualified change manager to bring them into line with other authorities. He said staff should have to re-apply for their own jobs and anyone who was not responding to the public should be let go. He said authorities were not working to a modern standard.

Cllr D. Turner said all employees would be transferred under TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking) arrangements and the councils were looking at other authorities to try and identify best practice, but there would be a lot of changes under the new authority.

#### **Mr D. Hallett**

Mr Hallett said he was concerned there was no police representative at the meeting and about the level of police presence in the town in general.

Cllr Mrs M. Ellis said PCSO Amanda King was unable to change her shift to attend the meeting. She said she met with the Dorset police and crime commissioner that week, and he had said he would ensure someone from Dorset Police was at the annual town meeting every year.



Cllr Mrs M. Ellis reminded everyone they were welcome to attend any council meeting, and could ask any question at the Full Council meeting and anything included on the agenda at committee meetings. She said people didn't have to wait until the annual town meeting to raise issues.

**6. Lyme Regis Town Council Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2017**

The document was noted.

*The meeting closed at 8.38pm*

*Total attendance approx. 35*

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