

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 JULY 2021

Present

Chairman: Cllr B. Bawden

Members: Cllr J. Broom, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr S. Williams

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

21/01/ENV Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson that Cllr B. Bawden is chairman of the Environment Committee.

There being no other nominations, Cllr B. Bawden was duly **ELECTED** as chairman.

It was proposed by Cllr D. Sarson that Cllr R. Smith is vice-chairman of the Environment Committee but as Cllr R. Smith was not present, he could not be nominated.

There were no other nominations so members agreed to defer the election of a vice-chairman until the next meeting of this committee.

21/02/ENV Terms of Reference

Cllr J. Broom asked why the terms of reference for this committee included at 4.1.5 'to contain spend to an approved budget' but this was not included in any other committee's terms of reference.

The support services manager said the town clerk had intended for this term to be included for all committees but as the council had reviewed its committee structure and had not agreed any changes at this point, the existing terms of reference without this term had not yet been included for other committees.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, the terms of reference were **RECEIVED**, with paragraph 4.1.5 removed for the time being until the terms of reference for all committees could be reviewed to include this.

21/03/ENV Public Forum

L. Noel

L. Noel said she had recently been elected chairman of Turn Lyme Green (TLG) and the members of that organisation wanted to say how pleased they were that an Environment Committee had been established and they looked forward to working with everyone on the council on environmental issues in Lyme Regis. She said she noticed in the committee's terms of reference it mentioned environmental objectives and she

was interested in the objectives this committee decided to proceed with. She said the strategic goals seemed to relate to the council and its own work and activities, as opposed to the community as a whole. L. Noel said TLG would like to see a Refill tap on the seafront with a sign to publicise it. She said Grenville Barr, of TLG, wrote a report around two years ago suggesting five taps and one was agreed at the least so it would be good to have it working. She asked if there was a possibility of it being installed by the Environment Day during Carnival Week, when there would be lots of people wanting to refill their plastic bottles. She said improved litter and recycling arrangements were also important to TLG, as well as car charging points and sustainable power projects.

The operations manager said the council had agreed some time ago to have two Refill points; one outside Marine Parade toilets and one near Boylo's. He said he hoped to have them both ready by 19 July 2021.

V. Elcoate

V. Elcoate said she was pleased to see the council had set up an Environment Committee and she thanked the councillors who had agreed to sit on it. She said she was one of the co-ordinators for the Dorset Climate Action Network (CAN), which networked hundreds of people across Dorset, with many town and parish councils to be included to share ideas and good practice. She said it would be good if Lyme Regis could get involved. V. Elcoate said what was good for the environment was also good for the local community so she saw it as part of the driving force behind the council because if it could focus more on the environment, local residents would benefit from it. She said Dorset CAN was holding a Greener Open Homes weekend in September, with people in Lyme Regis having already agreed to open their homes and show things like renewable energy and e-charging at home. She asked the town council to support the event and let people know it was happening so people could go and learn lessons. She said there was tangible evidence from previous Open Homes weekends that it influenced people to do greener things in their own homes that were of real practical benefit. V. Elcoate said the Update Report on the agenda showed the practical things being done or proposed around the town and it was heartening to see this. She said she had personally noticed more use of single-use plastic from eating and drinking establishments due to Covid and she suggested the council could encourage businesses to go back to how they were, using compostable materials.

S. Case (read out by an officer)

S. Case said he gave his wholehearted support to the Environment Committee because he strongly believed very few policy areas of local, district, national, or even world governance, were of equal importance or urgency. He said of course there were many kinds of environments demanding public attention, not the least industrial, post-industrial and urban too, so that was why Lyme Regis with its outstanding natural assets should make every effort to protect them and also to assist other locations less fortunate.

21/04/ENV Apologies

Cllr K. Ellis – attending another meeting
Cllr C. Reynolds – self-isolating
Cllr D. Ruffle – illness
Cllr R. Smith – self-isolating

21/05/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

21/06/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

21/07/ENV Update Report

Lyme Regis Car Club and e-bike rental hubs

Cllr B. Bawden said now Western Power Distribution had given a date for connecting an electricity supply, it was hoped the Car Club trial could start soon, as previously agreed by the council. She said while that was going on, further investigation would take place to determine what it would take to get a permanent Car Club in Lyme Regis and the possibility of e-bike rentals, although this would need to be in conjunction with other towns and villages as people would collect bikes from one location, ride to another and leave them there.

Cllr D. Sarson asked if there were any grants available for e-bikes.

Cllr B. Bawden said grants were available and would be applied for.

The operations manager said the set-up for e-bikes was more expensive than the Car Club because multiple bikes were needed, as opposed to one car.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked how the council would keep an eye on the changing government targets and avoid spending public money on something that could have otherwise been funded by government money. He asked if the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) kept its eye on government initiatives as he didn't want the council to rush in, only to find out the government was going down a different route.

Cllr B. Bawden said the Dorset CAN was keeping an eye on initiatives and funding and this was the benefit of the council being part of the network.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers

The operations manager said Lyme Regis was at capacity in terms of the power coming to the town and although the council's EV charger would be on the existing network, in the background, Western Power Distribution (WPD) was working on a much bigger project to reinforce the supply to Lyme Regis.

It was noted that as more people had electric vehicles and no new non-electric vehicles would be sold after 2030, better infrastructure would be required to support this.

Cllr B. Bawden invited V. Elcoate to speak. V. Elcoate said residents in Lyme Regis had had to pay for an upgrade to their electricity supply to be able to charge electric cars and as such, a group of residents had put pressure on WPD to improve the supply. She said she would be happy provide a briefing about the discussions which had taken place with WPD.

V. Elcoate also informed members about a scheme where residents with EV chargers could advertise their availability and people could book a slot to charge their vehicle and pay the homeowner for the electricity.

It was noted many properties in Lyme Regis wouldn't be able to have EV chargers because they were not accessible to vehicles.

21/08/ENV Environment Information for the Town Council Website

Cllr B. Bawden said the aim of having an environmental section on the town council's website was to publicise information to residents about, for example, the availability of grants for warmer homes or energy efficiency measures.

The operations manager said there would most likely be a cost involved as it wasn't simply a case of adding a tab.

The support services manager said the website was designed with the optimum number of tabs on the main navigation to create good usability and design. She said adding another tab would be possible but it would involve some minor changes to the design of the homepage and navigation menu. The support services manager said she had already discussed this with the website designers, Blue Level, and they could mock-up some designs for consideration, although this would involve a modest cost. She said there would also be the cost of officer time to consider in setting up the pages and populating them with information.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if Lyme Regis Development Trust (LRDT) had a role in providing environmental information.

Cllr B. Bawden said LRDT provided information about specific projects but the aim of the page on the council website was to provide information about what the council was doing and to signpost residents to other places.

It was agreed the support services manager would further discuss the options with Blue Level for creating an environment tab, including costs, and to bring proposals to the next meeting.

21/09/ENV Cycle Lanes and Bicycle Racks

Cllr B. Larcombe said near the Rock Point Inn, where cycle racks had recently been installed, was the natural place for them and he suggested additional racks at the other end of the walkway, perhaps in the car parks. He said he wasn't in favour of having racks near Langmoor Gardens as he didn't want to encourage people to cycle through the gardens.

The operations manager said Cllr R. Smith had suggested somewhere at the top of town so people could leave their bikes and walk down the high street rather than pushing them back up, so the area near Langmoor Gardens was suggested for that reason.

Cllr G. Stammers was concerned about cycle lanes in the Middle Mill area as it was very busy with pedestrians, children and dogs, as well as steps in some areas. She said it was very difficult to cycle between Lyme Regis and Uplyme because the geography didn't lend itself to it.

The operations manager said the owner of 'Bumpy' field was not in favour of a cycle lane and it would take a lot of ground works and liaison across the border to establish it. He suggested the idea of cycle lanes could be picked up as part of the Town Management and Highways Committee's wider traffic and parking agenda.

Other suggested areas for bicycle racks were the area outside the library, Holmbush car park and the area outside the Baptist Church. However, the operations manager said Cllr D. Turner, Dorset Council's ward member, didn't believe the area outside the library was feasible.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** not to pursue bicycle racks in Langmoor Gardens but to look for somewhere at the Cobb end of the seafront, and to hold discussions with Dorset Council about any other potential locations.

21/10/ENV Japanese Knotweed

The operations manager said legally the council needed to do something about Japanese knotweed and he was asking members to consider using a glyphosate-based product for that specific purpose.

Cllr G. Stammers asked how the gardeners felt about using the product and if there was any risk to their health and safety in doing so.

The operations manager said the individuals who would be using the product were content. He said it was a weed killer which people might use at home and all the major city and county councils were still using it because it was the only product that was effective against weeds.

Proposed by Cllr J. Broom and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the use of a glyphosate-based product for the sole purpose of council gardening staff injecting into the stems to eradicate Japanese knotweed.

21/11/ENV UN Sustainable Development Goals logo

Cllr B. Bawden said it had been difficult to progress anything on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as the UN didn't have a platform to demonstrate development. As a start, she felt it would be a good idea for the council to display the logo because as far as she was aware, this council was the first in the south west of England to pledge to meet these aims.

Cllr B. Larcombe said if the logo was used, staff and members would have to be familiar enough with what was involved if questioned by the public. He said it was one thing to be supportive of the SDGs but he asked if it would infer the council was somehow contributing to it.

It was acknowledged the council could support and implement initiatives which fed into the SDGs, such as supporting the foodbank or community energy schemes.

The operations manager said the council had recently discussed the welcome to Lyme Regis signs and it was agreed the Plastic Free Lyme logo would be added to them, as well as to council emails and in the footer of the website. He asked members to think about where it would stop in terms of adding logos to council communications.

Several members were concerned about an overload of logos and whether displaying the SDG logo would actually mean anything to the public. It was felt the actions of this committee would be a far better statement than any logo.

Cllr S. Williams left the meeting at 8.21pm.

Cllr B. Larcombe suggested deferring consideration of this matter until the council could see what objectives it could start to shape in relation to the SDGs so the logo could then be used with some meaning.

The support services manager said the Plastic Free Logo was included in the footer of the council website and this was quite discreet. As the council was also considering an environmental page on the website, she suggested the SDG logo could be incorporated into the footer of the website, which could then link to the environment page where there could be a significant section on the SDGs and the council's progress against them.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to incorporate the UN's Sustainable Development Goals logo and progress against the goals as part of the environment page and the footer of the town council website.

21/12/ENV Queen's Green Canopy

The operations manager said putting trees around Anning Road playing field may have some pushback from residents because they would create a screen. He said he would recommend planting trees along the walkway in the Lister Gardens, where cherry trees could be planted and called the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Walk.

Cllr D. Sarson left the meeting at 8.27pm.

Other areas suggested included the perimeter of Woodmead car park, the junction of Anning Road and Queen's Walk near the war memorial, and alongside the cemetery driveway.

Members discussed what kind of trees were the most suitable as the initiative was focused on planting sustainably to benefit future generations, but cherry trees wouldn't have as much of an environmental impact as bigger trees.

Cllr D. Sarson returned to the meeting at 8.30pm.

The operations manager said the type of tree would depend on the location; while cherry trees would be more suitable in the Lister Gardens, there could probably be larger trees at the cemetery. He also suggested the triangular piece of land near Hix's restaurant.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr J. Broom, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to plant trees, where possible, for the Queen's Green Canopy, on the lower edge of Anning Road playing field, the triangular piece of land near Hix's restaurant, around Woodmead car park, on the junction of Queen's Walk and Anning Road near the war memorial, on the Lister Gardens walkway to the wooden bridge, and along the driveway of the cemetery, and to consult other landowners and residents as appropriate.

21/13/ENV LRTC Net Zero Carbon 2030 – Strategic Top Ten Progress Report

The operations manager said Covid-19 hadn't set the council too far off against the plan and projects were progressing well.

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm.