

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2025

Present:

Chairman: Cllr S. Cockerell

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr P. May, Cllr M. Denney, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr A. Wood, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr G. Stammers

Officers: A. Shepherd (administrative and community engagement assistant), S. O'Connell (operations manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

Guests: G. Barr

25/22/ENV Public Forum

N. Newman

N. Newman raised concerns about the Environment Agency (EA) letters indicating withdrawal from routine river maintenance after six months. They questioned reliance on individual riparian owners and asked the town council to consider a coordinated response.

25/23/ENV Apologies

J. Breeze (non-member)
V. Elcoate (non-member)

25/24/ENV Minutes

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2025 were **ADOPTED**.

25/25/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

25/26/ENV Dispensations

There were none.

25/27/ENV Matters Arising

River Lim Action Group Report

A member asked if there were any updates regarding the council's assistance to the River Lim Action Group in establishing the ownership of the riparian land below Gosling Bridge.

The operations manager said there was no update at present and that the council was still awaiting a response.

Food Security

It was noted that no comments had been received on the food security paper put forward at the previous meeting, which contained a substantial amount of useful information. In the absence of any feedback, it was reported Cllr P. May and Cllr S. Cockerell had recently met to review possible actions in relation to the paper. Members were urged to read the document and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss it, whether to endorse some of the proposed actions, suggest alternatives, or indicate that the current proposals are not suitable.

25/28/ENV Update Report

Riparian Owners

A member asked for clarification on who holds responsibility for informing the riparian owners and providing them with the necessary information, and whether this was the responsibility of the EA.

The operations manager said the riparian owners should be notified by the EA directly by letter, but the town council had not been informed as riparian owners.

It was suggested the council could put pressure on the EA to ensure the information was sent out to all relevant people.

The town clerk said council could share general guidance from the EA via the website, social media and the Lyme Living magazine.

It was agreed the council would write to the EA requesting that they convene and lead a handover/briefing meeting for all relevant stakeholders (riparian owners, Dorset Council, the town council, Woodland Trust, Town Mill, Upper Mill, River Lim Action Group, etc.) to explain responsibilities, permitting and support available.

Battery Powered Landscaping Tools

A member asked if there was any update or feedback from the battery powered landscaping tools trial.

The operations manager said the general feedback was positive as they were quieter, no hearing protection was needed, they had adequate battery life, and produced no fumes.

25/29/ENV Environment Committee Objectives

EPC recommendations

Caution was advised on cavity wall insulation in marine environments and to consider internal/external insulation options instead.

Undertake further investigation into rainwater harvesting

It was agreed the council would continue seeking opportunities on suitable council assets and where reuse was practical.

25/30/ENV Budget Proposals 2026-2027

It was suggested food security issues was put forward as an objective.

The town clerk said a cost would need to go against it before being considered by the Strategy and Finance Committee.

Members discussed officers' suggestion for additional staffing resources to fulfil this committee's requirements.

The town clerk said as far as he was aware, only Bridport Town Council had dedicated environmental staff. He said the council had been reviewing the monitoring systems proposed by Low Carbon Dorset and intended to seek their advice on what would be reasonable and proportionate for an organisation of the town council's size. A meeting with them was expected within the next two or three weeks, after which a more formal recommendation could be made.

Members agreed that a further discussion would take place following the meeting with Low Carbon Dorset.

25/33/ENV Co-option of Non-Members

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members co-opted Grenville Barr, Janet Breeze, and Vicki Elcoate onto the Environment Committee.

25/34/ENV To receive the minutes of the Bathing Water Quality Meeting on 9 September 2025

It was suggested some motorhome users were dumping sewage directly into the overflow drains in Holmbush car park that led directly to the sea, which was believed to cause E. Coli spikes during the summer months.

It was suggested the council put signs up to discourage this behaviour but it was noted it was a Dorset Council car park.

It was suggested officers worked with South West Water to ensure the Turning the Tide plan was implemented in a timely manner, noting the impact it might have on the town and the roads.

Members discussed the issues around displaying the water quality signs and the suggestion about funding an electronic sign for Church Cliff Beach. It was suggested match funding could be sought from Dorset Council.

It was suggested Dorset Council should either instruct the harbourmaster to continue updating the existing signs or agree to installation of a new electronic sign that could be operated remotely.

The operations manager was asked to contact the Dorset Council ward member to obtain an update on discussions with Dorset Council and the EA.

A member suggested a letter was written to the EA encouraging continued work with farmers to prevent run-off, especially to notify them to avoid feeding cattle beside a watercourse.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, the minutes from the bathing water quality meeting held on 9 September 2025 were **RECEIVED**.

25/35/ENV Town and Parish Climate and Nature Workshop

The town clerk reported back from the town and parish climate and nature workshop, adding that it was noted that Lyme Regis Town Council had already undertaken a considerable amount of work in comparison to other councils.

One of the key outcomes and opportunities identified for the town council included exploring potential collaborations between Solar Together and Solar Communities.

Members were informed that individuals, including members of the committee, could apply to become Climate Ambassadors. It was suggested that the council might consider establishing an employee volunteering scheme, whereby a council employee or member could act as an ambassador to local schools or institutions to discuss climate matters.

25/36/ENV Climate Response of the Year

The town clerk said the application had been submitted so retrospective approval would be required from Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to retrospectively **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** the approval of the application to the National Association of Local Councils for its Climate Response of the Year award 2025.

25/37/ENV EcoVend Reverse Vending Recycling Machines

Members raised concerns regarding the high cost, ongoing management requirements, maintenance in a coastal environment, and limited storage for collected materials. Members also noted that similar schemes were more successful in urban or retail settings and that there was no trial period available.

It was agreed that while the initiative had merit, further consideration was required to assess its long-term viability and relevance to the area.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to defer any decision on the EcoVend machine for 12 months.

24/38/ENV Round Britain eRIB – Commemorative Noticeboard

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr M. Denney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to proceed with exploratory discussions with the Round Britain eRIB team and to install a commemorative noticeboard or plaque in Lyme Regis recognising the electric world record achieved by the Round Britain eRIB project.

25/39/ENV Action Plan for Achieving Net Carbon Zero Emissions by 2030

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to adopt the amended net carbon zero emissions action plan.

25/40/ENV Low Carbon Dorset Impact Survey

Members noted the report.

25/41/ENV Progress on Energy Performance Certificates

Members noted the report.

25/42/ENV River Lim Action Group 2024-25 Budget Spend

Members noted the report.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm.