

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL 2026

Present:

Chairman: Cllr P. May

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr A. Wood

Officers: K. Newman (administrative and community engagement assistant), S. O'Connell (operations manager)

Co-Opted Membership: V. Elcoate (River Lim Action Group)

25/69/ENV Public forum

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

25/70/ENV Apologies

Cllr S. Cockerell – holiday
Cllr M. Denney
Cllr G. Stammers – holiday
G. Barr – prior commitment
J. Breeze – holiday

25/71/ENV Minutes

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026 were **ADOPTED**.

25/72/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

25/73/ENV Dispensations

None requested none granted.

25/74/ENV Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2026

Monitoring and Bathing Water Quality Church Cliff Beach Notices

The operations manager said that at the most recent bathing water quality meeting, Dorset Council (DC) had taken no responsibility and advised that statutory signage, including clear messaging about swimming, would be installed in the coming days in line with regulatory requirements.

The operations manager noted that further updates were required and believed the signage had not yet been installed.

It was noted Litter Free Dorset had made another sign and the town council needed to discuss this with them.

River Lim Action Group Funding report

The operations manager clarified that there had been a misunderstanding at the last meeting: the £7,900 figure was related to the term grant, while the £7,000 was allocated for the Lynch works.

He confirmed that the £7,000 remained allocated for the Lynch works.

Bee Friendly Lyme Regis

The operations manager said articles had been published in the March and May editions of Lyme Living to increase awareness, with further engagement planned. He said the operations supervisor would support this.

25/75/ENV Update Report

Monmouth Beach – Litter Bin Provision

It was confirmed a litter bin had been installed.

25/76/ENV Environment Committee – Objectives

The operations manager said battery equipment was being purchased that week, with the aim to be battery-operated by the following week.

A member asked about the installation of garden signs, noting that QR codes had been rejected in favour of simple explanatory words and whether the signs would be installed for the summer.

The operations manager said the aim was for July, but some beds had not yet been planted, which could delay some of the signs but they were currently being worked on.

A member asked which battery units were purchased.

The operations manager confirmed that Stihl tools had been purchased. He said the new equipment was well received, quieter, and less polluting, and that about 70% of the kit had been replaced at a good price.

25/77/ENV Bathing Water Quality Meeting Minutes

It was noted that the main issue was pollution below Woodmead Road Bridge, with high bacteria levels and no combined sewer overflows and pollution hotspots, especially around the Town Mill.

However, it had been confirmed the Turning the Tide project by South West Water was going ahead in the spring, with a dedicated web page for updates.

It was noted the Environment Agency was due to visit in August to revisit hotspots and although it was felt the catchment has been improved, the lower river pollution remained unresolved.

Proposed by Cllr A. Wood and seconded by G. Turner Minutes, the minutes from the bathing water quality meeting held on 22 April 2026 were **ACCEPTED**.

25/78/ENV Co-option

The chairman said the town clerk hadn't used the process that he thought had been agreed.

Members agreed the process for co-opting non-members to the Environment Committee needed to be as simple as possible.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that for the council year 2026/27, the Environment Committee offers three places for the co-option of non-voting members and that the advertisement date for these places is Thursday 21 May 2026, with a closing date of 19 June 2026. Applicants will be required to submit a CV and a statement to confirm disqualification criteria do not apply as stated in the selection procedure.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that this council adopts a selection procedure for applicants to be co-opted as non-voting members of the Environment Committee as follows:

1. Non-members who wish to apply to sit on the committee after it has been advertised for must supply a CV and a declaration that they meet the requirements to be appointed, at least one week before the meeting when selection is to take place. Ideally this will be the first Environment Committee meeting of the new council year. No more than two people from one organisation could apply to be co-opted.
2. If the number of valid applicants is less than or equal to the number of agreed spaces, then they will automatically be appointed as non-voting members of the Environment Committee.
- 2.2 If more applications than the advertised spaces are received, then at the meeting a two or more-stage voting process would be entered into. Members cast a single vote for their preferred candidate in one or more rounds of voting. The purpose of each voting round is to eliminate the candidate with the lowest number of votes until the number remaining is equal to the available spaces. Those remaining applicants will then be appointed as non-voting members of the Environment Committee.
3. Members of the Environment Committee would have the right to vote to remove non-members in any subsequent Environment Committee meeting by a majority vote.

A member asked if multiple organisations applied, could two from one organisation be chosen, excluding another organisation. The chairman said members could decide who to vote for, based on merit and expertise.

A member asked if voting would be secret or open; the chairman said the method could be chosen.

The chairman confirmed only two people from any one organisation could apply.

25/79/ENV Biodiversity Policy – Draft for Consideration

Members discussed the draft Biodiversity Policy and supported having such a policy but felt it would be difficult to combine multiple policies.

The operations manager agreed that actions could be addressed in the biodiversity audit and action plan, and that the policy was about adopting a consistent approach.

Members supported the suggestion to publicise biodiversity efforts in LymeLiving, including bird boxes and awareness-raising.

It was suggested local biodiversity experts could be involved in the process of drafting the policy.

The operations manager said funding had been allocated in 2026-27 for a biodiversity survey this year, which should be the first step, followed by integrating findings into the action plan.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to adopt a draft Biodiversity Policy but ask officers to integrate it into the existing Environment Policy and bring it back for approval at the next Environment Committee meeting.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that biodiversity actions be incorporated into the current climate action plan, rather than having a separate plan.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the climate action working group takes on the biodiversity action plan to be incorporated into the existing climate action plan.

25/80/ENV Action Plan for Achieving Net Carbon Zero Emissions by 2030

It was agreed the action plan was ready to be uploaded to the council website.

The operations manager said the cost section was still being developed and would be updated annually in September for budget-setting.

It was noted that the next major revision would be the addition of the biodiversity action plan.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the Action Plan for Achieving Net Carbon Zero Emissions by 2030 document be renamed the 'Lyme Regis Town Council Climate Action Plan', recognising it as a working plan.

25/81/ENV Carbon Literacy Accreditation and Training

The operations manager said the council needed to check the information on pledges (and renewing pledges) was up-to-date. He said the fee to maintain accreditation was £2,250 + VAT every three years, He said the fee was next due in 2026, but this would

be unbudgeted expenditure. He said accreditation was tied to the organisation, not individuals, though individual training was still recognised. He said if accredited staff members were to leave, then the accreditation could fall away.

Proposed by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the council approves an unbudgeted spend of c.£2,250 + VAT to retain the silver carbon literacy accreditation.

25/82/ENV River Lim Action Group Report

A member asked how the committee could move forward with invasive species on town council or shared land.

The operations manager said it would require a review and risk assessment of the most effective approach. He was recently made aware of an outcrop of Japanese knotweed on the riverbank behind the cadet hut and the council needed to address it.

It was noted the River Lim Action Group had been working on a plan to remove invasive species effectively and had employed the services of a specialist contractor who was conducting a three-year programme. As the service involved a free initial assessment and quotation, this might be useful to the council.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton Rumbold, the River Lim Action Group report was **RECEIVED**.

25/83/ENV Great Big Dorset Hedge Project – Information Update

A member said that whilst the town council couldn't identify three kilometres of existing hedge, there might be other areas that would benefit from being turned into a hedge and Great Big Dorset Hedge Project could then advise.

The operations manager said the team had only reviewed what the council currently had, and not what could be created. He said Strawberry Fields would have the greatest potential, but it was likely the site would be included in the Local Plan for future development.

The meeting closed at 8.12pm.