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Mark Green
Town Clerk

Environment Committee

Core Membership: Cllr P. May (chairman), Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr A. Wood, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr A. Wood

Co-Opted Membership: G. Barr, J, Breeze, V. Elcoate

Notice is given of a meeting of the Environment Committee to be held at the Council Offices, St Michael's Business Centre, Church Street, Lyme Regis on Wednesday 11 November 2026 commencing at 7pm when the following business is proposed to be transacted:

Mark Green
Town Clerk
06.11.26

The open and transparent proceedings of Full Council and committee meetings will be audio recorded and recordings will be held for one year by the town council.

If members of the public make a representation to the meeting, they will be deemed to have consented to being audio recorded.

If members of the public have any queries regarding audio recording of meetings, please contact the town clerk.

Members are reminded that in reaching decisions they should take into consideration the town council's decision to declare a climate emergency and ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030 and beyond.

AGENDA

1. Public Forum

Twenty minutes will be made available for public comment and response in relation to items on this agenda

Individuals will be permitted a maximum of three minutes each to address the committee and questions must be submitted in advance. Please refer to the Guide to Public Participation at Council Meetings.

2. Apologies

To receive and record apologies and reasons for absence

3. Minutes

To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 11 July 2026

4. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members are reminded that if they have a disclosable pecuniary interest on their register of interests relating to any item on the agenda they are prevented from participating in any discussion or voting on that matter at the meeting and to do so would amount to a criminal offence. Similarly if you are or become aware of a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration at this meeting which is not on your register of interests or is in the process of being added to your register you must disclose such interest at this meeting and register it within 28 days.

5. Dispensations

To note the grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

6. Proposals for Objectives 2027-2028

To enable members to consider the committee's objectives for 2027-28 ahead of the formal commencement of the council's budget-setting process on 18 November 2026.

7. Budget Proposals 2027-2028

To allow members to consider this committee's objectives for 2027-28 ahead of the next stage of the budget-setting process to be considered by Full Council on 18 November.

8. Environmental Training Provision and Carbon Literacy Accreditation Review

To enable members to consider whether the council should continue renewal of its formal Carbon Literacy accreditation or move to a more flexible and cost-effective environmental awareness training programme for all staff and councillors.

9. New Council Link Member to Turn Lyme Green

To enable members to propose a replacement council representative to Turn Lyme Green.

10. Dorset Seed Savers Project

To enable members to consider a request from Turn Lyme Green regarding support for its proposed Dorset Seed Savers initiative.

11. Community Rain Planter Project

To enable members to consider a request from Rhys Pritchard, on behalf of Turn Lyme Green and the River Lim Action Group, seeking support in principle for a proposed community rain planter project.

12. Exempt Business

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2026

Present:

Chairman: Cllr S. Cockerell

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr P. May

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

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

26/01/ENV Public forum

There were no members of the public present.

26/02/ENV Apologies

Cllr A. Wood
Cllr M. Denney
G. Barr (non-member)
J. Breeze (non-member)

26/03/ENV Minutes

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr P. May, the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2026 were **ADOPTED.**

26/04/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

26/05/ENV Dispensations

There were none.

26/07/ENV Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 April 2026

Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold arrived at 7.03pm.

Invasive Species – Japanese Knotweed

A member asked if it was in the town council's best interest to treat nearby invasive species on non-council land to avoid the spread onto town council land. He said Himalayan Balsam was also becoming problematic again and needed to be considered.

It was suggested the operations manager liaised with the River Lim Action Group regarding what action was being taken and where.

DRAFT

It was noted there were patches currently being treated by Uplyme Parish Council and the outcrop of invasive species growth at Charmouth Road car park had already been reported to Dorset Council.

26/08/ENV Update Report

No additional items were raised.

26/09/ENV Environment Committee – Objectives

A member asked about the garden signage. The operations manager said it was already part of the objectives set out for 2026/27 and that he had met with Creative Solutions last week to discuss the options. He said they were currently looking at A4 signage to keep costs down.

It was suggested the committee added to its list of 2026-27 objectives all the organisations it wanted to support. Bee Friendly Lyme Regis was suggested.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the town council includes in the list of objectives for 2026-27 to support the activities of Turn Lyme Green.

The operations manager asked for clarification on the financial implications of this, as the budget for objectives had already been set for the 2026-27.

It was suggested organisations such as Bee Friendly Lyme Regis would not progress without the support of the town council and although no funding was being sought at this time, it may be for subsequent years.

The value of consulting with local experts and avoiding duplication with the Climate Action Plan was discussed.

26/10/ENV Co-option

It was noted the process for co-option agreed at the last meeting of this committee was different to the process outlined in the report. A member had sought advice from an officer, who confirmed the committee should use the agreed process, as per the minutes.

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the three applicants, G. Barr, V.Elcoate and J. Breeze, be accepted and co-opted to the Environment Committee.

26/11/ENV Carbon Literacy Accreditation/Training Update

The committee was reminded Dorset Climate Action Network had silver accreditation and could deliver the training.

The operations manager said the costs outlined in the report were only for accreditation, but training costs would need to be considered by the Strategy and Finance Committee.

A member asked why ongoing training and accreditation had not been budgeted for, and suggested this be approved as unbudgeted expenditure. It was suggested this

committee approved the expenditure, instead of being referred to the Strategy and Finance Committee.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge that members **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve unbudgeted expenditure of an unknown amount for the continuation of the silver level carbon literacy accreditation and the relevant requirements be actioned, and that the town council uses external suppliers where appropriate to reduce significantly the workload on officers.

26/12/ENV River Lim Action Group Report

It was noted Church Cliff Beach water quality had improved, but Front Beach had some issues. The committee agreed to raise these concerns at the upcoming Bathing Water Quality meeting and to ensure Dorset Council's participation.

Positive developments in beach signage were reported, with new, more informative signs being developed. The committee discussed the challenge of countering negative media coverage and the need for accurate public information.

It was noted the Rover Lim Action Group planned to intensify river monitoring and reporting, with the aim of holding responsible agencies accountable and publicising improvements when data supported it.

The committee acknowledged the positive impact of local groups and funding for local farmer engagement, with ongoing efforts to secure additional resources for river health initiatives.

The meeting closed at 7.52pm.

DRAFT

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 November 2026

Title: Proposals for Objectives 2027-2028

Purpose of Report

To enable members to consider the committee's objectives for 2027-28 ahead of the formal commencement of the council's budget-setting process on 18 November 2026.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the committee's proposed objectives for 2027-28 and identify any associated budget requirements for consideration as part of the council's budget-setting process.

Background

1. As part of the annual budget-setting process, each committee is invited to review its objectives for the forthcoming financial year.

2. This provides an opportunity for members to consider existing priorities, identify any new objectives and determine whether funding may be required to support their delivery.

Report

3. Members are invited to review the proposed objectives for 2027-28 as set out in Appendix 6.

4. In doing so, members are encouraged to ensure that proposed objectives support the delivery of the council's Climate Action Plan and contribute towards the council's wider environmental, biodiversity and sustainability ambitions.

5. Members are also invited to identify any additional objectives they wish to consider for inclusion within the committee's priorities for 2027-28.

6. Officers recommend that the committee considers proposing additional staffing resources to support the delivery of the council's environmental objectives and Climate Action Plan as part of the 2027-28 budget-setting process.

7. Any proposed objectives and associated budget requirements agreed by the committee at this meeting will be incorporated into the wider budget discussions for 2027-28 and considered under the following agenda item, Budget Proposals 2027-28.

8. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 18 November 2026.

Sam O’Connell
Operations manager
November 2026

Objective (RAG Rated) Red: Not Started/Behind Schedule Amber: Started/Action Needed Green: Complete/On schedule	**Budget If required**	**Lead officer**	**Target completion date**	**Updates/comments**
2027-28				
Implement EPC recommendations across council assets where feasible			Ongoing	Review EPC recommendations and implement cost-effective and practical measures as opportunities arise.
Develop an Environmental Monitoring System			TBC	Develop a baseline environmental performance monitoring and reporting system, potentially using external specialist support to measure progress against environmental objectives.
Increase water storage capacity and reduce water consumption where practicable			Ongoing	Identify opportunities to improve water efficiency and increase rainwater harvesting/storage across council sites.
Progress delivery of the 2030 Climate Action Plan			Ongoing	Continue implementation of actions identified within the council's Climate Action Plan and monitor progress annually.
Tree planting and habitat enhancement programme			Ongoing	Continue supporting tree planting and biodiversity enhancement opportunities where suitable land and resources are available.

Engage with National Grid and key stakeholders to explore increased grid capacity for Lyme Regis			TBC	Arrange discussions with National Grid and relevant partners to understand future infrastructure requirements and opportunities for electrification resilience.
Reduce traffic congestion and associated emissions through improved signage and wayfinding			TBC	Work with relevant stakeholders to identify signage improvements that help reduce vehicle movements and improve traffic flow.
Increase where feasible staff capacity and resources to support delivery of the council environmental objectives			TBC	Review staffing requirements and opportunities to strengthen officer support for delivery of the Climate Action Plan.

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 November 2026

Title: Budget Proposals 2027-2028

Purpose of Report

To allow members to consider this committee's objectives for 2027-28 ahead of the next stage of the budget-setting process to be considered by Full Council on 18 November.

Recommendation

Members identify this committee's objectives for 2027-28

Background

1. As explained at the last meeting of Full Council held on 14 October 2026, the budget-setting process for 2027-28 will involve three separate stages, culminating in the setting of the final budget and precept at the meeting of Full Council on 16 December 2026.

2. As part of budget-setting process, members need to consider any new objectives for 2027-28. These objectives are normally informed by suggestions from the community, members and staff.

3. In order to obtain views from the local community, a consultation was held during July and August. This consultation asked the community to indicate their preferences/ranking for a number of suggested objectives, but also sought ideas or comments or suggestions from the community.

4. A summary of the outcome of the consultation was provided to members as an update to the last meeting of the Resources Committee and was considered at the members' budget briefing on 22 October 2026.

5. Staff have also provided some suggested new or revised objectives for 2027-28 and beyond and both these suggestions and those from the community were considered by the meeting of the Operations Committee held on 28 October 2026 and at the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 4 November.

6. Some of the suggestions, particularly those from staff, relate to an initial or feasibility stage of what might subsequently be a larger and more costly project, if pursued. With regard to the staff suggestions, particular focus has been given to objectives which have the potential to generate new and additional income streams.

7. The spreadsheet attached as **appendix 7A**, shows those objectives favoured by the Operations Committee highlighted in green and blue. Those highlighted in blue were considered by staff to offer particular potential to generate new and additional income. Those not highlighted were felt by the committee to be a lower priority and/or objectives which could be considered in future years.

8. At the Resources Committee, several members questioned whether a project to deliver a vending machine at Mini-golf should be prioritised and whether the amount identified to improve the amenities/mini-golf area was sufficient, although no alternative sum was

suggested. In addition, there was concern whether the work to replace handrails in the gardens had been completed and, if not, it was suggested this should be moved from the lower list to the upper priority list.

9. Members of this committee are asked to consider whether they agree with the priority objectives identified by the Operations Committee and/or the comments of the Resources Committee and to indicate whether there are any additional objectives they would want added to the priority list.

10. The budget working group agreed at the meeting of Full Council held on 14 October 2026 will have met twice by the time of this committee and has already identified some potential cost savings and additional sources of income. Nonetheless, the council's finances are unlikely to be able to fund a very long list of objectives for 2027-28 and a further stage of prioritisation will be undertaken at Full Council once all of the objectives have been identified by each committee and the total amount available to spend has been further refined. If there are differences of opinion or priority as between different committees, then it will be the role of Council to reach a decision one way or another.

11. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by Full Council on 18 November 2026.

Mark Green
Town clerk

October 2026

27/28 Objectives Identified as Priority by Operations Committee

Officer lead	Beach replenishment contribution	15,000.00	
Officer lead	Waste storage facilities on seafront/town centre	10,000.00	Also DC funding
Committee lead - TMH	Metal memorial tree - 640 leaves	25,000.00	
Officer lead	Further investment in town bus shelters with RTI	30,000.00	DC/External funding?
Officer lead	Digital gateway card	No Cost	
Officer lead	Electric vehicles	30,000.00	
Officer lead	Additional chalets/huts at MB-feasibility	10.000.00	
Officer lead	Additional/new day huts rear of Theatre-feasibility	5,000.00	
Officer lead	Demolish MB garages & provide additional parking	10,000.00	
Officer lead	Short/medium term uses at S Fields-feasibility	10,000.00	
Officer lead	Repairs at Cemetery- Drive & walls-new surfaces?	20.000.00	
Officer lead	Improvements and repairs to mini golf	25,000.00	
Officer lead	Vending unit at mini golf	5,000.00	Not supported by Resource
Officer lead	Demolish cadet hut + new storage, fencing & parking	35,000.00	
Officer lead	Park and ride investment - Pay to park	20,000.00	
Officer lead	Market on Theatre Square	2,000.00	
Member suggestion	Install a Changing Places facility	35,000.00	Potential ext Funding?
Community suggestion	Lockers for bags and suitcases on the seafront	5,000.00	

Previously committed	Garden handrails	10,000.00	Supported by Resources if not complete
		272,000.00	

Lower Priority or Future Years			
External	Bin store repairs MP + Broad street car park	2,000.00	
Additional budget required	Car park machines - MB	17,500.00	
Officer lead	Children's area - Langmoor gardens	50,000.00	
Business case	Woodroffe school sports facilities	30,000.00	
Committee lead - TCP	New videos for the website	10,000.00	
Officer lead	New guildhall chairs	5,000.00	
Committee lead - Environment	Metered electric supply in the gardens	10,000.00	
Officer lead	LRTC app	10,000.00	
Officer lead	Picnic benches	3,500.00	
Officer lead	Fencing - cemetery	5,000.00	
Officer lead	Develop WH CPk..steps land & hut-feasibility	5,000.00	
Officer lead	Winter uses of Pavilion?	?	
Officer lead	Get rid of seafront lift and make use of area	20,000.00	
Officer lead	New community & other storage 2x containers	5,000.00	
Officer lead	Waste storage facilities on seafront/town centre	75,000.00	
Officer lead	Cobb Gate car park railings contribution	10,000.00	
Officer lead	Resurface and reline car parks-29-30?	250,000.00	
Officer lead	Jane Austen Gardens -major enhancement? 28-29?	150,000.00	
Officer lead	Disability access audit	5,000.00	
Officer lead	Purchase a cinema screen	30,000.00	
Officer lead	Boules area in the gardens	3,000.00	
Member suggestion	Environmental education opportunities	?	
Member suggestion	Opening the chapel for community use	1,500.00	
Committee lead - TMH	Review of seafront signage	10,000.00	
Committee lead-environment	Electric signage for car parks - Out of town	25,000.00	
Committee lead - Environment	Reverse vending machines	15,000.00	
Community suggestion	Upgrade toddler area at Anning Road play park	25,000.00	
Community suggestion	Rail on steps to gardens from Stile Lane		DONE?

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 November 2026

Title: Environmental Training Provision and Carbon Literacy Accreditation Review

Purpose of Report

To enable members to consider whether the council should continue renewal of its formal Carbon Literacy accreditation or move to a more flexible and cost-effective environmental awareness training programme for all staff and councillors.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

1. Consider whether officers should review and compare alternatives to the council's current Carbon Literacy accreditation, including costs, content, delivery methods and the potential benefits of a more flexible environmental awareness and CPD training programme.

2. Consider whether environmental awareness training should form part of the induction and ongoing training requirements for staff and councillors.

3. Request a further report with recommendations to be presented to the next meeting of the Environment Committee on 27 January 2027.

Background

4. Lyme Regis Town Council was the first town council in the country to achieve Silver Carbon Literacy accreditation and has since demonstrated a commitment to environmental awareness and carbon reduction through staff training and organisational initiatives.

5. Since 2022, the council has spent approximately £9,637 on Carbon Literacy accreditation and training. The current quoted cost of renewing the council's Silver Carbon Literacy accreditation is £2,250 plus VAT, excluding any additional costs associated with training delivery, certification applications, course accreditation and officer administration. Further costs will also arise as new staff and councillors require training and certification in order to maintain accreditation requirements and organisational participation levels.

6. Under the current Silver accreditation requirements, organisations the size of Lyme Regis Town Council are required to maintain approximately 40% of their workforce as Carbon Literate. As staff leave the organisation and new staff or councillors join, additional training and certification are required to maintain accreditation standards and organisational participation levels.

Report

7. Since achieving Silver accreditation, staff and councillor turnover has highlighted the challenges associated with maintaining accreditation. New staff and councillors require training to support compliance with accreditation requirements, whilst officers must continue to dedicate resources towards training administration, evidence gathering, monitoring, reporting and future reaccreditation submissions.

8. Maintaining accreditation can often be more suited to larger organisations with dedicated sustainability teams, larger training budgets and greater organisational capacity to manage accreditation requirements. For smaller organisations, the financial and administrative burden associated with maintaining accreditation can be proportionately greater.

9. Officers have undertaken an initial review and identified several alternative environmental awareness training providers and learning platforms that may offer greater flexibility and reduced administrative requirements whilst continuing to support the council's environmental objectives.

   Alternative provider examples include but are not limited to:

   - iHasco: Approximately £6 to £8 per user per month, providing access to environmental awareness, sustainability and climate change courses together with a wider library of workplace training modules.

   - DeltaNet International (Learning Pool): Typically, between £10 and £29 per learner per year depending on user numbers and package requirements, including environmental awareness, sustainability and carbon reduction modules.

   - IOSH Environmental Awareness: Approximately £95 to £150 per delegate for environmental awareness training delivered through a recognised professional training provider.

   - Fife Group: Approximately £30 per delegate for environmental awareness training covering climate change, waste management and energy efficiency.

10. Officers note that further market testing may identify additional providers and training packages. Many providers offer discounted rates for larger delegate numbers and organisation-wide subscriptions, potentially reducing costs further whilst providing a wider range of environmental and compliance-related training opportunities for both staff and councillors.

11. In addition to environmental awareness training, many of these providers offer wider training provision covering health and safety, GDPR, cyber security, equality, diversity, workplace culture and conduct, and other compliance-related subjects. This could enable the council to utilise a single training platform to meet a range of staff and member training requirements, rather than focusing solely on maintaining the participation levels required to satisfy Carbon Literacy Silver accreditation requirements.

12. Alternative training platforms are generally easier to administer and deliver than formal accreditation programmes, with courses available on demand and capable of being completed remotely at a time convenient to staff and councillors. This may help increase participation and ensure a more consistent level of training across the organisation. Many platforms also support continuing professional development (CPD) by providing access to a wider range of environmental, compliance and workplace training modules, enabling staff and councillors to maintain and broaden their knowledge throughout the year.

13. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by Full Council on 18 November 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations Manager
November 2026

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 November 2026

Title: New Council Link Member to Turn Lyme Green

Purpose of Report

To enable members to propose a replacement council representative to Turn Lyme Green.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider and propose a replacement council representative to Turn Lyme Green.

Background

9. The council appoints representatives to several external organisations and community groups to support communication, partnership working and the sharing of information.

10. Cllr G. Stammers was one of the council's appointed link members to Turn Lyme Green but has now decided to step down from the role. A replacement link member is therefore sought.

Report

11. The appointment of a replacement link member will help maintain effective communication and support between the council and Turn Lyme Green, ensuring members remain informed of relevant environmental projects, initiatives and activities.

12. The role of the link member is to attend meetings where appropriate and provide feedback and updates to the committee on matters relevant to the council's environmental objectives and Climate Action Plan.

13. Members are invited to consider potential nominees and/or express an interest in serving as the council's replacement link member to Turn Lyme Green.

14. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 18 November 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
November 2026

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 November 2026

Title: Dorset Seed Savers Project

Purpose of Report

To enable members to consider a request from Turn Lyme Green regarding support for its proposed Dorset Seed Savers initiative.

Recommendation

Members are asked to review Appendix 10A and consider whether the council wishes to support the Dorset Seed Savers initiative through the council's communication channels, including social media and the council magazine, recognising the links between the project and the council's environmental objectives relating to biodiversity and climate action

Background

15. Turn Lyme Green has launched a new environmental initiative known as Dorset Seed Savers. The project aims to improve local seed security and food resilience through the growing, saving and sharing of locally adapted seed from edible plants.

16. The project will encourage participants to grow edible plants using organic growing methods and undertake seed saving activities within their gardens and allotments. Workshops, gatherings and seed-sharing events will also be organised to support participants and increase knowledge of seed saving practices.

Report

17. The project seeks to create a network of growers producing and sharing locally adapted seed, helping to improve community resilience and local food security

18. In addition to food-growing objectives, the initiative aims to address wider environmental challenges, including declining biodiversity, habitat loss and the reduction in pollinating insects. The project proposes the creation of bee habitats and increased planting of pollinator-friendly species within participating gardens and allotments

19. Turn Lyme Green has requested the council's support in helping to publicise and collaborate on projects associated with Dorset Seed Savers. The organisation has identified links between the initiative and the council's environmental objectives, particularly those relating to biodiversity, pollinator support and climate action.

20. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 18 November 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
November 2026

Dorset Seed Savers

A new project from TURN LYME GREEN

BACKGROUND

Turn Lyme Green is launching a new project – Dorset Seed Savers. We are tackling local seed security – and our food security depends on our seed security. We will be saving seed and gardening organically without the use of any chemicals and using natural amendments and drought management for our soil and seeds production.

We will create a network of people growing and sharing locally adapted seed of edible plants. All our 'starter' seed will be grown in the UK, produced by seed growers who are using organic growing methods.

We'll show participants how to save seed with workshops and gatherings, and each participant will undertake to grow one or more types of edible plant at home in their garden or allotment and save the seed. At seed harvesting time we will get together to prepare and swap our seed so we each get lots of different, strong seeds for little work

We are also taking on important environmental challenges including declining diversity in the varieties of seed grown, and declining biodiversity in gardens and allotments with the rapid loss of habitat for bees and other pollinating insects. With advice from Turn Lyme Green's Bee Friendly Lyme Regis, we will make and install 'homes 'for solitary bees in all our seed savers' gardens and plant flowers for insects.

TOWN COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

We would like to receive the Council's support to collaborate on and publicise projects promoting Dorset Seed Savers. We want to build on the Council's objectives outlined in its document, 'Our Journey to Net Zero' notably supporting its work to increase pollinating plants.

PLANS FOR THE COMING YEAR

By harvest 2027, we aim to share the many different types and varieties of seed – both of edible plants and pollinating flowers – amongst our participants. We will retain the surplus to supply Turn Lyme Green's Seed swap 'Seed Saturday' and Bridport Seed Library. By holding talks and conversations over the coming year, we hope to raise awareness of community resilience and the importance of local food security.

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 November 2026

Title: Community Rain Planter Project

Purpose of Report

To enable members to consider a request from Rhys Pritchard, on behalf of Turn Lyme Green and the River Lim Action Group, seeking support in principle for a proposed community rain planter project.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider whether they wish to support the proposed rain planter project in principle for the purposes of the associated funding application. Any future proposals arising from the project, including potential locations, permissions, maintenance arrangements or delivery arrangements, would be subject to separate consideration and approval, where required.

Background

21. A request has been received from Rhys Pritchard, on behalf of Turn Lyme Green and the River Lim Action Group, seeking the committee's support in principle for a proposed community rain planter project.

22. The proposal forms part of an application to the Dorset Community Foundation Green Futures Fund, with the funding application due to be submitted on 16 November 2026. The applicant has advised that support in principle from the committee would assist in strengthening the funding bid.

23. No financial contribution is being sought from the council at this stage. The applicant has advised that the project would only proceed if dedicated external funding is secured.

Report

24. The proposal seeks to establish a community project involving young people and residents in the construction of water-saving rain planters using locally grown timber.

25. The project aims to promote sustainable water management, environmental awareness and community engagement. The proposed planters are designed to capture and re-use rainwater, helping to reduce water consumption during dry periods and slow surface water run-off during heavy rainfall events.

26. The applicant advises that the project could include practical workshops with residents and young people, potentially involving local schools, together with wider public engagement and water-saving awareness activities.

27. The project is intended to utilise locally sourced timber and support community participation whilst raising awareness of sustainable water management and environmental resilience. The applicant has also highlighted potential benefits relating to local skills development, biodiversity enhancement and community involvement.

28. The current request relates solely to support in principle for the project and associated funding application. No financial commitment is being sought from the council at this stage. The applicant has advised that the project would only proceed should dedicated external funding be secured.

29. Any future proposals relating to locations, permissions, maintenance arrangements or other council involvement would be subject to separate consideration and feasibility assessment and, where appropriate, referred to the Operations Committee, as matters relating to the use of council land, assets, operational resources and ongoing maintenance responsibilities fall within its remit.

30. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 18 November 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
November 2026

Lyme Regis Town Council – Environment Committee Locally made rain planters: request for support in principle

From Turn Lyme Green, with the River Lim Action Group (RLA) November 2nd, 2026, Purpose

To ask the committee to support in principle a community project to make and install

water-saving planters in Lyme Regis, and to consider how it might complement the council's own plans for planters around the town.

Background

Turn Lyme Green, working with RLA, is applying to Dorset Community Foundation's Green Futures Fund (deadline 16 November) for a project in which young people and residents make planters from locally grown timber. The fund's top priority is reducing water use and increasing its reuse. The project would include practical workshops, possibly with local schools, and a public water-saving event and awareness campaign. The design builds on a pilot delivered in Poole in October 2026.

Rain planters

Where a site has a downpipe, the planters can take run-off from the roof and pass it through gravel, sand and soil. This slows the water before it reaches the drains, which helps reduce peak flows in heavy rain, and filters it on the way, improving the quality of what flows on. They suit hard-surfaced areas next to buildings with access to guttering, which may suit some council-owned sites best. Self-irrigating planters store water at the base, so need watering less often in dry spells. These can be used where there is no downpipe.

The River Lim and the sea are central to life in Lyme, for residents and visitors alike. Natural solutions like these show practical action for resilience as weather patterns change, helping both in droughts and during heavy rain. Planters can also include bee hotels or other habitat features, made in TLG's existing workshops, to add value for pollinators and wildlife.

Social value

Planters made this way cost more than mass-produced ones, but the spend does more for the town:

Local timber supports jobs in Dorset forestry and milling. We select naturally pest- and weather-resistant species, so the planters are inherently low-maintenance.

Making planters in workshops with young people builds their skills and confidence, and opens conversations about green careers.
Working with local organisations and tradespeople keeps money circulating in the community and can help new social enterprises create work for young people who are not in education, employment or training.

The planters would also show the town's values in a visible, lasting way and generate positive stories about the council supporting local people. This matters for In Bloom: environment and community make up 60% of the RHS judging criteria. The marking sheet specifically rewards greening solutions such as rain gardens, measures to minimise water use, habitat for wildlife, signage and interpretation, and engagement with schools, young people and local groups – all of which this project offers.

We would also approach South West Water to run a local event giving advice on domestic rainwater harvesting for householders, and/or providing water saving equipment such as water butts and cistern hippos.

The committee is asked to:

- support the project in principle;
- consider hosting two or three trial installations on suitable council sites, with grounds staff invited to the installation so they are familiar with the light care the planters need;
- consider whether a small number of locally made planters could form part of the council's planned planter project, weighing social value alongside cost;
- suggest an officer contact and any advice on local timber sources.

No financial commitment is sought at this stage. Sites, design and care arrangements would be agreed with officers if the bid succeeds. At present the project is dependent on dedicated funding being found.