

## LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2024

#### Present

**Chairman:** The Mayor, Cllr D. Sarson

**Councillors:** Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr R. Doney, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr P. Evans, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr R. Smith, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

**Officers:** A. Mullins (support services manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

Rev. Sarah Godfrey read out the town prayer.

#### 23/152/C Public Forum

##### J. Edmonds

J. Edmonds spoke in relation to agenda item 19, Receipt of a Petition. She thanked members for responding to her email regarding a petition so kindly and courteously and for considering the points made in it. She also thanked the support services manager for being clear and helpful in providing information that had helped understand the processes and how to communicate with the council. She said the petition was currently standing at around 1,300 signatures, which reflected the fondness the local community had for the pavilion. J. Edmonds said she was a victim of anti-social behaviour and the impact it had on her life was horrific, so she would never belittle its impact, especially on employees of the council, who must have found themselves on the receiving end of this while having to clear up. She understood the issues being experienced at the time of the original proposal had largely disappeared but there could be a reoccurrence. However, she acknowledged the strength of feeling that had been obvious in the community and said the pavilion held a place in people's hearts. She said the iconic views of the gardens from the beach were only iconic with the pavilion and without it, it could be anywhere in the world. J. Edmonds told several stories about people who had enjoyed the pavilion. She asked members to treat such a treasured landmark how it deserved to be treated. She said in 2017 she worked at Glastonbury Festival and her job was to stop people urinating in the waterways, but by educating and talking to people as equals, treating them with friendliness and kindness, for the first time, the river was clear of urine. She believed something similar could be done for the gardens, by creating a team, perhaps called Love the Gardens, with signs saying 'Love the gardens, leave no trace'. J. Edmonds said there were a lot of people who would be happy to walk around as part of their daily exercise and report any problems. She said if people were treated as equals, and people were friendly and kind and treated others with respect, they usually responded positively. She suggested a feature was made of the pavilion, it was named, events were held there such as an arts competition, and that kids were involved so the gardens were a much more exciting and inclusive place. She said a local decorator had offered to provide paint and spruce it up and the community would

support the council to put pressure on the police to play their part. She said this could be made a win/win for everybody and for a council that listened to its residents.

### **N. Williams**

N. Williams also spoke in relation to agenda item 19, Receipt of a Petition. He said Lyme Regis was a fabulous place to live and visit and he fully supported J. Edmonds and thanked her for the stories. He said he knew the council had quite a lot of things to consider, some of those decisions were easy and some were challenging. He thanked the council for dealing with this and understood what members did as a council. He understood members worked in good faith for the community and it was a tough time and although Lyme Regis was a great place to live, he felt it could be better. N. Williams said it would be great if the petition could change the council's decision, which it had thought through many times. He said he found out about the decision seven days ago on social media and people in the community started talking, the petition was started with a few people signing, which now stood at 1,300. He said with a population of 3,800, this was an enormous amount. He said he had worked for the South West Regional Development Agency, working on lots of regeneration projects in cities and towns, and this was unprecedented. N. Williams said a lot of local people were prepared to help and he wanted to help the council find them and help the pavilion, the gardens and the rest of the town as it was a fantastic opportunity for the town to move forward. He said so many people had come forward and wanted the council to change its decision and most importantly, he and others could help the council. He understood there had been some anti-social behaviour, which was the same in every town, but places were made safe by doing things together. He suggested having a photo call there, getting people working in the gardens, getting people to use the pavilion and the more people used it, the safer it would become, which was a win/win for everybody. N. Williams said in terms of publicity, it was a positive opportunity for the town and they wanted to send a positive message about the town. He said the pavilion was an emotional thing, which the council couldn't take down, but there were a lot of people with experience who would help.

### **J. Bowen**

J. Bowen also spoke in relation to agenda item 19, Receipt of a Petition. He said he had been coming to Lyme Regis for about six years. He said he was a highly professional person and an antiques restorer who had travelled around the world, working for Sotheby's and Christie's. He said he understood the problems with the pavilion but he didn't believe it would take much to restore. He said with his knowledge as a wood person, there were issues with the construction but it wouldn't take much, it just needed a bit of love. He said he was passionate about the pavilion and he wanted to retire to Lyme Regis. He said the best times were spent sitting in the pavilion, enjoying it, and he had come all the way from Yeovil to speak on this matter as he was gutted. J. Bowen said he knew there were problems at the pavilion but some of the people involved were good people. He said Glastonbury had a lot of problems with drugs and alcohol but they employed good helpers to interact with people, which worked and calmed everything down.

## **N. Ball (read out by an officer)**

N. Ball submitted a poem called 'Pavilion, toilet or smoking house' and this was read out by an officer.

The mayor, Cllr D. Sarson thanked those who had attended the meeting and J. Edmonds for taking the time to organise the petition. He acknowledged the strength of public opinion and welcomed the community engagement. He said a separate meeting would be held in two weeks' time to consider reversing the decision.

## **23/153/C Dorset Council Matters**

Cllr B. Bawden's report was included in the agenda but she gave the following updates:

- She had been speaking to Dorset Council's (DC) community safety team, the police and crime commissioner's office and the neighbourhood policing team about how they could work effectively on anti-social behaviour in the gardens. She said it would be an ongoing conversation.
- The Our Future Transport consultation event had been held at no cost to the town council.
- Planning permission was still awaited for the park and ride site.
- The town council had achieved the bronze and silver Carbon Literacy award and was the first town council to achieve this. She was working with the communications team at the Carbon Literacy Organisation to coordinate the publicity on this.
- She had spoken to the chairman of Lyme Regis Business Association about changes to commercial waste regulations and the chairman had agreed to put this to the group for discussion. She would try and arrange a meeting with DC's commercial waste team to explain the changes.
- She wasn't making progress with getting a designated parking space for people with additional mobility needs, so she was considering raising it as a proposal at the next Full Council meeting.
- The footpath from Timber Hill to Charmouth Road was in a bad state and had been reported.
- She emphasised the importance of reporting faults and issues directly to DC, which she could then be copied in on. She said the more people who reported things like potholes or dangerous parking, the more evidence it gave DC of need.
- Drainage problems at Holmbush car park were being investigated.
- She said there had been a request for a tea van on East Cliff Walkway for the motorcyclists. She would ask DC but this was not a highway.
- She would try to arrange a meeting with the harbour dredging and beach replenishment team while they were in Lyme Regis and would welcome any questions.
- She was meeting with the West Dorset MP and asked if anyone had any questions to put to him.

Cllr B. Larcombe said some members had done a walkabout with highways officers in 2018 and again in 2019-20, when it was fully recognised the need to have to double yellow lines around the Clappentail roundabout and a marked bus stop. He asked when this would be done.

Cllr B. Bawden said it was due to be done last October and she had asked for yellow lines on both sides of the road, but it had only been agreed to have them on the left-hand side towards the bus stop. She assumed the work would include the drawing of the bus stop and repairs to the surface around the mini roundabout. She had asked for the work to be done during the February half term but it wasn't happening until May.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if DC could pursue the idea of extending the Cobb Gate break water, which he was sure would alleviate a lot of the sand drift towards Charmouth, also saving money for DC in doing the annual dredging.

**23/154/C Questions from Councillors**

There were none.

**23/155/C Apologies for Absence**

Cllr C. Aldridge  
Cllr C. Reynolds – personal commitment

**23/156/C Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were none.

**23/157/C Dispensations**

There were none.

**23/158/C To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 7 February 2024**

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr R. Smith, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 7 February 2024 were **ADOPTED**.

**23/159/C Matters arising from the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 7 February 2024**

Cllr B. Bawden said the Active Travel response hadn't been sent to members and she had since asked for the Local Transport Plan consultation response to also be sent. She also asked for copies of the letters sent to Uplyme Parish Council in support of the 20mph speed limit and to DC requesting hedgehog crossing signs.

**23/160/C Update Report**

There were no updates.

### **23/161/C Mayor's Announcements**

Members noted the report.

### **23/162/C Receipt of a Petition**

The mayor, Cllr D. Sarson brought this item forward on the agenda and asked J. Edmonds to present the petition.

J. Edmonds presented the online petition, which had 1,298 signatures.

### **23/163/C Planning Committee**

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024, to note the committee's comments made on planning applications under the power delegated by Full Council, and to note the recommendations made under the chairman and vice-chairman's delegated authority following the cancellation of the meetings on 6 February and 5 March 2024.

### **23/164/C Environment Committee**

Proposed by Cllr R. Smith and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee held on 28 February 2024 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

#### **24/60/ENV – Funding Transfer Great Big Dorset Hedge to Little Green Change**

**RESOLVED:** to transfer the remainder of the grant from the current Great Big Dorset Hedge project to Little Green Change, allowing for the funding to be carried over into next financial year, such that the project must be finished by September 2024.

#### **24/61/ENV – Bathing Water Quality Meeting 4**

**RESOLVED:** to ask officers to write to South West Water asking them to share details of the relevant sections, concerning Lyme Regis and the River Lym, in their investment programme that they would be presenting to Ofwat.

#### **24/62/ENV – Potential Installation of PVs on the flat roof above toilets, rainwater harvesting and use in the gardens, 'grey water' use and recycling in Marine Parade toilets and the change to a metered electricity supply to gardens lighting**

**RESOLVED:** to support further work to investigate the potential installation of PVs on the flat roof above the toilets, rainwater harvesting and use in the gardens, 'grey water' use and recycling in Marine Parade toilets and the change to a metered electricity supply to gardens lighting.

### **24/63/ENV – Use of Biodiesel in Council Tractor and Other Vehicles**

**RESOLVED:** to consider the principle of running the council's tractor and, possibly other diesel vehicles in the current fleet, on biodiesel and providing a pumped and banded tank at or within the Monmouth store to facilitate this and investigate further into the possibility of a combined biodiesel facility for other businesses on the seafront.

### **24/64/ENV – Budget Spend**

**RESOLVED:** that the £4,496 left in the 2023-24 environment budget is earmarked to go towards changing to use of biodiesel in council tractor and other vehicles, in principle.

### **23/165/C Human Resources Committee**

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr P. May, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 13 February 2024 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

#### **24/53/HR – Town Clerk's Annual Appraisal**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the town clerk's progression to spinal column point 47 on 1 April 2024

#### **24/55/HR – Operations Manager, Performance Summary Appraisal**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the operation's manager's progression to spinal column point 33 on 1 April 2024.

#### **24/56/HR – Support Services Manager, Spinal Column Point Progression**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the support services manager's progression to spinal column point 31 on 1 April 2024

#### **24/57/HR – Finance Manager, Performance Appraisal Summary**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the finance manager's progression to spinal column point 28 on 1 April 2024

#### **24/58/HR – Acting Operations Manager, Annual Performance Appraisal**

It was noted Cllr M. Ellis was incorrectly minuted as seconding the motion at the committee meeting but she was not present.

Cllr G. Stammers agreed to second the recommendation.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the acting operations manager's progression to spinal column point 24 on 1 April 2024.

### **24/59/HR – Spinal Column Point Progression and Pay Arrangements For Other Employees for 2024/25**

**RESOLVED:** to note the spinal column point progressions for post holders 217, 216, 203, 206, 215, 202, 210, 218, 107, 106, 104, 109 and 110.

### **24/60/HR – Administrative and Community Engagement Assistant, Six-Month Probation Review**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the administrative and community engagement assistant's (post holder 109) continued employment with the council, effective from 12 January 2024.

## **23/166/C Strategy and Finance Committee**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 6 March 2024 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

### **23/94/SF – Governance Arrangements**

**RESOLVED:** to recommend to the upcoming council that it may wish to examine the committee structure, based on the views the Strategy and Finance Committee made; that minutes should be shorter, kept to the salient points and where practical, anonymised; and that minutes should be circulated to members within one or two weeks of the meeting.

### **23/95/SF – Further Land Movement at Ware Cliff**

**RESOLVED:** to note the further land movement at Ware Cliff and the emergency works undertaken to protect properties; to approve the unbudgeted expenditure estimated at up to £20,000 + VAT incurred in undertaking the emergency works that have already taken place and those works which need to be undertaken to deal with further slippage; to retrospectively approve the exception to standing orders in the appointment of Axminster Excavations to carry out these works because of the specialist nature of the works and their ability to mobilise and complete the works at very short notice; and to approve the appointment of Lewis Brown Ltd to carry out the future monitoring of ground markers at Monmouth Beach to commence on the planned withdrawal of the current contractor, West Country Land Surveys Ltd, in autumn 2024 and note the exception to standing orders in their appointment because of the specialist nature of the works and because they have already been through a competitive process in respect of similar works in the seafront gardens.

### **23/96/SF – Replacement Mini-Golf Building**

**RESOLVED:** to proceed with reducing the tender price for the already approved mini-golf building without making changes which would result in the need for a fundamental redesign and the reapplication for permissions and consent with resultant delays, increases in fees and build costs.

### **23/97/SF – Jubilee Pavilion**

**RESOLVED:** to agree the principles of an agreement for the future use and management of the Jubilee Pavilion, and to agree £3,000 of unbudgeted expenditure from the 2023-24 budget for costs to reinstate the Jubilee Pavilion as a welcome point.

### **23/99/SF – CCTV Project**

**RESOLVED:** to note the progress and spend against the 2023/24 budget allocation for CCTV, to approve a 2023/24 budget of up to £29,000 to cover the estimated CCTV project overspend and to approve £9,000 from the 2024-25 budget to renew nine seafront cameras and connect them to Dorset Council's control centre.

### **23/100/SF – Priority Two Objectives and Projects**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the following priority two objectives: a secure card link to the mini golf hut, the continuation of bursaries, recommendations from the Traffic and Travel Working Group with a revised figure of £10k, and the defibrillator at the mini golf; to ask officers to explore the option of having seafront litter collection staff for June to August and to discuss with existing staff the opportunity of overtime for other peak periods; and to instruct officers to bring a report to members in the first quarter of 2024-25 with the year-end position with a view to releasing funding for further priority two projects.

### **23/101/SF – Church Cliff Beach Bathing Water Designation**

**RESOLVED:** to delegate the survey response for the Church Cliff Beach bathing water designation to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to the town clerk in consultation with three members of the Strategy and Finance Committee.

### **23/102/SF – List of Payments**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the schedule of payments in January 2024 for the sum of £132,691.46.

### **23/104/SF – Accreted Land and Trailer Park at Monmouth Beach**

**RESOLVED:** to note the received consent from Natural England for the 'harbour use' of the town council-owned accreted land at Monmouth Beach; to approve the granting of a new lease to Dorset Council's for its use of both the above land and the adjacent 'trailer park' land with a term of five years and at an initial rent of £14,100 for 2024/25, increasing to £19,200 in 2025/26 and, thereafter, increasing by RPI as calculated at September each preceding year; and that the cost of any subsequent applications for consent to Natural England be wholly met by Dorset Council as a condition of any future lease renewals.



## **23/167/C Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee**

Proposed by Cllr D. Ruffle and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Tourism, Community and Publicity Committee held on 21 February 2024 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

### **23/59/TCP – Sculpture Trail**

**RESOLVED:** the council should manage the sculpture trail for one year in the first instance and to review the arrangement in February 2025, ahead of the 2025-26 financial year.

### **23/60/TCP – Stampede by the Sea**

**RESOLVED:** to agree to the elephant sculptures for Stampede by the Sea being located on town council land, with final approval delegated to the town clerk, in consultation with the chairman of this committee and the Town Management and Highways Committee.

### **23/64/TCP – Seafront and Beach Concessions**

**RESOLVED:** to award the deckchair concession for 2024 to Gemma Manders, at the tender price offered, and to re-advertise the arts and crafts concession.

## **23/168/C Town Management and Highways Committee**

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee held on 14 February 2024 and adopt the recommendations, as follows:

### **23/86/TMH – Weed Spraying Policy and Procedure review**

**RESOLVED:** to confirm that the policy and procedure has been reviewed and will continue unchanged.

### **23/87/TMH – Dorset and Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Local Transport Plan 4**

**RESOLVED:** to consider the survey, provide a sense of their response and delegate the completion of the survey to the town clerk in consultation with the Travel and Transport Working Group.

### **23/88/TMH – Public Engagement Event on ‘Our Future Transport’ on 20 February 2024**

**RESOLVED:** to support and publicise the Our Future Transport event and cover any costs of displays of town council proposals.

### **23/89/TMH – Request for a Memorial Plaque**

**RESOLVED:** to write to the widower of the member of staff and explain that there are no more trees available and the waiting list closed but that an exception would be made, and area for a new tree would be selected, perhaps placed near to the Cllr Barbara Austin memorial tree.

### **23/91/TMH – Cemetery Postbox**

**RESOLVED:** to install a cemetery postbox.

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr C. Reynolds be present at the emptying of the cemetery postbox and that it was promoted on the website and publicised in the residents' newsletter.

### **23/92/TMH – 20mph Proposal**

**RESOLVED:** to support the 20mph zone across Lyme Regis and to add Timber Hill as it falls outside the proposed zone.

### **23/93/TMH – Uplyme 20mph**

**RESOLVED:** to support the Uplyme Parish Council 20mph area and communicate that via officers to Uplyme Parish Council.

### **23/94/TMH – Hedgehog Crossing Sign**

**RESOLVED:** to approach Dorset Highways and request a hedgehog crossing sign at the bottom of Summerhill Road.

### **23/169/C Frequency of Planning Committee Meetings**

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr B. Bawden, members **RESOLVED** to change from a two to a three-weekly cycle for Planning Committee meetings.

### **23/170/C Draft Corporate Plan 2024-29**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members **RESOLVED** to approve the Corporate Plan 2024-29.

### **23/171/C Request to Hang a Portrait**

Proposed by Cllr P. Evans and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** to approve the request from the family of the council's first town clerk, Harry Williams, to hang his portrait in the Guildhall.

### **22/172/C Travel and Transport Vision Statement for Lyme Regis**

*Cllr M. Ellis left the meeting at 7.44pm.*

Cllr B. Larcombe said he couldn't see how restricting the number of vehicles accessing the town centre by 50% could be achieved within the next five years. He felt the percentage could be removed so the aim was just to reduce traffic.

*Cllr M. Ellis returned to the meeting at 7.45pm.*

Cllr B. Bawden said the government guidance on local transport planning was for a vision led approach, with proposals to change the hierarchy in the Highway Code so pedestrians come at the top and motor cars come at the bottom. This would mean a completely different way of looking at town centres so it was important to be aspirational and look at ways of making places look attractive, safer and better for people. She said the specific measures would be formed later on but it was important to have the overarching vision to start with.

Cllr R. Smith said he didn't interpret the aim as restricting traffic, but putting in place measures to reduce traffic by giving people better alternatives.

Cllr P. May said the traffic expert in the Traffic and Travel Working Group believed traffic coming into Lyme Regis would grow between 11 and 13% per year so even having an aspiration to reduce it was an ambitious aim.

It was suggested the aspiration relating to traffic reduction was added in as the fifth bullet point and the reference to 50% was removed.

Proposed by Cllr B. Bawden and seconded by Cllr P. May, members **RESOLVED** to amend the draft Travel and Transport Vision Statement for Lyme Regis as developed by the Travel and Transport Working Group to add the aspiration relating to traffic reduction as the fifth bullet point and remove the reference to 50%.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr S. Cockerell, members **RESOLVED** to approve the Travel and Transport Vision Statement for Lyme Regis as developed by the Travel and Transport Working Group, as amended by Full Council.

## **22/173/C List of Payments**

Cllr B. Bawden asked if the council's rates bill would be significantly reduced by the sale of Guildhall Cottage and whether the community use of the Jubilee Pavilion would affect the liability of rates.

The town clerk said the sale of Guildhall Cottage would reduce the rates bill but the council would continue to pay rates on the Jubilee Pavilion.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked what the £4k paid quarterly for electricity at the Marine Parade Shelters covered.

The town clerk said the finance manager would circulate details in the members' briefing.

Cllr B. Bawden asked if any utilities and phone charges were recharged to business users.

The town clerk said he would ask the finance manager to provide members with a detailed breakdown.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr R. Smith, members **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments in February 2024 for the sum of £160,827.56.

**22/174/C Relocation of Council Offices and Disposal of Existing Building and Site**

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr R. Smith, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential matters relating to relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**23/175/C Exempt Business**

**a) Relocation of Council Offices and Disposal of Existing Building and Site**

The town clerk said the aim was to be in the new offices by the end of this year, but the council wasn't in control of all the target dates as there were other parties involved.

*The meeting closed at 8.10pm.*