

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2024

Present

Chairman: Cllr P. May

Councillors: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr B. Bawden, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr P. Evans, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Ruffle, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr G. Turner

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

23/107/SF Public Forum

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

23/108/SF Apologies for Absence

Cllr R. Doney – holiday
Cllr B. Larcombe – personal commitment
Cllr R. Smith – work commitment

23/109/SF Minutes

Proposed by D. Ruffle and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024 were **ADOPTED**.

23/110/SF Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

23/111/SF Dispensations

There were none.

23/112/SF Matters arising from the minutes of the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting held on 6 March 2024

CCTV

An update was requested on when planning permission would be granted for the camera at the skatepark.

The town clerk said he would find out and report back to members.

Park and ride 2024

It was noted planning permission had been granted by Dorset Council for improvements to the park and ride site, with 16 conditions attached.

23/113/SF Update Report

Members noted the report.

23/114/SF Strategy and Finance Objectives

Members noted the report.

23/115/SF Review of Standing Orders

It was agreed the new standing order 8c. regarding voting on appointments would also include: 'The councillor must provide written notice in advance that they wish to seek election'.

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr P. Evans, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the standing orders, with an amendment to 8c to include 'The councillor must provide written notice in advance that they wish to seek election'.

23/116/SF Review of Financial Regulations

The town clerk said the proposed changes to treasury management had been suggested to allow for more flexibility so officers could take advantage of the best interest rates, without having to wait for committee approval. However, members would be informed retrospectively in an annual report.

Proposed by Cllr D. Ruffle and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the financial regulations.

23/117/SF The Annual Review of the Communications/PR Policy and Procedure

It was suggested certain elements of the procedure were not currently being followed with regards to providing statements and photographs to the press.

A query was also raised about insufficient use of council noticeboards as this had been raised at the annual meeting of electors.

The town clerk said the noticeboards were used but the concern was they were crowded with other information so important notices weren't always visible. He stressed it was important press releases and statements were co-ordinated by the support services manager but members were not prevented from talking to the press directly, although he advised caution.

It was noted the section on the council column was still included in the procedure and would be deleted.

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the Communications/PR Policy and Procedure, with the deletion of section 7, Council column.

23/118/SF The Annual Review of the Complaints' Policy and Procedure

Proposed by Cllr D. Sarson and seconded by Cllr S. Cockerell, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the complaints' policy and procedure and note the volume and nature of complaints received since May 2023.

23/119/SF Information Policy

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the Information Policy.

23/120/SF Equality and Diversity Policy

It was noted the training and induction programme for the new administration would include equality and diversity training.

It was agreed paragraph 9.2.1 would be amended to include members as well as employees and renumbering would be required from section 9 onwards.

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr D. Ruffle, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the equality and diversity policy, with an amendment to paragraph 9.2.1 to include members and to renumber the document from section 9 onwards.

23/121/SF Review of the Protocol for the Audio Recording of Council Meetings

It was noted the audio technician would be at the Guildhall on 28 April 2024 to refine the specification for equipment to amplify meetings.

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the protocol for the audio recording of council meetings.

23/122/SF Debt Management Policy and Procedure

Proposed by Cllr D. Ruffle and seconded by Cllr S. Cockerell, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the debt management policy and procedure.

23/123/SF Review of Arrangements with other Local Authorities, Not-For-Profit Bodies, and Businesses

The town clerk clarified the Tripartite Agreement had novated to Dorset Council as West Dorset District Council no longer existed and the agreement still had the same status.

23/124/SF Appointment of Signatories for Wilkinson Legacy account

The town clerk said officers couldn't find anything out about the history of the account and as it held only c£500, it would cost more in officer time to try and move the money out.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve changing the bank signatories for the Wilkinson Legacy Account to the mayor, town clerk, deputy town clerk and finance manager.

23/125/SF List of Payments

Proposed by Cllr D. Ruffle and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the schedule of payments in March 2024 for the sum of £404,300.05.

23/126/SF Investments and Cash Holdings

The town clerk said he would be working with the finance manager on treasury management, with the possibility of putting some money on short-term deposits to generate more interest income.

23/127/SF Debtors

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, 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.

23/128/SF Exempt Business

a) Debtors

Members thanked staff involved in significantly reducing the level of debt.

The meeting closed at 7.48pm.