

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2024

Present

Chairman: Cllr M. Ellis

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Caddy, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr P. Evans, Cllr S Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr J. Trevena

Officers: M. Green (deputy town clerk), A. Mullins (support services manager), AK Mullins (property and projects assistant), A. Turner (operations manager)

Other members: Cllr A. Wood

24/23/TMH Public Forum

M. Denney

M. Denney spoke in relation to agenda item 14, 20mph Speed Limit Proposals. He believed the whole town should be a 20mph zone to create a smoother, quieter, safer town. Although the speed limit would not be policed, he said it would be self-policing and you couldn't drive more than 20mph in most of the town anyway. He said narrow or no pavements were an issue and those who objected would say it was impossible to drive slowly uphill, but this wasn't the case.

L. Gooden

L. Gooden spoke on the same agenda item. She said Woodmead Road was used as a racetrack so 20mph in this road would be beneficial and safer for everybody.

B. Bawden

B. Bawden spoke on the same agenda item. She had been working on the 20mph at the request of residents for over two years and had been involved in Speedwatch monitoring and the town council's public engagement. She said in Devon and Cornwall 20mph limits were introduced where communities asked for it. She said places like London and Manchester were way ahead in mobility, accessibility and road safety, making them calmer, safer and more accessible. She couldn't understand why it was so hard to achieve in Dorset. She said the council's traffic and travel working group had developed a vision and a 20mph scheme for most of the town was part of that, as well as making it more accessible and safer. She said a 20mph scheme was the first step in doing what a lot of other places were already doing and Lyme should put people first, not motorists.

C. Hemsley

C. Hemsley spoke on the same agenda item. He spoke about electric cars and how difficult they were to hear and how much bigger cars were these days. He said a wider 20mph zone would go some way in recognising there was a safety element with bigger

cars. He said there was no signage so this could be looked at. He said he just wanted Lyme Regis to be safer.

J. Breeze

J. Breeze spoke on the same agenda item. She congratulated the council for setting up the traffic and travel working group and agreeing to fund a speed indicator device in lower Sidmouth Road, where Speedwatch volunteers had recorded excessive speeds. The 20mph consultation was welcome, highlighting residents' concerns. She said 20mph had a positive impact and she was happy to share data with anyone who had concerns about the scheme. Although it had been suggested 20mph was introduced only around Anning Road and Woodroffe School, she said few children lived within close proximity to the schools and this wouldn't benefit the majority of Lyme residents, 53.7% of whom were in favour of 20mph. She favoured a wider scheme but felt it should include Sidmouth Road, Pound Road and Pound Street; she couldn't understand why Sidmouth Road couldn't be included as other parts of the A3052 were, and there were large stretches with no pavements, forcing people onto the road. She was concerned there would be an accident or an emergency vehicle wouldn't be able to get through. She supported a wider 20mph zone and asked the council to pressure Dorset Council (DC) to invest the income it generates in car parks to address residents' concerns.

R. Smith

R. Smith spoke on the same agenda item. He was concerned about traffic speed at the top of Sidmouth Road, particularly the area above the speed indicator device which was steep. He gave statistics on traffic speed related to the likelihood of being killed when hit and said the steep downhill increased the distance cars needed to slow down. He said this section must not be excluded from the 20mph scheme, especially as children used it to walk to Woodroffe School and elderly people used it to get to the town or bus stop. Residents also found it dangerous turning out of side roads. He said the 20mph speed limit was an opportunity to make the town a special place and similar schemes were in place elsewhere. He said the town council had a responsibility towards residents' safety and the 20mph limit was a great opportunity. He asked members who didn't have to walk on busy, unpaved roads to think of residents who did and not to implement half measures, especially as the area was not served by the town bus. He asked members to recommend a 20mph limit across the widest possible area, providing the widest possible protection to residents and doing everything they could to ensure no one was hurt or killed.

L. Smith

L. Smith spoke on the same agenda item. She formerly attended Colyton Grammar School and walked down Sidmouth Road to catch the bus and regularly had to walk on the verge because vehicles were so close. She said people got a lift to the bus stop, even if they lived within walking distance of the bus stop. She felt it was important this area was addressed with a lower speed limit.

24/24/TMH Apologies

Cllr G. Stammers – holiday
Cllr G. Turner – work commitments

24/25/TMH Minutes

Proposed by Cllr P. Evans and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 June 2024 were **ADOPTED**.

24/26/TMH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr A. Wood declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 15, Installation of Communication Boards in Play Areas, and he would leave the room for this item.

24/27/TMH Dispensations

There were none.

24/28/TMH Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Management and Highways Committee meeting held on 5 June 2024

Outdoor gym equipment

The operations manager confirmed the meeting with the supplier was taking place on 20 June 2024.

CCTV

The deputy town clerk said a draft licence had been received from DC for the pole and camera next to the skatepark. Officers had confirmed there were no issues so it was hoped the licence would be completed soon.

It was agreed members would be updated via the briefing.

24/29/TMH Update Report

Accreted land

The deputy town clerk said there had now been contact from DC's property team so he hoped this would move things forward. However, there were likely to be some issues to address as the property team had not been previously involved and wanted to re-visit some of the earlier decisions. He added DC was offering to pay the old rent while discussions were ongoing and a further report to the Strategy and Finance Committee in October may be required.

Town bus

The deputy town clerk said he was progressing discussions with Beaminster Town Council about the possibility of using its 16-seater minibus on weekdays, as it was currently only used on a Saturday. He was also looking at the town council buying a bus and running it using local volunteers, or the third option was to buy a bus and get a commercial operator to operate it on the council's behalf. He said First was prepared to do this and costed options would be presented to the Strategy and Finance Committee.

24/30/TMH Town Management and Highways Committee – Objectives

Members noted the report.

24/31/TMH 2025-26 Budget Proposals

The committee put forward the following objectives: Woodmead car park drainage, Bell Cliff steps, town bus, car park machines, gardens' paths, removal of soil from the Monmouth Beach area, gardens' handrails, refurbishment of the gazebo, traffic and travel working group projects, and a one-way system.

24/32/TMH Emergency Planning Procedure Review

It was agreed as the contact number for all office staff was the office number, this section could be removed.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the Emergency Planning Procedure, with an amendment to remove office staff telephone numbers.

24/33/TMH A Member Request to Join the Travel and Transport Working Group

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Caddy, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to appoint Cllr J. Trevena to the traffic and travel working group.

24/34/TMH Local Heritage List and Lynch Safety Issues

The deputy town clerk said the council may be notified of more heritage assets as time went on.

The deputy town clerk said if the council said it didn't want railings on the lynch, he was sure DC would not pursue it. However, the issue of the repair of the lynch walls was an ongoing issue because it was in a poor and worsening condition.

Members were generally not in favour of railings because there had been no other incidents of someone falling into the river and there was a concern they could cause more accidents.

It was suggested the vegetation should be removed from the top of the wall to help people see where the edge was.

The deputy town clerk said the last time the vegetation was removed it was carried out jointly by the town council, Dorset County Council and West Dorset District Council, led by Dorset County Council. As the title wasn't registered, it wasn't clear which council owned the lynch, and the Environment Agency claimed not to have any responsibility.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the inclusion of various local assets in a 'Local Heritage List' being compiled by Dorset Council and to not support the installation by Dorset Council of heritage railings along the river side of the Lynch as a pedestrian safety measure.

24/35/TMH The Gazebo

It was suggested the proposed inscription be amended from 'For the people of Lyme Regis to rest a while' to 'For all to rest a while'.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr J. Trevena, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to name the gazebo The Gardens Pavilion and to engrave of the inside of the structure: 'For all to rest a while'.

24/36/TMH 20mph Speed Limit Proposals

The deputy town clerk said Sidmouth Road, Charmouth Road and Timber Hill did not meet DC's normal criteria for a 20mph limit and would probably not be supported by them. However, the council could submit an application which included a wider area, which would require DC to give a written indication about whether these roads could be included. He said the DC panel which considered applications was due to meet on 2 October 2024, so a draft application could be submitted to that meeting, but any final decision would be made later.

However, it was noted any recommendation from this committee would not be resolved by the Full Council until 23 October 2024 so a draft application could not be made to the panel on 2 October 2024.

Several members felt a blanket scheme across the town was excessive and a 20mph limit was only required outside schools, nurseries and youth clubs and roads where drivers tried to exceed the speed limit. There was also concern there would be no enforcement of the speed limit, so people would not adhere to it.

Several members were in support of a wider 20mph area as it would be much simpler, less signage would be required, and it would be cheaper because signs would only be required at the entrances to the 20mph zone and not within it when drivers moved between a 20 and 30mph area.

A member asked if the council could challenge DC's criteria for introducing a 20mph limit.

The deputy town clerk said the reasons DC gave for Charmouth and Sidmouth Roads not meeting the criteria were that the measured vehicle speeds on these roads were well in excess of 20mph, and their function as a strategic route, rather than a residential road. He acknowledged this disregarded the concerns of residents who lived in those roads, but the way to test this was to make a draft application and to include these roads, and any others, not included in the DC plan.

Cllr P. May requested a recorded vote on the following motion:

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to propose a draft area of roads shown brown on the Dorset Council plan plus the top of Broad Street, Pound Road and Cobb Road and Sidmouth Road up to the junction with Shire Lane for a 20mph speed limit.

Voted for – Cllr P. May, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr J. Trevena, Cllr P. Evans
Voted against – Cllr G. Caddy, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr M. Ellis
Abstentions – None

Cllr A. Wood did not vote as he was not a member of the committee.

Cllr A. Wood left the meeting at 8.19pm in line with his declaration of pecuniary interests.

24/37/TMH Installation of Communication Boards in Play Areas

It was suggested there could be a third communication board on the seafront near the beach recycling box.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to support the intended installation of 'Communication Boards' at the Anning Road and Henry's Way play areas and on the seafront near the beach recycling box at a total cost of approximately £450 + VAT and funded from within existing budgets.

It was noted further quotes would be obtained.

Cllr A. Wood returned to the meeting at 8.23pm.

24/38/TMH Cobb Road Closure

Members noted the report.

24/39/TMH Complaints, Incidents and Compliments

Members were concerned about reports of the steps next to SWiM restaurant being slippery due to cooking fat from the restaurant's extractor and asked if further action needed to be taken.

The deputy town clerk said he was already dealing with this and the restaurant had made modifications to the extraction system but it hadn't worked. He said he would take it up again with the owners and if it continued to be a problem, he would bring it back to members.

24/40/TMH Chalet and Day Hut Sites at Monmouth Beach

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, 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 information relating to an individual 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.

24/41/TMH Exempt Business

a) Chalet and Day Hut Sites at Monmouth Beach

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to instigate proceedings to repossess the site of Monmouth Beach day hut 23 if there is no suitable, new replacement by 31 October 2024, and to instruct officers to write to the owners of Monmouth Beach chalet 18 and give them until 31 March 2025 to get permission for and to install a new chalet acceptable to Lyme Regis Town Council as landowners, or the site will be repossessed.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.