

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER 2024

Present

Chairman: Cllr J. Trevena

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr P. May, Cllr S. Larcombe

Other members: Cllr A. Wood

Officers: M. Green (deputy town clerk), K. Newman (administrative and community engagement assistant)

Guests: G. Roberts (River Lim Action Group), C. Matheson (Little Green Change), L. Davis (River Lim Action Group), J. Breeze (River Lim Action Group)

24/17/ENV Public Forum

G. Roberts and J. Breeze from the River Lim Action Group introduced themselves to the council in relation to their applications to be co-opted as non-members to the Environment Committee.

24/18/ENV Apologies

Cllr S. Cockerell – holiday
Cllr G. Stammers – holiday

The chairman explained that Cllr A. Wood was not a voting member of the committee.

24/19/ENV Minutes

Proposed by Cllr G. Turner and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe, the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2024 were **ADOPTED**.

24/20/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr P. May declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 9 because one of the candidates for co-option, V. Elcoate, was his civil partner. He also disclosed that he was a member of the Dorset Climate Action Network. He also disclosed that two of the co-optees represented Turn Lyme Green, of which he was a member and sat on the steering committee.

24/21/ENV Dispensations

There were none.

24/22/ENV Matters arising from previous meeting held on 28 February 2024

Carbon Literacy Organisation Accreditation

The deputy town clerk reminded members that further training courses for Carbon Literacy accreditation were on offer in October, November and that all members that had not already undergone the training were encouraged to participate.

Update on Contaminated Land Strategy Consultation

Cllr S. Larcombe asked that he be kept updated on the consultation.

24/23/ENV Update Report

Little Green Change

The chairman invited C. Matheson from Little Green Change to speak.

C. Matheson presented her report to the committee and thanked the council for the funding it had provided to the organisation.

Rainwater harvesting

A member spoke about rainwater harvesting being an important objective because pristine water was being used to water plants in the gardens. He said it would be better to use something cheaper and more environmentally friendly and urged officers to continue looking for opportunities for rainwater harvesting.

The deputy town clerk said officers would continue to investigate options. In the meantime, the intention was to harvest rainwater from the gazebo roof.

Electric Supply to Gardens Lighting

A member asked if there was a timescale to look for additional quotations for the switch over of the lighting in the gardens to a metered supply.

The deputy town clerk said he expected to have a quotation by next week and would look to see if there was some kind of business case for the switch over. However, in his opinion, there wasn't much of an incentive to change over to a metered supply.

24/24/ENV 2025/26 Budget Proposals

The committee put forward the following objectives:

- Continuation of biodiversity projects, including additional wildflower gardens (and maintenance on the existing wildflower gardens)

- Planting of trees, which might be hard to do on council land but could be facilitated in other areas of the town
- Exemplar renewable energy projects that the town council could undertake (PV, heat pumps, etc)
- Adoption of heat pumps and solar panels
- Battery installations to make use of renewable energy
- The installation of LED lighting wherever possible.
- Following up of EPC recommendations to guide the town council to reduce energy consumption further
- Further investigation into rainwater harvesting
- Continued funding of biodiesel tank to power main diesel vehicles
- River Lim improvement projects
- Removal of vegetation in the lower Lim River, in particular Japanese knotweed which has started to appear near the Town Mill
- Feasibility study for hydroelectric power.

A member suggested the council investigated ways to reduce waste and packaging but perhaps this initiative could be tied in with the Town Management and Highways Committee.

24/25/ENV Co-option

A member said they found the current co-option policy confusing and wondered if the policy should be used for the town council as a whole and not necessarily for this committee.

Cllr. P May asked for clarification that the current co-option policy was referring to the current co-option policy for the full council, and not a sub-committee co-option policy.

The deputy town clerk said the issue was whether the process was proper or if a more transparent process was needed; one which would allow anyone who was interested in applying to be co-opted to the committee to apply on equal terms. He accepted the existing procedure for co-opting a member to the council wasn't precisely suitable without some amendment and suggested officers came back to members with a more suitable process for co-opting members to this and other committees.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that officers be asked to produce a suitable bespoke policy and procedure for the co-option of members to this or other committees.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that Grenville Barr and Janet Breeze be co-opted as non-members to the Environment Committee for the current year.

Cllr P. May left the meeting at 7.49pm.

Proposed by Cllr. C Aldridge and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that Vicki Elcoate be co-opted as a non-member to the Environment Committee for the current year.

Cllr P. May returned to the meeting at 7.51pm.

24/26/ENV Minutes of the Environment Agency, Southwest Water/Pennon Group, Dorset Council and Lyme Regis Town Council Bathing Water Quality Meeting 6

The chairman said meeting 7 had taken place on 1 October 2024 but no minutes had come through yet.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, the minutes of the bathing water quality meeting 6 were **RECEIVED**.

24/27/ENV River Lim Action Group Report

The chairman invited G. Roberts and L. Davis from the River Lim Action Group to present the report. They thanked the town council for the huge joint effort and its ongoing support.

24/28/ENV Budget Report

The deputy town clerk reminded members there was currently no spend against the current year's budget and that perhaps some of the ideas that had been mentioned earlier could be funded this year. He also reminded them that although they had already identified potential adjectives for 2025-26, 2024-25 was the final year of budget allocation to carry out the council's climate action plan and they might want to consider extending it for further years.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr S. Larcombe members agreed to **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** that the Environment Committee be awarded an annual budget of £25k for the remaining four years of the council.

24/29/ENV Dorset Council's Nature Emergency Declaration

The deputy town clerk suggested if members decided they wanted to develop a policy, a working group could be set up to discuss as it was too big a subject to be discussed at this meeting.

Members were concerned this was a very broad subject and the town council's influence on it was relatively small compared to Dorset Council who could better impact the wider Dorset area. It was noted the town council was already being proactive and pursuing projects that were fulfilling aspects of nature protection.

It was agreed the possibility of declaring a nature emergency should be kept under review by this committee.

24/30/ENV Migration to Battery Powered Equipment

A member said the council should be aware of how companies were disposing of the batteries rather than just assuming they were disposing of them responsibly.

It was suggested biodiesel could be used in any suitable mowers going forward.

24/31/ENV Use of Biodiesel/HVO in council vehicles

The deputy town clerk said the tractor had the greatest carbon emissions and he had now received confirmation from the manufacturer that it could run on biodiesel.

A member asked how secure the biodiesel tank would be.

The deputy town clerk said there was a secure and lockable location for it next to the refurbished harbour store building, although it could go inside the building if necessary. He also pointed out that there would be new CCTV cameras monitoring the building and the area around it.

24/32/ENV Appointment to Repairs Café Steering Group

It was noted the steering group meetings were likely to take place in the daytime and would be held monthly.

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr P. May that members **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that Cllr S. Larcombe be appointed to the Repairs Café Steering Group.

24/33/ENV Low Carbon Dorset Exhibition

It was suggested the posters designed by the council for the exhibition be used for future projects.

24/34/ENV Citizens Advice Energy Advice

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.46pm.