



**Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Seaton Town Council
On Monday 21st October 2019**

Present

In the chair: Cllr J Rowland

Councillors: T Antoniou, D Haggerty, D Ledger, S Read, J Russell, H Sanham,
M Shaw, A Singh and D Squire

Officers: Town Clerk and Admin Officer

Public: No members of the public were present

139. Apologies for absence

The Council received and accepted apologies from Cllr Ken Beer
Cllr Gwyn Davies was absent

140. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Rowland and Ledger declared personal interests as Councillors with East Devon District Council (EDDC)

Cllr Shaw declared a personal interest as a Councillor with Devon County Council (DCC)

141. Public Question Time

No members of the public were present

142. Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd

The Council considered a report from the Town Clerk concerning the financial package provided by Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd and discussion took place around:

- What budget would cover the cost of Rialtas inputting the data onto the financial system and how confident would the Rialtas employee be at allocating expenses to the correct ledger code.
- The Chairman of the Finance Committee, Cllr Ledger, responded that there should be no additional expenditure into General Reserves for this expense.
- The Clerk said that she would speak to the Chairman, Cllr Ken Beer and Cllr Ledger with reference to allocating cost codes for Rialtas to use.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation in the Clerk's report to authorise the engagement of Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd for a maximum of 4 days' work to provide data input/correction service at a cost of £399 + VAT per day + 45p per mile and train the Clerk and two members of staff on the Rialtas financial system. A new budget heading for this expense will be added to the accounts for 2019/2020.

(moved Cllr Antoniou; seconded Cllr Singh)

143. Membership of DALC

The Council considered a report from the Town Clerk concerning the renewal of the Councils membership of the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC). Due to recent staff changes, the Council's membership of the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) has recently lapsed. This was due for renewal on 1 April 2019 and, after discussions with DALC, it was agreed that membership would



be extended on a temporary basis until 30 September 2019. A request to extend this further was refused. Discussion took place around:

- The Clerk confirmed that no payment had been made to DALC and they had kindly let the membership run even though no subscription payment had been made.
- New Councillors have been booked on a course run by DALC and if the subscription is renewed the cost of the course will be at a reduced rate.
- The Clerk was going to attend DALC's AGM later in the week and would find out information about the association. The wording of the seconded recommendation in the report is that the Council needs to renew its subscription to DALC for 2019/2020. The Council can consider its options to renew DALC's subscription for the following year or an alternative body if that provides a superior service and benefits to the Council.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation in the Clerk's report to:

- 1.1 approve the renewal of the Council's membership of DALC for 2019/20
- 1.2 authorise the automatic annual renewal of the Council's membership of DALC (or any equivalent body, if in the Clerk's view, such alternative body provides superior service and benefits to the Council)

(moved Cllr Ledger; seconded Cllr Singh)

144. External Auditor Comments

Further information was requested by the external auditor on 29 September 2019 in respect of the Council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2018/19. This was supplied and the review by the external auditor was completed and a final certificate issued on 30 September 2019.

The Council **RESOLVED** to note the External Auditors report.

(moved Cllr Ledger; seconded Cllr Shaw)

145. Financial Regulations

The Council considered a report from the Town Clerk concerning the Town Councils Financial Regulations. The Clerk reported that there a new National Association of Local Councils (NALC) set of Model Financial Regulations. In light of this the Clerk proposed amendments to the Council's existing Financial Regulations to:

- adjust the financial parameters within which decisions on expenditure can be made, both in an emergency and in the normal course of business, without the need to call a meeting.
- update the Council's authorised signatories. Additional signatories should be authorised, and the Clerk would suggest that as a minimum, the Clerk and the Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee are added along with any other Members that the Council considers appropriate.
- update the Council's banking methods to allow payments via internet banking.

Discussion took place around:

- Online banking is currently not incorporated in the NALC Model Financial Regulations. In order to use online banking Councils are recommended to bring in a number of policies to ensure this is covered by not following the regulations. The Clerk responded that this was not something the Council would be carrying out immediately and would ensure the correct safeguards were in place.



- Cllr Sanham thought it was not legal to have people, other than Councillors, as cheque signatories. She thought this should be legally checked again. The Clerk said they would check on this.
- It should be agreed whose name goes on the Council's debit card and this should be incorporated in the Financial Regulations.

The Clerk's report recommended that the Council:

1.1.1 approves the amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations (October 2019)

1.1.2 approves the removal and/or addition of authorised signatories as the Council sees fit.

Cllr Ledger proposed acceptance of these recommendations with the addition of seeking advice on legally who could be authorised signatories. It had previously been agreed that the signatories include the current Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and two members of the Committee along with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

Cllr Ledger asked that it be added to the recommendations that upon seeking advice the Town Clerk is added to the list of authorised signatories. It was agreed that Cllr Singh be added to the list of authorised signatories.

The Council **RESOLVED** to:

- approve the amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations (October 2019)
- approve the removal of former Councillors as authorised signatories and to add Cllr Ledger and Cllr Singh and, subject to clarifying the legal position, the Town Clerk as authorised signatories (moved Cllr Ledger; seconded Cllr Haggerty)

146. Confidential Items

The Chairman moved that in accordance with the Council's Standing Order 1 (c) press and public would be excluded from the meeting during the discussions of items 19 to 20 on the agenda as there was likely to be disclosure of information as matters are being discussed which could identify an individual or are commercially sensitive. Council AGREED the statement as read.

147. Town Guide 2020

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the KF Marketing & Seaton Print & Design quote for the production and print of the Seaton Town Guide 2020 subject to the plates and artwork remaining the property of Seaton Town Council.

(moved Cllr Antoniou; seconded Cllr Russell)

148. Staffing Matters

The Council considered a report and additional report from the Town Clerk concerning Staffing Matters at the Town Council.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations in the Clerk's report on Staffing Matters. (moved Cllr Ledger; seconded Cllr Haggerty)

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations in the Clerk's report on Staffing Matters. (moved Cllr Singh; seconded Cllr Haggerty)



The Chairman thanked all the staff for the work they had done whilst without a Town Clerk.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations in the Clerk's report.

Meeting closed at 8.22pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____