



**Minutes of the Seaton Town Council Meeting
on Wednesday 6 May 2020**

Present:

Chair: Cllr K Beer

Councillors: J Rowland, D Ledger, D Haggerty, M Shaw, A Singh, M. Hartnell and E Bowman

Officers: Town Clerk and Administrative & Community Events Officer

Public: 5 members of the public

Note: All attendees accessed the meeting remotely and could be either seen and/or heard

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllr. Russell

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Ledger, Hartnell & Rowland declared a personal interest as a Councillor with East Devon District Council (EDDC)

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

3. Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on Friday 20th March 2020 (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

4. Public Question Time

Richard Drysdale, Manager of Seaton Jurassic, updated Members on the current situation with the Tourist Information Centre and Seaton Jurassic:

- in line with Covid-19 legislation the centre is closed, and staff are furloughed.
- East Devon District Council are supporting the centre with their rateable value and grants
- all calls to the Tourist Information Centre are being diverted to Richard.
- the centre is putting activities out on social media sites
- there are PDF's of various walks created by the Seaton Visitor Centre Trust which are available as hard copies from outside Seaton Jurassic and the Tesco store



- Seaton Jurassic, along with Seaton Tramway and other attractions in Devon, are working together with Visit Devon, Visit South Devon and other organisations to look at Seaton going forward. It will be a tough summer, but the centre will be making the most of this time to make sure it is in the best possible place going forward

5. County Councillor Report

Cllr Shaw presented his reports for April & May 2020 and, additionally, updated Members on:

- Covid-19 – there have sadly been several deaths at a care home in Seaton with one member of staff in a serious condition in intensive care at the RD&E in Exeter. Devon has the lowest death rate of any council area in the country. It would be good if, at a later date, the Town Council could commemorate the people who have died in this pandemic. People are still being sent into care homes from hospitals, but more precautions are being taken by the homes.
- Cllr Shaw has been pressing Devon County Council to consider different ways of how to approach this epidemic. The lack of testing and tracing has been a problem in Devon as, given the level of infection which the county has, should have been implemented sooner. Now waiting to see if there will be a national scheme for testing and tracing which will work and help the county.
- Pecorama have been making ear guards to help people in care homes who are wearing masks to take the pressure off their ears. Cllr Shaw has been trying to get these distributed to local care homes.

Members noted the report.

6. Seafront Enhancement Project

Members received an update from Cllrs. Shaw and Rowland on the Seafront Enhancement Project:

- Efforts were being made to commence Phase 1 as planning permission was due to expire in August. It was therefore important that the development be commenced in order to stop the planning permission from lapsing. If work could not commence before August, due to the Covid-19 crisis, the question was raised whether East Devon District Council might extend the period for commencement of the works. Cllr Rowland would raise this with EDDC.
- Devon County Council Legal Department were preparing a draft Section 278 Agreement for consideration by the Town Council. This is a legal agreement required for works to the existing highways.

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to proceed with Phase 1 of the Seafront Enhancement Scheme.

(moved Cllr Rowland; seconded Cllr Shaw)



7. Council Priorities 2020/21

A number of proposals were brought forward by different Members for consideration as priorities for 2020/21, as summarised below:

- Progression of Phase 1 of Seafront Enhancement Scheme, with commencement prior to August 2020 to enable the planning permission to remain extant **(Cllrs. Rowland & Shaw)**
- Launch and ongoing management of STC website **(Cllrs. Rowland & Ledger)**
- Community Engagement – building engagement with individual volunteers and key stakeholders within the community **(Cllr Ledger)**, which could encompass the proposed unwanted laptop scheme **(Cllr Singh)**
- Completion of the renovation and painting of the street furniture **(Cllrs Ledger & Rowland)** with possible engagement of volunteers linking into priority 3 above **(Cllr Ledger)**
- Establishment of Virtual Town Hall **(Cllr Ledger)**
- Marshlands – to implement a tender process to look at options for the redevelopment of the Marshlands site as a space for hire, business units, the Council Offices and possibly a residential element **(Cllrs. Rowland, Ledger & Shaw)**
- Liaison with building owners to improve the aesthetic appeal of retail units with window displays and painting **(Cllr Rowland)** with possible engagement of volunteers linking into priority 3 above **(Cllr Ledger)** and look into the possibility of having a grant scheme which business owners could apply to for assistance to help them smarten up their shop fronts **(Cllr Hartnell)**
- Promotion of Seaton for tourism **(Cllr. Haggerty)**
- Establishment of a Town Art Trail starting with the replacement of the boards at Marshlands **(Cllr Ledger)**
- Work with EDDC to examine feasibility of asset transfers on a comprehensive basis **(Cllr Rowland)**
- Review of Council's budgets for 2020/21 to assess risk areas in light of Covid-19 **(Cllr Rowland)**

A comprehensive discussion ensued around the various proposals and Members unanimously agreed that:

- where possible, the 2020/21 priorities should build on the very positive response of the community towards the current pandemic and to actively engage with individual volunteers and key stakeholder organisations within Seaton to support the community going forward; and
- to offer support, where possible, to help regenerate the town

This resulted in the following priorities being agreed for 2020/21:



1. **Progression of Phase 1 of Seafront Enhancement Scheme** - with commencement prior to August 2020 to enable the planning permission to remain extant
2. **Website** - Launch of and ongoing management of the new STC website, as a key tool providing advice and information to residents and visitors alike
3. **Town Improvements** – to include:
 - Completion of the renovation and painting of the street furniture with possible engagement of volunteers linking into overarching desire to engage the community
 - Liaison with building owners to improve the aesthetic appeal of retail units with window displays and paint
 - Establishment of a Town Art Trail, starting with the replacement of the boards at Marshlands
4. **Virtual Town Hall** – in conjunction with Seaton Gateway, to establishment a Virtual Town Hall
5. **Marshlands** – to commission a feasibility study to look at options for the redevelopment of the Marshlands site as a space for hire, business units, the Council Offices and possibly a residential element
6. **Promotion of tourism** – to include attendance by representatives of the Town Council at the British Tourism & Travel Show at Birmingham NEC in October 2020 and the funding of a stand
Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to support attending the British Tourism & Travel Show in October
(moved Cllr Rowland; seconded Cllr Amrik)
7. **Asset Transfers** - work with EDDC to examine feasibility of asset transfers on a comprehensive basis
8. **Budgetary Review** – to review the Council's budgets for 2020/21 to assess risk areas and also where monies may be reallocated from projects/budget codes that, in light of the pandemic, will no longer be used as originally intended

In the course of the discussions it was further agreed that:

- Cllrs Hartnell and Bowman would join the **Marshlands Working Group**
- **Laptop Scheme** – to seek donations of unwanted laptops and tablets to be refurbished by Cllr. Singh and redistributed by the Council within the community, initially to care homes, to help provide access to the isolated and relieve loneliness.

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to support the **Laptop Scheme**
(moved Cllr Rowland; seconded Cllr Haggerty)



- Cllr Ledger, in conjunction with the Clerk and Cllr Hartnell, to go through the budget to see what the Council could afford to put towards a grant scheme for business owners to improve their shop fronts and bring a proposal back to the next Council meeting

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to support the **Council Priorities 2020/21** (moved Cllr Rowland; seconded Cllr Ledger)

8. Payments, receipts and unpaid invoices

Members noted the Council's financial position as at 30 April 2020 that the balance in the Treasurer's Account stood at £397,997.78 and Petty Cash at £152.70 and ratified the schedule of payments & receipts made as at 30 April 2020, which had already been approved in line with the delegation agreed by full Council on 20 March 2020.

9. DALC and SW Councils Memberships

Members considered the report prepared on the benefits, any overlapping benefits and gaps in services provided by the two organisations and in light of the fact that the Council had to be a member of DALC to access training for Councillors, but had not had cause to seek advice from SW Councils since the interview process for the Clerk, Members **RESOLVED** to:

- Renew membership of DALC
- Not renew membership of SW Council

(proposed Cllr Beer; seconded Cllr Haggerty)

10. Update on Covid-19

Members had been updated to a great extent on the situation regarding Covid-19 in Seaton by Cllr Shaw, as part of his County Councillor Report. Additionally, Andrew Gwyn Davies had sent in figures of what the co-ordinators and volunteers had achieved during the pandemic. Cllr. Rowland thanked Andrew Gwyn Davies, Cllr Ledger and the Clerk for all the work they had done during the Covid-19 crisis along with all the co-ordinators and volunteers Cllr Rowland said the level of support across the town has been fantastic.

Finally, Cllr Beer thanked the Seaton Coronavirus Group and its many volunteers for all they were doing and had indeed been helped himself by two of them.

Members noted the update.

11. Any Other Business

Cllr Haggerty thanked Andrew Gwyn Davies and his team, including Cllr Bowman for all the work they had put into the VE Day celebrations. Even though



the celebrations had been postponed the town looked great with all the flags flying.

Meeting closed at 19.20pm

Signed K Beer

Dated 1/7/2020