



NOTICE

THIS WILL BE A REMOTE MEETING WHICH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND BY FOLLOWING THE LINK BELOW

To: All Members of Seaton Town Council

**Remote Meeting of Seaton Town Council
on Wednesday 5th August 2020 at 5.30pm**

30th July 2020

You are hereby summoned to attend the above meeting to be held on **Wednesday 5th August 2020 at 5.30pm**. In accordance with the provisions of *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020*, this meeting will be held remotely and Members of the Town Council and members of the public can access the meeting by taking the following steps:

Log on to: www.zoom.us

Click on: 'Join Meeting' and then enter:

- Meeting ID: 966 9468 1597
- Passcode: 810508

It is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered at the meeting and resolution or resolutions passed as the Council considers appropriate.

This meeting has been advertised as a public meeting and as such could be filmed or recorded by broadcasters, the media or members of the public. Please be aware that whilst every effort is taken to ensure that members of the public are not filmed, we cannot guarantee this, especially if you are speaking or taking an active role.

**Julia Mutlow
Town Clerk**

AGENDA

20/COU/01 Apologies for absence
To receive any apologies for absence

20/COU/02 Election of Vice Chairman/Deputy Mayor



20/COU/03 Declarations of interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda

20/COU/04 Minutes

To agree the minutes of the Council meeting held remotely on Wednesday 1st July 2020

20/COU/05 Public Question Time

To allow any questions or reports from members of the public

20/COU/06 Police Report

20/COU/07 County Councillor Report

20/COU/08 District Councillor Reports

20/COU/09 Approval of Council's Insurance Provider 2020/21

To ratify the Clerk's use of her delegated authority, in consultation with two councillors, to renew a one-year policy of insurance with Zurich Municipal to 21 April 2021 at a cost of £3,605.03 plus and additional premium of £302.44 to cover the Council's vehicle insurance for the same period.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Members note and ratify the Council's insurance provision for 2020-21 with Zurich Municipal.

20/COU/10 Town Clerk's report and update on 2020/21 priorities, including recommendations as to budgetary and other decisions as appropriate

To receive an update on the Council's work and priorities for the 2020/21 municipal year.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Members:

1. note the update on the Council's 2020/21 priorities
2. agree to the submission of a request to Devon County Council seeking their views on the overage provisions binding Marshlands
3. authorise the Clerk to engage a contractor within agreed budgets to repair the wall on roundabout, once quotations are received

20/COU/11 Terms of Reference – Finance & General Purposes Committee

To adopt the updated terms of reference for this Committee, as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 15 July 2020.



It is **RECOMMENDED** that Members adopt the updated terms of reference for the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

20/COU/12 Promoting Seaton & Town Guide 2021 – Cllr Haggerty

To consider proposals and agree actions for:

- the resumption of 'Promote Seaton' meetings
- whether the Council should produce a Town Guide or an alternative for 2021
- the implementation of a TIC & website business card
- sponsorship of flowerbeds in the town for 2021

20/COU/13 Community Consultation – Cllr Ledger

To consider whether a community consultation should be carried out to establish the priorities of the residents of Seaton and to delegate the preparation of such a consultation to the Clerk in consultation with Members via email.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

1. a community consultation should be instigated to understand the priorities of local residents
2. authorise the Clerk to prepare and arrange distribution of said consultation document, after liaison with Members

20/COU/14 Future events – Cllr Ledger & Cllr Beer

To consider the possibility of organising appropriately safe open-air events for the town generally and, in particular to thank volunteers for all they have done to support other residents during the Covid-19 pandemic and to set any such budget as the Council considers fit.

20/COU/15 Consideration of Grants Applications

To consider applications received for grants under the Community Grants and Shop Fronts Grants Schemes and approve or reject, as the Council considers appropriate

20/COU/16 Request from Seaton Jurassic

To consider a request from Seaton Jurassic seeking the Council's support for an impending planning application for a proposed extension to Seaton Jurassic and for financial support for the works

20/COU/17 Updates on Covid-19 in Seaton

To receive and note any verbal updates on the current situation

20/COU/18 Any other business

To consider any other business the Chairman considers urgent



Minutes of the Seaton Town Council Meeting on Wednesday 1 July 2020

Present:

Chair: Cllr K Beer

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

Officers: Town Clerk and Administrative & Community Events Officer

Public: 8 members of the public

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

12. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received

13. 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)

14. Minutes

All Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Council meeting held remotely on Wednesday 6th May 2020 (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

Those Members present of the Community & Open Spaces Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Community & Open Spaces Committee held on Monday 24th February 2020 and these were noted by all members of the Council (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

15. Public Question Time

A statement was made by a member of the public questioning how the Council could justify building new Council offices which, in her view, would not benefit the town at all. She went on to discuss the state of the lampposts, benches and planters and said that the town looked 'derelict and neglected'. Cllr Beer responded stating that the Council was taking a lot of time making the town look



better. Cllr Ledger added that the lampposts were one of the Council's priorities and that if the Marshlands scheme went ahead it would benefit the town by providing business units and a museum. The speaker responded that the lampposts had been talked about for two years. Cllr Beer explained that most of the lampposts do not belong to the Town Council. This was echoed by Cllr Rowland who added that work had started on the lampposts of West Walk, but this had been curtailed by the outbreak of Covid-19 and the lampposts on East Walk were owned by DCC and, if we were to carry out that work, DCC's agreement would be needed. Cllr Rowland reiterated that any redevelopment of Marshlands would benefit the town by relocation of the Museum and possibly help finance elements of the Seafront Enhancement Scheme. Cllr Hartnell went on to add that there were a lot of positive items on the agenda that would address the issues raised.

16. Report of Internal Auditor 2019/20

Members noted the report of the Internal Auditor and accompanying documents

17. Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020

Members **RESOLVED** to approve Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Singh)

18. Accounting Statements 2019/2020

Members **RESOLVED** to approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements (proposed Cllr. Russell; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

19. Town Clerk's report and update on 2020/21 priorities, including recommendations as to budgetary and other decisions as appropriate

The Town Clerk directed Members to her report and asked Members to note and resolve as per the recommendations. There was particular debate around recommendation 5 regarding the redevelopment of Marshlands. Cllr Hartnell questioned the detail of the overage clause that had been entered into as part of the purchase of Marshlands from DCC. His recollection was that any sale by the Council to a third party (ie if any redevelopment included residential units for the sale) may be affected by the overage provisions. Cllr Rowland did not believe this was an issue but it was agreed that the provisions would be checked prior to any work being done and the proposed recommendation would be amended to reflect this.

Members **RESOLVED** to:

1. approve the website and authorise the Clerk to arrange its launch as soon as practicable, including amending priority (2) to reflect this has been done (proposed Cllr. Beer; seconded Cllr. Singh)
2. note the town improvements already carried out (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Singh)
3. approve the first part of the Seaton Art Trail including:



- a. the allocation of a maximum of £1,200 for the replacement of the boards at Marshlands; and
- b. approval of the 6 complementary works by local artists (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Singh)
4. note the conclusions reached regarding the Virtual Town Hall Project and remove this as a priority for 2020/21 (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Singh)
5. subject to the outcome of a prior investigation into the overage provisions entered into between the Council and DCC on the purchase of Marshlands, to commission a feasibility report including the drafting of a tender process, to enable the Council to explore the possibility of redeveloping the Marshlands Centre by demolishing existing buildings and replacing them with purpose-built accommodation for Seaton Town Council and a museum, together with residential units on upper floors so that the overall development is in keeping with the surroundings and height of the Fosseyway Court redevelopment. The report should also include options for temporary accommodation for Seaton Town Council and the associated costs (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

20. Appointment to Committees

Members **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Hartnell and Bowman be appointed to the following Committees:

- o Cllr. Hartnell – Planning Committee and Finance & General Purposes Committee
- o Cllr Bowman - Finance & General Purposes Committee

(proposed Cllr. Russell; seconded Cllr. Singh)

21. Approval of Direct Debits 2020/21

Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the schedule of monthly direct debits payments for 2020/21, as already approved under the Council's Scheme of Delegations (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Singh)

22. Replacement of outdoor gym equipment using CIL

The Council received verbal reports on the possibility of the replacement of the town's outdoor gym equipment using available CIL monies. Cllr Rowland confirmed he had been in discussion with officers at EDDC who would seek quotations on the Town Council's behalf as they had specialist experience in this regard. EDDC had also agreed in principle to enter into an agreement to maintain any equipment purchased. Cllr Hartnell, said he completely echoed what Cllr Rowland had said and local residents were quite rightly upset that the equipment had been removed and ward members were frustrated that it had been removed without then being given notice, as they had not had the



opportunity to assess the condition to see if it could be kept going longer. Whilst Cllr supported the use of CIL monies in principle, he questioned whether all CIL funds held should be utilised towards replacement equipment and added that he felt that a consultation with residents should be carried out. Furthermore, the type of equipment needed should be considered. Cllr Bowman asked who determined what type of equipment would be installed – like for like or different and stated that he felt further discussion with residents was needed? Cllr Rowland stated that the original equipment had been funded by s106 monies and public consultation had been carried out at that stage. Cllr Beer commented that we had no idea of the costs at the moment. Cllr Haggerty added his support in principle and said clearly any equipment would have to be such that it did not require supervision so he would have thought like for like would be appropriate. Cllr Hartnell re-entered the discussion and proposed that agreement on the replacement of equipment using CIL monies be given in principle, and quotations could then be obtained to see what could be afforded and at what costs and perhaps a decision could be made to replace the more popular equipment. Cllr Shaw proposed that once costings were available, the amount of CIL funds to be allocated could be decided.

Members **RESOLVED**, in principle, that CIL funding should be used to provide replacement outdoor gym equipment at Seafeld Gardens and EDDC should be asked to proceed with obtaining costings for the replacement of individual pieces of equipment. Once available a decision would be made as to the equipment to be purchased and level of CIL funds to be allocated and any purchase would be subject to East Devon District Council entering into an agreement to carry out all necessary checks and maintenance of the equipment, in line with the manufacturer's requirements for the duration of its lifetime (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)

23. **Review of Council's Grants Scheme**

Members considered the updated Community Grants Scheme and application form and associated Business/Shop Front Grants Scheme to businesses to assist in the general improvement of the town. Cllr Hartnell summarised the proposed Business/Shop Front Scheme which he had drafted by taking the best elements of similar schemes adopted by other town and parish councils that had worked well. He emphasised that this would help businesses already struggling as they come out of lock down and would tie in with the Council's priority of tidying up the town. He proposed a further provision should be added to the scheme precluding serving councillors from applying. Cllrs Hartnell and Haggerty declared an interest as business owners. Cllr Beer asked how it might be promulgated and it was noted that this could be done via social media, the new website and also via a comprehensive database of businesses that was being compiled.



Cllr Ledger thanked Cllr Hartnell for the work he had done on this policy.

Members **RESOLVED** to:

1. approve the updated Community Grants Scheme and application form; (proposed Cllr. Rowland; seconded Cllr. Haggerty);
2. approve, in principle, the Business/Shop Front Grants Scheme and application form including an additional provision that serving Councillors may not benefit from the scheme, subject to such amendments as are necessary to ensure compliance with the Council's powers under s137 or otherwise.
(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Singh)

Cllr Rowland proposed a suspension of Standing Orders to enable a change in the order of business and to bring forward item 20/COU/15. This was agreed unanimously.

24. Request from the Gateway Theatre

Members considered a request from the Gateway Theatre for financial assistance in light of the Covid-19 crisis and received a verbal update from Elga Mackie of The Gateway Theatre Company. The venue is currently closed due to the Covid-19 crisis and is likely to remain so until early next year. The Gateway had submitted a formal request for assistance to the Council could give the Gateway. Cllr Rowland said that, whilst no promises could be made there was a discretionary grants system, funded by central government, and awarded by EDDC which would be worth the Gateway looking into. Whilst it could not make grants for loss of income, it could consider the fixed costs of running a building. Members agreed that this item should be referred to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) and that, in the meantime, Cllr Hartnell and Cllr Rowland would meet with Trustees of the Gateway to gain information on their position and report back to F&GPC .

25. Seafront Enhancement Project

Members received the Clerk's report on the Seafront Enhancement Scheme, outlining the work that had been done and the issues that had arisen in respect of the implementation of planning permission 17/0369/FUL prior to its expiry in August 2020. Cllr Haggerty spoke first and stated that, in his view, there was a lack of information about the project and he would like to see it delayed until a new planning permission were granted and all the finance in place.

Cllr Shaw countered that the project had been thoroughly and carefully developed over a long period of time, including three public consultations He



added that the seafront was the town's key asset, albeit not currently looking at its best and it should go ahead with a new application being made on the same terms as the existing permission.

Cllr Rowland added that, in order to apply for grant funding, planning permission would need to be in place. Furthermore that recent progress had been made on the redevelopment of the Moridunum and Fosseway Court and, if that came to fruition, then the seafront project was a key component thereof.

The Clerk reiterated the issues set out in her report to Council and confirmed the current position regarding the recent announcement on a possible change in the law to extend the implementation period for the current permission but said at this stage this had not been confirmed.

Cllr Hartnell stated that he was disappointed that decisions had been taken regarding the project which could potentially have led to the project being implemented unlawfully, and was concerned that neither the current Town Clerk, nor her predecessor had been included in the Seafront Enhancement Working Group meetings. He added that if the project was to proceed then the tender process had to be carried out correctly and the submission of a new application would allow time for that to be done. Cllr Hartnell therefore probed that a new application be submitted, mirroring the existing, with the associated costs to be taken from the existing budget for the project. The budget could then be topped up in the next financial year. He also stated that the Clerk should attend and minute future working group meetings and that a project manager would need to be appointed.

Cllr Russell expressed the view that whatever funding was required to complete the project should be available before it started.

Cllr Ledger questioned whether the funding from Devon County Council that had been made available had to be spent within a certain time period. Cllr Shaw responded that he was unsure on this point but would check the position. The Clerk stated that her understanding was, from communications received from DCC's legal team, was that at least some of the monies had to be utilised by 31 December 2020.

Members acknowledged that the existing planning permission cannot be implemented lawfully or in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and Public Contract Rules prior to its current expiry date and **RESOLVED** to:

1. submit a new application to EDDC, mirroring the existing scheme and that the Town Clerk should attend any meeting the working group to take minutes
2. approve that the costs associated with that application should be met from the 2020-21 budget for the Seafront Enhancement Project



(moved Cllr Hartnell; seconded Cllr Rowland)

26. Budgetary Review and Adjustments 2020/21

In light of the underspend of existing budgets, identified as part of the budgetary review by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, Members **RESOLVED** to reallocate the funds as follows:

1. an additional £10,000 should be added to the existing grants budget bringing the available amount to £18,000; this would be the combined sum available to the Community Grants Scheme and the newly adopted Shop Front/Business Grants Scheme; (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)
2. the remaining £7,500 should be placed in a Covid-19 contingency budget; (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)

There was further discussion regarding Cllr Rowland's proposal regarding the reallocation of monies set aside for a Streetscene operative towards the further cleaning costs arising from Covid-19 to enable a further public toilet to be opened in the town. Discussion centred around whether the reopening of facilities at Marsh Road or Thury Harcourt would better serve the town. On balance, it was decided that Thury Harcourt would be the more appropriate option. Members therefore **RESOLVED** to:

3. reallocate the sum of £7,500, included in the current budget as a contribution towards the Streetscene service for an all year round barrow service, as a contribution to be paid to East Devon District towards the additional cleaning costs of opening the public toilets at Thury Harcourt. (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Shaw)

27. Allotments

Members considered the report on allotments including the results of the recent inspections, current financial position, review of risk, update of Non-Statutory Rules and the proposed dissolution of the Allotments Committee. Cllr Hartnell raised a question in relation to the risk assessment regarding the safety of ponds. The Clerk noted this and agreed that this would be considered and added to the risk assessment. Members **RESOLVED** to:

1. approve the updated Non-Statutory Allotment Rules including the provision on one plot per household (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Ledger)
2. note the 2020/21 Risk Assessment (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Ledger)



3. dissolve the existing Allotments Committee (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger)
4. agree that the fees for 2020/21 should not be increased (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

28. Christmas Lights 2020

Members received the report on the Council's Christmas lights event and

RESOLVED to:

1. approve the date of the 'Christmas Lights Switch On' as Saturday 28 November 2020
2. enter into a three-year contract with Supplier 1 for the provision of Christmas Lights
3. authorise officers to work with other stakeholders in the town to take forward the organisation of the Christmas Lights event, along the lines of the itinerary at appendix 3, making adjustments as necessary to ensure compliance with any rules and guidance that prevail at the time (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Beer)

29. Walking & Cycling Interventions for Town & Parish Councils

Members noted the 'Reallocation of Road Space for Active Travel Framework and Guidance' produced by Devon County Council and summary by Cllr Shaw

30. Update on Covid-19

Members noted the ongoing work in Seaton being done by the volunteer group and commended their efforts

31. Any Other Business

Discussions were had around:

- **Use of Marshlands** – a request had been received from Ben Tucker regarding the use of Marshlands kitchens free of charge by Seaton's newly established CIC Re:store for storage of food and, going forward, to produce meals. This had been established with a view to harnessing and continuing the committed voluntary response by the community to the Covid-19 pandemic and enabling food that was donated by Tesco to be used without going to waste. This effort was unanimously supported by Members as extremely beneficial to the community at large and something they wanted to support, subject to ensuring that Marshlands could be accessed out of hours without compromising security. Cllr Singh said he was happy to assist on occasions to enable members of the group to access the building.
- **Play Parks** – the Clerk outlined the recently issued guidance regarding the re-opening of play parks and confirmed that she had carried out a risk assessment and it was clear that – in light of the nature of the play equipment, location of the parks and level of staff available - the only realistic precaution that could be



taken would be additional signage which would fall short of the recommendations in the guidance. She confirmed that she had discussed the matter with Dave Cooke at EDDC earlier that day who advised that a paper was going to Cabinet at EDDC regarding the opening of the skate parks in the first instance. EDDC had indicated that if the skate park was re-opened, but a decision was made not to open play park at The Underfleet, then he would arrange for barriers to separate off the play park. On balance, at the current time, Members agreed that the play parks should remain closed, pending further guidance.

Meeting closed at 20.44pm

Signed _____

Dated _____

County Councillor's Report, August 2020

Stop Line Way and Cycle routes at the County's AGM

County officers are continuing to work on the purchase of the land for the missing section of the Stop Line Way in Seaton Wetlands and I am in touch with them regularly about this. Funds for the purchase are in this year's budget and for the work in next year's.

As I have reported before, I am disappointed that the County is unable to press ahead with the remainder of the Stop Line Way in the Axe Valley, so as to link Seaton and Axminster. In this light it was interesting that a similar issue was under the spotlight at the County's delayed AGM, held by Zoom on 23 July. My Green colleague, Cllr Jacqi Hodgson, had proposed a cycle route between Totnes and Littlehempston so as to enable a through route from Totnes to Newton Abbot. The Cabinet proposed a negative amendment, and a protracted debate ensued in which local Lib Dem and Green members attempted to move the proposal forward. I supported them and was able to mention our own issues. Although, with a large Conservative majority in the Council, the Cabinet view prevailed, cycle routes are becoming a major issue at County.

Locality Budget

Most of my 2020-21 Locality Budget is still available for local community groups and parish/town councils to apply for. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/democracy/councillors-nav/locality-budgets/>

Traffic Group meeting

The first online meeting of the group was held on 6 July and it seemed helpful to participants that Steve Kelly was able to check issues instantly on his computer. The next meeting will be on Zoom on 7 September and I will send out invitations nearer the time.

Black Lives Matter

My Independent colleague Claire Wright, responding to 6th-formers at the King's School, has proposed a motion welcoming the protests which took place in several places in Devon around 'Black Lives Matter' and suggesting ways in which the Council could help address these. I have seconded her proposal, which will be debated in September.

Axe Valley Reminiscence Project

I attended a Zoom meeting on 20 July about this proposed new spin-off from the innovative 'Living Memories' project run by Brian Norris of Colyton (living-memories.net). This has potential for linking up individuals and groups in the area as well as combating isolation.

Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee

I have been re-appointed to this committee for 2020-21.

Community Hospitals

I am supporting a Colyford resident has launched a petition on the Government website to reopen community hospital beds: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/319223>

EDDC Councillor report for Seaton Town Council meeting on 5 August 2020

Report produced by Jack Rowland on 31 July 2020

Current financial situation of EDDC

The Covid-19 crisis is having a severe effect on the finances of EDDC, not just in the current financial year, but also for the medium term financial plan. Income is down as until recently due to the total lockdown situation the income from car park revenue had been decimated whilst costs have remained the same as Central Government would not allow Council staff to be furloughed apart from the few staff that are directly paid from income earned e.g. at the Thelma Hulbert gallery in Honiton. In other areas costs are increasing e.g. the requirement to clean the open public toilets much more frequently (pre-Covid-19 this was once per day, now it is 4 times per day for toilets that are open from 8am to 8pm during the summer months). Central Government has provided £1.5m towards the shortfall for this year, but that still leaves a £2.8m gap.

Central Government have recently announced another round of support for Councils and the EDDC share is £196K. The announcement outlines an income guarantee scheme where 75% of lost income apart from the first 5% of losses would be reimbursed. As at the date of this report EDDC are waiting for the precise details of this scheme to assess the impact on the £2,8m gap.

Since being appointed as the Finance portfolio holder I have been having a number of meetings with the Finance Strategic Lead Officer, to discuss how the budget for 2020/21 will be balanced as a legal requirement and making provision for the projected shortfall for the medium term financial plan. The bottom line is that either income has to be increased, costs reduced or a combination of both whilst still making provision for future years as, even before Covid-19 made an impact, a shortfall was still being forecast. As soon as I can I will update Seaton Town Council on the decisions that have been made.

Discretionary Grant Scheme for businesses in East Devon

I am a member of the panel that considers the applications made from businesses under this scheme that is intended for businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sector where they have not received any previous grants from other Covid-19 related schemes due to the eligibility criteria. Even though this scheme is discretionary there are still a number of criteria that had to be met.

EDDC received a total of £2.410,500 to pay out and to date a total of £2.268,500 has been approved in 2 tranches for 229 businesses across the district. The balance of £142,000 has been retained to deal with any appeals that may arise next month as all the money has to be allocated by 28 August or returned to Central Government and we, as a panel, want to ensure that does not happen.

Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP)

On 23 July the Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Cllr Ledger, met to discuss the GESP proposals and the potential next step of public consultation. In a nutshell GESP involves the local authorities of Exeter, Mid Devon, Teignbridge and East Devon working together to prepare a new joint plan for the provision of new homes, jobs and infrastructure through to 2040 with an aim of being adopted by 2023.

Local councils will still have local plans, but GESP is intended to identify sites for 500+ homes and employment land of 5 hectares plus outside Exeter with an aim of doubling the size of the economy to £20billion and the number of jobs by 35000. The plan, as it stands, for East Devon shows the potential sites as being along the A30 corridor, the western end of the A3052 closest to Exeter and between Exmouth and Exeter.

After a 4 hour meeting the vote of the Strategic Planning Committee was to make a recommendation to EDDC Full Council on 20 August to withdraw from GESP and develop a new Local Plan for East Devon whilst still working in collaboration with the other local authorities as legally required to do.

Issues that directly affect Seaton

Public toilets

At the moment only the public toilets on West Walk are open although the summer opening times have been extended from 8am to 8pm, 7 days per week,

The decision to extend the closing time to 8pm was made at a Cabinet meeting on 18 June when a decision was made to re-open 4 additional toilets in addition to the 10 already open. This means that of the 27 toilet sites across East Devon, 14 are now open. I appreciate that of the 3 in Seaton, only the West Walk toilets are open at the moment albeit for an extended time to 8pm.

Following the proposal that I put forward to Seaton Town Council on 1 July for STC to use £7500 to supplement extra staff for EDDC Streetscene barrow and toilet cleaning I have been working with EDDC staff to ensure an extra person is recruited to enable the toilet block at Thury Harcourt to be opened.

The additional cost for EDDC to have 14 toilets open from 8am to 8pm in the summer with the 4 times per day cleaning regime is £77k for the remainder of this financial year plus the original envisaged saving of £62k (total £139k). To put this into context the additional cost to re-open all 27 sites from 8am to 8pm with 4 cleans per day would total £213k for the remainder of the year. Bearing in mind the current overall financial situation I hope readers appreciate the difficulties faced in trying to strike the right balance and this subject will be revisited as soon as the details of the income guarantee scheme from Central Government are received that I mentioned earlier.

Outdoor gym – Seafeld Gardens

Following the approval of my proposal at the last STC meeting I am following up with the relevant EDDC officer to obtain quotes for replacement equipment

Car park fees

EDDC car park fees have not increased for 10 years, but in view of the financial pressure on the medium term financial plan the work that started under the previous administration needs to begin again to review this subject and make recommendations that would potentially be adopted for the next financial year 2021/22.

In view of the current pressures faced by town centre retailers, even before the Covid-19 crisis, I feel the Town Council needs to carry out a survey to gain the opinions on car park charges in the future and the method of paying e.g. cashless and in the light of the financial challenges faced by EDDC.

Seaton Heights

I have been in regular correspondence with the relevant EDDC Officer over the past year as I've been concerned at the lack of promised action by the site owner to improve security and to demolish the derelict and dangerous buildings. I involved the Fire Service to carry out an assessment of the site as well to add weight to my argument as the site is liable to either deliberate arson or a fire starting by mistake or stupidity.

My last email was to request that a Section 215 notice be issued to enforce action, but I've been assured that a new management team is in place for the owning company and that a new investor is also pushing for action to be taken.

I will continue to monitor the situation for what is a prime redevelopment site at the entrance to Seaton and could be a major factor in the regeneration of the town to attract more investment and act as boost to the tourist industry especially if UK residents are looking to spend future holiday time in this country.

Seaton Quay development (old Racal site)

I managed to make contact with the planning agent to ask what is happening with this site that has been subject to approved planning approvals and revisions over a number of years.

The latest news is that it appears that another revision is due to be submitted soon.

Jack Rowland

EDDC Councillor – Seaton Ward

Portfolio Holder - Finance

JRowland@eastdevon.gov.uk

20 COU 10 Town Clerk's report and update on 2020/21 priorities, including recommendations, as appropriate

INTRODUCTION

For Members' ease of reference, key areas of work have been summarised in list form below. Where appropriate, items will be dealt with in more detail under separate agenda reports.

Since the last meeting, and despite the restrictions and challenges faced as a result of Covid-19, the Clerk is pleased to report that much has been achieved and the Council continues to enjoy much greater positive engagement with the community of late, both via meetings and the Council's social media channels. This accords with the Council's decision to actively engage with individual volunteers and key stakeholder organisations within the town, whilst working towards its priorities for 2020/21.

Sadly, since the last Council meeting, Cllrs Rowland and Shaw have taken the decision to resign from the Town Council due to their extensive workloads with the District and County Councils, respectively. The Mayor has written to both on behalf of the Council expressing thanks for all that both have done for the town during their tenure on the Town Council and the casual vacancies that have arisen have been notified to EDDC and posted on the Council's website.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

For the purposes of this report, work carried out since the last meeting has been divided into two sections – general matters and updates on the Council's 2020/21.

GENERAL MATTERS

Finance – the annual return and accounting statements for 2019/20 have been submitted to the external auditor and the accounts are currently subject public consultation.

Covid-19 Town Safety – The Council's officers are working with EDDC officers to implement the necessary signage. In light of the responses received from Members relating to potential road closures to enable wider walk ways in places, we have advised EDDC that these will not be sought as the general consensus was that the limited benefit thereof would seem to outweigh disruption caused to residents and business owners.

Elections & Co-options – the Council currently has 5 vacancies. Co-option applications are being actively sought in respect of three of those vacancies via the Council's website and social media. In respect of the two most recent casual vacancies, these are currently subject to the requisite legal notice to the electorate of Seaton that an election may be sought if a request is received from ten electors by 13 August. Should such a request be received, then an election will be held but, due to the Covid-19 regulations, such an election will not take place before 6 May 2021. However, should no such request be received by the date stated then co-options may also take place in respect of these two vacancies.

Re:store & Save Food Hub– as mentioned and agreed by Members at the last Council meeting, the Council's kitchens/refrigeration facilities are now being used by Re:store - which is a community interest company that has arisen from the work done originally by the Seaton Coronavirus Community Group – and partners to ensure there is a little food waste as possible in Seaton. A worthwhile initiative that already appears to be working well.

Recruitment – the recruitment process for a Deputy Clerk and an Administration & Community Events Officer is ongoing.

Outdoor Gym Equipment – the Clerk has followed up with officers at EDDC regarding the quotations for new equipment and confirmation that EDDC would be prepared to enter a service level agreement to maintain any equipment purchased for its lifetime. A design/procurement exercise is being carried out and the Clerk will report back to Council for consideration, once options/costings are available.

2020/21 PRIORITIES

1. **Seafront Enhancement Project** – since the last meeting, the Clerk has been in liaison with Carl Northcott regarding the submission of an application to mirror the scheme permitted under the existing permission, which expires on 7 August. However, in the meantime the law has finally been amended. On 22 July, new legislation was given Royal Assent which means that the period for implementation of the existing planning permission has been extended until May 2021. As such, quotations are being sought by Carl Northcott from planning agents to deal with the discharge of the planning conditions, rather than submission of a new application. The Clerk is also trying to access the tender documentation so that the tender process for the initial works can be properly implemented. Members will be kept updated.
2. **Website & Social Media** – the website was launched on the 14 July and positive feedback has already been received by both the Council and the web designers. The Clerk and one of the Administrative Officers, along with Cllr Singh, attended training with Blaze Concepts on 23 July, which was extremely informative, and it will be a priority for staff to keep the website up-to-date.
3. **Town Improvements**
 - this priority is divided into three parts:
 - **Street furniture** - the town's maintenance team continues working extremely hard to maintain the town's street furniture and assets. In summary:
 - **Lampposts**
 - The Clerk has been in discussions with EDDC and has been advised that the repainting of lampposts delayed by Covid-19 are about to resume to EDDC owned lamp posts. Furthermore, she has made an approach to DCC to seek authority to repaint the DCC-owned lamp posts and a response is awaited.
 - **Benches**
 - repainting and repairing of benches is ongoing
 - **Planting and planters**
 - repainting of planters is ongoing

- brackets for some hanging baskets have been repaired to increase their life
 - **Marshlands**
 - the new railings on the Marshlands front wall have now been installed
 - **Play Parks**
 - both STC's play parks have now reopened with extensive signage in line with Government guidelines.
 - HAGS have repaired the damaged lily basket play equipment at The Underfleet. However, the maintenance team has raised questions about the likely longevity of the repair and this has been raised with HAGS by the Clerk

 - **General**
 - the longest footpath in the area running from Seaton Down Hill picnic area (Footpath 20) has been cleared and strimmed by the maintenance team
 - **Further works in progress include:**
 - quotations are awaited for the repair of the damaged brick wall opposite the Vault
 - the inspection of the recently acquired Seaton Hole telephone box, to establish what repairs and repainting might be required what works would be required to repurpose it with shelving or the like, is pending
 - water refill station – the donation from SW Water has now been received and quotations are being sought for the water refill station on the seafront and research being done as to installation and maintenance of the same.
 - **Liaison with building owners** – a comprehensive list of owners and occupiers of business premises in the town is almost complete and will be utilised as part of the liaison with owners to improve the aesthetic appeal of the town
 - **Seaton Art Trial (Marshlands boards)** – The scanning of the artwork is being finalised and then it will be passed to SW Signs to prepare the art boards. It is hoped that they will be ready to unveil in in the week commencing 17th August.
4. **Redevelopment of Marshlands** – further to the last meeting of the Council on 1 July, the Council's Asset Working Group met to discuss the Marshlands project. After receiving legal advice from the Clerk, on the overage provisions that bind any change of use of Marshlands, it was agreed that the Clerk should write to Devon County Council to seek their views generally on the relevant overage provisions and whether there was any scope for these to be waived or varied.
5. **Promotion of Tourism** – the Clerk has been liaising with Cllr Haggarty on this matter and Members should note that British Travel & Tourism Show at Birmingham NEC has been postponed until March 2021. The Town Guide for

2020 has been produced on a limited run of 5000 and this is currently be distributed both locally and regionally. Arrangements for future years will be considered at agenda item **20 COU 12**

6. **Asset Transfer from EDDC** – an approach has been made by the Clerk to officers at EDDC to establish the availability of a comprehensive list of assets within the town. She has been advised that this is not currently available but EDDC are looking into this. Further updates will be brought to Members when available.
7. **Budgetary Review (8)** – a meeting of the Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee met on 15 July 2020 and reviewed the 2020/21 budget generally along with any variances over 15%. The budget will remain under regular review as the pandemic proceeded

RECOMMENDATION

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Members:

1. note the update on the Council's 2020/21 priorities
2. agree to the submission of a request to Devon County Council seeking their views on the overage provisions binding Marshlands
3. authorise the Clerk to engage a contractor within agreed budgets to repair the wall on roundabout, once quotations are received

Finance & General Purposes Committee – Terms of Reference

Membership

Six members of the Council plus the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as ex-officio.

Membership of the Committee to be decided upon its creation and the membership of the Committee to be re-appointed at the Annual Council Meeting in May each year.

Delegated Powers

This Committee is authorised to:

1. receive and approve details of all payments authorised in the course of the business of the Town Council, including those purchased with the Council's debit card
2. monitor income and expenditure each month against the approved budgets for all committees
3. consider all matters delegated to it, in accordance with the Council's adopted Financial Regulations
4. consider any matter which does not fall within the remit of any other committee. Where there is a specific budget for such a matter, the Finance & General Purposes Committee shall have delegated power to authorise expenditure. Where there is no specific budget, the Committee shall make recommendations to Council
5. authorise the transfer of unspent and available amounts between budget headings or to an earmarked reserve, as they consider appropriate, during any financial year
6. monitor the Council's activity in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations
7. receive and consider each committee's proposals in respect of revenue and capital and sources of funding for the following financial year not later than the end of October each year
8. produce detailed estimates of all income and expenditure, including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for each financial year in the form of a budget and present it to Council at its December meeting for Council to enable it to approve budget and set precept for the next financial year
9. review cheque signatories annually at the first meeting of each new financial year

- 10.** review the Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, annually at the first meeting of each new financial year
- 11.** undertake periodic checks on petty cash expenditure and to approve petty cash expenditure at each meeting
- 12.** receive details of bank statements and confirm reconciliation at each meeting
- 13.** make such decisions as they consider necessary, including incurring expenditure within approved budgets, on all matters affecting any buildings and land owned by Seaton Town Council. Such decisions will include:
 - ensuring leases are in place and fit for purpose and that tenants comply with the terms and conditions of the lease
 - marketing available space for rent at the Marshlands Centre
 - ensuring buildings and land are maintained and fit for purpose for tenants, hirers, employees and all other users, including ensuring the appropriate risk assessments, health and safety checks, fire safety precautions, legionella checks and any other required inspections have been conducted
 - preparing of an annual budget plan to cover all maintenance and running costs for buildings and land and longer-term development/maintenance funds, as considered appropriate
- 14.** prepare recommendations for full Council for any critical expense required that is not within the approved budget for any given year
- 15.** invite specialist professional officers or advisors to attend meetings to provide guidance as to matters under discussion

Updated August 2020