



Seaton Town Council Constitution

Chapter 1 Introduction

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1. Introduction to the Constitution of Seaton Town Council

1.1. Seaton Town Council ('the Council') is responsible for several local services.

1.2. It must provide some of these services by law; others are discretionary.

1.3. The Council is a body created by government under an Act of Parliament.

1.4. The Constitution is the Council's internal rule book. It sets out how the Council will operate and how decisions are made. Some of the processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose.

1.5. The Constitution also contains procedural rules which apply to the conduct of meetings of the Council.

1.6. In order to ensure the sound management of the Council's financial affairs and good corporate governance, the Constitution includes financial regulations and rules that apply to all contracts for works and the supply of goods and services to the Council.

1.7. The Constitution is a living document and the different chapters of the Constitution are kept under continual review and is re-examined regularly by the Council.

1.8. The Constitution is split into several different chapters which form the Constitution for the Council:

Chapter	Content	Reviewed
1	Introduction to Constitution	
2	Standing Orders	February 2020
3	Financial Regulations	February 2020
4	Staff Handbook	March 2020
5	Members' Code of Conduct	May 2017
6	Complaints Policy	May 2017
7	Risk Management Strategy	May 2017
8	Risk Register	March 2020
9	Data Protection Policy	May 2018
10	Data Breach Policy	March 2020
11	Protocol on Member/Officer Relations	September 2017
12	Freedom of Information Policy	May 2017
13	Publication Scheme	May 2017
14	Health and Safety Policy	February 2019
15	Communications & Media Policy	May 2017

16	Grants Policy	July 2020
17	Allotments Non-Statutory Rules	July 2020
18	Shop Front/Business Grants Scheme	July 2020

2. Who pays?

2.1. Money for services comes from fees and charges, grants and council tax in the form of a precept.

2.2. The Council receives no income from business rates and its general expenditure is not subsidised through a government grant.

2.3. There are no central government controls or “cap” on the Council’s expenditure.

2.4. This makes the Council directly accountable to residents for the financial implication of its actions.

3. Who decides?

3.1. Every four years, voters in Seaton elect 12 Town Councillors.

3.2. They take all major decisions of the Council.

3.3. Decisions are always collective and voted on unless they have been delegated to the Town Clerk.

4. The Council’s job

4.1. The Council’s role is to deliver services to the people of Seaton in an open, transparent and cost-effective way, acting in the best interests of Seaton and its citizens.

4.2. This sometimes means that the 'greater good' is more important than individual or group’s interests, but this is what democratic local government is all about.

4.3. Taking those decisions, after listening to the community, is the job of Town Councillors acting collectively as Seaton Town Council.

5. How is the Council organised to carry out its job?

5.1. The Council makes all policy and other decisions within the powers given to a town council by law.

5.2. Committees can make decisions only on those issues the Council has delegated, otherwise a committee must make a recommendation to Council.

5.3. Sub-committees can make decisions only on those issues the committee has delegated, otherwise it must make a recommendation to the committee.

5.4. Panels and working groups can be appointed by Council and committees and can be made up of Councillors and/or staff and/or representatives of other organisations and/or individuals. They can make recommendations to the parent committees or Council, as appropriate, and cannot decide on matters.

5.5. Staff deliver the Council's services in line with policies or directions as determined by Councillors, collectively in Council, a committee or a sub-committee. They can advise Councillors on policy issues and statutory requirements the Council must meet. They also carry out the day to day operational management of the Council's services.

6. Further information

The Town Clerk can be contacted using the contact details on the cover page of this document.