

**Minutes of the Seaton Town Council ('the Council')
Meeting
on Monday, 4 July 2022**

Present:

Chair: Cllr Singh

Town

Councillors: K. Beer, E. Bowman, P. Burrows, D. Haggerty, M. Hartnell, D. Ledger, J. Russell, Cllr Steven & D. Wright

Officers: Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Facilities & Projects Officer

Public: East Devon District Councillor Rowland (EDDC)

42. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Macaskill and Wood.

43. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hartnell declared a personal interest as a Devon County and East Devon District Councillor and Cllr Ledger declared a personal interest as an East Devon District Councillor.

44. Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of a meeting of Seaton Town Council held on Tuesday 6 June 2022. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

45. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported the events he had attended during the preceding month which included being interviewed by Seaton Primary School for their newsletter, the Seaton Summer Celebration and the Mayor Making Ceremony in Chard. Members noted the Chairman's report.

46. Public Question Time

No statements were made, nor questions raised by members of the public.

47. County Councillor's Report

Members noted the County Councillor's verbal report in which he highlighted:

- in line with the rest of Devon, use of private vans to take waste to local recycling centres would be monitored and restricted to 12 visits a year. Free permits could be obtained online, and the intention of the monitoring was to curb deposits of trade waste without the appropriate permitted

- Cllr Hartnell had visited the hub from where the road networks were monitored and from where a piece of work was being done regarding the issuing of notices in respect of moving traffic offences. There was support for this, albeit it has yet to be finally decided by Cabinet
- Northleigh had been descoped from the Airband contract and the village was now considering working with Openreach as an alternative
- The Chief Executive Officer of Devon County Council (DCC) would be retiring in August and his replacement would be announced imminently
- Cllr Hartnell would be meeting with officers regarding Seaton Jurassic and also with Keir Duffin of DCC to establish what level of monies might be available DCC as part of the Devon Place Board work
- Levelling Up Fund – DCC had been approached for support for this bid and had agreed to support the Seaton element of the bid, as much of the work had already been carried out. Cllr Hartnell had expressed a view to EDDC Cabinet that perhaps a stand alone bid for Seaton should be submitted.
- Fore Street - plans to resurface the whole area from Manor Road were scheduled into the highways work programme for the next financial year. Cllr Hartnell added that there were many issues with rural roads which were very costly to repair and all of the competing requirements had to be factored into the maintenance schedules and budgets

48. District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Rowland introduced his written report and highlighted the fact that the Government had delayed the date for submission of levelling up bids. A meeting was arranged with the newly elected MP for Tiverton & Honiton to seek support for the Axe Valley bid. Cllr Ledger reported on the staff shortages facing EDDC, particularly in the safeguarding, homelessness and housing allocation teams. The shortages had been further impacted by over 50 officers testing positive for Covid-19. Cllr Ledger also reported on the meetings he had set up with sheltered housing and community centre providers across the district, and stated that more had to be done to protect the most vulnerable in the district.

49. Town Clerk's Report

Members noted the summary.

50. Committee meeting minutes

Members received and noted the minutes of the following committee meeting:

- Planning Committee – 6 & 20 June 2022
(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Bowman)

51. Update on Tourist Information Centre

Members noted the update and the significantly increased footfall since the move to the seafront.

52. Letter of Support - Axe Valley Levelling Up Fund Bid

Members ratified the Council's submission of a letter of support to East Devon District Council, in respect of the Axe Valley Levelling Up Fund Bid. (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

53. Art Trail

Members noted an update on the Art Trail and approaches that had been made to EDDC regarding the possibility of artwork on the Hideaway and considered whether the seafront wall of Marshlands should be used as a canvas. Members agreed that Marshlands could be used and this would be progressed by officers with the assistance of Andrew Gwyn Davies. (proposed Cllr. Bowman; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)

54. IRF Fund

Members received a brief update from Cllr Wright, as the Council's representative on the consortium, who advised that he and the Mayor would be attending a further meeting regarding this later in the month. Members noted the update.

Standing Orders were suspended to permit Cllr Rowland to speak on the IRF Fund. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

55. Play Park Inspections

Members noted the inspection reports on the Council's play parks. The issue of replacing the decayed wood on the benches at Elizabeth Road Play Park was raised. Members **RESOLVED** to authorize the Town Clerk to take such action as was necessary to arrange for these repairs. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Wright)

Confidential Items

The Chairman moved that in accordance with the Council's Standing Order 1(d) press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following items due to their commercially sensitive information.

56. Report on the Council's buildings

The Council considered a comprehensive report on the state of the Council's buildings. The report outlined:

- the substantive issues facing each building

- the progress made by officers in obtaining quotations for the various works and advice taken
- options for the possible development/better use of Marshlands
- a summary of existing relevant budgets and reserves and the decisions required in order to prioritise any works

Furthermore, the report included recommendations intended to ensure:

- the safety of users of the buildings
- accessibility for all
- the buildings could be utilised to provide maximum benefit to the town
- where appropriate, the buildings could be used generate income to offset precept rises

Members discussed various options and were particularly concerned to ensure funds were available to replace the heating system in the Town Hall which was close to beyond economic repair whilst, at the same time, securing improvements to Marshlands such as repairs to the roof and implementing disability access to enable use of the first floor.

Members **RESOLVED** to:

- approve, in principle, the proposal for the Council Chamber/function room to relocate to the seafront-side of Marshlands, subject to further information being available on the structural feasibility and costs of works
- Supplier 8 (roofer) be engaged to carry out the works at a cost of £3,500 with a contingency of £2,000 to cover unforeseen issues as the work progresses to be taken from EMR328 General Asset Maintenance
- Supplier 1 (as detailed in paragraph 4.3.2) be engaged to produce a structural engineer's report at a cost of £1,750 + VAT from budget 190/4502 (Marshlands Feasibility Study)
- Supplier 1 (as detailed Paragraph 4.3.3) be the preferred lifts supplier, due to their emphasis on DDA compliance and their extended aftercare and servicing provisions, and be engaged in due course, at a cost of £19,900 + VAT from EMR Asset Maintenance, once further costings have been considered by the Council for the wider works
- meeting of the Museum Working Group should be arranged with the curator of Seaton Museum and Chair of Axe Valley Heritage Association to:
 - establish the ownership of the collection
 - understand the arrangements in place for its accession

- to discuss how, if at all, the Council may be able to help
- transfer the £12,000 received from Jurassic Fibre from general reserves to the EMR Asset Maintenance and £5,000 underspend on the events budget (due to successful application to The National Lottery Communities Together Fund) to the Marshlands General Maintenance budget towards the Marshlands works

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)

As the possibility of enhancements to the seafront was being pursued by EDDC by way of an application to the Levelling Up Fund, Members decided that the monies held in that reserve could be best utilised at the current time to improve essential infrastructure at the Town Hall and therefore **RESOLVED** to:

- transfer £38,584 from EMR321 Seafront Enhancements to a new EMR help specifically towards the cost of replacing the heating in the Town Hall.

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)

Meeting closed at 7.08pm

Signed _____

Dated _____