

**Minutes of the Seaton Town Council ('the Council')  
Meeting  
on Monday, 6 March 2023**

**Present:**

**Chair:** Cllr Singh

**Town**

**Councillors:** K. Beer, P. Burrows, D. Haggerty, M. Hartnell, D. Ledger, J. Russell & C. Wood

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

**Public:** 66 members of the public were in attendance

**148. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. E. Bowman, M. Macaskill, M. Steven & D. Wright. East Devon District Councillor Rowland (EDDC) also requested that his apologies be noted.

**149. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Hartnell declared a personal interest as an East Devon District and Devon County Councillor (DCC) and Cllr Ledger declared a personal interest as an East Devon District Council (EDDC). Cllr Burrows declared a personal interest in 23/COU/06 as his grandson played for Seaton's junior football team.

**150. Minutes**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Seaton Town Council held on Monday, 6 February 2023, subject to an amendment to correct the Cllr. Hartnell's update on the Moridunum. (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**151. Chairman's Report**

Members noted the Chairman's Report.

**152. Public Question Time**

Nicole Stacey from Baker Estates Ltd spoke on agenda item 6, planning application 22/2781/MOUT and raised the following points:

- Sports pitch - there has been an identified need for additional sports pitches for many years as confirmed by East Devon, as well as Sport England's response to this application. Seaton Town Football Club has a problem accommodating the youth and ladies' teams, so this is an opportunity to help enhance and maintain their

facilities. The detailed design would be subject to a subsequent 'reserved matters' application. The master plan shows an indicative arrangement.

- Housing need and delivery - there are currently 297 households on the local housing register in need of an affordable home in Seaton. Market housing also caters for local housing needs. Baker Estates provided 25% affordable housing at our previous Rowan Drive and Barnards Hill developments and are providing a number of affordable homes elsewhere. 25% affordable homes (circa. 32 homes) will be delivered on the site, and be secured via a section 106 legal agreement.
- Flood Risk/ Drainage - the Environment Agency (EA) has currently issued a 'holding' objection to the application, on the basis they have asked for additional information to be provided. This type of response is common for any application and should not be regarded as an 'in principle' objection, which it is not. The EA have clarified in correspondence that have no strong objection to the proposal and their main point is that they are seeking a betterment if possible by way of changes to levels within the green corridors. Devon County Council (DCC), who have undertaken a study relating to flooding experienced in the town in October 2021 have confirmed that they do not have any in principle issues with the development of this site. There will be a betterment to the current drainage situation which is uncontrolled and unregulated.
- Accesses – two are proposed off Harepath Road and Colyford Road. These have been discussed with DCC (local highway authority) as part of the pre-application process. A detailed analysis has been submitted as part of the Transport Assessment. There is scope to agree additional traffic safety measures on Colyford Road, along with a potential crossing point.
- Ecology- extensive surveys have been completed for the site, which Natural England has confirmed are sufficient.
- Infrastructure Contributions towards local infrastructure will be made as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- Local Plan – EDDC has a requirement to maintain a 5-year supply of deliverable housing land and to have an up-to-date Local Plan. The land is a draft allocation in the emerging Local Plan

Ten members of the public spoke on agenda item 6, planning application 22/2781/MOUT and raised the following points:

- The land adjacent to Harepath Road is a huge wide bat corridor taking bats, some of which are rare, to their roosting and feeding grounds on Seaton Wetlands. The proposed street lighting and floodlights on the football pitch will have a negative impact on bats travelling from Beer Quarry Caves to Seaton Wetlands. The proposed site is an important area for bat conservation. There has been a decline in bat management nationwide but numbers are slowly increasing with careful management. A housing development in this location could seriously affect the local bats in their recovery.



- The infrastructure in the town could not support this development. The hospital is closed, doctor surgeries and the primary school are struggling and at capacity and there are no NHS dentist spaces.
- 130 homes on a greenfield site is against the Purple Plan strategy and the Local Plan strategy, the latter emphasizing the importance of the Wetlands to Seaton's tourism offer.
- The developer will be able to apply for any Section 106 agreement to be amended after development has commenced if affordable housing quota needs to be adjusted due to financial viability issues therefore is the destruction of this site worth the risk when there is no guarantee that affordable housing will be provided.
- What size and type of housing would be provided as affordable housing? Mortgaged homes are not the same as social housing, which is what is required in order to help young people in Seaton.
- The proposed site is quality agricultural land and is surrounded by Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) on three sides. Once this land has been developed it is gone forever. Without the fields Seaton Road/Colyford Road will flood.
- The proposed site is an important part of the Green Wedge and is the only piece of land which stops Colyford becoming part of Seaton. There are brownfield sites which have not been developed yet and these should be built on first before destroying green fields. There is no proof that the number of houses proposed are needed.
- The last three applications for this site were refused planning permission by East Devon District Council and an appeal lodged in 2013 was dismissed by the Planning Inspector.
- The proposed development is not in accordance with the Development Plan for East Devon and is also not within the built-up area boundary (BUAB) of Seaton as defined in the current Local Plan.
- Seaton has fulfilled its housing requirements.
- The site is prone to flooding and this development will only exacerbate this.
- Why have Baker Estates not requested an environment impact assessment to assess contamination impact on the river and wildlife?
- Why have Baker Estates Ltd only applied for outline planning permission? No details have been given with the application as to the types of properties, size of properties etc. Only an indicative layout has been submitted.
- The developers plan to use Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) that depend on infiltration of surface water and existing watercourses to convey surface water away from the site. The application states that Stafford Brook and a drainage ditch to the south of the site will be used for this purpose. Who are going to be responsible for the maintenance of the SUDS and the communal areas in the development and what redress will the occupants of properties in Primrose Way, Buttercup Close, Celandine Close and others downstream have, if SUDS and the associated watercourses fail?



- Seaton Town Council has an Environment Policy which states that the Council will support the protection and enhancement of green spaces so please could the Council adhere to its policy.
- The proposed football pitch will require levelling which can only be completed using CIL funds generated from the development. These funds would need to be allocated to improving infrastructure.
- Seaton Town Football Club currently runs four teams on the main pitch, fourteen at the primary school and one team on the Elizabeth Road pitch. Next year they are hoping to have an Under 16's side. A new pitch would improve the Club's ability to deliver football facilities for the town and without an additional pitch the youth teams were in jeopardy.

**153. Motion by Cllr Hartnell, seconded by Cllr Burrows**

**'Seaton Town Council reconsider application 22/2781/MOUT Baker Estates Ltd Land Adjacent to Harepath Road, Seaton EX12 2WH at the meeting of Council on 6th March. This will allow for more time to consider the response from the Environment Agency along with details from Devon County Highways and any other public responses.'**

In light of the recent comments of the Environment Agency and the fact that, as at the date of the meeting, there was no view received from Highways, Members **RESOLVED** to oppose the outline application and requested that a full application be submitted by the applicant addressing all pertinent matters.

(proposed Cllr. Burrows; seconded Cllr. Haggerty) Cllrs Ledger & Hartnell abstained from voting.

**154. County Councillor's Report**

Members noted the county councillor's report and Cllr Hartnell provided an update on the following additional matters:

- Sutton Barton (Honiton) Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) - will be undergoing significant maintenance works from 12/03/2023 until 27/03/2023 (inclusive).
  - During the works, the site will be closed to the public on 12/03/2023 to 27/03/2023 (inclusive). Due to the scale of the works it would not be safe/practical to open to the public during that period. The site will re-open to the public on Tuesday 28th March 2023.
  - The works are being undertaken outside of the busy summer period to try and minimise disruption to the public as much as possible. The alternative HWRC facilities at Sidmouth, Exmouth and Exeter will remain open as usual.
- Bus changes - from Sunday 2nd April local bus operator Stagecoach South West will be introducing a number of timetable changes across their network, Key changes are:



- Changes are focussed on improving the punctuality of buses across the region.
- New X30 bus route for Seaton
- Buses on popular route 57, connecting Exeter to Exmouth will increase from every 30 minutes to every 15 minutes.
- Exeter route 4A will feature now stops at the Future Skills Centre and hotel.

### 155. District Councillors' Reports

Members noted the written report by Cllr Rowland. Verbal updates were provided by Cllrs Ledger & Hartnell highlighting:

- Feedback on the 'Levelling Up' bid had been received from central Government by EDDC and Cllr Ledger would circulate once he had received confirmation that he was permitted to make the information public.
- ZED Pods had been selected by EDDC as the preferred supplier of modular homes for social housing in East Devon. EDDC had submitted an application for the siting of such a home in the car park at Blackdown House and all town and parish councillors would be invited to visit the site and view the structure. It was anticipated that the first site to be developed would be a 50-unit scheme in Honiton.

Cllr Burrows raised the issue of residents who were having difficulties in downsizing from larger homes to smaller one-bedroom properties. Cllr Ledger asked that he be sent details of anyone with such difficulties, and he would try and assist.

Cllr Hartnell noted that Cllr Rowland had indicated that he did not intend to stand for re-election to EDDC and asked that thanks be recorded to Cllr Rowland for his full and helpful reports during his tenure as a district councillor.

Cllr Beer asked for an update on Seaton Jurassic and it was confirmed that negotiations were ongoing with Seaton Tramway.

### 156. Town Clerk's Report

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and, in particular, noted Devon Carers' involvement with the warm hub and their request that the Council consider becoming a supporter of Carer Friendly Devon. Members **RESOLVED** to sign up to support this initiative. (proposed Cllr. Wood; seconded Cllr. Singh)

### 157. Committee meeting minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the following committee meetings:

- Planning Committee – 14 February 2023
- Finance & General Purposes Committee – 6 February 2023

(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Singh)

**158. Update on Tourist Information Centre**

Members noted the update.

**159. Insurance renewal for 2023-24**

Members noted the revised premium of £4,438.27 for the Council's insurance cover for 2023/24 (as part of a 3-year agreement) and **RESOLVED** to:

- delegate authority to the Town Clerk to renew the motor insurance cover for 2023/24 with the provider that represents best value.

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Singh)

**160. Direct debits & regular payments 2023-24**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of direct debits and regular payments 2023-24

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggarty)

**161. Request to install plaque in Cliff Field Gardens**

Members considered the request from Seaton Summer School to install a plaque in Cliff Field Gardens to celebrate 40 years of friendship and **RESOLVED** to allow a plaque to be installed. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Beer)

**162. Update report on events for 2023**

Members considered the progress of the Seaton Summer Celebration, Coronation, Children & Young Person's Festival and Outdoor Cinema and **RESOLVED** to:

- note the updated report
- delegate authority to the Town Clerk to take such action as she considers necessary to secure wildflower seeds as a memento for children resident in Seaton to commemorate the King's Coronation subject to the final cost not exceeding £1600.
- approve a community grant of £550 to the Gateway Theatre Company for the delivery of two screenings over the weekend of the Coronation and delegate to the Town Clerk the authority to approve any further Coronation grant applications received (up to £250 per application), subject to any application fulfilling the grant criteria and budget being available



- resolve that it is not best use of public funds to offer a shuttlebus service for the Seaton Summer Celebration event.
- approve the use of Underfleet play park as the venue for the children's / young people's event
- approve the infrastructure and entertainment costs obtained for the children's / young people's event, as detailed in this report and delegate authority to the Town Clerk to take such action as necessary to secure the bookings from third party suppliers
- delegate authority to the Town Clerk to take such action as necessary to invite local businesses to provide sponsorship for the children's / young people's event

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

### **163. Schedule of meetings for municipal year 2023-24 & Annual Town Meeting 2023**

Members noted and **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of meeting dates for municipal year 2023-24 and approve the change of date for the annual town meeting to 27 March 2023. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

### **164. Approval of Asset Register**

Members reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the Council's asset register and disposals. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

### **165. Seaton Project Group**

Members noted the update on the work of Seaton Project Group

### **166. Play Park Inspections**

Members noted the inspection reports on the Council's play parks.

### **Confidential Items**

The Chairman moved, seconded by Cllr Beer 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 the inclusion of commercially sensitive information

### **167. Replacement of Marshlands Heating**

Members considered a report on the condition of the heating and quotations received to replace it and **RESOLVED** to:

- select Bramshaws to carry out the replacement of the Marshlands heating system at a cost of £13,421.09 + VAT

- a sum of £13,400 be transferred from general reserves to EMR328 General Asset Maintenance

(proposed Cllr. Beer; seconded Cllr. Burrows)

#### **168. Town Hall clock tower repairs**

Members consider a report on the works needed to repair and ensure the future safety of the clock tower at the Town Hall and **RESOLVED** to:

- approve the quotation from the Cumbria Clock Company of £1610 + VAT, to remove and replace the current dial fixings
- approve the quotation received from Clarke Brothers of £1645 + VAT to supply scaffolding and make good surrounding brickwork
- authorise the Town Clerk to instruct both suppliers to carry out the necessary remedial works

(proposed Cllr. Beer; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

#### **169. VAT Report**

Members considered a detailed report prepared by the Parkinson Partnership on the Council's position with regard to VAT recovery and **RESOLVED** to:

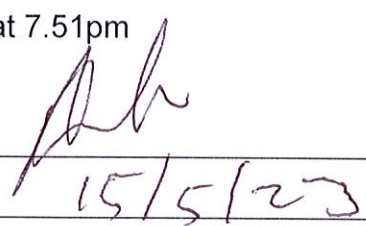
- ratify the expenditure of £700 on the initial report from the Parkinson Partnership, as authorized by two Members under the Council's Financial Regulations
- authorize additional expenditure of up to £2,000 to seek further advice regarding partial exemption calculations
- authorise the Town Clerk to take such action as is necessary to establish whether the 7-year rule applies and to report back to the Council with options, should it not.

(proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

Meeting closed at 7.51pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_



15/5/23

