

**Minutes of the Seaton Town Council ('the Council')
Meeting
on Monday, 3 July 2023**

Present:

Chair: Cllr. A. Singh

Town

Councillors: K. Beer, E. Bowman, K. Brooks P. Burrows, N. Dyke, D. Haggerty, D. Ledger, A. Mendham, J. Russell & C. Wood

Officers: Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk

Public: 2 members of the public were in attendance throughout the meeting and a third member of the public arrived during the meeting

44. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Hartnell.

45. Declarations of interest

Cllrs. Haggerty & Ledger declared a personal interest as an East Devon District Councillors (EDDC). Cllrs. Dyke, Singh & Wood declared personal interests as they volunteered at the Gateway Theatre Company. On the item relating to the Town Hall, Cllr. Ledger declared a personal interest as there was a possibility that Ledger Scaffolding (owned by his parents) may provide the scaffolding for the works.

46. Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Seaton Town Council held on Monday, 5 June 2023. A recorded vote was requested. Cllrs. Beer, Haggerty, Ledger, Mendham, Russell & Singh voted in favour of approving the minutes as drafted, Cllr. Brooks voted against and Cllrs Bowman, Burrows, Dyke & Wood abstained. (Approval of the minutes was proposed by Cllr. Ledger and seconded by Cllr. Beer).

47. Public Question Time

The following issues were raised by a member of the public: *Mr. Jack Rowland:*

- Seafont Enhancement Scheme – he stated that he had previously been involved, as both a Town Councillor and East Devon District Councillor, in trying to bring to fruition improvements to Seaton seafont including applying for the, now expired, planning application which was approved in 2017 and, as a District Councillor, he worked to ensure that a seafont improvement scheme was included in the Axe Valley Levelling Up bid in 2022, although the bid was unsuccessful. The bid included the Moridunum site which was now being marketed by EDDC as a 'standalone' sale. Therefore, depending on the

outcome of the marketing campaign, any future rounds of Levelling Up funding, in which a further Axe Valley bid was submitted, would not include the Moridunum site. In addition, as demolition of the Hook & Parrot site may now happen in early 2024, this still left the question of the remaining improvements to the seafront. He went onto to request that Seaton Town Council worked with the recently reformed Seaton Chamber to submit a new planning application that would largely mirror the expired application, but excluding the Moridunum site, as he understood that the Chamber were willing to undertake the work involved in the planning application process, but if the Town Council submitted the application then the application would attract a lower fee and, in his view, this would be a good use of some of the remaining funds in the earmarked reserve for seafront enhancement.

- Use of the word Chairman – the member of the public also asked whether the Council would consider adopting the word “Chair” in all documents and during meetings, in line with the practice adopted by some Councils, including EDDC.

Members noted the statements made.

48. Chairman’s Report

Members noted the report.

49. County Councillor’s Report

Members noted Cllr. Hartnell’s report and Cllr. Dyke highlighted the issue of increased parking on Harbour Road. This matter would be raised with Cllr Hartnell in due course by councillors.

50. District Councillors’ Reports

Cllrs. Haggerty & Ledger reported that they had been involved in more training since the last meeting. This had been helpful as many new councillors had been elected. Cllr Ledger added that there were likely to be many new policies coming through after the next meeting of Cabinet and the biggest upcoming project was the provision of social housing, so it may be that some funding would be available for delivery in Seaton. Members noted the reports.

51. Town Clerk’s Report

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report and **RESOLVED** to:

- note the report
- approve the initial priorities for Q.1, 2 & 3 of 2023-24, pending the outcome of the community consultation, as appended to these minutes

(proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Bowman)

52. Committee Minutes

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

- Planning Committee – 19 June 2023

(proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

53. Update on Tourist Information Centre

Members noted the number of visitors to the Tourist Information Centre and the progress made regarding weekend opening. Cllr Dyke asked whether a breakdown of visitor numbers at weekends could be provided in future reports. The Town Clerk agreed that this would be possible, as long as the weekend TIC volunteers completed the enquiry sheet that was kept on reception to note visitors. Members noted the update.

54. Tourist Information Centre - Motion by Cllr. Bowman

Cllr Bowman had presented a list of actions, behind a general motion, which he believed could improve the tourist experience for visitors to Seaton including leaving the front gate to the tourist information centre permanently open, relocating the deckchair, toy library and benches and installing a new noticeboard. Officers advised that some of the suggestions were already in hand, such as a replacement noticeboard and other raised various considerations such as building security, highways and landowner consents and minimising risk to the Council's assets. It was **RESOLVED** that officers would meet with Cllr Bowman and advise which could be taken forward under the Council's scheme of delegations and, if decisions were required by Council, as to any of the proposals, then a report could be brought to Members at a future meeting. (proposed Cllr. Bowman; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

55. Local Council Awards

Members reviewed the draft application for the Quality Standard Award and **RESOLVED** that all documentation and information was in place to enable the Council to apply for the Quality Standard under the Local Council Award Scheme and authorised the Town Clerk to finalise and submit said application. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

56. Outside Bodies

Cllr. Haggerty presented his report on the Coast meets Country Project. He felt that it was an exciting initiative to encourage visitors to the East Devon region, and added that, at a recent meeting of the stakeholders, various projects in Seaton, such as the beach access matting and Summer Celebration, had been positively commented on. Members noted the report.

57. Play Park Inspection Reports

Members noted the play park inspections. The Town Clerk reported that there had been a number of issues of minor vandalism at the play parks over recent months. A question was raised as to whether the Police still produced a monthly report on crime figures. The Town Clerk advised that no report was prepared but the figures could be accessed online. She added that the Council had today received notification that, due to a promotion, the PC Parfitt would be leaving the Seaton Neighbourhood Policing Team with immediate effect. The Council **RESOLVED** that a letter of thanks

should be sent to thank him for his work, whilst stationed in the town. (proposed Cllr. Burrows; seconded Cllr. Singh)

58. Review of the Members' Code of Conduct

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Members' Code of Conduct (July 2023). (proposed Cllr. Haggerty; seconded Cllr. Beer)

59. Community Grants Application

Members considered the application for a community grant from Seaton PTFA and **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £1,000. (proposed Cllr. Beer; seconded Cllr. Brooks)

60. Community Consultation 2023

Members considered the report regarding a community consultation in 2023 and **RESOLVED** to authorise the Town Clerk & officers to prepare a general community consultation, building on the 2021 consultation, and make the necessary arrangements to implement said consultation. The final version of the new consultation would be circulated to Members. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Beer)

61. Update on events 2023

An update was provided on events delivered in the first three months of the municipal year, including details of final costs and feedback. Furthermore, progress on upcoming events was reported. A member of the public asked to speak and Members therefore **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to allow this (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger). The individual stated that he was a member of the newly formed Seaton Chamber, which had now officially launched, and the Chamber hoped to work with the Council on initiatives in the town. The Town Clerk confirmed that officers had approached the Chamber with a view to setting up an initial meeting. Members **RESOLVED** to:

- note the net delivery costs and feedback received for:
 - Coronation Event/Activities
 - Seaton Summer Celebration
- delegate to the Town Clerk the authority to take such action and allocate such expenditure, within allocated budgets, as she considers necessary to deliver the following events, and to make such adjustments as might become necessary:
 - Seaton Children's Event
 - Seaton Outdoor Cinema

(proposed Cllr. Beer; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

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 discussion of the following items on the agenda as matters being discussed included commercially sensitive information, professional advice and personal data.

62. Update on works to Town Hall

Members considered the update on the works scheduled to the Town Hall clocktower and **RESOLVED** to approve the additional cost of works to the clock and clock tower of £690 + VAT, over and above the original quotation previously agreed by Council. The reason for the increase was that as a result of the site visit with the clock company and Clarke Brothers, it had become apparent that the clock would have to be removed, rather than works being carried out in situ. (proposed Cllr. Bowman; seconded Cllr. Wood)

63. Update on Marshlands

Members noted a comprehensive update report on the progress of works to Marshlands and discussions with potential tenants. Members asked whether the wall abutting Harbour Road could be repainted to improve its appearance. The Town Clerk advised that the wall had been repainted just over two years ago but deteriorated quickly due to the weather conditions. However, officers were aware of it and it would be repainted when the Toan Maintenance Officer's schedule permitted.

64. Annual tree inspections

Members considered the report and in light of the recent inspections that had been carried out by Advance Arboriculture and their existing familiarity with the Council's tree stock, **RESOLVED** to:

- commission annual inspections of the Council's trees
- commission the works, without first securing three quotations, for the reasons stated in the report
- approve Advanced Arboriculture as contractor to carry out an annual inspection of the Council's tree stock on all four of the Council's sites at a cost of £1,035 + VAT. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

65. Consideration of restrictions on Cliff Field Gardens

Members considered the report regarding the restrictive covenants pertaining to Cliff Field Gardens and the question of whether an indemnity policy should be obtained. Members **RESOLVED** to seek further advice from the Council's insurers and retained solicitors and a further report would be brought to Council in due course. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

66. Code of Conduct

The Town Clerk delivered a report on member conduct and reminded of their obligations under the Members' Code of Conduct. Members noted the statement.

Meeting closed at 7.32pm

Signed _____

Dated 4/9/2023

