

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

Present:

Chair: Cllr. A. Singh

Town

Councillors: E. Bowman, K. Brooks, P. Burrows, N. Dyke, M. Hartnell, D. Ledger, J. Russell & C. Wood

Officers: Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk

Public: 42 members of the public were in attendance for the item regarding Seaton Hospital. Thereafter, three members of the public remained whilst the applications for community grants were considered and one of those members of the public (Mr. Jack Rowland) was present for the rest of the public agenda items.

102. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. K. Beer and D. Haggerty and approved.

103. Declarations of interest

Cllrs. Hartnell & Ledger declared personal interests as an East Devon District Councillors (EDDC) and Cllr Hartnell declared a personal interest as a Devon County Councillor (DCC).

104. Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Seaton Town Council held on Monday, 2 October 2023. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Burrows).

105. Public Question Time

Three members of the public, including Mr. Jack Rowland and the Chief Executive of Seaton Hospital League of Friends, spoke in support of taking such action as might be necessary, including the possibility of making an application to declare the hospital an asset of community value, in order to retain Seaton Hospital for the benefit of the residents Seaton and the wider area.

Mr Rowland also asked that district & county councillors provided written reports in advance, were possible, so that questions could be asked by members of the public on matters arising during public question time, as this item was ordinarily listed on the agenda prior to the EDDC and DCC reports. As it was not always possible for

councillors to provide written reports in advance, the Town Clerk agreed that, on future agendas, public question time could be listed after the reports, to enable questions to be raised by members of the public that arose from verbal reports provided.

One member of the public spoke in support of the application for a community grant by Seaton & District Art Society.

106. Seaton Hospital

A motion by Cllr. Hartnell was brought to consider what action, if any, the Council might take to assist the local campaign to secure the future of the former wards at Seaton Hospital, including the possibility of registering the hospital as an asset of community value. This was discussed at length and the Council considered that the Seaton Hospital League of Friends would be the most appropriate body to make such an application, with the support of the Council. Members **RESOLVED** to support the proposition that Seaton Hospital be registered as an asset of community value and further agreed that the Council would support discussions with Seaton Hospital League of Friends to enable an application to be submitted. Should NHS Property Services seek to dispose of the hospital, a request would be made that the Council be fully consulted prior to any final decision being made. (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Ledger).

Members **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to bring forward the following item of business – consideration of community grants. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Hartnell).

107. Community grant applications

Members considered two applications for community grants and **RESOLVED** to award:

- Inspiring Connections - £900 (proposed Cllr. Wood; seconded Cllr. Ledger).
- Seaton & District Art Society - £500 (proposed Cllr. Wood; seconded Cllr. Hartnell).

108. Chairman's Report

Members noted the report.

109. County Councillor's Report

Members noted the written report.

110 District Councillors' Reports

Members noted the following updates from East Devon District Councillors:

- Cllr. John Heath:
 - advised that he had assisted a resident in a dispute over a council tax banding

- thanked Cllr Hartnell for facilitating the cutting of undergrowth on Beer Road
- had alerted Streetscene to the Chine being overgrown in places
- had written to Sarah Wollaston regarding Seaton Hospital and was part of the newly formed steering group. He stated that he would support and work with Seaton residents to retain Seaton Hospital for the benefit of Seaton and surrounding areas
- Cllr. Dan Ledger advised that:
 - EDDC's Chief Executive had retired
 - nature and rewilding were a significant issue across the district and a comprehensive strategy and policy was being developed which would assist in informing town and parish councils
 - it was hoped that the strategic plan would be going forward for adoption, albeit there had been slippage of about 18 months
 - the number of voids (empty properties) in the district had reduced

111. Town Clerk's Report

Members **RESOLVED** to:

- note the report
- approve the transfer of £9,651.79 from EMR327 (Town Hall Heating) to EMR 321 (Fisherman's Gap Improvements)
(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Wood)

112. Committee Minutes

Members noted the minutes of the following meeting:

- Planning Committee – 18 September 2023

113. Update on Tourist Information Centre

Members noted the update. Cllr. Bowman said he would like to organise a meeting of the volunteers, who had assisted in the summer months, and he and the other Volunteer Co-ordinators were encouraged to arrange this.

114. Playpark inspection reports

Members noted the play park inspections.

115. Report on civic regalia

Members considered the options regarding updating or replacement of the mayoral chain of office and the importance of maintaining the town's only piece of civic regalia. They considered that, if the option were taken to mount the existing chain of office in a case to preserve it and replace it at a total cost of £8,257.22, then this would provide best value as the chain would last for at least 48 more years at a cost of 5p per resident person per year. Members therefore **RESOLVED** to:

- approve the reasons for not obtaining alternative quotations
- commission a new mayoral chain of office to provide 48 years of engravable links and associated presentation case for existing chain of office at a cost of £8,257.22.

(proposed Cllr. Burrows; seconded Cllr. Russell)

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 item on the agenda as matters being discussed included commercially sensitive information.

116. Purchase of mobile scaffold tower

Members considered three quotations and **RESOLVED** to:

- approve the purchase of a Lewis 250 Industrial Scaffold Tower (8 Rung) at a cost of £1,168.03 + VAT
- approve the use of the tower, conditional on appropriate PASMA training being undertaken by users

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Hartnell)

117. Grounds maintenance & planting tender 2024-2027

Members considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- promulgate the tender via:
 - the government's national procurement website – Contract Finder
 - local advertising
- agree to alternative planting in the larger flower beds, if advised as viable by those tendering
- approve the draft advertisement and tender document, including such amendments as considered necessary by the Town Clerk to give effect to the Council's decision regarding alternative planting
- authorise the Town Clerk to take such action as was necessary to implement the tender process and report the outcome back to Council for a decision

(proposed Cllr. Wood; seconded Cllr. Dyke)

118. Seaton Beach School

Members considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- note the feedback regarding the Seaton Summer Beach School programme for 2023 as outlined in the above report
- approve the proposed format and estimated cost for the delivery of a beach school programme for 3 years from 2024/25



- approve the draft proposed tender document
- authorise the Town Clerk to take such action as she considers necessary to implement the tender process

(proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Wood)

Meeting closed at 7.58pm

Signed _____

Dated 11 December 2023

