

**Minutes of the Seaton Town Council ('the Council')  
Meeting  
on Monday, 15 May 2023**

**Present:**

**Chair:** Cllr. A. Singh

**Town**

**Councillors:** P. Burrows, N. Dyke, D. Haggerty, M. Hartnell, D. Ledger, A. Mendham,  
J. Russell & C. Wood

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

**Public:** One member of the public was in attendance

**1. Election of Mayor/Chairman for the municipal year 2023/2024**

Cllr. Singh was duly elected Mayor & Chairman of Seaton Town Council for the municipal year 2023/24. The Mayor/Chairman read out and signed the prescribed Declaration of Acceptance of Office (proposed Cllr. Russell; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**2. Election of Deputy Chairman/Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2023/2024**

Cllr. Haggerty was duly elected Deputy Mayor & Deputy Chairman of Seaton Town Council for the municipal year 2023/24. The Mayor/Chairman read out and signed the prescribed Declaration of Acceptance of Office (proposed Cllr. Burrows; seconded Cllr. Wood)

**3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Beer, Bowman & Brooks and accepted. Additionally, Members **RESOLVED** to permit Cllr. Bowman to sign his Declaration of Office after the meeting, as he had not done so in advance. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**4. Declarations of interest**

Cllrs. Hartnell, Haggerty & Ledger declared a personal interest as an East Devon District Councillors (EDDC) and Cllr Hartnell as a Devon County Councillor (DCC). Cllr. Hartnell declared a further personal interest, as his son volunteered at the Gateway Theatre Company. Cllrs. Dyke & Wood declared personal interests as they too volunteered at the Gateway Theatre Company.

**5. Minutes**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Seaton Town Council held on Monday, 6 March 2023. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Russell)



**6. Committee meeting minutes**

Members noted the minutes of the following committee meetings:

- Planning Committee – 21 March & 3 April 2023
- Personnel Committee – 4 April 2023

**7. Public question time**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**8. Terms of reference for committees 2023/24**

Members reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the Council's terms of reference for committees for the 2023/2024 municipal year. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**9. Appointments to committees & working groups 2023/24**

The following councillors were appointed to the Council's committees and working groups, for the 2023/2024 municipal year:

<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>5 seats + Chair/Deputy Ex Officio</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cllr Singh (ex officio)</li> <li>2. Cllr Haggerty (ex officio)</li> <li>3. Cllr Beer</li> <li>4. Cllr Brooks</li> <li>5. Cllr Burrows</li> <li>6. Cllr Russell</li> <li>7. Vacancy</li> </ol>
<p><b>Finance &amp; General Purposes</b></p> <p>6 seats + Chair/Deputy Ex Officio</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cllr Singh (ex officio)</li> <li>2. Cllr Haggerty (ex officio)</li> <li>3. Cllr Beer</li> <li>4. Cllr Brooks</li> <li>5. Cllr Burrows</li> <li>6. Cllr Dyke</li> <li>7. Cllr Hartnell</li> <li>8. Cllr Wood</li> </ol>
<p><b>Personnel</b></p> <p>4 seats + Chair or Deputy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cllr Singh (ex officio)</li> <li>2. Cllr Beer</li> <li>3. Cllr Dyke</li> <li>4. Cllr Hartnell</li> <li>5. Cllr Ledger</li> </ol>
<p><b>Appeals</b></p>	<p>Members to be appointed by Council as and when it is necessary to convene an appeals hearing, to include Deputy Chairman, as the Chairman sits on the Personnel Committee.</p>
<p><b>Foreshore Working Group</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cllr. Burrows</li> </ol>



	2. Cllr Haggerty 3. Cllr Ledger
--	------------------------------------

Members **RESOLVED** to approve all appointments to committees and working groups (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

**10. Appointments to outside bodies**

The following councillors were appointed as representatives on the following outside bodies for the 2022/2023 Municipal Year:

<b>Outside Bodies</b>	
Coast to Country Project	Cllr. Haggerty
DALC Larger Councils Group	Cllr. Beer
Gateway Theatre Company	Cllr. Wood
Seaton Project Board	Cllrs. Singh (Mayor) & Wood

Members **RESOLVED** to approve all appointments to outside bodies (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**11. Adoption of general power of competence**

Members **RESOLVED** that the Council met the conditions, as prescribed by the Localism Act 2011 and associated secondary legislation, to be an eligible council for the purposes of adopting the general power of competence and adopted said power. (proposed Cllr. Burrows; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

**12. Review of the Council's constitutional documents & policies**

Members reviewed the Council's standing orders, financial regulations, scheme of delegations, policies and schedules for the 2023/2024 municipal year as listed below:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Staff Handbook
- Complaints Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Register
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Breach Policy



- Member & Officer Protocol
- Freedom of Information
- Publication Scheme
- Health & Safety Policy
- Communications Policy
- Community Grants Policy
- Training & Development Policy
- Memorial Bench Policy
- Non-smoking & Non-vaping Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Environment Policy
- Gazebo Hire Policy
- Investment Policy
- Land & Buildings Hire Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Tree Management Policy
- Statement of Internal Controls
- Scheme of Delegations

Members **RESOLVED** to approve all of the documents listed above as drafted (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

### **13. Budgetary Report – 2022/23**

Members considered a report on the outturn position at the conclusion of 2022/23 financial year, including the annual financial statement on allotments and **RESOLVED** to note the report. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Ledger)

### **14. Report of the internal auditor 2022/23**

Members considered the report of the internal auditor and **RESOLVED** to note the observations and actions taken to address them. (proposed Cllr. Haggerty; seconded Cllr. Russell)

### **15. Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) for the financial year 2022-23. (proposed Cllr. Haggerty; seconded Cllr. Russell)

### **16. Accounting Statements 2022/2023**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and note the explanation of variances for the financial year 2022-23. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

### **17. Exercise of public rights**

Members **RESOLVED** to note and agree the dates for the exercise of public rights as Monday 5 June to Friday 14 July 2023. (proposed Cllr. Ledger; seconded Cllr. Wood)

#### **18. County Councillor's Report**

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

- some highways works had been carried out in Fore Street and Valley View and works were scheduled in Eyewell Green. However, Cllr Hartnell acknowledged that potholes were a significant problem and whilst some funding was available, this was limited and barely covered inflationary increases to the costs of repairs. He confirmed that councillors and officers had attended an 'away day' and highways works were on the list of the new Chief Executives priorities. Cllr. Hartnell went on to explain that when issues were reported they were categorised according to the risk a defect posed and remediated in line with the level of risk. He added that there had been a direct correlation between the level of potholes reported and the changes in climatic temperatures that often caused them with reports exceeding 500 per day at the peak.

#### **19. Town Clerk's Report**

Members noted the Town Clerk's report.

#### **20. Annual RoSPA Inspections**

Members noted the annual inspection reports and the work being undertaken by the Town Maintenance Officer, as a result of the observations therein.

#### **21. Local Government Awards**

Members **RESOLVED** to register for the Quality Standard Award. (proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Burrows)

#### **22. Progress report on replacement of bus shelters**

Members noted the progress made and **RESOLVED** that the Facilities & Projects Officer should be commended for his work with officers from Devon County Council and East Devon County Council to secure the funding for the replacement of all the town's bus shelters. (proposed Cllr. Haggerty; seconded Cllr. Singh)

#### **23. Seaton in Bloom 2023**

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

- Seaton in Bloom should go ahead in 2023.
  - Cllrs. Burrows, Dyke, Mendham & Singh would collectively judge the entries.
- (proposed Cllr. Burrows; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

#### **24. Christmas Lights 2023 onwards**



Members considered the proposals for the delivery of Christmas lights in the town from 2023 onwards and requested that a date be set for the switch-on event as soon as practicable. The Town Clerk was asked to liaise with the Carnival Committee and, if practicable, a date would be set as at the end of November/very early December. A question was raised as to whether Seaton Chamber would be involved. The Town Clerk advised that no approach had been received from the Chamber, however, whilst the Council should remain responsible for the installation of the lights as they owned them and had the necessary skills, training and insurance to install them, should Seaton Chamber wish to liaise with other stakeholders such as the Carnival Committee and organise the event itself then that would be welcome. Members

**RESOLVED** to:

- approve the disposal of non-functioning lights
- approve the proposed purchase of the lights, frames and bulbs detailed in the report accompanying the agenda at a maximum cost of £5,000 as detailed below:
  - additional festoon lights & 100 spare bulbs - £2,850 + VAT
  - purchase of 10 frames (previously rented) - £750 + VAT
  - repair of frames & new lights - £1,000 + VAT
  - Christmas Tree' Cone (should the electricity be available at Fisherman's Gap) – labour & lights - £400 + VAT
- approve the budget virement of £1,000 from the 170/4395 bus shelters code to 227/4840 Christmas lights, should this be required

(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**25. Update on Tourist Information Centre**

Members noted the level of enquiries at the tourist information centre and also the need for a TIC Volunteer Co-ordinator to manage volunteers, if it was to be opened at weekends. Members were advised that any person who was willing to take on this voluntary role would require good administrative and organisational skills and to ensure volunteers were appropriately recruited, trained, and managed. A proposal was put forward that a request be circulated on the Council's social media platforms to seek such an individual and it was **RESOLVED** that this action should be taken by officers. (proposed Cllr. Wood; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

**Confidential Items**

The Chairman moved, seconded by Cllr. Ledger 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 potentially commercially sensitive information.

**26. Report on VAT**

Members noted the calculations prepared by the VAT specialists (Parkinson Partnership) and their conclusions that the Council would remain within the exception

offered by the 7-year rule as regards cumulative VAT recovery, therefore VAT on the capital works scheduled to both Marshlands and the Town Hall would be recoverable.

## 27. Update on Town Hall

Members considered the report on risk pertaining to the Town Hall and, in order to assist the Council in protecting its financial position and its duty to the public purse,

### RESOLVED to:

- note the ongoing risks.
- seek written assurance from the tenant that, in accordance with the obligations in the lease that it will meet 50% of the cost of any expenditure item, prior to said item of maintenance expenditure being undertaken by the Council.
- request an open book policy from the tenant to provide reassurance to the Council that it the tenant can meet its commitments generally and, in particular, as regards the 50% contribution towards the heating replacement (total cost £19,139 + VAT) and clocktower repairs (total cost £3,255 + VAT) already approved by Council.
- submit quarterly indicative invoices to assist the tenant in their budgeting.

(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Haggerty)

Meeting closed at 7.46pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated 5/6/23

