

**Minutes of the Seaton Town Council ('the Council')
Council Meeting
on Monday, 3 November 2025**

Present:

Chair: Cllr. M. Hartnell chaired the meeting initially, followed by Cllr. A. Singh, who arrived after the start of the meeting

Town

Councillors: P. Burrows, N. Dyke, M. Hartnell, K. Pike, J. Rowland & C. Wood

Officers: Town Clerk

Public: Four members of the public were in attendance.

91. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Bowman and the reasons accepted. Cllr. Singh apologised that he may be slightly late arriving and the reasons accepted.

92. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Hartnell declared a personal interest as an East Devon District Councillor (EDDC) and as his son was a volunteer and conducting work on a self-employed basis for the Gateway Theatre Company. Cllr. Dyke declared a personal interest as a volunteer at the Gateway Theatre Company, and Cllr. Wood declared an interest as a volunteer and trustee of the Gateway Theatre Company. Cllr. Burrows declared a personal interest in the application by Axe Valley Christians Against Policy in light of his involvement with the church and associated groups.

93. Council Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of a meeting of Seaton Town Council held on Monday, 6 October 2025. (proposed Cllr. Dyke; seconded Cllr. Pike)

94. Committee Minutes

Members noted the minutes of the following meetings of the Council's committees:

- **Finance & General Purposes Committee** – 20 October 2025
- **Planning Committee** – 6 October 2025

95. County Councillor's Report

Devon County Councillor Paul Arnott attended and highlighted the following:

- Local Government Reorganisation – the date of submission of the proposal for a new structure for local government in Devon was approaching.
- Although a final decision had yet to be made, it was likely that the preferred proposal to be put forward would be that Plymouth and Torbay would remain

and the remainder of the county would form a new unitary authority, currently being called 'New Devon'.

- New Devon would consist of 16 'neighbourhood committees' across the geographical area and each committee would include representatives from town & parish councils, the police, voluntary organisations and any other stakeholders who wished to be part of it.
- the powers devolved to the committees would be dependent on central government and Devon hoped that the committees would have wide-reaching powers to avoid a situation where there would be very large unitary authorities and then town/parish councils with nothing in between.
- however, there was not unanimous consensus for the proposal described. For example, Exeter wished to expand and develop a whole new unitary authority. In light of the deadline of 28 November to submit proposals, it was unlikely that consensus would be reached, so all proposals would be submitted, and central government would make the final decision after consultation with all stakeholders.
- the current timetable was that a decision on the new structure would be made by July 2026, with interim elections in May 2027 and the new authorities going 'live' in May 2028.
- additionally, over and above that, there would be a strategic mayoral authority although in light of the timetables for other authorities .
- it was acknowledged that that LGR was unlikely to lead to any savings, despite that being one of the reasons given by government for the process and Cllr. Arnott would be writing to central government to ask why the LGR was being implemented when it was now clear that there would be little or no efficiencies, as a result of the process.

Members noted the report.

96. District Councillors' Reports

Cllr. Hartnell updated Members on the walk about with EDDC Streetscene that had taken place earlier in the day. The primary concern raised was the increase of weeds in the town since EDDC had made the decision not to use glyphosates. This decision was being revisited by EDDC. In the meantime, a new street sweeper was now available, and this would be in Seaton from Wednesday which should alleviate the problem by removing many of the kerbside weeds.

The Town Clerk confirmed that a response was still awaited regarding a rebate from EDDC to reflect the lack of a designated operative for the first 5.5 months of 2025.

The state of The Look Out was again raised by councillors and the Town Clerk confirmed that there had been no progress in terms of EDDC agreeing to take planning enforcement action.

Cllr Arnott, as leader of EDDC, asked that a formal request be sent to him and he would take this up with officers. The Town Clerk would action this.

The issue of dead trees on EDDC land at Ryalls Court was raised and correspondence would be forwarded by Cllr Dyke to Cllr Hartnell to speak to officers at EDDC on this matter.

Members noted the report.

97. Public Question Time

A question was asked regarding what feedback had been received on the ongoing coastal defence work. Members noted that feedback from the public had been generally positive.

Representatives from Axe Valley Christians Against Poverty spoke in support of the organisation's application for a community grant.

98. Update on Gateway Theatre Company

Members received an update from the Chair of the Gateway Theatre Company, including the following:

- trustees had been concentrating on improving management processes and this work was in its late stages
- a meeting with the accountants was arranged for later in the week, after which the draft accounts for the previous year would be made available to the Council
- thanks to the Council's Deputy Clerk and Facilities Officer for the considerable time and effort given by them to arrange the upgrade to the dressing rooms
- a number of new initiatives were being developed to reengage with the community including collaborations with various organisations supporting the community
- the last 3 events have been a success with beneficial financial results and box office sales are improving
- scheduling of events aims to attract core audiences and also attract new ones, therefore events are chosen carefully

Members noted the update.

Members **RESOLVED** to suspend the Council's Standing Orders and amend the order of business to bring the consideration of community grants applications forward. (proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Singh)

99. Community Grant Applications

Members **RESOLVED** to delegate to the town clerk the power to approve the following community grant applications:

- Axe Valley Christians Against Poverty - £750
- Operation Rudolph - £1,000

SUBJECT TO the following being provided by both organisations:

- confirmation that the grant would solely benefit residents of Seaton, rather than the wider Axe Valley area

(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Rowland)

100. Town Clerk's Report

Members noted the report and correspondence log and **RESOLVED** to authorise the Town Clerk to:

- agree, on behalf of the Council, the terms of a grant agreement with East Devon District Council in respect of developer contributions; and
- to make the necessary arrangements for execution of the agreement, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders

(proposed Cllr. Dyke; seconded Cllr. Pike)

101. Update on Seaton Tourist Information Centre

Members noted an update on enquiries to the tourist information centre.

102. Appointments to Outside Bodies

Members **RESOLVED** to:

- note the 'Wild About Seaton' Masterplan
- appoint Cllr. Burrows as representative to the 'Wild About Seaton' Stakeholder Group (Next meeting: 2 December 2025 via Teams)

(proposed Cllr. Singh; seconded Cllr. Pike)

103. Play Park Inspections

Members noted the inspection reports

104. Report on Hybrid Meeting Equipment

Members considered the report on options to purchase equipment to enable hybrid meetings and **RESOLVED** to:

- note the report
- defer a decision on the purchase for the time being until legislation was passed to permit decision making at hybrid meetings
- allocate £5,000 to an earmarked reserve, specifically for the purchase of such equipment in the future

(proposed Cllr. Hartnell; seconded Cllr. Singh)

105. Planning applications for consideration:

105A. Mr James Morrison - 68 Scalwell Lane, Seaton EX12 2DL

Demolition of garage, construction of new garage; extension of first floor, existing half-hipped roof replaced with new gable ends and construction of new pitched roof incorporating roof lights and PV panels; changes in fenestration, construction of canopy above entrance on west elevation, and inset balcony with glass balustrading on east (rear) elevation; external finishes including painted render, vertical cladding, and stone slip details; new raised terrace with glass balustrading to rear.

Members **RESOLVED** to propose no objection to the application (moved Cllr Burrows; seconded Cllr, Rowland)

105B. Mr Adam Taylor - 16 Littlefields, Seaton EX12 2BZ

Single storey extension to the rear of the property.

Members expressed concerns about the proposal and took the view that it was an overdevelopment of the site. Members therefore **RESOLVED** to object to the application for reasons of overdevelopment (moved Cllr Rowland; seconded Cllr Singh)

The meeting closed at 7.09pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____