



Seaford Town Council

To the Members of the Full Council

An Extraordinary Meeting of the **Full Council** will be held electronically via Zoom* on **Friday 15th May 2020** at 7.00pm, which you are summoned to attend.

Cllr Nazish Adil
Mayor of Seaford
11th May 2020

***see overleaf for important information to join virtual meeting and accessing password**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING WILL BE VIDEO RECORDED

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies for absence.

2. Disclosure of Interests

To deal with any disclosure by Members of any disclosable pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, as defined under the Seaford Town Council Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011, in relation to matters on the agenda.

3. Public Participation

To deal with any questions, or brief representations, from members of the public in accordance with Seaford Town Council Policy and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

4. 2020-2021 Annual Meeting

To consider report 173/19 regarding the options available to the Council and the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting (pages 7 – 12).

For further information about items appearing on this Agenda please contact:

Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk, 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG

Email: admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 01323 894 870 (*please note that due to working from home, this phone line is not currently manned, so please leave a voice message and this will be picked up and forwarded to the relevant member of staff to deal with*)

*Zoom Meeting:

In line with the Coronavirus Act 2020 and subsequent regulations governing local authorities meetings, the Council will be holding this meeting via the online video conference facility, Zoom.

To join the Zoom meeting follow this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88473049839?pwd=WHVCK3k2YytmSC9TTG1kYnpOR3htZz09>

Meeting ID: 324-593-6872

Password: (to ensure online security it is recommended that meeting passwords are not publicised and are given directly to those intending to attend the meeting. Please therefore email admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk for the password at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting date)

Taking Part in a Zoom Meeting

Please note that the following instructions are for joining a meeting using a laptop, computer or tablet device. Accessing with a smartphone may differ.

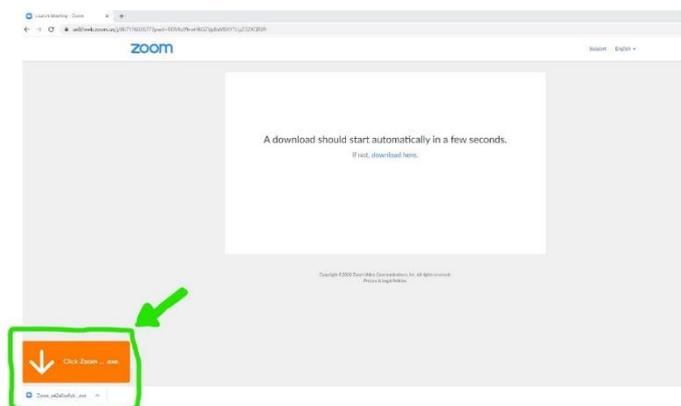
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1 – Joining

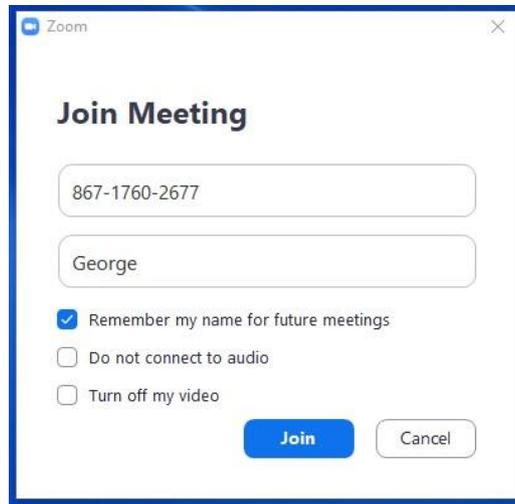
Follow the link provided by email/on the agenda.

1a – If this your first time, you will probably see the screen below. Click the Zoom icon at the bottom to open the desktop app.



The you will be prompted to enter the meeting id and your name (note, this will be visible by all meeting participants). The meeting id can be found on the agenda, Council’s website or circulated email.

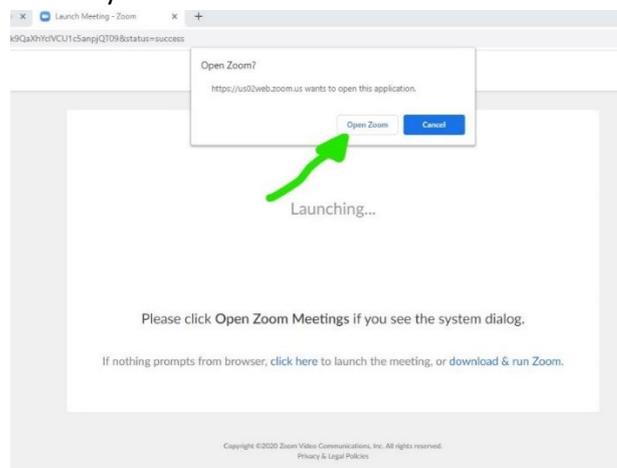
- For councillors, please do not choose to not connect your audio or turn off your video with the tick boxes.
- Members of the public will need audio as a minimum and whilst video is preferred, it is optional.



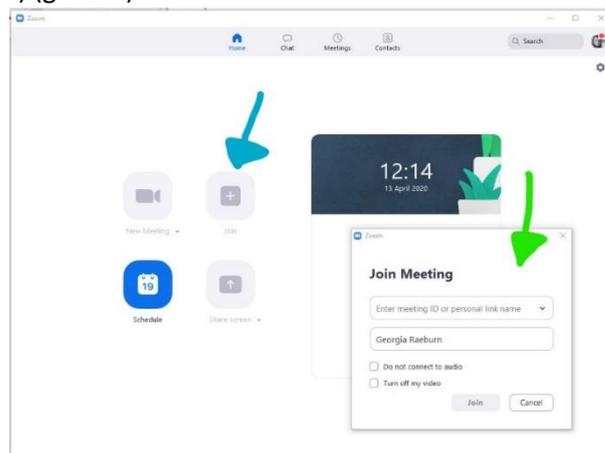
You will then be prompted to enter the meeting password, on the agenda, Council’s website or circulated email. Enter this and click to ‘join meeting’ (skip 1b and go to 2).

1b - If you have already downloaded the Zoom app, you can either:

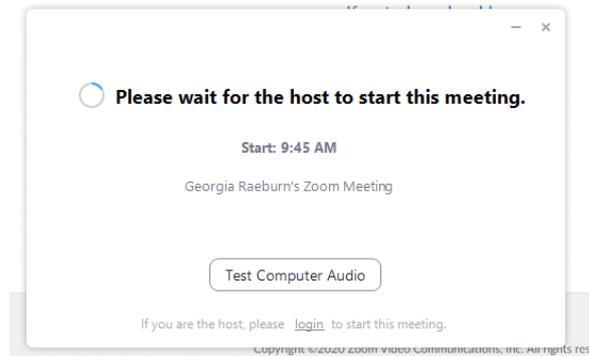
- Follow the link and you should see the screen below. Click the button to ‘open Zoom’ (go to 2)



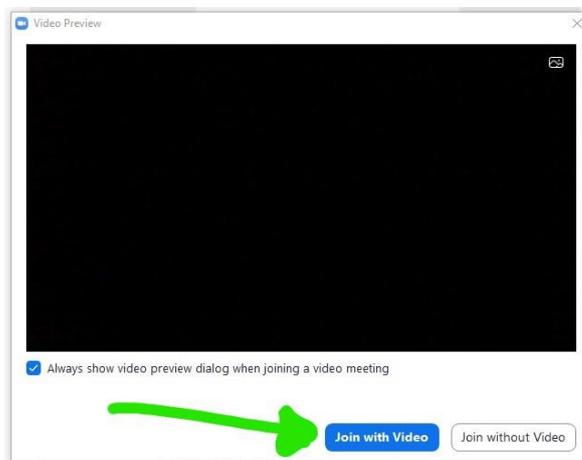
- Open the Zoom desktop app and click ‘join’ (blue arrow) and then enter the meeting details (green arrow) (go to 2)



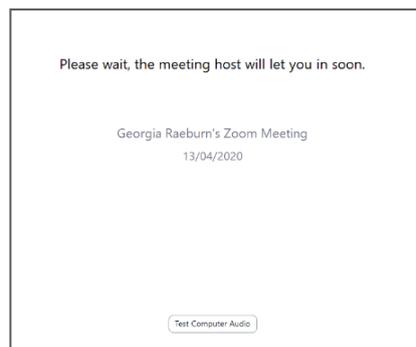
2 – Once in the desktop app, if the meeting has not yet started, you may see this below. If you wait, the host of the meeting just needs to start the meeting.



3 – Once the host starts the meeting, you will see the pop up below in your desktop app. Click the button to 'join with video'.



4 – You will then join the 'waiting room' and the host will have to approve you entering. Your screen will probably show the below.



5 – Once admitted entry by the host, you will see the screen below. Click to 'join with computer audio'.



6 – Settings

6a - Screen View

Once in, you will see all participants in the meeting so far. More participants may join and the screens will get smaller/move around to accommodate this. If you can just see one big person and the rest are fitted around, you are on 'speaker view' change in the top right hand corner of the screen; try out 'gallery view' and see which you prefer!

6b - Mute / Unmute

Check to see if you are muted (shows on bottom left of screen):

- If it says 'unmute' with a red line this means you are muted and can't be heard
- If it says 'mute' you can be heard

It will be best to remain muted until you want to speak – this prevents too much background noise and will make it easier for everyone to hear the speaker.

6c - Technical Run Through – Chat Function

We will go through the meeting at the start to make sure everyone can hear and see and be heard and seen. If you have any problems with the audio and can't hear/be heard, we can use the 'chat' function to try to resolve this.

Click on 'chat' at the bottom of the screen. Type your issue in the text box and hit 'enter' – your message will go to the host only who will respond to try and help.

7 – Once everyone is up and running, the Chair will conduct the meeting in the usual manner; going through the agenda. The Host (an officer) will monitor the IT/technical side of the meeting.

8 – Participation

Please remember to keep yourself on mute unless you are speaking (save for the Chair and host, who will need to be able to speak freely). It is imperative that all participants are able to clearly hear the speakers without lots of background noise.

8a – Public Participation

- i. The Chair will introduce public participation and invite any members of the public wishing to speak to raise their hands clearly in the video.
- ii. The host will note down those wishing to speak (using the name/id shown by the person's screen).
- iii. The host will inform the Chair in turn who is next to participate.
- iv. Once at the end of the list, the Chair will check if any other members of the public were wishing to speak.
- v. The Chair, or an officer and other councillor if invited to do so, will respond where relevant to the member of public.
- vi. The public statement and any response will be recorded for the minutes in the usual manner.
- vii. If a member of public does not have video feed, when the Chair is asking who would like to participate, the member of public should unmute themselves and state their name and that they wish to speak. They will be noted down in the list by the host and they will be invited to participate at the relevant stage by the Chair.

8b – Councillor Discussion/Participation

To try and prevent councillors from speaking over each other, it is encouraged that councillors keep their video/audio 'muted' until invited to speak by the Chair.

- i. Councillors wishing to speak should raise their hand clearly in the video (as above) and the host will note the hands raised. All hands then go down, when prompted.
- ii. The host will inform the Chair who is to speak, and the Chair will invite that councillor.
- iii. The councillor speaking first should 'unmute' themselves and make their statement; then 'mute' their video/audio again.
- iv. The Chair will either respond or ask an officer to reply, where necessary.
- v. The Chair will then ask if any other councillors are wishing to respond to the councillor's statement by show of hands. The host will note the hands raised and prompt the Chair as to who to invite to speak.
- vi. Then follow the above steps ii-iv and work through the list of councillors wishing to respond.
- vii. Then return to the list of councillors who had originally wanted to speak and follow the above steps again.
- viii. If councillors do not have video feed, when the Chair is asking which councillors would like to speak or respond to another councillor's statement, the councillor should unmute themselves and state their name. They will be noted down in the list by the host and they will be invited to participate at the relevant stage by the Chair.

This may feel over the top but is trying to ensure that all councillors have a fair chance to partake in discussions. Hopefully when we are all more accustomed to this way of 'meeting', this will all become more second nature.

8c – Voting

The Chair/an officer will clearly read out what it is that is being voted on, in the usual manner.

The host will then read through councillor's names asking for their vote, whether 'for', 'against' or 'abstain'. This is to ensure that votes are marked down correctly and remove any error of doubt.

The host will confirm verbally whether or not the resolution was carried.

Please note, this does not mean they are recorded votes and individual votes will not be shown in the minutes; a councillor would still have to specifically request a recorded vote if one was wanted.

9 – Leaving the Meeting

To leave the meeting, you can click on the 'leave meeting' in red text at the bottom right hand of the screen. You will be prompted to confirm you want to leave.

If you leave by accident, please follow the above steps in section 2 to re-join the meeting.

9a – Exclusion of Press & Public

Where an exclusion of press & public is resolved, all members of press and public will need to leave the meeting. They can do this themselves or the host does also have the ability to remove them.

The host will then 'lock' the meeting so no new attendees can join and interrupt the confidential session.

9b – Declaration of Interest

If a councillor has declared an interest in an item on the agenda and it is deemed best that they 'leave the meeting' for that item. They should leave following the meeting in the usual manner but keep their Zoom desktop app open. The host will then 'invite' them to return once the item has concluded.

When invited to return, a pop up will appear that the councillor should then 'accept' and they will re-join the meeting.



Agenda Item No:	4
Committee:	Council
Date:	15th May 2020
Title:	2020-2021 Annual Meeting
By:	Georgia Raeburn, Executive Support Officer
Purpose of Report:	To present the Council with the options available regarding the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting.

Recommendations

You are recommended to:

- 1. Consider the contents of the report and make a decision based on the options available regarding the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting.**
 - 2. Delegate power to the Proper Officer in consultation with the Mayor or relevant Committee Chair to amend the scheduled meetings within the Council's adopted meeting timetable as deemed necessary, until physical meetings can recommence.**
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1. Information

Regulations

- 1.1** Following the introduction of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ('the 2020 Regulations') on 4th April 2020, the Council must now decide whether or not it wishes to proceed with its Annual Meeting that was originally scheduled for 21st May 2020.
- 1.2** To clarify, the 2020 Regulations are emergency Regulations which have effect for a temporary period up to and including 6th May 2021.
- 1.3** They apply to meetings of specified bodies including parish/town councils and operate by temporary modification or disapplication of several statutes. The Regulations override existing Standing Orders but as they are temporary, it is not necessary to revise the Council's adopted Standing Orders. In summary, where applicable to town councils, they:
 - a.** Make emergency provision allowing remote attendance (i.e. virtual attendance through a web address or telephone number) by councillors and clarify public and press access. (*Regulation 5*).
 - b.** Remove the legal requirement for a town council to hold an Annual Meeting in May 2020. (*Regulation 6(c)*)
 - c.** Carry, by default, the current appointment of Chair of the Council (Mayor) and Vice-Chair (Deputy Mayor) on until the Annual Meeting is held, which could be May 2021, although a council may choose to hold an Annual Meeting before then should it wish to. (*Regulation 4 (2)*)
 - d.** Modify the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 allowing for remote attendance by the press and public. (*Regulation 13*)

1.4 The 2020 Regulations have been interpreted by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) with the Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) to mean:

- a. *Regulation 4(2) – this allows appointments normally made at an annual meeting to be continued until the next annual meeting or until such time as the authority determines. This appears to cover the Mayor as well as committee appointments etc. Councils therefore have the option to hold annual meetings remotely or in person when the restrictions are lifted or to go through to the next meeting in 2021. If an Annual Meeting is delayed, then all positions remain as they are today.*
- b. *Regulation 6(c) - This disapplies paragraphs 1 and 7 of Schedule 12 which removes the requirement to have an annual meeting this year. This means that the council can still have an annual meeting if it wishes, just that it doesn't have to, giving flexibility to simply keep the status quo until next year or review the situation as the national position changes.'* (source Association of Democratic Services Officers & Lawyers in Local Government joint guidance note updated 7th April 2020)
- c. *Regulation 4 – this provides that where an appointment would otherwise be made or is required to be made at an annual meeting of a local authority, the appointment continues until the next annual meeting of the authority or until such time as that authority may determine (Regulation 4 (2)). This would apply to the election of the chairman, the first business at the annual council meeting. Therefore the current chairman will remain in place until an annual meeting is held (possibly next year) unless the council decide to elect a replacement earlier.* (source NALC's Legal Topic Note LO1-20 issued 3rd April 2020)

1.5 The relaxation, by these Regulations, of certain requirements is designed to alleviate administrative burdens on local councils and allow councils the choice to maintain continuity and consistency during the current difficulties, should that be in the best interest of the council and the town.

Options

1.6 Seaford Town Council is therefore now in a position where it must decide whether to:

- a. Continue with the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting on 21st May 2020 (and in doing so, hold the elections for Mayor, Deputy and other business as normal¹)

Points to consider:

- i. Councillors elected/appointed will not enjoy the usual introduction and support in their roles. Most civic activity is also unable to take place at present and this is likely, at best, to be under restrictions for the first half, if not more, of the municipal year.

¹ That as set out in the Council's Standing Orders: (Standing Order 5j) 'i. In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and Councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council of his/her acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date; ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council; iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a Committee; iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a Committee; v. Appointment of members to existing Committees; vi. Appointment of any new Committees in accordance with Standing Order 4 above; vii. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back; viii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future; ix. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment; x. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks; xi. Review of the Council's and/or staff Subscriptions to other bodies.'

- ii. The other non-civic duties of the role of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council, are vital within the Council under the current circumstances and whilst civic activity is limited, the other responsibilities and leadership aspect of the roles are very much still required.
- b.** Postpone the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting until later in the year (and in doing so, retain the current appointments for Mayor, Deputy Mayor, committees and outside body representatives, until such a date as determined)

Points to consider:

- i. The only appointments that must remain unchanged are the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. These councillors would remain in office until an Annual Meeting is held.
 - ii. The above said, it would not be intended to review committee membership and Chair/Vice-Chair positions (save for filling current vacancies) or representatives on outside bodies until an Annual Meeting is held. If, however, a councillor/s wished for a review of either of these to be included as an item on an agenda during the year, they should in the first instance discuss this with the Mayor and Proper Officer.
 - iii. At the time of writing officers would still need to bring two essential items that would usually be considered as part of the Annual Meeting to an ordinary Council meeting which need resolving; firstly, a report regarding Committee membership to fill current vacancies and secondly, the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies.
 - iv. It may be sensible to delegate power to the Proper Officer in consultation with the Mayor to agree the date for the meeting to be rescheduled for. The Council may however wish to discuss the conditions under which the meeting is postponed until e.g. until physical meetings can be held again or until social restrictions are lifted and an incoming Mayor is able to undertake the civic aspects of the role, for example.
 - v. If a new Mayor and Deputy were elected later in the year, they would have a reduced time in office as Mayoral elections would be held again at the Annual Meeting in May 2021.
- c.** Cancel the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting (and in doing so, retain the current appointments for Mayor, Deputy Mayor, committees and outside body representatives, until May 2021)

Points to consider:

- i. (as above at b.i)
- ii. (as above at b.ii)
- iii. (as above at b.iii)
- iv. Removes concerns regarding challenging introductions in to new roles for councillors, including training in the roles and making contact with outside bodies that are pre-occupied with/inactive during the current crisis.

Meeting Facilities

- 1.7** Until Government guidance changes, all meetings must be held virtually and the 2020 Regulations have legally made this possible for local authorities providing specific conditions are met.
- 1.8** For a virtual meeting to be considered lawful, the specified conditions are that a councillor is able at the time of the meeting:
 - a.** to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance;
 - b.** to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting; and
 - c.** to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.
- 1.9** The Council will be holding its meetings using the Zoom meeting facility. Zoom has been recommended for use by NALC and has been used by the Council for various internal meetings as well as two committee meetings and has been satisfactory. Importantly, Zoom also allows for the above conditions to be satisfied.
- 1.10** When published, the agenda includes the necessary meeting details to enable councillors and members of the public to join the meeting.
- 1.11** If able to download the Zoom app or access Zoom through the internet browser on a device with an inbuilt camera (smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer), the individual should be able to attend the meeting using video and audio i.e. be heard and seen.
- 1.12** If they are using an older device, it may not have an inbuilt camera – the options then are to either use an external webcam or failing that, attend the meeting with audio only. Importantly, the individual will still be able to see and hear all other participants that are using video and be heard themselves, but not be seen.
- 1.13** If anyone attending the meeting does not wish to use the video function, they do not have to; upon joining the meeting they will be given the choice to decide whether to switch their video on.
- 1.14** There are various virtual meeting facilities available but officers opted to go for Zoom, having to make a swift decision following the closure of the Council offices and heeding NALC's advice. From the research that has been done, these facilities all offer largely similar packages.
- 1.15** The Council will be recording Zoom meetings, with a view to uploading them to its YouTube channel as it would usually do with physical meetings. As with any video/audio recording, there may be technical issues (as the Council has experienced with its video camera in the past), so councillors and members of the public are not able to rely on videos of meetings being available.
- 1.16** If an Annual Meeting is held, the virtual meeting will largely be able to follow in the same format, with the exception of a few ceremonial aspects, such as the handing over of the Mayoral Chain and photographs being taken.
- 1.17** If it wished to, the Council could recreate these ceremonial steps at the first physical meeting or indeed at the first physical civic event, for example.

Other Local Councils

- 1.18** Each local authority must assess its own circumstances in deciding whether or not to hold, postpone or cancel the Annual Meeting. The 2020 Regulations have been specifically written in such a way so as to allow this flexibility.
- 1.19** Of the other parish/town councils looked at online, 11 are not holding their Annual Meetings and 8 are holding the meeting. Of those not holding the meeting, the main reason appeared to be agreement within the Council on maintaining continuity in the roles and also the Annual Meeting usually being quite a large ceremonial event, so not wanting an incoming Mayor to be denied this.
- 1.20** It is important however that Seaford Town Council's decision is based on its assessment of its own situation, not that of other local authorities.

Young Mayor

- 1.21** Officers are still trying to decide the best option with regard to the role of Young Mayor and are in talks with the current Young Mayor and Deputy.
- 1.22** Unfortunately, the schools were closed before elections were able to be held for the officer of Deputy Young Mayor. This means that at present, if the current Deputy takes over as Young Mayor this month (as planned), they will not have a Deputy to support them.
- 1.23** The intention therefore is for the Young Mayor from the 2019/2020 Municipal Year to become the Deputy Young Mayor to support the new Young Mayor (who was the Deputy Young Mayor in the previous municipal year). Officers would contact the school as soon as possible about trying again to appoint a Deputy Young Mayor to start mid-year and work with the Young Mayor, as long as they can before they then take over the next municipal year.
- 1.24** The Young Mayor has been in contact with Officers about her plans for the 2020/21 municipal year. These include some interesting virtual activities to fundraise for Sussex and Kent Air Ambulance (her chosen charity) and will be creating a video setting her plans out to be used in the Town Council's virtual Town Forum.

Town Forum

- 1.25** The Annual Parish Meeting (or Town Forum as Seaford Town Council refers to it) was postponed directly as a result of the 2020 Regulations.
- 1.26** The 2020 Regulations failed to make mention to parish meetings (a term which includes the Annual Parish Meeting/ Town Forum) and therefore, there is nothing permitting them to meet remotely. It is NALC's view that the current Government guidance therefore means that parish meetings should not take place in person, including the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 1.27** Officers are working on arranging an alternative event, which will incorporate an update on the Council's activities, Mayor's Awards, Young Mayor's Awards and updates from financial grant recipients in the 2019/2020 scheme. The preparations for this event in their infancy but it is likely to be an entirely virtual event.

Meetings in General

- 1.28** Finally, it would be beneficial in the current circumstances to allow more flexibility surrounding the holding of meetings in line with the Council's adopted meeting timetable.
- 1.29** It is therefore recommended to delegate power to the Proper Officer in consultation with the Mayor or relevant Committee Chair to amend the scheduled meetings within

the Council's adopted meeting timetable as deemed necessary, until physical meetings can recommence.

1.30 Just to confirm, as per the update circulated by the Planning Officer to all councillors and appearing on the Council's website, that the decision made by the Council on 31st March 2020 will continue to be the process used regarding responses to planning applications until further notice.

1.31 For clarity, the resolution of the Council was: 'It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to temporarily **DELEGATE POWER** to the Planning Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Planning & Highways Committee to agree and submit a response on planning applications and tree works applications, where a consensus is reached by Planning & Highways Committee members by email. Where a consensus cannot be reached, the application will be referred to a meeting of the Planning & Highways Committee.'

1.32 The update can be viewed at:

<https://www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk/blog/planning-and-highways-committee-procedures-for-responding-to-applications-during-covid-19-restrictions/>

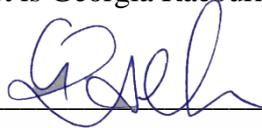
2. Financial Appraisal

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

3. Contact Officer

The Contact Officer for this report is Georgia Raeburn, Executive Support Officer.

Executive Support Officer



Assistant Town Clerk

