



Seaford Town Council

MINUTES of a **Meeting** of the **Full Council** held at Seaford Baptist Church Auditorium, Belgrave Road, Seaford on **Wednesday 30th March 2022** at **7.00pm**.

Present:

Councillors R Reed (Mayor) & J Cash (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors D Argent, L Boorman, M Brown, S Dunn, O Honeyman, J Meek and B Payne.

Adam Chugg, Town Clerk

Geoff Johnson, Assistant Town Clerk (Strategic Projects)

Karen Singleton, Responsible Financial Officer

Simon Andrews, Finance Assistant

Georgia Raeburn, HR & Governance Manager

There were two members of the public in attendance.

A minute's silence was held for the people of Ukraine.

C123/03/21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Adeniji, M Everden, MA Hayder, R Hayder, R Honeyman, J Lord, G Rutland, L Wallraven and B Webb.

C124/03/21 Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Rodney Reed declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 15, as a recently appointed trustee of Seaford Baptist Church.

C125/03/21 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

C126/03/21 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the following minutes and the recommendations therein:

C126.1	Full Council	26 th January 2022
C126.2	Community Services	17 th February 2022
C126.3	Golf & The View	8 th March 2022
C126.4	Planning & Highways	10 th February 2022
C126.5	Planning & Highways	24 th February 2022
C126.6	Planning & Highways	17 th March 2022

C127/03/21 Mayor's Update Report

Full Council considered report 200/21 presenting the Mayor's update report and details of engagements.

The Mayor provided an update on his work in the Seaford Defibrillator project and his thanks to the many volunteers, charities, not-for-profit groups and organisations that worked hard for the charity projects over his two years in the Mayoral office.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report.

C128/03/21 Young Mayor's Update Report

Officers will pursue an update for the next Full Council meeting in May 2022.

C129/03/21 Town Council Working Group Reports

There were no working group update reports.

C130/03/21 Outside Body Representative Reports

A standard agenda item to enable Town Councillors appointed as representatives of outside bodies of the Town Council to give brief verbal updates on relevant business / activities of the outside body, for noting only.

<p><i>Councillor James Meek, representative to Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve Management Committee</i></p>	<p><i>Provided an update following a meeting attended with Councillor Cash, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The committee thanking the Town Clerk for the report sent to meeting.</i> <i>• Sussex Wildlife Trust's Ranger update on successful work throughout autumn, winter and early-spring, including the work of volunteers and in cooperation with the golf course staff too.</i> <i>• Visitor numbers are increasing but this increasing the health and safety implications, such as the potential need for toilets at South Hill Barn (and the possibility of composting toilets), litter collection and disposal problems increasing (and this being outside the remit of the Trust's Rangers).</i> <i>• Work may be needed on Hope Gap Steps and access gate, with visitors being in danger of being caught by tide between Hope Gap and Coastguard Cottages. Need to think with partners about</i>
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	<p><i>measures to regulate how visitors use this stretch of coast.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A volunteer group of Seaford Natural History Society restoring the dew pond at South Hill Barn.</i> • <i>The Management Group looking at important clifftop work.</i>
<p><i>Councillor Mark Brown, representative to Seaford Head Golf Club</i></p>	<p><i>Attended a recent AGM. The Club discussed a revised constitution and rules for playing some of holes on course. The Club passed on its thanks to Town Council officers for the support in putting up honour boards in The View before its AGM.</i></p>

C131/03/21 District & County Councillor Update Report

An opportunity for an update from councillors at a District or County level on business and activities that effect Seaford and the local area.

<p><i>Councillor Sam Adeniji, East Sussex County Council</i></p>	<p><i>(passed an update to the Town Clerk to share)</i></p> <p><i>East Sussex County Council has issued a press release updating on the situation at Talland Parade. Assurance has been given that building work is on track to start shortly and the County Council has agreed to fund improvement works to Saxon Lane. The County Council will renew the scaffolding licence on a rolling six month basis, subject to the owners providing a schedule of work and communication plan, including updating the Town Council so it is aware.</i></p>
<p><i>Councillor Liz Boorman, Lewes District Council</i></p>	<p><i>Confirmed that the District Council is focussing on support to Ukraine. It is working with various partners (the County Council, churches, Seaford Ukraine groups) to support Ukrainian refugees and provide guidance where it can (homes, food, schooling).</i></p>

C132/03/21 Town Clerk's Update Report

Full Council considered report 199/21 updating Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk confirmed the work priorities that have been addressed and the Town Council's response following the situation in Ukraine.

Full Council discussed: the membership of The View Working Group; the upcoming Strengthening Local Relations (SLR) meeting (date to be confirmed) and an invite for councillors to send any additional items; the process with the planned review of parking arrangements in the town, and; acknowledging the huge loss following the passing of Claire Sumners and thanking her for all of her plastic-free work for the town.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report and the sad news of Claire Sumners having passed away.

C133/03/21 South Downs National Park Authority Presentation and New Interpretation Plaques Report

(7.35pm – Standing Orders suspended to allow the Peter Cousins of SDNPA to verbally present to the meeting)

Full Council received a presentation from Peter Cousin, South Downs National Park Authority's Commercial Manager for the new venture at the Seven Sisters Country Park. Peter provided an overview of the takeover of the country park from East Sussex County Council. With a £2.6m investment in the site, the focus is to make the site better for people and better for nature, in a way that leads that way in adapting conservation and climate change.

Peter updated on the plans for improving visitor experience, including: a more accessible visitor centre that is to be staffed 364 days of the year; additional concession offerings; a new, larger toilet block including accessible and changing places facilities; a conservation hub being created with offices that will also house Natural England officers too; the work at Foxholes, which is due to be completed at the end of 2022, and; plans for holiday accommodation. As well as this, Peter stressed the key works being undertaken to also address landscape management, including a new landscape management plan in place for the site. Already the number of birds seen at the site is higher than in the last 20 years.

Peter confirmed that the site will be recruiting for staff and volunteers, to assist with visitor engagement, guided walks, help in car parks and rangers.

Plans for the future include improving facilities for education (working with Plumpton College and Sussex Wildlife Trust), new paths around the site, improvement for accessibility (mobility scooters) and repairs to two dew ponds.

Full Council discussed plans for encouragement of the use of public transport and close working with Brighton & Hove Buses and discounts for people who arrive by bus, car park ownership and management, creation of a tourist bus in summer (possibly linking the Seven

Sisters, Seaford, Drusillas and possibly Lewes), signs at train stations as to how to get to site, a possible long term project for a cycle trail- fully offroad - from Seaford to the Seven Sisters and on to Eastbourne.

Full Council then considered report 198/21 seeking approval of a request from the South Downs National Park Authority to install three new interpretation plaques hosting digital content.

Full Council queried the process of the requirement to inspect the signs as landowner.

(7.49pm – Standing Orders reinstated)

It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to the request to install three new interpretation plaques, giving delegated authority to officers to confirm final locations.

Full Council thanked Peter Cousins of South Downs National Park Authority for attending and his presentation.

C134/03/21 Seaford Town Football Club – Football Pitch Maintenance

Full Council considered report 195/21 seeking approval, subject to a one year trial period, of the request from Seaford Town Football Club to take on the maintenance responsibilities of the main football pitch at The Crouch.

(7.50pm – Standing Orders were suspended to allow the Chair of Seaford Town Football Club, Tom Webster, to respond to questions)

Full Council discussed the maintenance costs for the pitch itself, recognition of the Town Council's financial contribution to the maintenance costs, opportunities to divert other users and dog walkers from using the pitch and Seaford Town Football Club creating a draft proposal for developments at The Crouch which has been recently submitted to Town Council officers.

Full Council congratulated the Chair on improvements at club since he has taken his position.

C134.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the report.

C134.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that Seaford Town Football Club takes on maintenance responsibilities of the main football pitch at The Crouch for a trial period of one year.

C134.3 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that money currently paid to Lewes District Council to maintain the pitch as part of the Grounds Maintenance Contract be transferred for Seaford Town Football Club.

C134.4 It was **RESOLVED** to **DELEGATE POWER** to the Projects & Facilities Manager, in consultation with the Chair of Community Services, to extend the agreement after the trial period.

(8.01pm – Standing Orders were reinstated)

C135/03/21 Fields in Trust Update Report

Full Council considered report 197/21 providing an update on the Fields in Trust programme and seeking approval to apply for Fields in Trust status for The Crouch, The Salts Recreation Ground and Martello Fields.

Full Council discussed Lewes District Council's decision not to apply for Fields in Trust status for the sites in Seaford and whether this can be appealed, whether any covenants exist on the sites to prevent larger development, what rights the Town Council would lose as landowner with future improvements on sites that are designated Fields in Trust status, and consulting with the relevant clubs and organisations before finalising agreements.

C135.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the update report.

C135.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that an application be made for Fields In Trust status for the three local sites, The Crouch, The Salts Recreation Ground and Martello Fields, and that the Deeds of Dedication for each site be brought to Full Council for approval in due course.

(8.10pm – One member of the public left)

C136/03/21 Golf Machinery Quotations and Financial Regulations Update

Full Council considered report 194/21 seeking approval to waive Financial Regulations in respect of the purchase of a Toro GP 1260 Green Roller and to amend Financial Regulations.

Full Council discussed having relevant Chairs involved in the approval process to waive Financial Regulations.

C136.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **WAIVE** section 11.1 of the Financial Regulations enabling the purchase of the necessary machinery.

C136.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **AMEND** section 11 of the Financial Regulations to include:

New 11.1e - Where three quotes are unobtainable and, after assessment by the RFO or Town Clerk, it is found to be for legitimate reasons, the decision to accept a quote from those presented can be approved by the RFO, in conjunction with the Town Clerk and the Chair of the relevant Committee. The final acceptance will still be as per the table in 11.11.

C137/03/21 2022 – 2023 Meeting Timetable and Arrangements

Full Council considered report 196/21 presenting the draft 2022 – 2023 meeting timetable and details of meeting arrangements.

Full Council discussed the chosen meeting venue being accessible by public transport, the feasibility of holding meetings within the Council Chambers, the possibility of having a selection of dates for the Personnel Committee on the meeting timetable, the challenges presented by hybrid meetings and the longer term options surrounding identifying a suitable venue as a Council Chamber/community hub.

C137.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the draft 2022 – 2023 meeting timetable, with one minor change moving the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting to 28th June 2022, and that this will be presented for final approval at the Full Council meeting on 12th May 2022 (the meeting immediately after the Annual Meeting). Asking officers to look into the points raised at the meeting and consult with councillors on the final timetable.

C137.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the update regarding the meeting arrangements and approve the following:

- a. Full Council meetings will be held at The View, with the Seaford Head School hall as a back-up venue (subject to availability);
- b. Committee meetings continue to be held in the Council Chambers, with The View as a back-up venue (subject to availability);
- c. Meetings will be video recorded using Town Council equipment and uploaded to the Town Council's YouTube channel – no change;
- d. Meetings will not be livestreamed or have provision for hybrid meetings – no change;
- e. Public participants are welcomed to attend the meeting in person and make representations in the usual manner – no change.

C137.3 It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that this Council supports the petition launched by ADSO and LLG on 5 January with regard to remote and hybrid meetings. We agree to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities calling on the Government to change the law to allow councils the flexibility to hold such meetings when they deem appropriate within agreed rules and procedures.

Full Council thanked Seaford Baptist Church for the facilities and support made available whilst facilitating the Town Council meetings.

C138/03/21 Annual Review of Corporate Risk Register 2022

Full Council considered report 187/21 presenting the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register and subsequent action plans for review and approval.

C138.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **ACKNOWLEDGE** the review of the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register.

C138.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the revised General & Financial Risk Assessment as presented with report 187/21.

C139/03/21 Annual Review of Internal Controls

Full Council considered report 185/21 presenting the Town Council's Internal Controls for review and approval.

C139.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Town Council's Internal Controls as set out in report 185/21.

C139.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the Statements 2, 5, 6 and 7 of the Annual Governance Statement have been complied with as set out in report 185/21.

C140/03/21 2022 – 2023 Annual Investment Strategy

Full Council considered report 186/21 seeking approval of the 2022 – 2023 Annual Investment Strategy.

C140.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Investment Strategy 2022 – 2023 as set out in report 186/21.

C140.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report.

C141/03/21 Sickness Absence Policy Review

Full Council considered report 155/21 presenting a revised Sickness Absence Policy as considered by the Town Council's Personnel Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the Sickness Absence Policy as presented with report 155/21.

The meeting closed at 8.51pm.

Councillor R Reed

Councillor Rodney Reed
Mayor of Seaford