

Seaford Annual Town Meeting

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held via Zoom on **Tuesday 20th April 2021** at **7.00pm**.

Present from Seaford Town Council:

Chair - Councillor Rodney Reed (2020-2021 Mayor)

11 Town Councillors

Adam Chugg (Town Clerk) and Georgia Raeburn (Executive Support Officer).

Peter White (Town Crier of Seaford)

11 members of the public

Peter White, Town Crier of Seaford, called people to the meeting and lead a minutes silence in honour of the late Duke of Edinburgh. A tribute is also posted on the Town Council's website.

1. Welcome and Introductions by the Mayor

The Mayor welcomed the attendees and outlined the format of the meeting. The Mayor also reminded people to view the Civic Awards and large grants presentations that have been recorded and uploaded onto the Town Council's YouTube channel.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held 21st May 2019 were accepted by the participants. The Mayor reminded the meeting that there was no Town Meeting in 2020 but that a video of the Awards and presentations is still available on the Town Council's YouTube Channel.

3. Seaford Town Council Update

Adam Chugg, Town Clerk, presented key updates from the Town Council this year. The full presentation and slides shown can be viewed within the recording of the meeting.

This included:

Key information –The Town Council is the most local form of government that works for the betterment of Seaford, is custodian of some open spaces, Seaford Head Golf Course and The View restaurant, the seafront, Seaford Head Nature Reserve, memorials, Sutton Road War Memorial, events, working in partnership with community groups and facilitating the office of Young Mayor.

A quick word about money - a brief overview of income and expenditure and the 2021-2022 precept was presented.

Key priorities 2021 – The Town Clerk set out the 10 key priorities for this calendar year which include;

'Staycation' 2021, Grounds Maintenance contracts, Martello Toilets, Climate Emergency, planning and land, Assets Working Group, cliff management, return to physical meetings, refreshed objectives and seafront plans.

'Staycation' 2021- further information about staycation plans were set out, which included details of the Martello Fields, concessions, The Salts and Crouch, South Hill Barn, memorials and sponsorship, camping/glamping, the golf course, The View, visitor numbers and local businesses.

The Town Clerk also expressed his intention to have a positive approach and culture that is respectful and inclusive in decision making.

4. Question & Answer Time

<i>Resident A</i>	<i>Expressed their pleasure at receiving an update on the flora and fauna of Seaford Head and the planning for staycations. They spoke about the Seaford community being at the heart of the town itself; the whole community coming together to respond to the Covid crisis and for the protection of the town and those most vulnerable. Thanked Seaford Town Council on behalf of the Seaford Volunteer Emergency Team (SVET) for the Mayor's Award recognising all those volunteers that responded. Confirmed that this was a whole team and whole town effort and that SVET would be ready and able to continue if needed in the future.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for this statement and were pleased SVET had been nominated and won an award.
<i>Resident B</i>	<i>Expressed an interest in the camping/glamping aspect of the Staycation 2021 plans. Stated that in 2020 there were issues with camping on the beach overnight, which is against Town Council byelaws. Questioned what the plans were to deal with camping on the beach this summer.</i> <i>Noticed that the litter bins had disappeared on the golf course and asked if there were plans to put them back.</i> <i>Questioned whether, if there were another lockdown, the Town Council has plans to make better use of golf course for socially distanced exercise. Explained that in lockdown, the public were discouraged from using the golf course but felt that this should be allowed as long as it is done respectfully.</i>
Town Council Response	With regards to the camping, confirmed that the Town Council has regular meetings with Police as partners. Confirmed that this item is on the agenda for the next meeting with the Police, to discuss steps the Town Council or other agencies can take to address this. Explained that with regards to the golf course, this is an ecologically important site, so the Town Council needs to strike the right balance of being a facility for town and the responsibility as custodians of that space and its upkeep. Understands that there are differing opinions as to how the space is used but that the Town Council will always look at best use of space. Confirmed that a refurbishment is underway with bins – new ones are on order and due to arrive soon.
<i>Resident C</i>	<i>Asked that as the Town Council is not the tourism authority, can it speak with Lewes District Council about keeping the vital Tourist Information Centre open throughout week.</i>
Town Council Response	Confirmed that this would be raised with Lewes District Council.
<i>Resident D</i>	<i>Described how St Peter's Church has installed an L-shaped corner bench, which has really encouraged and increased conversations. Asked how the Town Council is planning to help rebuild the community after the pandemic. Explained that facilitating safe places to converse and meet with one another does help and queried whether the Town Council would look at installing L-shaped or similar benches to encourage this.</i>
Town Council Response	Confirmed that the Town Council would be happy to look at this.

<i>Resident E</i>	<i>Commented on the remarkableness of The Shoal benches and the commemorations mounted on them. Queried whether the Town Council can turn this into the 'Seaford' signature and whether it can look at recreating this elsewhere in the town.</i>
<i>Resident F</i>	<i>Voiced the possibility, subject to Town Council resources, of more plaques on The Shoal and possible scope for more partnership fishes too.</i>
Town Council Response	Confirmed that the Town Council would be happy to look at this.
<i>Resident G</i>	<i>Thanked the Mayor on behalf of Phillipa Davis, who started Sew Sussex and was sorry not to be able to this evening's meeting, for her Mayor's Award. Confirmed that Sew Sussex has made over a million items for NHS workers and volunteers.</i>
<i>Resident H</i>	<i>Questioned whether the Town Council would look at a feasibility study of introducing car parking fees for visitors to seafront.</i>
Town Council Response	Confirmed that this is an issue that has been raised recently and that increased visitor numbers are clearly making people think about this. Explained that a solution cannot be offered now but that the Town Council can work with relevant partners to look in to the most appropriate ways forward.
<i>Resident I</i>	<i>Expressed pride of the fact that the Town Council gained NACO Civic Office of the Year commendations.</i>
Town Council Response	Confirmed that the Town Council was commended for how it coped and adapted during the Covid pandemic and highly commended for how it is planning to come out of this.

In closing the Mayor thanked the Town Council Officers for facilitating this Virtual Town Forum and thanked everyone for 'attending' and reminded people to take a moment to watch the Civic Awards and large grants presentations on the Town Council's YouTube Channel.

The meeting ended at 7.58pm

Councillor Rodney Reed
Mayor of Seaford 2020-2021