



## Seaford Town Council

### Minutes of a meeting of Seaford Town Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Held in the Council Chambers, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG at 7.00pm.

#### Present:

Councillors F Hoareau (Chair) and R Stirton (Vice Chair)

Councillors S Ali, L Boorman, C Bristow, R Buchanan, J Lord and L Wallraven

Adam Chugg, Town Clerk

Karen Singleton, Responsible Financial Officer

Lucy Clark, Finance Manager

There were 4 members of the public present.

#### **F01/06/23 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies of absence received.

#### **F02/06/23 Disclosure of Interests**

Councillors L Wallraven and F Hoareau declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7, as members of the Seaford Bonfire Society.

#### **F03/06/23 Public Participation**

Speaker	Statement
Resident A	<i>Expressed concerns about the Grants Policy stating that grants are not awarded retrospectively, in particular given the grants timeline. Confirmed that the Motorfest event – a huge community event that is not-for-profit and relies upon external funding - took place on 25<sup>th</sup> June, which before the working group meeting but after the Committee meeting, and is an example of the timeline and policy requirements not working. Asked the Committee to consider a lower amount of £1,000 for Motorfest.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution. Clarified that whilst the working group took place on 13 <sup>th</sup> June, only

	<p>recommendations were discussed and actual decisions would be made at this Committee which is after the event. Confirmed that the Town Council will write to the organisation about these points and to see if there is a way around the unfortunate timings for future years.</p>
<i>Resident B</i>	<p><i>Following an emailed send to the Town Council in relation to grants and the leases that have been entered into by the Town Council, raised concerns around rent reviews not considering market value, rent reviews not taking place during lease terms and a potential loss of rental income as a result. Requested that the Town Council consider these points and ensures future rent reviews are carried out properly.</i></p> <p><i>Raised further concerns that one of the Town Council's tenant sports club is not a 'not- for- profit' organisation and should therefore be paying the market value. Also believes that this sports club has failed to provide its accounts to Companies House and so the Town Council have entered into a 50 year lease with an organisation that is failing to meet its requirements as a limited company. Requested that the Town Council reconsiders more detail within the email of the concerned resident.</i></p>
Town Council Response	<p>Recognised that the Town Council is behind with some of its rent review processes and this being a reason for the recent organisational restructure - the rent review process will be taken forward ensuring market values are considered where appropriate.</p> <p>Clarified that the sports clubs' rents are historic dating back to when Lewes District Council set them as landowners and the approach has not changed since then. Confirmed that the social value as well as the market value was considered and it is seen as normal practice to charge sports clubs – and other organisations - lower rents for social benefits.</p>

	Clarified that there is nothing in the Grants Policy to prevent current tenants from receiving a grant.
<i>Resident C</i>	<i>Congratulated the members that elected to join this committee. Expressed sincere thanks to the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for their professionalism, expertise, support and guidance. Commented that the previous F&amp;GP Committee have passed on a very healthy financial position with sufficient reserves to improve the town of Seaford. Advised the committee to enjoy their time as councillors and to ensure that the finances should be spent on improving Seaford Town for its residents and the environment.</i>
Town Council Response	Extended the Committee's thanks to the previous chair of this Committee and to the Responsible Finance Officer for their services.

*(7.15pm - Resident B exited the meeting)*

*(7.15pm - Councillor S Ali leaves the room)*

### **F03/06/23      Receipts, Payments and Bank Reconciliation Reports for February, March, April and May 2023**

The Committee considered report 15/23 advising of Receipts, Payments and Bank Reconciliations for February, March, April and May 2023.

The Responsible Finance Officer highlighted that the Town Council banks with the Co-Operative Bank and that its savings account is with the CCLA.

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

*(7.18pm - Councillor S Ali returned to the room)*

### **F04/06/23      Finance Report to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023**

The Committee considered report 16/23 informing the Committee of the Income and Expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 and highlighting significant variances from budget.

The Responsible Finance Officer responded to Members requesting further clarification on certain items.

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

## **F05/06/23 Finance & General Purposes Year End Finance Report 2022 - 2023**

The Committee considered report 09/23 presenting the year end 2022 - 2023 financial positing for the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Responsible Finance Officer gave a brief explanation on the partial exemption adjustments and responded to members questions.

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

## **F06/06/23 2023 - 2024 Grant Applications**

The Committee considered report 18/23 informing the Committee of the 2023 – 2024 grant applications.

The Responsible Finance Officer informed the Committee that a column within the Small Grants list, which clarified the reason why Seaford Community Partnership were not awarded a grant, was omitted on page 37 of the agenda. It was confirmed that the cost of this work could come from the Town Council’s maintenance budget as it is Town Council owned land.

Members discussed Residents A’s comments. The Responsible Finance Officer confirmed that the Grants Policy is due to be reviewed before next year’s grants process and that the Committee can look to make changes in such a way to avoid the timing issues.

**F06.1** It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the recommendations of the Town Council’s Grants Working Group.

**F06.2** It was **RESOLVED to AGREE** the successful grant applicants in the 2023 - 2024 scheme and to **APPROVE** the amounts awarded as set out below:

<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Purpose of Grant</b>	<b>Award Agreed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Small Grants – Up to £500</b>			
Seaford Community Partnership	For maintenance of the Beach Garden comprising the sunken garden plus two raised gravel gardens either side of it.	<b>£0.00</b>	Funds for this work can come from budget due to being a Council-owned piece of land and the Council originally funding the work to create the Sunken Garden. The Council will look to formalise maintenance / funding process going forwards.

Name of Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Award Agreed	Comments
Seaford Cricket Club	Towards purchasing branded feather flags to be used at events along with the purchase of promotion flyers.	<b>£310.00</b>	Awarded full amount
<b>Large Grants - £501 to £3,000</b>			
Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team	Towards the cost of fuel expenses for BHCT 4x4 patrol vehicles to continue to provide search and rescue patrols.	<b>£0.00</b>	The Grants Policy states not to grant to religious groups. Charity is not based in Seaford. Oversubscription of grants pool required prioritisation for Seaford-specific activities.
Care for the Carers	To reach more young carers in the Seaford Area by running two activities at the Mecread Youth Centre to include arts and crafts, sport of cooking along with providing advice and support from the team.	<b>£767.00</b>	Grant awarded to cover travel costs, venue hire, refreshments and resources, and support and supervision; not the two staffing costs as an ongoing/revenue cost.
Cradle Hill P.T.F.A.	Towards providing an outdoor quiet play zone which will be fenced, seated and sheltered. This would also double up as an outside learning area.	<b>£2,815.00</b>	Small reduction to conform to budget.
Cuckmere Community Bus	To help meet ongoing annual running costs and avoid/minimize deficits and help bridge the gap between income and expenditure.	<b>£2,000.00</b>	Reduced to reflect previous year's grant awarded. Recommends to enter into discussions with Cuckmere Community Buses about a service funding agreement for a set period.

Name of Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Award Agreed	Comments
Down Syndrome Development Trust (DSDT)	To support 5 Seaford based Children with DS and their families to access our Swimming Activities	<b>£0.00</b>	A charity that has been supported by the Council over a number of years - has grown and strengthened itself significantly, resulting in less volunteers but more paid staff, a wider reach than just Seaford, healthy cash balances and access to a number of different funding routes. Oversubscription of grants pool required careful prioritisation of allocation of funds.
Family Support Work (FSW)	Funding towards the Reachout to Positive Activities 2023/24 in Seaford providing a range of activities for Seaford families of a 12 month period for those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.	<b>£0.00</b>	Grants Policy states not to grant to religious groups. Charity not based in Seaford and funds are towards ongoing staffing costs. Oversubscription of grants pool required prioritisation for Seaford-specific activities.
Friends of Bishopstone Station CIC	To help fund IT equipment, cleaning costs and accountancy fees relating to our two community projects, Meet up Mondays and Bishopstone Station Community Food Project.	<b>£1,400.00</b>	Grant awarded to cover IT equipment, not cleaning costs/provisions or the accountant costs.

Name of Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Award Agreed	Comments
GIA (Gardening in Action) CIC	To Support the Peverells Community Garden with providing one year's welfare facilities, part funding of wheelchair matting and a colour laser printer with supplies.	<b>£1,786.00</b>	Grant awarded to cover part of wheelchair matting costs, not printer or venue/welfare hire costs.
Havens Community Hub	To Support the expansion and development of Havens Food Co-Operative Pop Up Pantry Scheme allowing operations to continue and more partnership working to take place.	<b>£502.00</b>	Felt a grant should be awarded due to the importance of the charitable activities, although could see the charity is district-wide and has access to a variety of funding pools. Grant awarded to part fund advertising and volunteer mileage costs, not overhead or organisational costs. Would like to see advertising/promotion of work within Seaford prioritised before allocating funds to expanding.
Lewes District Churches Homelink	To help to continue the delivery of their Small Grants service.	<b>£0.00</b>	Grants Policy states not to grant to religious groups. Not comfortable with agreeing a grant to then fund a charities own grants scheme.
Mercread Youth Centre	To convert the Main Entrance Door into an Automatic Access door for wheelchair users and general easier access.	<b>£2,500.00</b>	Small reduction to conform to budget.

Name of Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Award Agreed	Comments
Seaford Bonfire Society	To assist with the cost of providing medical emergency professionals along with the assisting the costs of the event security.	<b>£2,000.00</b>	Reduction to conform to budget and also reflect the oversubscription of grants pool requiring careful prioritisation of allocation of fund.
Seaford Community Events Committee	Towards the cost of the Event Management/Health & Safety Provisions (run by Sussex Events) for Seaford Motorfest 2023.	<b>£0.00</b>	Grant not awarded due to event taking place before grant is made and policy stipulating against this. Recommends that the applicant considers applying in advance for following year's event i.e., apply in 2024/25 scheme for their June 2025 event, with the ability to spend the grant monies in the preparation stages of the event in the 2024/25 financial year, as per the Grants Policy. (However, the Grants Policy is due to be reviewed before the next Grants Process and this situation will be considered).
St James' Trust (Seaford)	Towards the weekly cost of a mini-bus hire for the Tuesday Lunch Club. The transport is essential to the club's success as many clients no longer drive and are unable to use public transport.	<b>£2,475.00</b>	Awarded full amount.



<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Purpose of Grant</b>	<b>Award Agreed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Teddy Treats Childrens Charity	Support Local Children to Attend Dance, Singing & Art Activities.	<b>£2,815.00</b>	Small reduction to conform to budget
The Youth Counselling Project	To provide sixty sessions of wellbeing support and mental health interventions to six additional children or young people in need in Seaford.	<b>£2,815.00</b>	Small reduction to conform to budget
Waves (Seaford)	To enable improvement and expansion of services during the next twelve Months by offering practical help & emotional support to families and children experiencing short or long-term difficulties. Furthermore, to enable an additional fifty wellbeing/counselling sessions to families and children in need and distress.	<b>£2,815.00</b>	Small reduction to conform to budget
	<b><u>TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED</u></b>	<b><u>£25,000.00</u></b>	

**F06.3** It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the future work around possible service funding agreements.

### **F07/06/23 Seaford Town Football Club Grant**

The Committee considered report 19/23 seeking approval to carry forward a grant awarded to Seaford Town Football Club in 2022 - 2023 to 2023 - 2024.

Members discussed the report in depth. The Responsible Finance Officer advised that situations such as this could also factored in when reviewing the Grants Policy before the next year's process.

Members thanked the professionalism of the Responsible Finance Officer for ensuring that the grant money is spent correctly.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that the grant of £1,500 awarded to Seaford Town Football Club in 2022 - 2023 is carried forward to 2023 - 2024, on the condition that the Town Council is kept up to date with the progress of the project and the grant is returned if it is not used for its intended purpose by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, or earlier should the project not be viable.

**F08/06/23 Exclusion of the Press & Public**

It was **RESOLVED** that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public **BE EXCLUDED** from the meeting during the discussion on the next item of business for the reasons as set out on the agenda.

*(7.38pm - the remaining public exited the meeting)*

**F09/06/23 Receipts Due for Payment EXEMPT**

The Committee considered exempt report 17/23 confirming the unpaid receipts due on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

The Responsible Finance Officer responded to members requesting further clarification on certain items.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the receipts due for payment list as of 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

The meeting closed at 7.44pm.

*Councillor F Hoareau*

Councillor F Hoareau

Chair of Finance & General Purposes