



## Seaford Town Council

### Seaford Town Council Full Council Agenda – Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### To the Members of the Full Council

Councillors S Adeniji, S Ali, L Boorman, C Bristow, R Buchanan, R Clay, S Dubas, F Hoareau, O Honeyman, R Honeyman, J Lord, S Markwell, O Matthews, J Meek, G Rutland, L Stirton, R Stirton, I Taylor, L Wallraven and M Wearmouth

A meeting of the **Full Council** will be held at **The View at Seaford Head,**

**Southdown Road, Seaford, BN25 4JS** on **Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024** at

**7.00pm**, which you are summoned to attend.

Adam Chugg,

Town Clerk

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- The meeting will be recorded and uploaded to the Town Council's YouTube channel shortly after the meeting.
- See the end of the agenda for further details of public access and participation.
- Ahead of the meeting, the Mayor has requested that a short reflection by a Seaford Town Councillor be provided before the meeting. Anyone not wishing to take part in this reflection is invited to wait until 6.55pm before attending the meeting.
- There will also be a minutes' silence held in memory of former Town Councillor, Pauline Gower

### 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 relevant legislation and Seaford Town Council Policy.

## 4. Petitions

In accordance with the Town Council Petitions Policy, this is a standard agenda item to facilitate any public petitions being presented to, and noted by, Full Council. Please note, that this would not prompt a discussion on the petition at this meeting.

## 5. Minutes

To note the following minutes, approving or not approving recommendations as required:

|   |                            |   |   |
|---|----------------------------|---|---|
| 5.1   | Full Council               | 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024   | <a href="#">25.01.24 Full Council Draft Minutes</a>                   |
|   |                            | <i>N.B. There is an amendment to the draft minutes circulated – this is the inclusion of an additional sentence within, minute ref C103/01/23, as follows:<br/><br/>'It was requested that the vote on the recommendations be taken separately, given speculation around the term "widespread support" being used.'</i> |   |
|   |                            | 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2024  | <a href="#">15.02.24 Full Council Draft Minutes</a>                   |
|   | Community Services         | 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024  | <a href="#">07.03.24 Community Services Draft Minutes</a>             |
|   | Finance & General Purposes | 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2024   | <a href="#">12.03.24 Finance &amp; General Purposes Draft Minutes</a> |
| <i>N.B. The Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee has made two recommendations to Full Council within these minutes (minute ref F34 and F37.2).<br/><br/>Full Council is asked to approve the minutes at this stage of the meeting, noting that the two recommendations are included elsewhere on this agenda for consideration.</i> |                            |   |   |
|   | Golf & The View            | 27 <sup>th</sup> February 2024  | <a href="#">27.02.24 Golf &amp; The View Draft Minutes</a>            |
|   | Planning & Highways        | 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2024   | <a href="#">01.02.24 Planning &amp; Highways Draft Minutes</a>        |

|  |  |                                |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
|  |  | 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2024 | <a href="#">22.02.24 Planning &amp; Highways Draft Minutes</a> |
|  |  | 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024    | <a href="#">14.3.24 Planning &amp; Highways Draft Minutes</a>  |

## 6. Civic Update Reports

### a. [Mayor's Update Report](#)

To consider report 184/23 presenting the Mayor's update and details of engagements attended (pages 8 to 10).

### b. Young Mayor's Office Update

To give an opportunity for a verbal update from the Young Mayor's office.

## 7. [Town Clerk's Update Report](#)

To consider report 198/23 updating Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Council (pages 11 to 15).

## 8. Town Council Working Group Reports

A standard agenda item to accommodate reports from active Town Council Working Groups. N.B. There are no working group reports for this meeting.

## 9. 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.

## 10. District & County Councillor Update Report

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

## 11. [Request for the Town Council's Support of a Seaford App](#)

To consider report 191/23 updating the committee on the creation of and consider supporting the Seaford App (pages 16 to 21).

## 12. [Committee Structure Review](#)

To consider report 183/23 providing a briefing on the review to be carried out on the Town Council's Committee structure (pages 22 to 24).

**13. [2024 – 2025 Proposed Meeting Timetable](#)**

To consider report 196/23 presenting the proposed 2024 - 2025 meeting timetable for adoption by Full Council (pages 25 to 27).

**14. [Final Adoption of Discretionary Grants Policy](#)**

To consider report 194/23 presenting the revised Discretionary Grants Policy for final adoption, as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee (pages 28 to 38).

**15. [Financial Regulations Review](#)**

To consider report 185/23 presenting the review of the Town Council's Financial Regulations (pages 39 to 62).

**16. [Annual Investment Strategy](#)**

To consider report 189/23 presenting the Annual Investment Strategy 2024 - 2025 for adoption (pages 63 to 68).

**17. [Annual Review of Corporate Risk Register 2024](#)**

To consider report 188/23 seek Full Council's review and approval of the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register and subsequent action plans (pages 69 to 83).

**18. [Annual Review of Internal Controls](#)**

To consider report 187/23 allowing Full Council to review and approve the Town Council's Internal controls (pages 84 to 91).

**19. [Appointment of the Internal Auditor](#)**

To consider report 186/23 proposing a three-year agreement with the current appointed internal auditor, Mulberry & Co (pages 92 to 94).

**20. [Cuckmere Buses – Proposed Grant Funding Agreement](#)**

To consider report 190/23 seeking approval to a three-year Grant Funding Agreement with Cuckmere Buses and the amount of grant funding given (pages 95 to 106).

**21. [Lewes District Council's High Street Audit – Opportunity for Seaford](#)**

To consider report 195/23 briefing Full Council on proposals from Lewes District Council for a 'High Street Audit' for Seaford, including a financial contribution from the Town Council (pages 107 to 113).

## **22. South Hill Farm Lease**

To consider report 192/23 providing an update on the review of the lease for South Hill Farm – the farmland on the Seaford Head Estate (pages 114 to 123).

## **23. New Asset – Bus Shelters**

To consider report 199/23 presenting an opportunity for the Town Council to take on ownership of three new bus shelters within the town (pages 124 to 127).

## **24. Member's Allowance Policy**

To consider report 193/23 providing an opportunity for Full Council to consider a review of its Member's Allowance Policy (pages 128 to 143).

## **25. Exclusion of Press & Public**

The Chair will move 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 below.

The resolutions of the items will be recorded publicly in the minutes of this meeting.

*The Proper Officer considers that discussion of the following item is likely to disclose exempt information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 and Freedom of Information Act 2000 and may therefore need to take place in private session. The exempt information reasons are shown alongside the item below.*

*Furthermore, in relation to paragraph 10 of Schedule 12A, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.*

## **26. Assets Update – Bönningstedt Wall & Hurdis House EXEMPT**

To consider exempt report 197/23 providing a confidential update relating to two of the Town Council's assets (exempt pages).

*Reason for exemption: to consider commercially sensitive arrangements relating to the financial and business affairs of the Town Council's assets.*

*Explanation of Reason: under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s43(1), disclosure of this report would likely prejudice the commercial interests or activities of any party.*

## AGENDA NOTES

### **For further information about items on this Agenda please contact:**

Adam Chugg, Town Clerk, 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG

Email: [meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01323 894 870

### **Circulation:**

All Town Councillors, Young Mayor, Deputy Young Mayor and registered email recipients.

### **Public Access:**

Members of the public looking to access this meeting will be able to do so by:

1. Attending the meeting in person.

Due to health and safety restrictions, the number of public in attendance will be limited. The Town Council therefore asks that you contact

[meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk) or 01323 894 870 to register your interest in attending at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Spaces will be assigned on a first come, first served basis.

Please note that if you don't register and just attempt to turn up at the meeting, this could result in you not being able to attend if there is no space.

OR

2. Watching the recording of the meeting on the [Town Council's YouTube channel](#) , which will be uploaded after the meeting has taken place.

### **Public Access to the Venue:**

If you are attending the meeting in person, please arrive from 6.45pm where you will be shown into the meeting for a 7.00pm start.

### **Public Participation:**

Members of the public looking to participate in the public participation section of the meeting must do so in person, by making a verbal statement during the public participation section of the meeting.

Below are some key points for public participation in the meeting:

1. Your statement should be relevant to the activities of the Town Council.
2. You will only be able to speak at a certain point of the meeting; the Chair of the meeting will indicate when this is.

3. You do not have to state your name if you don't want to.
4. If you are unsure of when best to speak, either query this with an officer/councillor ahead of the meeting or raise your hand during the public participation item of the meeting and ask the Chair – they will always be happy to advise.
5. When the Chair has indicated that it is the part of the meeting that allows public participation, raise your hand and the Chair will invite you to speak in order.
6. Statements by members of the public are limited to four minutes and you don't automatically have the right to reply. The Chair may have to cut you short if you overrun on time or try to speak out of turn – this is just to ensure the meeting stays on track.
7. Where required, the Town Council will try to provide a response to your statement but if it is unable to do so at the meeting, may respond in writing following the meeting.
8. Members of the public should not speak at other points of the meeting.
9. A summarised version of your statement, but no personal details, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## **Public Comments**

Members of the public looking to submit comments on any item of business on the agenda can do so in writing ahead of the meeting and this will be circulated to all committee members. Comments can be submitted by email to [meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk) or by post to the Town Council offices.

## **Health & Safety Measures:**

While Covid restrictions are no longer mandated the Town Council wishes to stay vigilant and mindful of the health and safety of its meeting participants by upholding the requirement that you should not attend the meeting if you are displaying any Covid-19 symptoms (or have tested positive) as identified on the [NHS website](#) or symptoms of any similarly contagious illness



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>184/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>6a</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Mayor's Update Report – March 2024</b>  |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk</b>                                    |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present the Mayor's update report and details of engagements attended.</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>                  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>     |
| 1. To note the contents of this report. |

### **1. Information**

1.1 Details of the mayoral engagements and updates since the last Full Council meeting can be found at Appendix A below.

### **2. Financial Appraisal**

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

### **3. Contact Officer**

3.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk.



## Report 184/23 Appendix A

### Mayor's Report to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Full Council

#### Mayors' Engagements

##### FEBRUARY

24<sup>th</sup> February – Premier Convenience store, I cut the ribbon for the opening of the new store.

24<sup>th</sup> February – Ukraine Vigil for the second anniversary of the Ukraine War, this was held at St Leonards Church.

##### MARCH

5<sup>th</sup> March – Youth Counselling Quiz night at The Plough.

12<sup>th</sup> March – East Sussex High Sheriff Awards at Hellingly Community Hub.

16<sup>th</sup> March – Cocktail/Mocktail evening in aid of the Young Mayor's Charities.

16<sup>th</sup> March – Peacehaven Civic Reception.

#### Future events that the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor will attend:

##### APRIL

13<sup>th</sup> April – A joint fundraiser for The Mercread Youth Centre and The Youth Counselling Project to be held at the Mercread Youth Centre. Please check the Mayor's Facebook page and/or the Town Council's website for more details of the purchase of tickets.

22<sup>nd</sup> April – Seaford Rotary Club are holding a presentation evening for young writers.

23<sup>rd</sup> April – Royal Society of St George, church service and meal to celebrate St George's day.

30<sup>th</sup> April – Seaford Town Forum, hosting by Seaford Town Council at Cross Way Church.

#### 2024 – 2025 Mayoral Events that the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor will attend:

##### MAY

10<sup>th</sup> May – East Sussex Women of the Year Lunch.

The Mercread Youth Centre and The Youth Counselling Project have been my chosen charities this Mayoral year. I have enjoyed working with them, attending events, raising money, and raising awareness of their work in the community. Thank you to both charities who work so hard for the Seaford residents.

Thank you to all of the charities who do so much work in the Seaford Community.  
Thanks to everyone who has helped with the various Mayoral functions, Civic Service and Mayor's Carol concert, they were amazing events.  
Many thanks especially to the Seaford Town Council officers who manage the Civic Office, and to Cllr Sally Markwell, who has been a very supportive Deputy Mayor.



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | 198/23  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | 7   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | Full Council  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2024   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | Town Clerk's Update Report – March 2024   |
| <b>By:</b>                | Adam Chugg, Town Clerk  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | To update Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Council. |

### Recommendations

#### Full Town Council is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** It remains a very busy time for the Town Council, but also an exciting one with a number of key areas of work being taken forward. I want to thank Councillors and officers for all their hard work in this period that has made a real difference.

**1.2** Please find below the following:

- Summary
- Key performance indicators including motions passed, complaints and Freedom of Information requests.
- Forward Planning

## 2. Summary

**2.1** Recent and current key achievements include the following:

**2.2** The View Transfer

**2.3** Has happened in this financial year. This has taken a fantastic team effort across the whole Town Council. The Town Council believes this will improve the catering offer to golfers and public over time, while delivering a more cost-effective delivery model.

**2.4** Staff Review – Council Offices

**2.5** This crucial work is now underway, with stage one including one-to-one discussions with every member of staff within the offices to give them a clear voice and key role in the process. This review will enable the Town Council to have the best possible structure, and use its funds most effectively.

**2.6** Committees

**2.7** It has been a particularly busy period for committee meetings in recent weeks, as the Town Council works hard to move business forward. The management team have worked well to take ‘ownership’ of relevant committees.

**2.8** Martello

**2.9** The project to refurbish the toilets, introduce a café and create a new Changing Places unit is on track.

**2.10** Stakeholders

**2.11** The latest Salts Stakeholder Group is just one example of the Town Council doing what it can to work with local groups and communities in our work.

**3. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

**3.1** Please find below information on motions passed, complaints received, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received and appeals submitted since the last report in January 2024.

**3.2** *Motions Table*

Please note that the motions listed below are those where actions after the meeting were required by the Town Council (STC).

| <b>DATE</b>  | <b>MOTION</b>          | <b>UPDATE</b>                            |
|--------------|------------------------|--|
| January 2024 | Budget for 2024 - 2025 | Being enacted. Please note that the work |

| DATE         | MOTION             | UPDATE   |
|--------------|--------------------|--|
|              |                    | undertaken to strengthen the finances of the Town Council has enabled the Councillors to agree a Precept increase significantly below the rate of inflation.   |
| January 2024 | Cliff Gardens      | Full Council gave permission for this project in 2022. Following on from the consideration of the latest update by Town Councillors, further discussions will take place with the Community Partnership as the project progresses. |
| January 2024 | Climate Policy     | Adopted. The Town Council has identified a number of actions to be taken as part of the implementation. The Climate Change Sub-Committee will consider these matters, reporting to the Community Services Committee.               |
| January 2024 | Concessions Policy | Adopted – updated policy used in latest tenders for concessions.   |

### 3.3 Complaints Table

Please find below details of the formal complaints received in accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Policy.

There were none submitted since the last update in January 2024.

Please note that this is the reporting that is possible in a public document. Any complaints relating directly to employees are handled confidentially in accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Policy and are not included in this update.

### 3.4 FOI Requests Table

| DATE        | FOI REQUEST   | UPDATE        |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| February 24 | Legal Compliance – Leases / S127 Local Government Act | Response sent |
| February 24 | Details of contracts/payments over £5000 in 2022      | Response sent |
| March 24    | Grass Verges costs                                    | Response sent |

### 3.5 Appeals

The Town Council has received one appeal, relating to a complaint about how the adverts on the Crouch were treated. This appeal is being considered.

## 4. Forward Planning

4.1 Like many recent Full Town Council meetings, this meeting has a very full agenda, and work on matters agreed will be taken forward.

4.2 In the coming months, some of our key work will also include:

- (a) Policy updates – to be brought to Full Town Council for review / agreement – a key policy to be reviewed is the Complaints Policy, taking forward any learning from the work to consider complaints in 2022 and 2023.
- (b) 'Seaford 25' – work to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of STC in 2024 – 2025 – a report on this will come to the May Full Council meeting explaining how the 2024 - 2025 civic year will be a '25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.'
- (c) Staffing Structure Review - outcomes to be considered. This review is a crucial piece of work, as improvements to the staffing structure

provides the best working environment for our busy staff, and best enables the Town Council to fulfill its functions well.

- (d) Parking – consider any recommendations from the Community Services Committee about parking.
- (e) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds – consideration of how these funds are to be used – a report will be brought to the June Full Council meeting.
- (f) Feed into the next stages of the Lewes Local Plan and considering when the Town Council will need to update the Neighbourhood Plan.
- (g) Celebrate D- Day.
- (h) Prepare for the new Town Centre Working Group in 2024 - 2025, as set out in the Town Council's Strategic Plan.
- (i) Consider a report from the South Hill Barn Working Group.
- (j) The Town Council is also hard at work at the upcoming Town Forum on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**4.3** Please note that these are just some examples of our work ahead.

## **5. Conclusion**

**5.1** I trust this provides an overview of key Town Council business for Councillors and residents, showing the mix of operational and strategic activities.

## **6. Financial Appraisal**

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

## **7. Contact Officer**

**7.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>191/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>11</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>                                      |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Request for the Town Council's Support of a Seaford App</b>         |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk</b>                          |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To note the creation of and consider supporting the Seaford App</b> |

### Recommendations

#### Full Council is recommended:

1. To note that a Seaford App is being created by Swappi and will be a free, online information hub for the community.
2. To consider supporting Swappi in the creation of the Seaford App by sharing links and general information about the Town Council and community.
3. Subject to recommendation two, to share details of the Seaford App, once launched, via the Town Council's communication channels.
4. Subject to recommendation two, to invite Swappi to present the launch of the Seaford App at the upcoming Town Forum on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Town Council has been approached by a small local business called Swappi, which creates mobile apps.
- 1.2 A mobile app is a type of application software designed to run on a smartphone or tablet device.
- 1.3 Having successfully worked with Peacehaven Town Council to create the Peacehaven and Telscombe App, Swappi is now creating an app for Seaford and is seeking non-financial support from Seaford Town Council.



- 1.4 The Peacehaven and Telscombe App can be viewed/downloaded via your mobile app store such as Google Play (for Android devices) or Apple App Store (for Apple devices).

## **2. About the App**

- 2.1 The Seaford App will be owned and maintained by Swappi, the Town Council will not be responsible for nor required to fund, update or fix the App.
- 2.2 The Seaford App will be free to all and available to download on Android and Apple devices.
- 2.3 As with the Peacehaven and Telscombe model, Swappi will fund the Seaford App by selling advertising space to local businesses, for which the Town Council will have no responsibility or involvement.
- 2.4 Acting as a central hub, the Seaford App will provide information and links to other authorities, organisations, and businesses detailing:
- Seaford's history;
  - travel information;
  - things to do;
  - tourist attractions;
  - Town, District, and County Council information;
  - live news and weather;
  - school and education;
  - sports clubs;
  - food, drink and places to stay;
  - health, well-being and mental health support;
  - and a business directory.
- 2.5 Example images of the Seaford App, and some statistics from the Peacehaven and Telscombe App can be found in Appendix A of this report.

## **3. Request for Seaford Town Council Support**

- 1.1 Swappi seeks the Town Council's support for the Seaford App in the form of:

- Sharing and linking information to the Seaford App, information which is already available on the Town Council’s website such as upcoming meetings and events, civic information, and public engagement/consultations.
- Sharing communications/marketing about the Seaford App to the Seaford community via the Town Council’s website, social media, and noticeboards.
- For the Seaford App to be able to say “supported by Seaford Town Council” as a way of helping the App to build trust within the community and its visitors.

#### **4. Summary and Recommendations**

- 4.1** The Town Council’s support is not required for the Seaford App to be created and run by Swappi. However, by giving its support, the Town Council is in a better position to make any comments or suggestions on the content of the Seaford App and put Swappi in contact with other organisations and authorities where necessary.
- 4.2** It will take minimal Town Council resources to provide Swappi with marketing support and links to Town Council and other community information.
- 4.3** It is therefore recommended that the Town Council supports the Seaford App, shares marketing and communications about the Seaford App, and shares with Swappi links to relevant pages of the Seaford Town Council website to be included in the Seaford App.
- 4.4** It is also recommended that Swappi is invited to present the launch of the Seaford App at the Seaford Town Forum on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024. To confirm, this is a public meeting rather than a Town Council meeting but is hosted by Seaford Town Council.

#### **5. Financial Appraisal**

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

#### **6. Contact Officer**

- 6.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Isabelle Moulard, Assistant Town Clerk.






## A NEW MOBILE APP FOR SEAFORD TOWN

### A SNEAK PREVIEW


Working with the council to create a free and informative app for the people of Seaford to bring the community and commerce of the town together.





### SEAFORD-TOWN-APP

This app is for the community of Seaford. Inside the app you will find valuable information; latest news, events, services, contacts, links, tourism, things to do and local updates.



Available for Apple  
Get it for Google

# COMING SOON



## SUMMARY

### A FREE APP FOR THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY

Supported by Seaford Town Council (?)

- ✓ Encouraging tourism
- ✓ Encouraging commerce
- ✓ Bringing the community together
- ✓ A source of useful and vital information
- ✓ Free to download and free from adverts

## A FREE APP FOR THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY

- Historical information
- Council updates
- Travel information
- Things to do with the kids
- Tourist attractions
- Planning updates
- Live updates (travel, weather, news)
- Schools and education
- Sports clubs
- Food and drink venues
- Health, well-being and mental health support
- **and a business directory**

We hope you agree that this is a positive idea for the town and something that will really help and benefit the community?

Here's a selection of some of the options and pages available

**A hub of free and useful information, news and services**

The businesses within the services example is blurred for GDPR reasons

# PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

30x

BUSINESSES, SERVICES AND CHARITIES SUBSCRIBING TO THE APP FOR ADVERTISEMENT

2,540 USERS WITH THE APP!  
& 5,543 VISITS TO THE APP

(data as of 14/03/2024)



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>183/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>12</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Committee Structure Review</b>  |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To provide a briefing on the review to be carried out on the Town Council's Committee Structure</b> |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Recommendations</b>                 |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>    |
| 1. To note the contents of the report. |

### 1. Information

- 1.1 Seaford Town Council is one of the largest town councils in the country, due to its portfolio of assets and subsequent budget levels. The Town Council therefore uses a committee structure to enable its decision-making processes, as it would not be practical for Full Council to consider all items of business.
- 1.2 The committee structure is agreed at each annual meeting of the Town Council in May. The current committee structure was established a number of years ago and, despite its annual readoption, has not been subject to more in depth review.
- 1.3 Officers therefore intend to review the committee structure. There being a number of reasons for the review, including:
- (a) the outsourcing of The View having changed the reporting and decision-making requirements of the Golf & The View Committee,
  - (b) the weighting of items of business across the various committees and Full Council being quite unbalanced, leading to some committee



meetings regularly being fairly short and some regularly being considerably longer,

- (c)** the remit of some committees and sub-committees benefitting from greater clarity, so there are clear expectations and understanding as to the purpose of that committee and also less confusion over which committee should consider certain items of business.

**1.4** This review is quite a significant piece of work as this directly or indirectly impacts the entire Town Council and is also linked to a number of other documents and processes.

**1.5** Officers are intending to begin this work in 2024 – 2025 ahead of any changes being implemented in 2025 – 2026.

**1.6** To confirm, the 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable and agenda items of business will be based upon the current committee structure (see a report elsewhere on this agenda). This will however be the transitional year and depending on when the review outcomes are determined by Full Council, there may be possibilities for changes to be rolled out in preparation for / advance of May 2025, if this is deemed to be suitable and practical.

**1.7** To clarify, the review will be looking at:

- (a)** the committee structure,
- (b)** the meeting timetable (frequency of meetings, days of the week), and
- (c)** committee terms of reference.

**1.8** Some of the key elements of this review will include:

- (a)** engagement with and feedback from councillors,
- (b)** learning from other councils,
- (c)** the outcome of the review of the Town Council's office staff structure and roles within, and
- (d)** current Town Council policy documents and/or national or best practice models.

**1.9** Following the above steps taking place, the process for reaching a final draft structure is proposed to mimic that taken with the budget-setting process:

- (a)** Each individual committee/sub-committee will be presented with a draft structure and terms of reference for consideration, making

recommendations either to Full Council or the parent committee, whichever relevant,

- (b) Full Council will then be presented with a draft structure and terms of reference based upon the recommendations of its committees.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 At this stage, Full Council is asked to note the planned review.
- 2.2 Updates will be brought back to Full Council accordingly with a view to the review outcomes being determined later in the 2024 – 2025 municipal year (October/November Full Council meeting being a sensible target, depending on the meeting timetable agreed elsewhere on this agenda).

## **3. Financial Appraisal**

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

## **4. Contact Officer**

- 4.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.





## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>196/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>13</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>2024 – 2025 Proposed Meeting Timetable</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>   |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present the proposed 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable for adoption by Full Council</b> |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Recommendations</b>                         |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>            |
| 1. To adopt the 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable. |

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Each year, Full Council is asked to adopt the timetable for its Council and committee meetings in the coming municipal year (May to May).
- 1.2 Members will be aware that elsewhere on this agenda is a report setting out the intention to review the Town Council's committee structure for Full Council to consider later in the 2024 – 2025 year.
- 1.3 While awaiting the outcome of this piece of work, the 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable and agenda items of business will be based upon the current committee structure.

### 2. Proposed Timetable

- 2.1 Attached at Appendix A is the proposed meeting timetable for the Full Council and committee meetings for the 2024 - 2025 Municipal Year.
- 2.2 As with each year, the timetable is largely dictated by the need for tri-weekly Planning & Highways meeting, in order to fit in with the District Council's planning processes.

- 2.3** Other Full Council and committee meetings are then scheduled in around this at the required frequency and occurring at relevant times of the year i.e. for the grants process, budget setting etc.
- 2.4** With 44 meetings in the municipal year, plus three other pre-scheduled dates, it can be challenging to address the varying needs of the meeting year – the proposed timetable does its best to balance these.
- 2.5** There are a few points to highlight with this proposed timetable:
- (a)** A better balance of meetings in each month has been achieved – avoiding any 5 meeting months;
  - (b)** August only contains Planning & Highways meetings, alleviating some pressure on both councillors and officers during peak holiday season;
  - (c)** Finance & General Purposes has moved back to a Thursday;
  - (d)** Golf & The View has only three meetings in this municipal year, due to the way in which the dates fell but also the outsourcing of The View and knowing this will result in less decision-making required of the Committee;
  - (e)** Personnel has only two pre-scheduled meeting in this municipal year but with the scope to schedule a third meeting at the appropriate time, depending on items of business for the Committee.
- 2.6** Full Council is asked to consider and adopt the proposed 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable as presented.

### **3. Financial Appraisal**

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

### **4. Contact Officer**

- 4.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.

**DRAFT**

Present to: March Full Council

**STC Meeting Timetable 2024-2025  
Public Meeting Timetable  
All at 7.00pm**

| Committee                       | Frequency                               | 2024                     |                                     |                          |   |             |                       |                           |                       | 2025   |                          |             |   |                     |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------|---|---------------------|
|                                 |   | May                      | June                                | July                     | Aug   | Sept        | Oct                   | Nov                       | Dec                   | Jan  | Feb                      | Mar         | April                                   | May                 |
| No. of Meetings =               |   | 3                        | 4+1                                 | 4                        | 2   | 3           | 3                     | 4                         | 4                     | 3+1  | 3                        | 4           | 3+1                                     | 3                   |
| Council                         | Bi-monthly                              | AGM<br>9<br>Thurs        | Year End Accounts<br>20<br>Thurs    | 25 <sup>h</sup><br>Thurs |   | 26<br>Thurs |                       | 14<br>Thurs               |                       | Budget<br>23<br>Thurs                        |                          | 27<br>Thurs |   | AGM<br>8**<br>Thurs |
| Community Services              | Quarterly<br>May, Sept, Dec,<br>Mar     | 30 <sup>h</sup><br>Thurs |                                     |                          |   | 12<br>Thurs |                       |                           | Budget<br>5<br>Thurs  |  |                          | 6<br>Thurs  |   |                     |
| Climate Change<br>Sub-Committee | Quarterly<br>Jul, Nov<br>Feb, May       |                          |                                     | 4<br>Thurs               |   |             |                       | Budget *<br>21<br>Thurs   |                       |  | 6<br>Thurs               |             |   | 1<br>Thurs          |
| Finance & General<br>Purposes   | Quarterly<br>Jun, Oct,<br>Dec, Mar      |                          | Grants<br>27<br>Thurs               |                          |   |             |                       | 10<br>Thurs               | Budget<br>19<br>Thurs |  |                          | 20<br>Thurs |   |                     |
| Golf & The View                 | Thrice Yearly<br>July, Dec, Apr         |                          |                                     | 30 <sup>h</sup><br>Tues  |   |             |                       |                           | Budget<br>10<br>Tues  |  |                          |             | 15 <sup>h</sup><br>Tues                 |                     |
| Planning & Highways             | Tri-weekly                              | 16<br>Thurs              | 6<br>Thurs<br>25<br>Tues            | 18<br>Thurs              | 8 <sup>h</sup><br>Thurs<br>29 <sup>h</sup><br>Thurs | 19<br>Thurs | 17<br>Thurs           | 7<br>Thurs<br>28<br>Thurs | 17<br>Tues            | 9<br>Thurs<br>30<br>Thurs                    | 20 <sup>h</sup><br>Thurs | 13<br>Thurs | 3<br>Thurs<br>24<br>Thurs               | 15**<br>Thurs       |
| Personnel                       | Twice Yearly +<br>others as<br>required |                          |                                     |                          |   |             | Budget*<br>3<br>Thurs |                           |                       |  | 27<br>Thurs              |             |   |                     |
| Others                          | Ad Hoc                                  |                          | 11<br>Grants Working Group<br>Thurs |                          |   |             |                       |                           |                       | 16<br>Budget<br>Briefing<br>Session<br>Thurs |                          |             | 29<br>2024 - 2025<br>Town Forum<br>Tues |                     |

44+3

**Notes**

- \* Won't receive draft budget paperwork but can consider any budgetary requests
- \*\* Forms part of 2025 - 2026 municipal year
- <sup>h</sup> In school holidays



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>194/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>14</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Final Adoption of Discretionary Grants Policy</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present the revised Discretionary Grants Policy for final adoption, as recommended by the Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee</b> |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Recommendations</b>   |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>  |
| 1.To adopt the revised Discretionary Grants Policy as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. |

### 1. Information

- 1.1 At its meeting in March 2024, the Finance & General Purposes Committee reviewed a revised Discretionary Grants Policy.
- 1.2 The Committee discussed the draft and agreed to recommend the draft policy to Full Council for adoption, subject to the following:
  - 5.5 Look at re-wording this point to aid the flow of reading.
  - 5.7 Change the wording 'all parties' to 'the Finance and General Purposes Committee'
  - 7.2 Include two further points:
    - a) Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward to the next financial year, they are then not permitted to apply for a new grant in that same financial year.

b) Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward, in addition to providing reasons, they must produce all updated documentation that is requested on the application form.

**1.3** These changes have been made and are tracked on the final draft version attached at Appendix A. This version is recommended by the Committee for adoption by Full Council.

**1.4** This revised policy will then be used for the 2024 discretionary grants scheme, which is due to go live in early-April 2024.

## **2. Financial Appraisal**

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

## **3. Contact Officer**

**3.1** The contact officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.



## Seaford Town Council

### Discretionary Grants Policy

2024 Review Version

F&GP Recommended to Full Council

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Policy Ref.</b>                         | F7  |
| <b>Date Last Adopted</b>                   | March 2023  |
| <b>Date of Next Review</b>                 | Before 2024 – 2025 grants scheme  |
| <b>Possible Prompts for Earlier Review</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change in internal processes or recommended best practice / legislation</li></ul> |
| <b>Previous Adoption Dates</b>             | May 2021<br>August 2017<br>May 2015   |
| <b>Author</b>                              | Responsible Financial Officer   |

# Discretionary Grants Policy

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

### DEFINITION:

A grant is any discretionary donation made by the Town Council to an external organisation, for the specific purpose it is applied for and is generally for the well-being of the Seaford community.

### OBJECTIVES:

The Town Council is committed, through this policy, to promote Seaford as a vibrant, active and sustainable community, and contribute to the development of projects and activities (including services) that benefit that community.

In doing so, the Town Council is aware of its responsibility for the use of public funds and for the distribution of these funds to be managed in accordance with the law and proper standards.

### RULES:

- 1.1 Financial grants are awarded by the Town Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) once a year; the timetable for the process is covered in section 5.
- 1.2 The Town Council operates a fully documented and transparent policy for awarding grants to ensure fairness and equality throughout the process.
- 1.3 The Town Council offers two types of financial grants:
  - large grants (£501, up to £3,000), and
  - small grants (up to £500).
- 1.4 There are different application forms for small or large grants and the applicant must ensure they are using the correct form for their requirements; the two forms are available from the Town Council's website when that years Grants scheme is running. Town Council staff can advise applicants as to which form to use.
- 1.5 The complete application and supporting documentation must be received on or before the closing date as advertised. Applications submitted without the necessary supporting documentation will not be able to be considered.
- 1.6 Only one application can be submitted from an organisation each year.

1.7 All applications will be considered at the same time but based on their individual merits. The final decision of assessment of applications and the level of any grant offered lies with the F&GP Committee.

1.8 The F&GP Committee will award a grant at a figure it deems suitable, taking into account the contents of this policy and not necessarily the figure that has been applied for.

1.9 Grants will be judged against clear and consistent criteria, and the successful applicants are required to adhere to a number of conditions set out below in this policy.

1.10 The Town Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the purpose specified on the application form.

1.11 The following **are not** eligible to apply for grants;

- a. Individuals, businesses, commercial organisations, religious groups\* or political parties
- b. Projects that are the statutory responsibility of other authorities
- c. Applicants who have a outstanding loan with or are financially indebted to the Town Council
- d. Applications seeking funding to cover the salary costs of activities.

\* unless the religious group can evidence that the project or activity will benefit the wider community, with no barriers as a result of religious beliefs

2. 1.12 Applicants are encouraged to apply to ensure their application is determined by the Town Council prior to the need for the funding. Retrospective applications for projects or activities delivered up to a maximum of three months prior to the submission deadline may be considered by the Town Council, but there is no guarantee an award will be made, and **applicants should not progress with their project on the assumption the Town Council will approve their request. LARGE GRANTS**

2.1 The maximum large grant amount that can be awarded by the F&GP Committee is £3,000. Exceptionally, grants over £3,000 may be considered but must be of benefit to potentially the whole town.

2.2 To be eligible to apply for a **Large** grant from the Town Council, the applicant must be able to provide and/or meet all of the following criteria;



- a. Be a voluntary/community group providing a service or activity for the benefit of the residents of Seaford;
- b. Applications must be made in the name of the organisation to which financial assistance is to be granted and all details on the application form must be completed.

2.3 Documentation Requirements - applicants are required to submit the following, with the table showing whether this is part of the application form or a separate document to be submitted:

|   | <b>Document</b>   | Application Form | Separate Document |
|---|---|------------------|-------------------|
| a | A written statement of how the grant is to be used  | Y                |                   |
| b | A written set of rules, constitution, or other governing document. They shall be current and properly authorised  |                  | Y                 |
| c | The latest bank statement showing details of a bank account held in the name of the applicant organisation  |                  | Y                 |
| d | The accounts of the organisation, including Balance sheet if available, for the previous financial year prior to the date of application, and indicate expenditure, income, assets and liabilities              |                  | Y                 |
| e | Proof of funding obtained from other partner bodies if appropriate  | Y                |                   |
| f | A copy of the organisation's Public Liability Insurance to the value of at least £1 million   |                  | Y                 |
| g | In the case of an organisation starting up, a projected budget is to be submitted along with a supporting business plan and risk management plan, for their first year of operation, in lieu of annual accounts |                  | Y                 |

|   | <b>Document</b>  | Application Form | Separate Document |
|---|--|------------------|-------------------|
| h | Grants requested for maintenance or improvement purposes must be supported by a minimum of two estimates for the work specified    |                  | Y                 |
| i | A policy to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (where appropriate)  |                  | Y                 |
| j | An Equality and/or Equal Opportunities policy (this policy may be contained within their constitution or other governing document) |                  | Y                 |
| k | Details of how the organisation will assess the effectiveness of the activity or project   | Y                |                   |

### 3. SMALL GRANTS

3.1 Small grants are awarded up to a maximum of £500.

3.2 To be eligible to apply for a **small** grant from the Town Council, the applicant must be able to provide and/or meet all of the following criteria;

- a. Be a voluntary/community group providing a project or activity for the benefit of the residents of Seaford;
- b. Applications must be made in the name of the organisation to which financial assistance is to be granted and all details on the application form must be completed.

3.3 Documentation Requirements – applicants are required to submit the following, with the table showing whether this is part of the application form or a separate document to be submitted:

|   | <b>Document</b>                                    | Application Form | Separate Document |
|---|--|------------------|-------------------|
| a | A written statement of how the grant is to be used | Y                |                   |

|   | <b>Document</b>   | Application Form | Separate Document |
|---|---|------------------|-------------------|
| b | A written set of rules, constitution, or other governing document. They shall be current and properly authorised  |                  | Y                 |
| c | The latest bank statement showing details of a bank account held in the name of the applicant organisation  |                  | Y                 |
| d | The accounts of the organisation, including Balance sheet if available, for the previous financial year prior to the date of application, and indicate expenditure, income, assets and liabilities              |                  | Y                 |
| e | Proof of funding obtained from other partner bodies if appropriate  | Y                |                   |
| f | A copy of Public Liability Insurance if the grant is to be used as a public event   |                  | Y                 |
| g | In the case of an organisation starting up, a projected budget is to be submitted along with a supporting business plan and risk management plan, for their first year of operation, in lieu of annual accounts |                  | Y                 |
| h | Grants requested for maintenance or improvement purposes must be supported by a minimum of two estimates for the work specified   |                  | Y                 |
| i | A policy to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (where appropriate)   |                  | Y                 |
| j | An Equality and/or Equal Opportunities policy (this policy may be contained within their constitution or other governing document)  |                  | Y                 |

## 4. AWARDING CRITERIA

- 4.1 Applications will be considered using the following criteria;
- a. Has the applicant met the documentation requirements?
  - b. Has the applicant specified how the grant will be used?
  - c. Has the applicant specified who will benefit from the grant within the Seaford community?
  - d. Is the applicant a voluntary or community group? And are they Seaford-based? If not, are they offering a significant proportion of their services within Seaford or a service not offered by others within Seaford?
  - e. Does the funding fit in with the Town Council's Strategic Plan? (In the event insufficient funds are available to meet all grant requests, priority will be given to organisations matching the Town Council priorities)
  - f. Does the grant help promote Seaford town?
  - g. Is the grant contributing to something that has not already been funded in the past by Seaford Town Council? Annual events are excluded from assessment against this criteria
- 4.2 The key points of the consideration against the above criteria for each application will be recorded, ensuring a record of the justification behind the outcome of the application should this need to be scrutinised.

## 5. PROCESS FLOW CHART

- 5.1 Seaford Town Council will publicise the timescale for awarding grants.
- 5.2 Application forms will be available for download from the Town Council's website [www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk)
- 5.3 Forms should ideally be submitted electronically by email to [finance@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:finance@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk) but may also be submitted by post or handed in to the Town Council offices.
- 5.4 Town Council Officers will assess the application for compliance in accordance with this policy as soon as practicably possible after receiving the application. Where the application does not meet the eligibility criteria or has not provided the correct supporting documentation, Officers will attempt to contact the named contact on the application to inform them of this, but it is ultimately the applicant's

responsibility to return a completed form along with all necessary supporting documentation before the closing date.

- 5.5 Applications will be reviewed by the F&GP Grants Working Group – which is open to all F&GP Committee members to attend, in accordance with this policy. The group will assess each application against this policy, making recommendations for consideration by the F&GP Committee.
- 5.6 The F&GP Committee will consider the recommendations made by the working group at its next scheduled meeting and make the final decision on the outcome of the grant applications.
- 5.7 After agreement of the recommendations by all ~~parties~~ the F&GP Committee, appropriate arrangements will be made for payment of the agreed grants, including presentations by the Town Council.

## **6. AWARDING GRANTS**

- 6.1 Grants will be paid by BACs, to the organisation named on the application form.

## **7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- 7.1 All applicants will be supplied with a grant evaluation form with the grant which must be completed as soon as possible. Future grants may not be awarded until this is returned.
- 7.2 If grant money is not spent, either for the purpose it was given or within the relevant financial year, the grant or any remaining monies must be returned to the Town Council. Organisations can request any unspent grant is carried forward but must provide details of the reasons for this request. The F&GP Committee will consider this at its next available meeting and if approved, the spending deadline will be extended until the end of the next financial year.

7.3 Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward to the next financial year, they are then not permitted to apply for a new grant in that same financial year.

7.4 Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward, in addition to providing reasons, they must produce all updated documentation that is requested on the application form.

7.37.5 If for any reason the organisation disbands during the period of the grant, the Town Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.

## **8. TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLICITY**

- 8.1 The Town Council will publicise the availability of discretionary grant-aid widely throughout the community.
- 8.2 The Town Council will report annually on the total spends on grants and list the groups in receipt of a grant and the use made of the grants.
- 8.3 In awarding grants the Town Council recognises and supports the valuable contribution made by the voluntary sector to the well-being of the community.
- 8.4 Organisations receiving a Town Council grant must acknowledge the Town Council in any relevant publicity or publications by using any promotional material provided by the Town Council.
- 8.5 For large grants recipients, representatives of the organisation will be asked to provide a presentation to the next annual Town Forum on the use of the grant.
- 8.6 All successful applicants for large and small grants will be invited to attend the next annual Town Forum to demonstrate their successes, their services and the benefit experienced by the grant.

## **9. GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENTS**

- 9.1 The Town Council may decide to enter into grant funding agreements with individual organisations. These agreements are administered outside of this policy and determined by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, being subject to Full Council approval if costs would be incurred outside of budget.
- 9.2 When assessing entering into a funding agreement, the Town Council will however be mindful of certain aspects of this policy, namely:
  - 1.11 a, b and c (not d\*) – eligibility criteria
  - 4.1 b, c, d, e, f and g (not a) – awarding criteria

\* recognising that a request for a grant funding agreement may stem from service delivery relying upon the funding and as such, the likelihood that this may include staffing costs.
- 9.3 The grant funding agreement itself will set out the documentation, monitoring, reporting and publicity requirements.



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>185/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>15</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Financial Regulations Review</b>                                      |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>                                       |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present the review of the Town Council's Financial Regulations</b> |

### Recommendations

#### Full Council is recommended:

1. To note that the National Association of Local Councils is working on updating its 2019 Model Financial Regulations for England and Wales.
2. To re-adopt the Financial Regulations as presented in report 185/23, with any necessary corrections to page numbers.

## 1. Information

- 1.1** The Financial Regulations were last reviewed and updated in March 2023. These are attached as Appendix A for reference.
- 1.2** The Interim Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) has advised that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has been working with The Parkinson Partnership LLP to update its 2019 Model Financial Regulations for England and Wales and that this should be completed later this year.
- 1.3** The Interim RFO has therefore advised that as the Town Council's current Financial Regulations are fit for purpose, having been thoroughly checked and revised in March 2023, it would not be necessary to make any amendments at this stage but wait until the new model is issued.

- 1.4 Full Council is therefore recommended to re-adopt the Financial Regulations as presented, noting that the model regulations are being revised by NALC.
- 1.5 Once NALC has issued its revised model regulations, a report will be brought back to Full Council to consider changes to its own Financial Regulations.

## **2. Financial Appraisal**

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

## **3. Contact Officer**

- 3.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Finance Manager.





Seaford Town Council

**Financial Regulations**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Policy Ref.</b>                         | F4   |
| <b>Date Last Adopted</b>                   | March 2023   |
| <b>Date of Next Review</b>                 | March 2024   |
| <b>Possible Prompts for Earlier Review</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to national Model Financial Regulations</li> <li>• Any changes identified that should not wait until the annual review for formalise</li> </ul> |
| <b>Previous Adoption Dates</b>             | March 2022<br>January 2022<br>March 2021<br>February 2019<br>April 2017<br>May 2015  |
| <b>Author</b>                              | Responsible Financial Officer  |

## FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

(Based on NALC 2019 model Financial Regulations)

### Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. GENERAL .....  | 3  |
| 2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL) .....                       | 5  |
| 3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING .....                     | 7  |
| 4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND .....                           | 7  |
| 5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS .....                 | 8  |
| 6. MAKING OF PAYMENTS .....   | 9  |
| 7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES .....  | 10 |
| 8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS .....  | 11 |
| 9. INCOME .....   | 12 |
| 10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES .....                               | 12 |
| 11. CONTRACTS.....  | 13 |
| 12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS ..... | 18 |
| 13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT .....  | 18 |
| 14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES .....                                    | 18 |
| 15. INSURANCE.....  | 19 |
| 16. INTERNAL CONTROL.....   | 19 |
| 17. EARMARKED RESERVES (EMR) .....  | 20 |
| 18. RISK MANAGEMENT .....   | 22 |
| 19. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.....                   | 22 |

These Financial Regulations were adopted by Full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023.

**1. GENERAL**

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Town Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of Full Council. Financial Regulations are one of the Town Council's governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial Regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Town Council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. The Town Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the Town Council has a sound system of internal control, which facilitates the effective exercise of the Town Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The Town Council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - for the timely production of accounts;
  - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
  - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These Financial Regulations demonstrate how the Town Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Town Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Any breaches of the Financial Regulations may be liable to disciplinary action against the individual in accordance with the Town Council's disciplinary policy
- 1.7. Members of the Town Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by Full Council. The RFO;
  - acts under the policy direction of Full Council;
  - administers the Town Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
  - determines on behalf of the Town Council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
  - maintains the accounting records of the Town Council up to date in accordance with proper practices;

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

- assists the Town Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - produces financial management information as required by the Town Council.
- 1.9. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Town Council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account, statement of balances, record of receipts and payments and additional information, or management information prepared for the Town Council from time to time complies with the Accounts and Audit Regulations<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the Town Council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
  - a record of the assets and liabilities of the Town Council; and
  - wherever relevant, a record of the Town Council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.11. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Town Council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
  - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
  - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
  - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to Full Council for approval to be written off without the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
  - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.12. The Town Council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular, any decision regarding:
- setting the final budget or the precept (Council tax requirement);
  - approving accounting statements;
  - approving an annual governance statement;

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<sup>1</sup> Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and any subsequent amendments and current regulations.

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts above the approved delegated limit (£3,000);
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors unless of high importance as determined by the Town Clerk (TC) and / or a matter of security which will be adopted and reported to the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting as soon as practicable afterwards.

shall be a matter for the Full Council only.

1.13. In addition, the Town Council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all of the Town Council bank accounts;
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations and resolutions about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.14. In these Financial Regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

1.15. In these Financial Regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England) issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

1.16. All references to authorisation in this document can be made by electronic means e.g. email, as well as hard signatures.

## **2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)**

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Town Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Mayor shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO & Finance Manager (FM). The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Town Council contained in the Annual Governance &

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

Accountability Return (AGAR), as specified in proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to Full Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 2.4. The Town Council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Town Council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the Town Council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Town Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Town Council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by Full Council and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the Town Council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
  - be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Town Council;
  - report to Full Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of two annual written reports during each financial year;
  - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Town Council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
  - perform any operational duties for the Town Council;
  - initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
  - direct the activities of any Town Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, as soon as practical, bring to the attention of the Finance & General Purposes Committee any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

**3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING**

- 3.1. Each committee shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital income and expenditure. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) not later than the end of December each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than the end of January, prepare detailed estimates of all income and expenditure including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by Full Council.
- 3.3. The Town Council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the Town Council's three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The Town Council shall fix the precept (Council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of Council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year or a date agreed with the billing authority. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

**4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND**

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget is authorised. This authority is to be determined by Full Council when setting the Annual Budget, subject to the requirements of the Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for a Committee Budget other than by resolution of Full Council. During the budget year, it is expected that Account Codes will vary to budget and that consequently Cost Centres will also vary. However, the Committee spend has to be within budget unless approved otherwise Full Council. It is noted that some budgets are dependent on external factors e.g. income received at the Golf and The View. Any deviations due to loss of income does not require approval but should be reported to the relevant Committee as soon as practicable. There is no need to undertake virements.
- 4.2. In cases of extreme risk, determined by the Town Clerk, to the delivery of Town Council services, the Town Clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Town Council, which in the Town Clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. The Town Clerk shall report such action to the Chair of the Town Council as soon as practicable thereafter. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects

## **Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption**

shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Any such funds will be considered for allocation to earmarked reserves by the Finance & General Purposes Committee or Full Council.

- 4.3. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually during the budget setting process for the following financial year. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time. This is not budgetary control just normal budget process.
- 4.4. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Town Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and where necessary the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained subject to 4.2 above.
- 4.5. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.6. The RFO shall regularly provide the relevant Committee with a statement of income and expenditure to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of significant variances. For this purpose, material (significant) shall be in excess of £1,000 or 15% of the budget. Movements in earmarked reserves (EMRs) shall be approved by the RFO and reported to the relevant Committee as part of the budgetary control process.

### **5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS**

- 5.1. The Town Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by Full Council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the budget manager and then the RFO or FM to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out and examined.
- 5.3. The FM shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The FM shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, in a timely fashion.
- 5.4. The RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of all items that are necessary to provide the services of the Town Council in line with the Town Council's Scheme of Delegation and the budgets set by the Town Council.
- 5.5. The Finance Assistant (FA) shall prepare a schedule of payments to be made for at least two Councillors and the RFO, FM or Town Clerk to authenticate for compliance.



## **Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption**

- 5.6. Payments are authorised and signed by the RFO, FM or TC. A summary schedule of payments made will be made available, on the shared drive, to all Councillors following each payment process. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.7. For each financial year the RFO shall draw up a list of due payments and Direct Debits which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts) and the like for which the Town Council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to. The list of such regular payments and Direct Debits shall be submitted to the Finance & General Purposes Committee on an annual basis.
- 5.8. In respect of grants, the Finance & General Purposes Committee shall approve expenditure in accordance with the Grants Policy and within any limits set by the Town Council.
- 5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Town Council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a discloseable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Town Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Town Council or a duly delegated Committee.

### **6. MAKING OF PAYMENTS**

- 6.1. The Town Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments
- 6.2. Following authentication under Financial Regulation 5.5 above, the RFO, FM or TC shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be affected by electronic payment wherever possible. The Town Council shall where possible reduce the number of cheque payments.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account shall be signed/ authorised by two members of Town Council, and countersigned by the TC, RFO or FM. If a member who is also a bank signatory has declared a discloseable pecuniary interest, or has any other interest, in the matter in respect of which the payment is being made, that Councillor shall be required to consider Standing Orders, and thereby determine whether it is appropriate and / or permissible to be a signatory to the transaction in question.
- 6.5. If thought appropriate by the RFO, payments may be made by variable direct debit provided that the list of direct debits made are given to at least two members of the

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

Town Council at each month end for them to countersign. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Town Council at least every two years.

- 6.6. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Town Clerk, RFO and FM shall be appointed as the Service Administrator or Nominee. The bank mandate approved by the Town Council shall identify a number of Councillors and officers who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts.
- 6.7. Changes to account details for suppliers, may only be changed on written notification by the supplier and authorised by the FM, RFO or Town Clerk. This must be followed up with a phone call to the company via a telephone number found on their official website before any changes are made. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.8. Any Debit / Credit Card issued is to be used in accordance with the Town Council's Purchase Ordering & Payment for Goods Policy.
- 6.9. Regular back-up copies of records on any computer shall be made and stored off site.
- 6.10. The FM shall provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the FM with a claim for reimbursement.
  - a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
  - b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
  - c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to authorised signatories under 5.5 above.

## 7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1. As an employer, the Town Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with contracts of employment payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by Town Council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Personnel Committee or Town Council otherwise than in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any Councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - b) by the internal auditor;
  - c) by the external auditor; or
  - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and shall only be authorised by Full Council otherwise than in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.

## 8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1. All borrowings and financial arrangements shall be affected in the name of the Town Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Full Council as to terms and purpose. The application for approval and subsequent arrangements shall only be approved by Full Council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement, which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets), shall be subject to approval by the Full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Full Council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Town Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Town Council policy.
- 8.4. Full Council shall approve an Annual Investment Strategy, in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance.
- 8.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.6. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Making of payments).

**9. INCOME**

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the Town Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO, who shall make and maintain adequate arrangements for prompt and proper banking and accounting for all cash, including its collection, custody, control and deposit.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by Full Council, notified to the RFO and FM, the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Town Council.
- 9.3. Full Council will review all fees and charges at least annually as part of the budget setting process.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to Full Council if over £3,000 or to the Finance & General Purposes Committee if under £3,000 and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the Town Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO and shall be deposited with the Town Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Town Council.
- 9.7. The RFO or FM shall promptly complete the VAT Return quarterly.
- 9.8. The RFO and FM shall ensure systems are in place, so that wherever practical and possible, receipts will be issued by staff at the point of receiving a cash payment.
- 9.9. Where more than £500 is received, in cash, by the Town Council and it is not practical to immediately issue a receipt, the RFO and FM shall ensure that systems are in place so that more than one person is present when the cash is counted, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

**10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES**

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. Order books shall be controlled by budget managers, the FM and the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, subject to Regulation 11.1 below.
- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Town Council.

- 10.5. Budget managers are responsible for the placing of orders within their overall budget.
- 10.6. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order or as soon after the order is placed by the budget manager.

## **11. CONTRACTS**

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- a. Every contract shall comply with these Financial Regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (viii) below:
    - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
    - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
    - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
    - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Town Council;
    - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £1,000 (in excess of this sum the Town Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, and
    - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
    - vii. contracts of employment;
    - viii. any contract, for the sale or purchase of any right in or over land or premises;
  - b. Where the Town Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Town Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations<sup>2</sup>
  - c. The full requirements of the Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations

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<sup>2</sup> The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)<sup>3</sup>

- d. When applications are made to waive Financial Regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to Full Council.
- e. 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. The final acceptance will still be as per the table in 11.1 (n).
- f. Invitations to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk.
- g. Each firm tendering shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. Except as in 11.1 (j), see table 11.1 (n)
- h. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk in the presence of at least one member of Town Council.
- i. Electronic tenders can be accepted for all contracts.
- j. All electronic tenders shall be submitted to a separate mailbox that can be accessed by the RFO and TC. After the tender period closes the RFO or TC will forward all tenders to the appropriate Manager who will recommend a contractor to Members/ Committee as per table 11.1 (n)
- k. All invitations to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to the Town Council's Standing Orders.
- l. The Town Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- m. Should it occur that the Town Council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Town Council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken, unless agreed by the Town Council.
- n. Where the estimated costs of works, goods, services or materials are as set out below, after the required budget provision has been agreed, the arrangements

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<sup>3</sup> Thresholds currently (1<sup>st</sup> January 2022- reviewed every two years) applicable are:  
a) For public supply and public service contracts £213,477 (inclusive of VAT)  
b) For public works contracts £5,336,937 (inclusive of VAT)

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

for the invitation of tenders or quotes as appropriate and the subsequent acceptance thereof shall be as shown in the table below.

| Estimated Value of purchase | Method of Procurement   | Accepted by   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| £2,000<br>and under         | Best Practice and value for money in line with FR 10.3 – power to spend.  | Budget holder   |
| 2,001<br>To<br>2,999        | Best Practice and value for money in line with FR 10.3 – power to spend.<br><br>No quote should be accepted without approval from the Town Clerk or RFO.  | Town Clerk / RFO  |
| £3,000<br>to<br>£24,999     | Minimum 3 quotes - No quote should be accepted without approval from the Town Clerk or RFO.<br><br>Quotes can be received electronically.   | Town Clerk / RFO  |
| £25,000<br>to<br>£49,999    | Minimum 3 quotations from at least three firms.<br><br>All contracts over £25,000 to be scrutinised by the TC or RFO prior to advertising of contract.<br><br>Advertise all contracts over £25,000 on the Town Council’s website and the Contracts Finder website within 24 hours of advertising elsewhere. Unless the Town Council chooses to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).<br><br>A contract for over £25,000 is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.<br><br>Quotes can be received electronically. | Town Clerk/ RFO<br>plus 1 Member of the Town Council<br>(Chair of relevant Committee if possible)                         |
| £50,000<br>to<br>above      | Minimum 3 quotations from at least three firms.<br><br>All contracts over £25,000 to be scrutinised by the TC or RFO prior to advertising of contract.<br><br>Tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of   | <b>£50,000- £199,000</b><br><br>Town Clerk/RFO<br>plus 2 Members of the Town Council<br>(Chair plus 1 other member of the |

**Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption**

| <b>Estimated Value of purchase</b> | <b>Method of Procurement</b>   | <b>Accepted by</b>  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
|                                    | <p>works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;</li> <li>• an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the Town Council’s specification</li> <li>(ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders</li> <li>(iii) the date of the Town Council’s written response to the tender and</li> <li>(iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All Contracts over £25,000 shall be advertised on the Town Council’s website and the Contract Finder website within 24 hours of advertising elsewhere. Unless the Town Council chooses to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).</li> <li>• The invitation to tender shall be advertised via the Town Councils website, social media, and a press release as well as any other manner that is appropriate.</li> <li>• Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.</li> <li>• Quotes can be received electronically.</li> <li>• A minimum of three tenders shall be invited to tender.</li> <li>• Tenders shall be opened by the Town Clerk/Proper Officer in the presence of at</li> </ul> | <p>relevant committee or the Mayor if possible)</p> <p align="center"><b>ALL TENDERS OVER £200,000 TO BE ACCEPTED BY FULL COUNCIL</b></p> |



**Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption**

| <b>Estimated Value of purchase</b>   | <b>Method of Procurement</b>  | <b>Accepted by</b>  |
|--|---|---|
|  | <p>least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Town Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender.</li> <li>• The outcome of the tender process will be recorded in the Town Council's tender file held by the Finance Manager and will be reported to the next appropriate meeting.</li> </ul>   |   |
| <p>In excess of £213,477 for services or</p> <p>£5,336,937 public works contract</p> | <p>A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £213,477 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £5,336,937 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.</p> <p>A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £426,955 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £5,336,937 for a works contract. The value of these contracts is calculated over the whole lifetime of the contract inclusive of VAT</p> | <p align="center"><b>ALL TENDERS OVER £200,000 TO BE ACCEPTED BY FULL COUNCIL</b></p> |

**12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

- 12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO or FM shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case, where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to Full Council.
- 12.3. Any variation to a contract, addition to, or omission from a contract must be approved by the Town Clerk to the contractor in writing, Full Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

**13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

**14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

- 14.1. The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Town Council. The RFO and FM shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of Full Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £5,000.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of Full Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Full Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning

## **Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption**

permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the Full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Full Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. The RFO and FM shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

### **15. INSURANCE**

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 18), the RFO shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Town Council's insurers.
- 15.2. Section Managers and the Town Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO and FM of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3. The RFO and FM shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Town Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to Full Council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the Town Council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance, which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by Full Council.

### **16. INTERNAL CONTROL**

- 16.1 The Town Clerk and RFO, under the direction of the Finance & General Purposes Committee shall be responsible for all internal control matters.
- 16.2 The Town Council's system of internal control shall cover:
  - a. Appointment of Proper Officers and the RFO;
  - b. Proper book-keeping and financial reporting arrangements;
  - c. Financial Regulations including Standing Orders and payment controls;
  - d. Risk management arrangements;
  - e. Budgetary controls;
  - f. Income controls;
  - g. Petty cash controls;
  - h. Payroll controls;

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

- i. Capital controls covering asset management, investments and borrowing;
- j. Bank reconciliation;
- k. Other areas identified from time to time in risk assessments.

16.3 All payments by the Town Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Town Council's Financial Regulations.

16.4 The RFO or FM shall supply to each Councillor at each scheduled Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, or on request, a statement to summarise:

- a. the Town Council's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
- b. the monthly balances held at the end of the period being reported

and a report which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

16.5 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the RFO shall provide:

- a. each Committee with a statement summarising the Town Council's income and expenditure for the year to date for information; and
- b. to Full Council, the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

16.6 The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the Town Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return of the Town Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Full Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June each year.

### 17. EARMARKED RESERVES (EMR)

17.1 Reserves will only be earmarked in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK (the Statement of Recommended Practice). The amount earmarked in any one financial year will not exceed the difference (surplus) between the budgeted net expenditure and the actual net expenditure. All capital receipts will go into a Capital Receipts EMR, which can only be used for capital expenditure.

17.2 Reserves can be spent or Earmarked at the discretion of the Town Council. They can result from:

## Report 185/23 – Appendix A – Recommended for Re-adoption

- (i) events which have allowed monies to be set aside,
- (ii) surpluses,
- (iii) decisions causing anticipated expenditure to have been postponed or cancelled,
- (iv) monies set aside for major anticipated capital schemes, projects or service arrangements the Town Council may wish to carry out.

17.3 Expenditure will not be charged direct to Earmarked Reserves and transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves will be distinguished from service expenditure in the Statement of Accounts.

17.4 For each reserve established the following will be clearly documented:

- a. The reason for or the purpose of the Earmarked Reserve will be clearly defined within the above guidelines.
- b. The types of expenditure the Earmarked Reserve will be used for and the basis of transactions will be clearly defined.
- c. Any circumstances for which the reserves cannot be used.

17.5 Reserves will be managed, controlled and reviewed by the RFO;

- a. On a transaction by transaction basis to ensure that the correct expenditure is being taken from the correct reserve and that no reserve is overspent.
- b. Twice per year, once during the budget review procedure and once at the year-end. The RFO, in consultation with the Town Clerk, will review the appropriateness of each reserve, making recommendations as to which reserves should be earmarked in the next financial year. At such time, any reserves considered no longer appropriate will be transferred back to the General Reserve.
- c. During the year end closedown procedures, when all income and expenditure is known, and having consulted with the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, the RFO will earmark any underspends on any appropriate budget as long as there are sufficient underspends in the overall Town Council budget. Any such decisions will be communicated promptly to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Expenditure from these reserves must be approved by the RFO, in consultation with the Town Clerk. Any use of these Reserves will be reported to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee.

**18. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 18.1. The Town Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Town Clerk shall prepare, for approval by Full Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Town Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by Full Council at least annually.
- 18.2. When considering any new activity, the Town Clerk and RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals.

**19. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 19.1. It shall be the duty of the Town Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Town Council annually, where possible. The RFO and Town Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise Full Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 19.2. Town Council may, by resolution of Full Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of the Town Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of Town Council.

\* \* \*



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>189/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>16</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Annual Investment Strategy 2024 - 2025</b>                             |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Andy Beams, Interim RFO and Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>            |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present the Annual Investment Strategy 2024 – 2025 for adoption</b> |

### Recommendations

#### Full Council is recommended:

1. To adopt the Annual Investment Strategy 2024 - 2025 as set out in Appendix A.
2. To note the contents of the report.

## 1. Information

- 1.1 The Town Council is required to produce an Annual Investment Strategy and review it each financial year.
- 1.2 The 2024 – 2025 Annual Investment Strategy is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.3 The only recommended changes are dates and a few clarifications on wordings.
- 1.4 It is a requirement that this strategy is made available to the public and therefore when approved, a copy will be published on the Town Council's website.

## 2. Financial Appraisal

- 2.1 The Town Council has a current account with the Co-Operative Bank and also invests in CCLA's Public Sector Deposit fund, which is an instant access fund.

- 2.2** Commercial interest rates have continued to improve this year with the rate at the end of February 2024 being 5.2624% compared with 3.9060% at the end of February 2023.
- 2.3** The total interest received to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 is £90,571.97 compared with £33,737.29 as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.
- 2.4** There is currently £1,770,000 (£1,725,000 in February 2023) in the CCLA account and this is expected to remain the same at the end of this financial year.

### **3. Contact Officer**

- 3.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Finance Manager.





Seaford Town Council

Annual Investment Strategy 202~~4~~<sup>3</sup> - 202~~5~~<sup>4</sup>

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Policy Ref.</b>                         | F9  |
| <b>Date Last Adopted</b>                   | March 2023  |
| <b>Date of Next Review</b>                 | March 2024  |
| <b>Possible Prompts for Earlier Review</b> | -   |
| <b>Previous Adoption Dates</b>             | April 2019<br>July 2020<br>March 2021<br>March 2022 |
| <b>Author</b>                              | Responsible Financial Officer                       |

## Annual Investment Strategy 202~~43~~ – 202~~54~~

1. The Town Council has had regard to the Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments produced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Guidance on Local Government Investments and CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes for Local Authorities.
2. This Annual Investment Strategy states which investments the Town Council may use for prudent management of its treasury balances during the financial year.
3. **Investment Objectives**
  - 3.1 All investments will be in pounds sterling (£).
  - 3.2 The general public policy objective for this Town Council is the prudent investment of its treasury balances.
  - 3.3 The Town Council's investment priorities are the security of reserves and liquidity of its investments.
  - 3.4 The Town Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.
  - 3.5 The DLUHC maintains that the borrowing of monies purely to invest or to lend and make a return is unlawful and this Town Council will not engage in such activity.
4. **Investment Balances/Liquidity of Investments**
  - 4.1 Based on its cash flow forecasts, the Town Council anticipates its fund balances in the financial year 202~~43~~ – 202~~54~~ will be up to £2,500,000.
  - 4.2 The Town Council has considered the current level of balances and estimated levels over the next three years coupled with the need for liquidity, its spend commitments and provision for contingencies. Investments may be made for longer than one year but only in CCLA's Local Authorities Property Fund (LAPF) and only balances that will not be needed for at least two years.
  - 4.3 In order to maintain sufficient security and liquidity the Town Council will manage any surplus funds mainly through CCLA's Public Sector Deposit Fund, which provide an optimal rate of interest. At the discretion of the

Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), in consultation with the Town Clerk, deposits in other UK banks, with a minimum long term Moody's (or equivalent) credit rating of 'A', may be used if offering a higher rate of interest.

## 5. Investments Defined as Capital Expenditure

- 5.1 The acquisition of share capital or loan capital in any body corporate is defined as capital expenditure under Section 16(2) of the Local Government Act 2003. Such investment will have to be funded out of capital or revenue resources and will be classified as "non specified investments".
- 5.2 A loan or grant by this Town Council to another body for capital expenditure by that body is also deemed by regulation to be capital expenditure by this Town Council. It is therefore important for this Town Council to clearly identify if the loan has been made for policy reasons or if it is an investment for treasury management purposes. The latter will be governed by the framework set by the Town Council for "specified" and "non-specified" investments.
- 5.3 It is not envisaged that any investments of a capital expenditure nature will be entered into during 202~~43~~ - 202~~54~~. Investment in the LAPF is not classed as Capital Expenditure.

## 6. Provisions for Credit Related Losses

- 6.1 If any of the Town Council's investments appear at risk of loss due to default (i.e. a credit rated loss, and not one resulting from a fall in price due to movements in interest rates), the Town Council will make revenue provision of an appropriate amount.

## 7. Investment Strategy to be Followed In House

- 7.1 To retain not less than three month's average working capital (revenue) requirement in the current and instant access accounts giving immediate access.
- 7.2 Amounts representing the balance on Capital Receipts Earmarked Reserve at the beginning of the financial year may be placed on deposit of up to one year's duration depending on the prevailing interest rates.
- 7.3 Any other funds may be placed on deposit of up to one year's duration, depending on the prevailing interest rates and forecast cash flow

requirements.

7.4 Suitably available funds may be placed for more than one year in CCLA's LAPF, depending on cash flow requirements, up to a maximum of £2,000,000. See 4.2.

**8. End of Year Investment Report**

8.1 During the budget process the RFO will report on investment forecasts.

8.2 At the end of the financial year, the RFO will prepare a report on investment activity.

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## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>188/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>17</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Annual Review of Corporate Risk Register 2024</b>  |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To review and approve the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register and subsequent action plans</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>   |
| 1.To note the review of the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register.<br>2.To adopt the revised General & Financial Risk Assessment as presented in Appendix A. |

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1** Local councils are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of their affairs and the stewardship of their resources. Part of good governance is the annual review of the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register, including general and financial risk.
- 1.2** The Governance and Accountability in Local Councils Guide recommends that once per year Full Council should:
- Take steps to identify and update its record of key risks facing the Town Council
  - Evaluate the potential consequences for the Town Council if an event that is identified as a risk, takes place
  - Decide upon measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences, and

- Record any conclusion or decision reached.
- 1.3** This report is presenting Full Council with an update how the Town Council's corporate risks are managed and monitored.
- 1.4** It must be highlighted that this report relates to corporate (general and financial) risks rather than drilling down to the level of risk assessments of specific activities, projects and / or assets. These risks are assessed continually, and steps put in place to mitigate and control identified risks. As required, these are brought to the attention of councillors e.g. the risk management plan within the recently adopted Strategic Plan, for example.

## **2. Corporate Risk Register**

- 2.1** Risk management is the process whereby councils methodically address the risks associated with what they do and the services that they provide. Identifying things that could go wrong and taking the appropriate steps to avoid this or manage the consequences where the risk cannot be avoided.
- 2.2** The Town Council uses the Local Council Risk System (LCRS) software to record and assess its corporate risks and controls.
- 2.3** Within LCRS, if a risk has a score of more than 4 then an action plan is created (see 1.8 below for more information on risk scoring).
- 2.4** The current risks have been reviewed and updated by the Town Council's officers and approved by the Town Clerk and the RFO. This year no risk had a score of 4 or above so there is no requirement for an action plan. To confirm, the controls in place have mitigated the level of the risk.
- 2.5** The full Risk Register (61 pages) will be circulated to members electronically, should they wish to read the entire document.

### Calculating Risk Score

- 2.6** Each year, Town Council officers review each risk and assign it two values between 1 and 3 (1 being low, 2 medium, and 3 high): one for the likelihood of the risk and one for the impact of the risk.
- 2.7** The risk score is calculated as:  
 (the likelihood of the risk happening) × (the impact of risk)  
 E.g.  
 Likelihood = Low 1

Impact = Medium 2

Risk score is  $1 \times 2 = 2$ , therefore no action is required

### 3. General & Financial Risk Assessment

- 3.1** The Town Council originally adopted its General & Financial Risk Assessment in March 2017 as a document that should be reviewed annually, and was most recently updated in March 2023.
- 3.2** This is a working document and has been changed as the need arises throughout the year. Officers have reviewed and updated the document as necessary - this is included at **Appendix A** with tracked changes.
- 3.3** Please note that this will remain a working document that will continue to be updated in the future as the need arises.

### 4. Annual Governance Statement

- 4.1** Councils are expected to make a number of representations and assertions in eight statements of assurance, which together comprise the Annual Governance Statement, about the accountability of the council.
- 4.2** The Statements below relate to this report:

| Statement   | Explanatory note  |
|---|---|
| 5. 'We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where require' | These representations cover the Council's responsibility to develop, implement and regularly monitor the effectiveness of systems of internal control covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall control environment, including Internal Audit;</li><li>• The identification, evaluation and management of operational and financial risks;</li><li>• Budgetary control and monitoring arrangements; and</li><li>• The documentation and application of control procedures</li></ul> |
| 6. 'We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit of the Council's accounting records and control systems.'  |   |

- 4.3** This review of the Corporate Risk Register gives the assurance required for Full Council to approve the Annual Governance Statement in June 2024.

## **5. Financial Appraisal**

4.1 This report has no direct financial implications.

## **6. Contact Officer**

6.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Finance Manager.





## Seaford Town Council

### General & Financial Risk Assessment

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Policy Ref.</b>                         | F5  |
| <b>Date Last Adopted</b>                   | March <del>2023</del> <a href="#">2024</a>  |
| <b>Date of Next Review</b>                 | March <del>2024</del> <a href="#">2025</a>  |
| <b>Possible Prompts for Earlier Review</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to its nature, amendments to this policy document are tracked throughout the year by officers, to be presented as one review each March</li> </ul> |
| <b>Previous Adoption Dates</b>             | <a href="#">March 2023</a><br>March 2022<br>March 2021<br>July 2020<br>July 2019<br>March 2017<br>February 2014   |
| <b>Author</b>                              | Responsible Financial Officer   |

### General and Financial Risk Assessment

| Area   | Risk   | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)   | Frequency months |
|--------|--|-------|--|------------------|
| Assets | Protection of physical assets detailed in the Council's Asset Register | H     | All assets over a value of £1,000 are insured through Zurich Municipal, unless previously agreed by Full Council not to insurance (e.g Skate Park) As new assets are purchased over £1,000 in value, they are added to the policy.<br>The Head of Assets & Projects (HAPS) to advise Finance team as soon as a project is completed to enable project to be insured if necessary.  | As and when      |
|        |  | M     | All leases and land registration details that are in the Council possession and are kept by the HAPS. Some original documentation is held by the Council's Solicitors.<br>There are however several historical issues outstanding with regards to land ownership.<br>1 Some documentation is missing.<br>2 Some parcels of land in the Council's ownership have not been registered with Land Registry.<br>3 Secure details of all land documents held by Solicitors.<br>Target to resolve all outstanding land issues by December 2023 <del>4</del> . | 12               |
| Assets | Security of buildings, equipment etc                                   | M     | Where possible buildings have alarm systems and CCTV installed. All offices routinely locked overnight. All assets at <a href="#">The View and Seaford Head Golf Course</a> are securely stored. Planned programme of testing electrical and safety equipment in place.  | Daily            |

| Area    | Risk                                 | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|---------|--------------------------------------|-------|---|------------------|
| Assets  | Maintenance of buildings etc         | M     | Planned ongoing maintenance schedule is worked to.<br>Planned programme of testing electrical and safety equipment in place.  | 1                |
|         |                                      | M     | Reactive repair allocations included in revenue budget, pool of suitable contractors to carry out works in place.   | 1                |
|         |                                      |       |   |                  |
| Finance | Banking                              | M     | The Council's bank accounts are in place with the Cooperative Bank and CCLA's Public Sector Deposit Fund. These are reconciled every month in accordance with the Financial Regulations.                                      | 1                |
| Finance | Risk of consequential loss of income | L     | Insurance cover in place for insurable risks  | 12               |
|         |                                      | H     | Uninsured risks (e.g. pandemic) – expenditure reduced, grants applied for and robust reserves.  | 1                |
|         |                                      | H     | General Reserves to be at least 50% of the precept.   | Annually         |
|         |                                      | H     | Earmarked Reserves increased for contingent liabilities (e.g. Building maintenance).  | 1                |
|         |                                      | H     | Financial performance of all activity reviewed monthly to enable any issues to be speedily addressed.   | 1                |
|         |                                      | M     | Committees consider in detail draft budgets. Councillor briefing reviews all potential financial issues to ensure all relevant information is present at the Full Council where the annual budget and precept are determined. | 1                |

*F5 General & Financial Risk Assessment – Adopted March 2023, Review March 2024*

| Area    | Risk                                     | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|---------|--|-------|---|------------------|
|         |  | M     | Precept paid 6 monthly.   | 6                |
|         |  | L     | <u>FM-RFO</u> checks bank statements to ensure all payments are received.   | 1                |
| Finance | Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty | M     | Petty cash at Council Offices <u>and The View</u> is managed in accordance with adopted procedures, which requires receipts for all purchases. Reconciled every month.  | 1                |
|         |  | H     | All cash from tills at The <u>View Golf Course</u> is reconciled with till reading every evening and banked promptly following all internal control procedures.   | Daily            |
|         |  | L     | Mayor's Charity pots- procedures in place for secure collection and banking, in accordance with National guidelines.  | As req'd         |
|         |  | L     | Cash only used where absolutely necessary- payment by BACs or Debit card the norm.  | 1                |
| Finance | Financial controls and records           | L     | Strict internal controls in place to separate functions relating to all form of payment transactions including electronic, debit cards and cheques. Two Councillors required to sign as well as at least two separate officers. | Daily            |
|         |  | L     | Internal Audit 2-3 times per annum, External Audit annually.  | 4/6/12           |
|         |  | L     | Audit Reports to be presented to the next available Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee meeting, all recommendations acted upon as soon as practical and reported back to F&GP Committee.                               | 4                |
|         |  | L     | All electronic financial records are backed up to the server weekly.  | Weekly           |

F5 General & Financial Risk Assessment – Adopted March 2023, Review March 2024

| Area    | Risk                                       | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|---------|--|-------|---|------------------|
|         |  | L     | Tenders secured for contracts when required in accordance with Financial Regulations.   | As req'd         |
|         |  | M     | All financial records stored and saved in accordance with Council's document retention policy.  | 12               |
|         |  | L     | Internal Controls are reviewed annually   | 12               |
| Finance | Comply with HMRC VAT Regulations           | L     | VAT payments and reclaims to be calculated by the <a href="#">FMRFO</a> , quarterly.  | 3                |
|         |  | L     | VAT reconciled monthly and claimed quarterly.   | 12               |
|         |  | L     | Advice notes from HMRC followed at all times, use external advice where necessary.  | 12               |
|         |  | L     | Internal auditor reviews VAT on a regular basis.  | 12               |
|         |  | M     | Carry out annual Partial Exemption Calculations.  | 12               |
| Finance | Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept | M     | The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) in consultation with the <a href="#">Finance Manager (FM)</a> , budget managers and Committee Chairs develop committee budgets based on previous performance and plans for the future. These are presented to the relevant committee for consideration and recommendation to F&GP who recommend the whole budget to Full Council. A briefing meeting is held with all Councillors to assess the Committee proposals and ensure that all potential contingencies are addressed in the final report. Draft figures go to the Full Council meeting in January to set the precept, avoiding any potential last-minute proposals that cannot be financially assessed ensuring financial diligence is retained. | 12               |

F5 General & Financial Risk Assessment – Adopted March 2023, Review March 2024

| Area      | Risk  | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|-----------|---|-------|---|------------------|
|           |   | L     | Expenditure against budget reported to relevant committee at least every quarter.   | 3                |
|           |   | M     | Budget managers to ensure that spend does not go over budget  | 1                |
| Finance   | Complying with borrowing restrictions   | L     | All current loans are paid automatically via Direct Debit every six months.   | 6                |
|           |   | L     | Any new loans require Full Council approval after presenting a full business case.  | As req'd         |
|           |   |       |   |                  |
| Liability | Risk to third party, property or individuals  | M     | Insurance in place with Zurich Municipal & Golfguard.   | 12               |
|           |   | M     | Full health and safety programme of inspections of all property and land is in place and carried out by a qualified Health and Safety Officer.  | Weekly           |
|           |   | M     | A qualified officer routinely undertakes risk assessments of all individual events such as Seaford Christmas Magic, Armed Forces Day.   | As req'd         |
| Liability | Safeguarding risks with relevant Council activities, where vulnerable adults or children are concerned. | M     | An appointed Welfare Officer to ensure safeguarding requirements and processes are in place for Salts Tennis Courts activities. Refresher training to be undertaken every 3 years. Another officer trained to deputise in Welfare Officer's absence. A Town Council Safeguarding Tennis Policy adopted in line with LTA guidelines. | 36 / As req'd    |

F5 General & Financial Risk Assessment – Adopted March 2023, Review March 2024

| Area      | Risk  | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|-----------|---|-------|---|------------------|
|           |   | M     | Permissions sought from the Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor's parents/guardians upon taking office, relating to a number of different duties and activities. Regular communication maintained with parents/guardians by relevant officers within the Civic Office.                     | Annually         |
|           |   | M     | A Golf Professional with relevant safeguarding training for the activities involving junior members / visitors at Seaford Head Golf Course.   | 36 / As Req'd    |
|           |   | M     | <b>An overarching Safeguarding Policy to be devised in <del>2023-2024</del><u>2024-2025</u></b> and adopted, addressing safeguarding arrangements across all of the Town Council's activities   | Tbc              |
| Liability | Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership.                      | H     | Insurance in place with Zurich Municipal & Golfguard  | 12               |
|           |   | M     | Full health and safety programme of inspections of all property and land is in place and carried out by a qualified Health and Safety Officer.  | Weekly           |
|           |   | M     | <u>Annual checks are made by the Play Inspection Company of all play equipment and reports issued to STC. Neighbourhood First make weekly checks and any issues are promptly acted on.</u><br><del>Annual checks by ROSPA of all play equipment takes place and report is acted on.</del> | 12               |
|           |   | M     | Play areas also inspected weekly by LDC & STC H&S Inspector.  | Weekly           |
| Liability | Legal liability as consequence of personal data controlled / processed. | L     | An appointed internal Data Protection Officer, with access to relevant training and resources.  | As req'd         |

| Area               | Risk                        | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------|---|------------------|
|                    |                             | H     | Initial training for all councillors and staff on data protection legislation and requirements and understanding of roles where personal data is concerned. Annual refreshers of responsibilities to be arranged.                       | 12               |
|                    |                             | H     | Adequate processes in place to ensure security of personal data being processed by both councillors and staff.  | 12               |
|                    |                             | L     | Adequate process in place for handling Subject Access Requests <del>(currently part of the Data Protection Policy, due for review in 2022).</del>   | 36               |
|                    |                             | M     | Privacy notices displayed explaining why personal data is collected, how it is used and stored.   | As req'd         |
|                    |                             |       |   |                  |
| Employer Liability | Comply with Employment Law. | H     | Membership of various national and regional bodies including NALC, SLCC, BIGGA, CIPD to ensure Managers are kept up to date with all relevant employment requirements and legislation as well as best practice.                         | As req'd         |
|                    |                             | L     | Subscribing to HMRC information emails and bulletins.   | Weekly           |
|                    |                             | M     | Ensure employee's terms & conditions comply with employment law.  | As req'd         |
|                    |                             | M     | Annual Appraisals take place with all employees.  | 12               |
|                    |                             | L     | Central records retained of all employee sickness absence and holidays. <del>Hard copies of all employee's records are currently stored in a locked filing cabinet, although the aim is to go 'paperless' with personnel records.</del> | As req'd         |



| Area               | Risk   | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)   | Frequency months |
|--------------------|--|-------|--|------------------|
|                    |  | M     | All digital records can only be accessed by <b>necessary managers</b> to ensure compliance with the Data Protection legislation.   | As req'd         |
|                    |  | L     | Routine reviews of employment terms and conditions acted on or where necessary reported to the Personnel Committee for action  |                  |
|                    |  | M     | Ensure all staff and councillors* involved with employment relations or processes have access to relevant training and resources. * Could change after each annual meeting and the appointment of committees. Relevant training will form part of the standard training list for relevant councillors. | 12               |
| Employer Liability | Comply with Inland Revenue requirements.     | M     | Regular review of current legislative requirements undertaken by managers. Internal auditor undertakes regular review.   | As req'd         |
| Employer Liability | Safety of staff and visitors.                | M     | Risk assessments carried out for all premises and activities undertaken by employees.  | As req'd         |
|                    |  | M     | Internal training undertaken on the job and on a regular basis formally when need arises.  | As req'd         |
|                    |  |       |  |                  |
| Legal Liability    | Ensuring activities are within legal powers. | M     | Proper Officer to clarify legal position on any new proposal, <u>including assessing any permissions required are sought and/or relevant legislation compiled with.</u>  | As req'd         |
|                    |  | M     | Legal advice to be sought where necessary.   | As req'd         |

| Area            | Risk  | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|-----------------|---|-------|---|------------------|
|                 |   | L     | Council to maintain General Power of Competence eligibility, which collectively gives the Council the power to do anything that and individual may do, as long as it does not break any laws.                     | As req'd         |
| Legal Liability | Proper and timely reporting via the minutes.                | L     | All agendas are issued and displayed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and/or other relevant legislation.  | As req'd         |
|                 |   | L     | Council meets regularly and always receives and approves minutes of meetings held since the last meeting including all committee minutes.   | 2                |
|                 |   | L     | Minutes made available to press and public via the Town Council website, <u>and email distribution and social media, and (where achievable) the library, notice boards and in the Tourist Information Centre.</u> | As req'd         |
| Legal Liability | Proper document control.                                    | M     | Original Deeds and leases stored with Barwells Solicitors <u>and within Town Council offices.</u>   | As req'd         |
|                 |   | M     | Copies Retained within the Council Offices <u>and stored in accordance with the adopted Document Retention Policy, and stored within a fireproof safe. Document Retention policy was adopted in 2021.</u>         | 36               |
|                 |   |       |   |                  |
| Councillors     | Registers of Interests, gifts and hospitality not in place. | M     | Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is retained in the Council Offices by the Town Clerk and sent to the Monitoring Officer at LDC who is responsible for the management.                                  | 12               |
|                 |   | M     | Declaration of interest is on the agenda at every meeting.  | 1                |

| Area | Risk | Level | Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)  | Frequency months |
|------|------|-------|---|------------------|
|      |      | M     | If circumstances change, updating declarations of interest is the responsibility of the individual councillor.  | 1                |
|      |      | M     | Emailed out annually to all councillors to ensure up to date.   | 12               |
|      |      | H     | Register of Gifts & Hospitality retained in Council Offices by the Town Clerk for use by councillors and Council employees.<br>Published annually on website.<br>Gifts & Hospitality Policy adopted by Council in 2018. | 12               |



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>187/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>18</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Annual Review of Internal Controls</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To allow Full Council to review and approve the Town Council's Internal Controls</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To review, comment upon and approve the Town Council's Internal Controls as set out in Appendix A.</li><li>2. To note that Statements 2, 5, 6 and 7 of the Annual Governance Statement have been complied with as per report 187/23.</li></ol> |

### 1. Information

- 1.1** Local councils are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of their affairs and the stewardship of their resources. Part of good governance is the annual review of the Town Council's Internal Controls, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.
- 1.2** Part of this process is performed by the Internal Auditor who performs tests to check the effectiveness of the Internal Controls.
- 1.3** The Town Council's Internal Controls have been reviewed by officers and are attached as **Appendix A** for Full Council to review, comment upon and approve.
- 1.4** Councils are expected to make a number of representations and assertions in eight statements of assurance, which together comprise the Annual

Governance Statement, about the accountability of the Town Council. The statements in the table shown below relate to this report. To confirm, the review of Internal Controls gives the Town Council the assurance required to approve the Annual Governance Statement at its meeting in June.

| <b>Statement</b>   | <b>Explanatory note</b>   |
|--|---|
| <p>2. 'We maintained an adequate system of Internal Control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and review its effectiveness'</p>  | <p>This statement covers the Council's responsibility to ensure its affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of financial conduct and arrangements exist to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. The Council also asserts that it has tested those arrangements at least once in the year to make sure that they are working in an adequate and effective way</p>  |
| <p>5. 'We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required'</p> <p>6. 'We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit of the accounting records and control systems.'</p> <p>7. 'We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from Internal and External audit.'</p> | <p>These representations cover the Council's responsibility to develop, implement and regularly monitor the effectiveness of systems of internal control covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall control environment, including Internal Audit;</li> <li>• The identification, evaluation and management of operational and financial risks;</li> <li>• Budgetary control and monitoring arrangements; and</li> <li>• The documentation and application of control procedures</li> </ul> |

## **2. Financial Appraisal**

2.1 This report has no direct financial implications.

## **3. Contact Officer**

3.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Finance Manager

## SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

## INTERNAL CONTROLS

| INTERNAL CONTROL | RESPONSIBILITY |
|------------------|----------------|
|------------------|----------------|

**Minutes**

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| Check Quorum Present For Each Council Meeting | CLERK TO MEETING   |
| Check Minutes Properly Signed                 | CLERK TO MEETING   |
| Pages In Minute Books Sequentially Numbered   | CLERK TO MEETING   |
| Minutes Reviewed By TC And Chair              | CLERK / TC / CHAIR |

**Assets & Investments**

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b><u>1. Assets</u></b>   |               |
| Register Of All Council Assets Kept And Updated At Least Annually | RFO / HAPS    |
| Asset Register As Per Final Accounts & Annual Return              | RFO           |
| <b><u>2. Investments</u></b>                                      |               |
| Chair Of F&GP To Check Monthly With Bank Reconciliation           | CHAIR OF F&GP |

**Income**

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b><u>1. Cash</u></b>  |          |
| Cash Banked Frequently At Least Once Per Week                | FA / RFO |
| <b><u>2. Credit Income</u></b>                               |          |
| Check Bookings Match Invoicing                               | FA / RFO |
| <b><u>3. Credit Control</u></b>                              |          |
| Check Debtor Balances Monthly                                | FA / RFO |
| <b><u>4. Bad Debts</u></b>                                   |          |
| Review Reasons For Non Payments                              | FA / RFO |
| Check All Reasonable Steps Taken To Collect Debts            | FA / RFO |
| List Of Outstanding Debtors Presented To Each F&GP Committee | RFO      |
| F&GP Authority Obtained For Bad Debts Written Off            | RFO / TC |

## SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

## INTERNAL CONTROLS

| INTERNAL CONTROL | RESPONSIBILITY |
|------------------|----------------|
|------------------|----------------|

Cash & Bank

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b><u>1. Receipt of Money- Admin Office</u></b>  |                    |
| Banked Promptly - Kept In Locked Tin Up To £250  | FA / RFO           |
| Most Income Is Received By Bank Transfer   | FA / RFO           |
| <b><u>2. Receipt of Money- The Golf Club</u></b>   |                    |
| Locked Till  | All Pro Shop Staff |
| Cash Removed From Till to Safe Over Night  | All Pro Shop Staff |
| Fire Proof Safe  | GP                 |
| All Cash Kept In Locked Safe Or Till   | GP                 |
| All Cash Reconcilled To Accounts   | GP                 |
| Collection Of Cash And Bank Weekly   | GP / FA            |
| <b><u>3. Bank Reconciliation</u></b>   |                    |
| Performed At Least On A Monthly Basis And All Bank Accounts Agreed                             | RFO                |
| Check & Ensure No Payments Or Receipts Are Being Carried Forward For A No. Of Months           | RFO                |
| Chair Of F&GP To Check & Sign Monthly With Corresponding Bank Statements- Reported To Comittee | RFO / CHAIR F&GP   |
| Review Cheques Outstanding For Over 6 Months And Ensure Written Off                            | RFO                |



## SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

## INTERNAL CONTROLS

| INTERNAL CONTROL | RESPONSIBILITY |
|------------------|----------------|
|------------------|----------------|

Payments

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b><u>1. Payments</u></b>   |   |
| Purchase Orders Raised For Most Purchases   | STAFF / RFO                                 |
| Purchase Order Books Kept Securely And Allocated To Specific Staff Members  | RFO / FA                                    |
| Purchase Orders Authorised By Approved Budget Holder As Specified In Policy F11 Purchase Ordering & Payment For Goods & Services Policy.            | COUNCIL / INTERNAL AUDITOR/ STANDING ORDERS |
| Invoice Approved By Budget Holder Before Payment  | BUDGET HOLDER / RFO                         |
| RFO To Authorises All Invoice Payments  | RFO   |
| Purchase Orders & Delivery Notes Checked Against Invoice Before Payment   | BUDGET HOLDER / FA                          |
| Control Copy Of Purchase Order Kept In Separate File  | FA  |
| Two Councillor Signatories Required For Each Payment  | STANDING ORDERS / RFO / FA                  |
| Payment Schedule Presented Or Emailed (With Cheques If Any) To RFO/Fm & Authorised Councillor Signatories   | RFO / FA                                    |
| Payment Schedule Signed/Authorised By Email By RFO/Fm & 2 Authorised Signatories  | RFO / FA                                    |
| Security Of Cheques & Petty Cash - Stored In Locked Room When Key Staff Are Out Of Office   | RFO   |
| Majority Of Payments By Bacs. 1 Person Inputs & Another Authorises. No One Person Can Make A Payment - Need Two People Using Their Own Personal Fob | FA / RFO                                    |
| <b><u>2. Petty Cash</u></b>   |   |
| Examine Petty Cash Expenses And Check Balances  | RFO   |
| Check VAT Is Appropriately Claimed On Petty Cash Receipts   | RFO   |
| Regular Frequency Of Reconciliation   | RFO   |
| Check Approval Of Receipts & Reimbursements   | RFO   |
| <b><u>3. Debit Card payments</u></b>  |   |
| Debit Cards Issued To Managers (HRGM, HAPS, APM & RFO)  | RFO   |
| Staff Member Responsible For Own Card   | STAFF                                       |
| FA Updates Spreadsheet & Codings, Councillors Given Sheet & Receipts Each Month To Sign   | FA / RFO                                    |
| Debit Cards Issued With An Appropriate Daily Spend Cap Including A Daily £250 Atm Withdrawal Limit.   | RFO   |
| Debit Cards Used Only When Necessary As Payment Via Bacs Is The First Choice Of Payment   | STAFF / RFO                                 |

## SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

## INTERNAL CONTROLS

| INTERNAL CONTROL | RESPONSIBILITY |
|------------------|----------------|
|------------------|----------------|

**Payroll**

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Prepare Contracts Of Employment For All Staff                      | TC / HRGM                |
| Check Gross Pay For Each Employee Is At Correct Rate               | RFO / HRGM               |
| Check Sick Leave/Pay Against Reporting Mechanism & Timesheets      | HRGM / HRGA              |
| Check Annual Leave/Pay Against Reporting Leave Cards & Timesheets  | HRGM / HRGA              |
| Check Any Statutory Sick Pay Or Maternity Pay Deductions           | HRGM / RFO               |
| TC Approval For New Starters                                       | TC / HRGM                |
| Prompt Removal Of Leavers From Payroll System                      | FM / HRGM                |
| RFO To Countersign Payroll And List Of Payment Made                | RFO                      |
| Councillors To Approve Bacs  | COUNCILLORS / RFO        |
| Internal Audit To Audit Annually                                   | RFO                      |
| Line Manager Authorises All Overtime & Mileage Countersigned By TC | TC / RFO / LINE MANAGERS |
| Staff Grading Reviewed Annually By Council                         | HRGM / TC / RFO / CLLRS  |

**Supplier Invoices**

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Check Purchase Orders & Delivery Notes Match Invoices               | FA               |
| Check Purchase Orders Authorisation                                 | FA               |
| Check Unmatched Purchase Orders                                     | FA               |
| Check Expenditure Coding - Correct Budget Head & Cost Centre        | FA / RFO / STAFF |
| Check Authorisation For Payment Of Invoice                          | FA / RFO         |
| Ensure Supplier Statements Checked Against Purchase Invoice Records | FA               |
| Check Any Old Creditors & Ascertain Why Still Unpaid                | RFO              |

**Insurance**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Reviewed Annually For Accuracy                           | RFO / HAPS |
| Index Linked   | RFO / HAPS |
| Provider Reviewed Every 3-5 Years                        | RFO / HAPS |
| Relevant Assets Added To Insurance At Time Of Aquirement | RFO / HAPS |

**General**

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Check Trial Balance Monthly | RFO |
|-----------------------------|-----|

## SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

## INTERNAL CONTROLS

| INTERNAL CONTROL   | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|----------------|
| Perform A Data Check In Omega Monthly  | RFO            |
| Check VAT Return & VAT Control Account Match Monthly   | RFO            |
| At Least Twice Each Financial Year - Check Actual Expenditure Against Estimates & Investigate Any Overspends | RFO            |
| Check Regular Reporting Of Expenditure And Variances From Budget   | RFO            |
| Monthly Checking Of All Transactions For Correct Coding  | RFO            |
| Financial Regulations Are Prepared In Line With Best Practice & Reviewed Annually                            | RFO            |
| Standing Orders Prepared In Line With Best Practice & Reviewed Regularly                                     | TC / HRGM      |
| Regular Contracts (Eg Utility) Reviewed Periodically To Ensure Best Value For Money                          | RFO            |
| Code Of Conduct Adopted For Members  | TC             |

**Key:**

APM = Assets &amp; Projects Manager

CLLRS = Councillors

FA = Finance Assistant

GP = Golf Professional

HAPS = Head of Assets, Projects &amp; Services

HRGA = HR &amp; Governance Assistant

HRGM = HR &amp; Governance Manager

RFO = Responsible Financial Officer

TC = Town Clerk



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>186/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>19</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Appointment of the Internal Auditor</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>   |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To consider a three-year agreement with the current appointed internal auditor, Mulberry &amp; Co</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>   |
| 1. To consider and approve a three-year agreement with the current appointed auditor, Mulberry & Co |

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 All local councils are legally required to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.
- 1.2 Each year, the Town Council appoints an internal auditor, who reports back on their audit findings.
- 1.3 This report is seeking Full Council's approval to enter into a three-year agreement with the Town Council's current internal auditor, Mulberry & Co.

### 2. Information

- 2.1 Seaford Town Council's appointed internal auditor for 2023 - 2024 was Mulberry & Co.
- 2.2 The Town Council first appointed Mulberry & Co in February 2015 and they have been subsequently appointed each year since.

- 2.3** Whilst it is recommended within the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide to change auditors every five years, it is also highlighted that there is no requirement to change audit companies providing a council is satisfied with the internal auditor's independence and competence.
- 2.4** Competence: Mulberry & Co is a specialist local authority audit company based in Godalming, with over 200 town and parish council clients spread across 16 counties. They are a founder member of the Internal Audit Forum, a group established in 2021 to encourage and promote professional standards of internal audit within the local authority sector. NALC recommends that councils source their internal auditor through the Internal Audit Forum. The Town Council has expressed no concerns about the internal audit service provided by Mulberry & Co.
- 2.5** Independence: Mulberry & Co have rotated which individual auditor is working with the Town Council, resulting in the Town Council having four separate auditors since 2015. This is to aid independent advice and additional viewpoints to ensure that the process remains unbiased.
- 2.6** Mulberry & Co are now able to offer a three-year agreement for the provision of internal audit services from 2024 – 2025 to 2026 – 2027.
- 2.7** The benefits of taking up this offer would be to secure a fixed cost to help with forward budgeting and to receive the following:
- Year-round internal audit support and advice from an assigned internal auditor
  - Updates throughout the year of key changes to proper practices
  - Ongoing financial and governance support from our dedicated Local Authority team members
  - Discounted rates on the range of councillor and officer training courses
  - Provision of locum support \*
  - Provision of dedicated reviews of council's policies and procedures \*
- (\*Additional costs apply)*
- 2.8** In light of the above, Full Council is being asked to confirm that a three-year agreement with Mulberry and Co be entered into.

### **3. Financial Appraisal**

**3.1** The current hourly rate for Mulberry & Co is £65 – this rate would continue with the three-year agreement.

**3.2** If Full Council decides against the agreement, this will increase to £70 per hour in 2024 – 2025, with further increases year on year if the Council remain with Mulberry & Co.

### **4. Contact Officer**

**4.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Finance Manager.



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>190/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>20</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Cuckmere Buses – Proposed Grant Funding Agreement</b>  |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To seek approval to a three-year Grant Funding Agreement with Cuckmere Buses and the amount of grant funding given</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To approve that a three-year Grant Funding Agreement be entered into with Cuckmere Buses.</li><li>2. To approve the level of grant funding given to Cuckmere Buses being set at £2,500 per annum over the course of the funding agreement.</li><li>3. To delegate power to the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, in consultation with the Mayor and Chair of Finance &amp; General Purposes, to finalise the service funding agreement based upon discussions with Cuckmere Buses.</li></ol> |

### 1. Information

- 1.1 At the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 when agreeing the outcomes of the 2023 grants scheme, the Committee recommended that the Town Council should enter into discussions with Cuckmere Buses about a service funding agreement for a set period. This was suggested due to Cuckmere Buses reliance on these funds for continuity of their community transport service.

- 1.2** Officers have now met with Cuckmere Buses who were very grateful for such an agreement to be considered.
- 1.3** As a Charitable Community Transport provider, Cuckmere Buses largely rely on support from local authorities which helps to meet a significant proportion of their annual cash operating costs and helps to avoid / minimise their deficits.
- 1.4** In 2023 they saw a decline in their volunteer drivers, without which they would not be able to operate. Their discretionary grant for 2023 - 2024 helped them to embark on a campaign to recruit and train new drivers especially for four bus routes (120,126, 26 and 40) that serve the Seaford area
- 1.5** Cuckmere Buses have applied for a discretionary grant each year since at least 2012. With the exception of 2016 - 2017, the Town Council has awarded the voluntary group with amounts varying from £500 to £2,000. For the last four years, Cuckmere Buses have requested amounts varying from £2,000 to £3,000. The amount that they have been awarded is £2,000 each year.
- 1.6** In order to ensure continuity of funding, hence service, and enable better planning for both the Council and the groups, Full Council is now being asked to agree to enter into a three-year Grant Funding Agreement with Cuckmere Buses. This agreement would take effect in April 2024 and expire in March 2027.
- 1.7** Furthermore, Full Council is being asked to consider approving that £2,500 per annum be the value of grant funding given to Cuckmere Buses during the agreement period.
- 1.8** To confirm, if the service funding agreement is entered into, Cuckmere Buses would no longer be required to apply through the annual discretionary grants scheme for these funds.
- 1.9** The draft agreement is included at Appendix A. This is based upon other grant funding agreements held by the Town Council.
- 1.10** It is recommended that power be delegated to the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, in consultation with the Mayor and Chair of Finance & General Purposes, to finalise the service funding agreement based upon discussions with Cuckmere Buses.



## **2. Financial Appraisal**

- 2.1** The overall annual grants budget for 2024 - 2025 has already been approved at £35,000. This includes £6,500 for an existing service funding agreement with Lewes District Citizen's Advice.
- 2.2** If a three-year funding agreement is approved, the agreed funding amount would be met from the annual grants budget each year.
- 2.3** For 2024 – 2025, this would leave £26,000 in the grants budget to be allocated as part of the discretionary grants scheme.

## **3. Contact Officer**

- 3.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Finance Manager.



Seaford Town Council

**GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL  
AND  
CUCKMERE BUSES**

**You should read these Terms and Conditions carefully. Failure to comply with these Terms and Conditions could put the Grant Funding and any future grant or other funding at risk and may result in action being taken to recover any monies already given.**

**Interpretation:**

**“the Agreement”** includes and incorporates these Terms and Conditions;

**“Data Protection Legislation”** means

- (i) the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and any applicable national implementing laws as amended from time to time;
- (ii) the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) to the extent that it relates to processing of personal data and privacy;
- (iii) all applicable laws about the processing of personal data and privacy

**“Grant Funding”** mean those grant funds which shall become payable by Seaford Town Council to the Provider

for the provision of the Services in accordance with the Agreement;

**“Grant Funding Term”**

subject to earlier termination, the term during which Agreement will remain in force;

**“Services”**

means the purposes for which the Grant Funding is being awarded;

**“The Town Council”**

means Seaford Town Council of 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG;

**“The Provider”**

means Cuckmere Buses, [ADDRESS]

**1 General**

- 1.1 The Grant Funding shall be used solely towards financing the Services in accordance with the Agreement.
- 1.2 Any amendment or modification of this Agreement or additional obligation assumed by either Party in connection with this Agreement will only be binding if evidenced in writing signed by each Party or an authorised representative of each Party.
- 1.3 The Grant Funding Payment made under this Agreement shall void the Provider from being able to apply under the Town Council’s Discretionary Grants Scheme for additional funding over and above that within this Agreement.

**2 Obligations of The Provider**

- 2.1 The Provider shall secure the delivery of the Services and ensure that at all times the Services are delivered in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.
- 2.2 The **Services** to be delivered which define the purpose of the Grant Funding are:
  - 2.2.1 Providing a bus service for Seaford using 16 seater Mercedes vehicles as per the annual timetable.

At the time of entering the agreement this is as follows:

Seaford Town route 120

Circular service running every ½ hour 13 times/day Monday to Friday and 6 times in the morning on a Saturday

18,344 passengers in 2023 (26,974 in 2019 pre pandemic)

Berwick to Seaford route 126

Return service running 4 times/day Monday to Friday and 2 times on a Saturday morning

3,277 passengers in 2023 (2,615 in 2019 pre pandemic)

Seaford/Alfriston/Polegate/Willingdon/Eastbourne route 26

Sundays and Public Holiday service running 4 times/day

2,865 passengers in 2023 (2,614 in 2019 pre pandemic)

Berwick/Wilmington/Westdean/Seaford route 40

Tuesday and Friday service twice per day

1,481 passengers in 2023 (2,519 in 2019 pre pandemic)

All routes are open to everyone with the majority of passengers using the Government Bus Pass scheme.

2.3 The Provider agrees with the following **reporting arrangements** to ensure eligibility for the following year's grant funding:

2.3.1 Annual performance figures to the Town Council reflecting both district wide activity and also a dashboard specific to Seaford.

2.3.2 The Town Council's Outside Body Representative for the Provider will be invited to all Provider Board meetings.

2.3.3 Presentation for the Town Council's Annual Town Meeting (the Seaford Town Forum).

2.3.4 Annually, following the closure of year end, the accounts of the Provider for a period of one financial year prior to the date of submitting the accounts, are submitted to the Town Council to indicate expenditure, income, assets and liabilities, together with funding obtained from other partner bodies if appropriate.

2.4 The Provider will notify the Town Council, in writing within 10 working days if there is a material change to any of the following of its documents:

2.4.1 Its written set of rules, constitution, or other governing document;

- 2.4.2 Its Equality and/or Equal Opportunities policy (this policy may be contained within their constitution or other governing document);
  - 2.4.3 A copy of the organisation's Public Liability Insurance to the value of at least £1 million;
  - 2.4.4 A policy to ensure the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults (where appropriate).
- 2.5 The Provider must notify the Town Council, in writing within 10 working days if there is any material change affecting finances, activities, how the Provider will assess the effectiveness of the Services provided or other factors stated in the Agreement.
- 2.5 The Provider shall comply with all statutory requirements and other laws and regulations relating to the Services and its development and operation including without limitation all relevant health, safety and employment laws and regulations.
- 2.6 The Provider shall ensure that it has all necessary consents, (this includes any approval consent, profile check, exemption, licence or permission from any governmental or other authority or any person required by law), or otherwise for the Provider to provide the Services.
- 2.7 The Provider shall ensure that any publicity relating to the Services will be accurate in its content and will recognise the financial support of the Town Council through the relevant use of the Town Council logo, as provided.

### **3 Obligation of Seaford Town Council**

- 3.1 In consideration of the Provider providing the Services under the Agreement, Seaford Town Council shall pay to the Provider the Grant Funding in accordance with the terms of the Agreement.

### **4 Grant Funding Term**

- 4.1 The term of this Agreement (the "Grant Funding Term") will begin on the date of this Agreement and will remain in force for a period of three years, ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027, subject to earlier termination as provided in this Agreement.
- 4.2 The Term may be extended with the written consent of the Parties.

### **5 Grant Funding Payment**

- 5.1 The Grant Funding is an annual amount of £2,500.00.

- 5.2 Wherever possible, payment will be made by bank transfer from the Town Council to the Provider by 30<sup>th</sup> June each year of the Grant Funding Term within this Agreement.
- 5.3 If payment is to be delayed or an alternative means of payment is required, the Town Council will notify the Provider of the expected delay length and reasons in writing, as soon as practicably possible.
- 5.4 The Provider will be responsible for all income tax liabilities and National Insurance or similar contributions relating to the Payment and the Provider will indemnify the Town Council in respect of any such payments required to be made by the Town Council.
- 5.5. The Provider will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred in connection with providing the Services of this Agreement.

## **6 Withholding or Repayment of Grant Funding**

- 6.1 Where there is a breach of these Terms and Conditions by the Provider, including the Services not having been provided in accordance with these Terms and Conditions with the Town Council's prior agreement, and without prejudice to Seaford Town Council's other rights and remedies, Seaford Town Council may at its discretion reduce, suspend and or withhold the payment of the Grant Funding or require repayment of the Grant Funding in full (or in Seaford Town Council's absolute discretion in part), on demand.
- 6.2 The Provider shall promptly repay to Seaford Town Council any money incorrectly paid to it either as a result of an administrative error or otherwise. This includes (without limitation) situations where either an incorrect sum of money has been paid or where the Grant Funding has been paid in error before all conditions attaching to the Agreement have been complied with by the Provider.
- 6.3 The Provider must repay any unspent element of this Funding if it is not used for the purpose for which it was intended upon receiving notice from Seaford Town Council. The amount repayable or unspent should be repaid back to Seaford Town Council within 28 days of receiving notice.

## **7 Termination**

- 7.1 Seaford Town Council may terminate the Agreement and any Grant Funding payments immediately on giving the Provider three months' written notice should it be required to do so by financial restraints or for any other reason.

7.2 Upon termination of this Agreement by the Town Council, any Grant Funding payment made for that year shall not be repayable by the Provider, save for where the Terms and Conditions of this Agreement have been breached by the Provider.

7.3 Seaford Town Council or the Provider may cancel the Agreement by giving the other party at least three months' prior notice in writing and such cancellation shall not affect Seaford Town Council's obligation to pay for the Services duly performed up to the date that the Agreement is terminated or the Provider to perform the Services up to the date that the Agreement is terminated.

## **8 Records and Compliance**

8.1 The Provider shall ensure that they maintain full and proper insurance policies relevant to the Provider's activities and shall when requested by Seaford Town Council provide full evidence of such insurance on demand.

## **9 Indemnity**

9.1 The Provider acknowledges that Seaford Town Council's extent of involvement in the Services is restricted to providing grant funds to assist the Provider to put the Services into practice. The Provider shall be solely liable for its personnel, the lawful performance of the Services and (without limitation) all claims, demands, damage and proceedings which may arise.

9.2 The Provider shall indemnify and hold Seaford Town Council, its employees, agents, officers or sub-contractors harmless with respect to all losses and all other liabilities such as but not limited to liabilities or losses arising from or incurred by reason of the actions and/or omissions of the Provider in relation to the project, the non-fulfilment of obligations of the Provider under this Agreement or its obligations to third parties.

9.3 Seaford Town Council accepts no liability for any consequences, whether direct or indirect, that may come about from the Provider running their business, the use of the Grant Funding or from withdrawal of the Grant Funding.

## **10 Assignment**

10.1 The rights and obligations under the Agreement are personal to the Provider and are not assignable.

## **11 Contract (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999**

11.1 None of the provisions of the Agreement are intended to or will operate to confer any benefit pursuant to the Contract (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 on a person who is not named as a party to the Agreement.

## **12 Force Majeure**

12.1 Seaford Town Council reserves the right to defer the date for performance of, or payment of, the Grant Funding, or terminate any agreement with the Provider, if Seaford Town Council, or the Provider is prevented from, or delayed in, carrying on its business by acts, events, omissions or accidents beyond its reasonable control, including strikes, lockouts or other industrial disputes (whether involving the workforce of Seaford Town Council or any other party), failure of a utility service or transport network, act of God, plague or epidemic, war, riot, civil commotion, terrorist activities, malicious damage, compliance with any law or governmental order, rule, regulation or direction, accident, breakdown of plant or machinery, fire, flood, storm or default of suppliers or subcontractors.

## **13 Waiver**

13.1 Failure to exercise, or any delay in exercising, any right or remedy provided under this Agreement or by law shall not constitute a waiver of that (or any other) right or remedy, nor shall it preclude or restrict any further exercise of that (or any other) right or remedy.

## **14 Governing Law**

14.1 The Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law.

## **15 Variation**

15.1 Seaford Town Council may (acting reasonably) amend the Agreement at any time, as long as Seaford Town Council informs the Provider within a reasonable period thereafter of the variation. No variation of the Agreement or of any of the documents referred to in it shall be varied by the Provider unless Seaford Town Council agrees it in writing.

## **16 No Partnership or Agency**

16.1 Nothing in the Agreement shall be deemed to create a partnership or agency relationship between the Provider and Seaford Town Council or be deemed to



authorise either party to incur liabilities or obligations on behalf of or in the name of the other and for the avoidance of doubt Seaford Town Council shall not be liable to pay wages, redundancy payments, salary, sickness pay or holiday allowances in respect of the Provider.

16.2 The Parties acknowledge that this Agreement is non-exclusive and that the Provider will be free, during and after the Term, to other grant funding or other funding from third parties for the provision of services similar to the Services.

## **17 Confidentiality**

17.1 Both parties will keep undisclosed, secret and confidential all intellectual property rights, know-how, other business, technical or commercial information disclosed to it by the other party as a result of this Agreement and shall not disclose the same to any person save to the extent necessary to perform its obligations in accordance with the terms of this Agreement or save as expressly authorise in writing or save to the extent that the disclosure of the same is required by law.

17.2 The Provider acknowledges that the Town Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) and the Provider notes and acknowledges the FOIA, the EIR and the Local Government Transparency Code under section 45 and 46 of the FOIA.

17.3 This Clause shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any termination of the Agreement.

## **18 Data Protection**

18.1 The Provider shall (and shall procure that they) comply with any notification requirements under Data Protection Legislation, and both Parties will duly observe and comply with all their obligations under the requirements of Data Protection Legislation, which arise in connection with the Agreement.

18.2 The Provider shall not provide the Town Council, including its Outside Body Representative, with any personal or confidential data relating to or coming from the Services provided.

## **19 Entire Agreement**

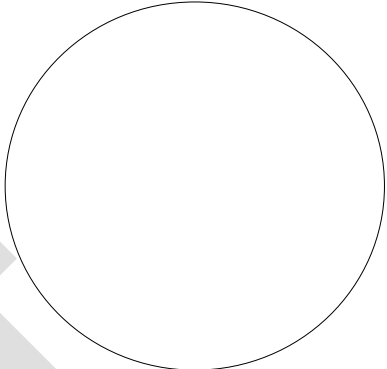
19.1 It is agreed that there is no representation, warranty, collateral agreement or condition affecting this Agreement except as expressly provided in this Agreement.

By signing and submitting the Agreement both Parties are agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** the Parties have duly affixed their signatures under hand on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed and stamped on behalf of **Seaford Town Council** by

(Print & sign) \_\_\_\_\_



In the presence of two Seaford Town Councillors

(Witness 1 Sign) \_\_\_\_\_

(Witness 2 Sign) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of **Cuckmere Buses** by

(Print & sign) \_\_\_\_\_

In the presence of

(Witness 1 Sign) \_\_\_\_\_

(Witness 2 Sign) \_\_\_\_\_



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>195/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>21</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Lewes District Council's High Street Audit – Opportunity for Seaford</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>   |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To brief Full Council on proposals from Lewes District Council for a 'High Street Audit' for Seaford, including a financial contribution from the Town Council</b> |

### Recommendations

#### Full Council is recommended:

1. To agree to take part in Lewes District Council's High Street Audit and provide £5,000 of funds towards the project.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Lewes District Council (LDC) is undertaking a number of 'High Street' audits and has approached the Town Council (STC) about Seaford being one of the places and STC being involved.
- 1.2 LDC is seeking a £5,000 contribution from each town council that takes part. LDC anticipates to contribute in the region of £12,000.
- 1.3 Full Council is therefore asked to consider if it wishes STC to become involved, including contributing £5,000 towards the costs.

## 2. Strategic Background

- 2.1 In the STC Strategic Plan, Full Council identified the town centre as a priority area for its work, and the aspirations of STC to include the following:

1. Recognise challenges for town centres, such as the cost of living crisis and internet shopping.
2. Define the area – what do we mean by a town centre?
3. How do we make it easy for people to get there?
4. How can we promote what the town centre has to offer – not just shops but coffee/art gallery/museum/history?
5. Can we create a community centre as an anchor and place for community to gather?
6. What activities and events that will bring people to the town centre?
7. Can we create more free wifi/charge points/cycle racks/ places young people may want to go?

**2.2** In addition, STC is looking to undertake the following work over the 4-year period of the plan relevant to the Town Centre:

1. Create a new Town Centre Working Group and Use engagement work for the 25th anniversary of the Town Council to better understand the issues and needs.
2. Work with partners to create more opportunities for young people and enable strong engagement with local young people
3. Understand options to improve visitor accommodation in the town, including identifying any role the Town Council can take
4. Help create a new community centre and space in the town centre, based upon need and including creative centres and workspaces
5. 'Future Proofing' the town.

**2.3** So, it should be explored whether the LDC audit can help STC with its goals and benefit Seaford and, if STC become involved, officers will look to maximise any read across between this audit work and the strategic work we wish to undertake.

### **3. Lewes District Council Audit Brief**

**3.1** A brief for the work is attached at Appendix 1.

**3.2** As councillors will see, this work will enable STC to receive information on:

1. occupancy rates including comparison to national data
2. opportunities for empty spaces
3. public realm
4. maximizing peoples' ability to reach the town centre

- 5. traffic impacts
- 6. visitor experience.

- 3.3** There is a clear economic regeneration focus here, so this information may not help, or be relevant to, all of the areas of work STC may wish to be involved in.
- 3.4** At the same time, it will clearly increase intelligence and understanding and may help STC connect to wider strategic work and possibly funding.
- 3.5** Members will see from the brief that STC's Town Clerk would be a part of the core project team, enabling representation of STC's and the town's interests throughout the process. The nature of the STC involvement makes it sensible that there is an operational presence – an officer – on this group.
- 3.6** STC will look to ensure that there is appropriate stakeholder involvement in the audit.
- 3.7** Timescales for the project are to be confirmed

#### **4. Financial Appraisal**

- 4.1** There is a £5,000 contribution from STC required towards the cost of the audit. This cost would be incurred in 2024 – 2025 and would be met from the professional fees budget.

#### **5. Contact Officer**

- 5.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.



# **Lewes District Council**

**HIGH STREET AUDIT**

**CONSULTANTS BRIEF**

**DRAFT**

**February 2024**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Lewes District Council (LDC), together with the Town Councils, are seeking to appoint a Consultant to carry out a High Street Audit of towns within the Lewes District.
- 1.2 The Audit will inform future strategies and plans to support local High Streets to thrive, not just survive.
- 1.3 This Audit will be funded by local Town Councils and Lewes District Council.

## **2.0 Subject of Appointment**

- 2.1 This Brief is for the appointment of the High Street Audit Consultant (herein known as 'the Consultant') for the purposes of developing a High Street Audit for towns within the Lewes District.

## **3.0 Scope 1: High Street Audit**

- 3.1 The Audit will encompass the following High Streets:
  - Lewes
  - Seaford
  - Newhaven
- 3.2 The High Streets have been defined on the maps in appendix 1 [TO BE INSERTED].
- 3.3 The Audit will need to include the following:
  - To work with Lewes District Council to agree the metrics required prior to the Council collecting and gathering the occupancy type and vacancy rate data.
  - The Consultant to provide an analysis of the data and trends for each High Street from the current occupancy and vacancy rates provided by Lewes District Council.
  - The Consultant to include comparisons to national High Street data and trends in the analysis.
  - The Consultant to identify opportunities for empty spaces and empty commercial properties.
  - The Consultant to work with Lewes District Council to agree the parameters for the Council to document and provide photographic evidence of the public realm issues and challenges e.g.
    - Crossings
    - Fences
    - Bus stops
    - Benches
    - Bins

- Bollards
- Signage
- Planters
- Shop frontages.
- The Consultant to provide an analysis of the study area to identify public realm solutions and make recommendations to overcome and mitigate public realm issues and challenges e.g. include possible site for secure cycle parking/cargo bikes, quick wins, green space etc.
- The Consultant to make recommendations on how to make it easier for people to reach the High Street? e.g. by foot, cycle, train, bus, car.
- The Consultant to identify what are the traffic impacts for each High Street e.g. congestion.
- The Consultant to identify what brings people into the High Street?
- The Consultant to make recommendation on how the visitor experience can be improved to ensure a future sustainable thriving High Street for each town listed?

#### 3.4 Outputs:

- A report that contains data, considerations and recommendations covering all elements of the scope detailed in paragraph 3.3 above.
- The report must provide analysis and recommendations for each High Street, not a summary at the District level.

#### 3.5 **Scope 2: Evidence the economic impact of Charleston in Lewes**

3.6 Charleston opened its doors to visitors in Southover House, Lewes, BN7 1AB in September 2023.

3.7 The second part of this report requires the Consultant to analyse and evidence the economic impact of Charleston in Lewes between September 2023 and present.

3.8 The Consultant is required to assess the direct economic benefit of Charleston on Lewes High Street.

3.9 Charleston will provide data on ticket sales, visitor survey results and footfall counters.

#### 4.0 **Budget**

4.1 As detailed in Paragraph 1.3 above, the Audit is being funded by Lewes District Council and Town Councils.

#### 5.0 **Project Governance**

5.1 Project Team:

- Lisa Rawlinson – Head of Regeneration –LDC



- Anna Salmon – Funding Programme Delivery Manager – LDC
- Sam Shore – Regeneration Project Manager – LDC
- Matthew Bird – Lewes Town Council
- Adam Chugg – Seaford Town Council
- Nathaniel Hepburn – Director and Chief Executive - Charleston

The Core Project Team will meet when required.

5.2 The remit of project team will be to:

- be the voice of their organisation
- understand the wider implications of the Audit
- challenge the Audit to maximise its success
- sense check for wider consultation
- promote the project positively.

5.3 The Consultant will engage with the project team at key milestones during the development of the Audit.

5.4 A response to this Brief for the Audit with accompanying details should be sent to [lisa.rawlinson@lewe-eastbourne.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.rawlinson@lewe-eastbourne.gov.uk) by.....

## 6.0 Basis of Appointment

The Consultant's appointment will be by formal Agreement as detailed at **Appendix B** [TO BE INSERTED] of this Brief. The employer will be Lewes District Council. No material amendments will be accepted to this Agreement unless they have implications on the ability of the Consultant to maintain insurance. Any amendments required must be submitted with your quotation response.

## 7.0 Fee

Please complete the Form of Quotation – Appendix B [TO BE INSERTED] and return it as part of your response.

The fee proposal must include all reasonable expenses and disbursements.

The fee proposal is to be presented in a clear manner, supported by a stage-by-stage breakdown, presented in sufficient detail and a style that enables a clear understanding of the fee, services, programme and deliverables for each stage, with any specific exclusions stated.



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>192/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>22</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>South Hill Farm Lease</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Louise Lawrence, Head of Assets, Projects &amp; Services</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To provide an update on the review of the lease for South Hill Farm – the farmland on the Seaford Head Estate</b> |

### Recommendations

#### Full Council is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the professional report assisting with the review of the South Hill Farm Lease.
2. To note the final lease will be brought before Full Council for approval at a later date.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1** Seaford Town Council owns the Seaford Head Estate, which hosts a number of different land uses including the golf course, nature reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), dew ponds, Vanguard Way, South Hill Barn and farmland.
- 1.2** The South Hill Farm lease transferred with the Seaford Head Estate to the Town Council, from the District Council, in 2005. The existing lease expired in September 2023.
- 1.3** Due to the complexities of the site and specifics of such a lease, Town Council Officers instructed BTF Partnership to provide professional advice about the agricultural let holding known as South Hill Farm (the 'Holding')

let under an Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy agreement dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1994 (the 'Tenancy').

- 1.4** This report to Full Council is providing an update on the progress of this work and the approach to have a final lease agreed for the site.

## **2. Information**

- 2.1** Attached at Appendix A is the report of BTF Partnership.

- 2.2** The report and lease address:

- (a)** the existing tenancy position,
- (b)** the proposed re-letting of the Holding together with timescales and matters benefiting and burdening the Holding, and
- (c)** some related issues / opportunities.

- 2.3** As examples of related issues / opportunities, these include:

- (a)** the new lease having to consider the possible change of status of the land on Seaford Head because of its potential inclusion in the new National Nature Reserve (as discussed by Full Council in October 2023).
- (b)** the new lease reflecting the recently announced SSSI survey findings around the management style of the land adjoining the Tenancy site (that leased to Sussex Wildlife Trust) due to the impact of scrub on the grassland, and the possibilities for different approaches e.g. cattle grazing.

- 2.4** Councillors will note that BTF have considered rent levels as part of their expert advice.

- 2.5** The BTF Partnership report does make other suggestions around the potentials with the 'flint barn central to the holding' – this is South Hill Barn. These suggestions are separate from the lease negotiations and can be taken into consideration by the South Hill Barn Working Group.

- 2.6** To be clear, the BTF Partnership is included for information but there are matters within it that Full Council may wish to consider at a later date.

## **3. Next Steps**

- 3.1** Officers continue to work with the land agent and are in regular communications with the tenant.

**3.2** Full Council is asked to note the contents of the BTF Partnership report ahead of the draft lease being finalised and brought to Full Council for final approval at a later date.

**3.3** It is anticipated that the new tenancy will commence on the lease signature.

#### **4. Financial Appraisal**

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

**4.2** The financial implications of the final draft lease will be addressed in the report being brought to Full Council at a later date.

#### **5. Contact Officer**

**5.1** The contact officer for this report is Louise Lawrence, Head of Assets, Projects & Services.



REPORT UNDERTAKEN BY BTF PARTNERSHIP  
ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF SEAFORD TOWN  
COUNCIL IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSALS  
FOR THE LETTING OF THE FARM HOLDING  
KNOWN AS SOUTH HILL FARM, SEAFORD,  
EAST SUSSEX

## 1.0 Scope and purpose of report

- 1.1 BTF has been instructed by Seaford Town Council to provide professional advice in relation to the agricultural let holding known as South Hill Farm (the Holding) let under an Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy agreement dated 02 February 1994 (the Tenancy). Within this report we will address the existing tenancy position, the proposed re-letting of the Holding together with timescales and matters benefiting and burdening the Holding; as well as some related issues/opportunities that occur to us.
- 1.2 This report is intended solely for Seaford Town Council and its councillors for internal use. We cannot be held liable for its distribution to third parties. We reserve the right to modify and update this report as new information emerges.

## 2.0 Executive Summary

|   |                     |   |
|---|---------------------|---|
| 1 | Landlord            | Seaford Town Council of 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN251HG.   |
| 2 | Tenant              | Execs of the Late Tom Masters of Chyngton Farm, Chyngton Lane, Seaford, BN25 4BT.   |
| 3 | Rent                | £10,000 per annum.  |
| 4 | Obligations         | Per clause 18-49 of the Tenancy. There is also a current Countryside Stewardship (CSS) Agreement commitment (entered into by the Tenant) on the Holding running from 2022 – 2027.   |
| 5 | Proposed new tenant | Rhiannon Masters widow of the late Tom Masters has indicated that she wishes to take on the Holding from her late husband’s Executors – such letting to be on a Farm Business Tenancy Agreement regulated under the terms of the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.   |
| 6 | Time scales         |   |
| 7 | Rent Review         | Rent fixed until termination of existing tenancy in September 2025.<br>Proposal would be that future rent reviews should occur every three years to be calculated in accordance with the financial earnings capacity of the Holding. Therefore, the agricultural rental elements of the Holding should be based on the traditional Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 formula (which is the basis of the current Holding rent assessment); with additional rental element geared to a 50:50 share (as between Landlord & Tenant) of profits of any diversified enterprises. |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
|                 |   |
| 8 Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holding is fundamentally in good order and in our view should continue to be managed in accordance with CSS obligations in order to unlock government environmental funding (but note payments generally based on “income foregone” rather than allowing for a profit element)</li> <li>- CSS agreement will then evolve into current DEFRA Environmental Policy (under the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)) which should further align with Landlord’s objective of running the Holding in an environmentally sustainable way that places principal emphasis on long term custodianship of the Holding for the benefit of all local stakeholders (including Landlord, Tenant and the public)</li> </ul> |

### 3.0 The Holding

- 3.1 The Holding is located on the urban fringe to the east of the town of Seaford. It comprises 110 hectares (276 acres) of permanent and temporary pasture, with some Winter bird seed CSS mixes. A plan of the land can be found at Appendix I. It does not include the bulk of the block of land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) running to the cliff edge to the West of the Coast Guard Cottages.
- 3.2 The Holding was inspected on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 by Colin Hall of BTF. During the inspection the land appeared to be well maintained and in good condition, with the fencing in a reasonable state of repair throughout. The Holding has been used in connection with the grazing and rearing of cattle and sheep.
- 3.3 Part of the Holding is identified to be a SSSI (unfavourable recovering). The Holding is divided centrally by a road which connects the Seaford Head Nature Reserve and the Coastguard Cottages. It is also crossed by a number of Public Rights of way as follows:
- SEA/31/2 (Bridleway)
  - SEA/22/1 (Footpath)
  - SEA/22/3 (Footpath)
  - SEA/24/1 (Footpath)

- 3.4 There is a redundant flint barn sited centrally to the Holding. This is not within the Tenancy, but the potential for further use and development of it may impact on the Holding, both in terms of providing additional diversification opportunities (for example, extra car parking), and also in respect of water supply (via a borehole) which could then also provide water for livestock.
- 3.5 DEFRA'S Land Classification map identifies the land to be Grade 3 (good to moderate). Further, the Holding is classified to be within Flood Risk Zone 1 (low probability) on the Environment Agency's flood map.
- 3.6 The Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) are responsible for fulfilling the grazing requirements of the bulk of the land within the SSSI and further enquiries should be made both as to what exactly is required in terms of ongoing management of this area and whether the Tenant would be better placed than SWT to provide it (or to provide in tandem with SWT).

#### 4.0 Matters benefitting and burdening the property

- 4.1 The Holding is varying in productive capacity, with the highest productive capacity land parcels being located towards the centre within close proximity to the flint barn. This offers the opportunity to utilise the highest capacity land with minimal restriction and implement more prescriptive environmental management obligations on the less productive land.
- 4.2 The flint barn not included within the tenancy would lend itself to an alternative use (subject to the relevant planning permission). There may also be the possibility of obtaining a license/certificate for a private burial ground, but we have not looked into that in any detail at this stage.
- 4.4 The centre of the Holding is accessible at all times via the footpath and bridleway network referred above and also by vehicle, for which visitors can park for an undefined length of time. There are opportunities to implement a parking tariff to generate additional income.
- 4.5 The property is located within an 'edge' area associated with Bovine Tuberculosis, and therefore requires annual testing.
- 4.6 Possibility of Rhiannon Masters as new Tenant taking the responsibility from Sussex Wildlife Trust of grazing the nature reserve (see 5.2 below).

#### 5.0 Proposed way forward

- 5.1 It is proposed that the existing Agricultural Holdings Act Tenancy is terminated, with protective notice being served by 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024 to come to an end on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025. A new Agricultural Tenancies Act tenancy should be granted to Rhiannon Masters for a term of 15 years with rent assessed in accordance with the productive capacity of the land and reviewed every three years. It may be that this is agreed prior to Michaelmas 2025 and possibly for a Michaelmas 2024 start.
- 5.2 Given the apparent difference in the management of the bulk of the SSSI land (more scrub) and the Holding (less scrub) it would seem that serious conversations with the Tenant should be had about becoming much more involved in the management of that area. Scrub poses a



significant threat to grassland communities on the South Downs and it appears that, without management, the majority of the grassland within the SSSI will become dominated by scrub and eventually convert to woodland. It is further accepted that the ecological value of the nationally scarce chalk grassland and chalk heath communities will be lost if this is allowed to happen and so scrub control is one of the key priorities for the management of this area. It seems that, with under grazing of the SSSI, this area is now high priority for grassland restoration and – if a way around current TB concerns can be identified - this may best be achieved by the Tenant as neighbour on the adjoining Holding.

- 5.3 The above is in a sense a Tenant diversification opportunity, given the current costs incurred by the Landlord involved in overseeing the management of the SSSI by SWT. Further opportunities for both Landlord and Tenant include the possibility of implementing a car parking tariff at the South Hill Barn Car Park to generate income both on retained freehold and the Holding.

## 6.0 Heads of Terms

[STILL BEING WORKED UPON IN PREPARATION FOR LEASE NEGOTIATIONS AND FUTURE PRESENTATION TO FULL COUNCIL

## 7.0 Outstanding Matters

- 7.1
- 7.2 Updated tenancy plan, clearly identifying what is to be included/excluded within the new tenancy.
- 7.3 Preparation of overall farm objectives plan for the term 2025 – 2040 to identify joint Landlord/Tenant objectives for the Holding, recognising diversification opportunities and productive capacity on the one hand against the importance of continued management of the Holding in a way that is sustainable and protects and enhances the natural environment.



**APPENDIX I**

**PLAN OF HOLDING**

[TO BE INSERTED]



**APPENDIX II**  
**DRAFT HEADS OF TERMS**

[TO BE INSERTED]



## Seaford Town Council

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>199/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>23</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>New Asset – Bus Shelters</b>  |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present an opportunity for the Town Council to take on ownership of three new bus shelters within the town</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>   |
| 1. To agree to take on the ownership, management and responsibility for three new bus shelters in the town. |

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Town Council currently has responsibility for five bus shelters in the town. This means that the Town Council must clean, maintain, and repair them.

1.2 The Town Council has now had the following approach from East Sussex County Council (ESCC):

East Sussex County Council are offering to cover all funding to install bus shelters at the bus stops below but require the Town Council to accept ownership and future liability including cleaning & maintenance in exactly the same way as they do for the bus shelters, they currently own.

1.3 Full Council is now asked to consider this proposal.

1.4 Therefore, in the report below, please find more information on the three proposed shelters, and the time and expense incurred maintaining the five the Town Council currently has.

## 2. Further Information

2.1 The three new bus shelters are as follows:

| Common Name      | Street          | Indicator Location | Proposal  | Google   |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|--|
| Chyngton Gardens | Eastbourne Road | Adjacent           | Bus shelter   | <a href="#">Chyngton Gardens - Google Maps</a> |
| Cemetery Gates   | Vale Road       | After              | Bus shelter & raised kerbs                              | <a href="#">Cemetery Gates - Google Maps</a>   |
| Millberg Road    | Walmer Road     | Adjacent           | Bus shelter, raised kerbs & relocation of the RTPI pole | <a href="#">Millberg Road - Google Maps</a>    |

## 3. Current Arrangements

3.1 The Town Council currently looks after the following five bus shelters:

- (a) Sutton Park Road
- (b) Bishopstone Marine Drive
- (c) Barn Rise
- (d) Walmer Road
- (e) Alfriston Road

3.2 The Projects & Facilities team look after these as part of the work they do to maintain all of the assets of the Town Council.

3.3 The feedback from the team is that this has NOT taken up significant time.

## 4. Current Maintenance Costs

4.1 The costs of maintenance have been as follows:

| YEAR        | EXPENDITURE<br>£ |
|-------------|------------------|
| 2013 - 2014 | 216              |
| 2014 - 2015 | 216              |
| 2015 - 2016 | 218              |

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 2016 - 2017            | 969           |
| 2017 - 2018            | 380           |
| 2018 - 2019            | 745           |
| 2019 - 2020            | 745           |
| 2020 - 2021            | 360           |
| 2021 - 2022            | 360           |
| 2022 - 2023            | 360           |
| 2023 - 2024 (estimate) | 660           |
| TOTAL                  | 5229          |
| <b>ANNUAL AVERAGE</b>  | <b>475.36</b> |

**4.2** Nearly all of these costs are monthly cleaning costs although there has been the occasional replacement of glass panels. Members can see above the years where this happened and there have been higher costs.

## **5. Advertising**

**5.1** ESCC have let the Town Council know that they will be seeking relevant planning permissions from Lewes District Council to install real time screens to these shelters. This could potentially provide advertising revenue to the Town Council to fund / support the cleaning and maintenance costs in the future.

## **6. Financial Appraisal**

**6.1** The Town Council has spent around £475 per year to maintain five bus shelters.

**6.2** The Town Council is now being asked to take on another three shelters – and so a reasonable estimate of the additional costs would be around £300 per year, with some extra costs in some years if there is a lot of vandalism or other damage.

**6.3** The 2024 – 2025 budget has been set at £1,000, to accommodate the Town Council taking on ownership of the shelters should it wish to.

## **7. Conclusion**

**7.1** Full Council is asked to consider the request from the County Council.

## **8. Contact Officer**

**8.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.





## Seaford Town Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>193/23</b>   |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>24</b>   |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Full Council</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Member's Allowance Policy – Full Council Consideration</b>   |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>   |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To provide an opportunity for Full Council to consider a review of its Member's Allowance Policy</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>Full Council is recommended:</b>                               |
| 1. To consider the Town Council's stance with member's allowances |

### 1. Information

- 1.1 At its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee considered a report on the Town Council's Member's Allowance Policy.
- 1.2 The F&GP Committee discussed the report but agreed to refer this to Full Council for consideration due to the need for all councillors to be involved in consideration of this matter.
- 1.3 Report 170/23 presented to the F&GP Committee is therefore included at Appendix A.
- 1.4 Appended to this are two further documents:
  - (a) the current Town Council policy document, and
  - (b) Lewes District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel Report.
- 1.5 Full Council is now asked to consider whether it wishes to:
  - (a) readopt the Member's Allowance Policy as presented for a further four years, OR



**(b)** instruct officers to research this further and present this information to a future Full Council meeting for consideration, including any budgetary considerations.

**1.6** If option (b) is chosen above, it is anticipated that any changes / access to an allowance would be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, in order to allow for the necessary budget to be agreed for the 2025 – 2026 financial year.

## **2. Financial Appraisal**

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

## **3. Contact Officer**

**3.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.

The Town Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee has referred consideration of the report below to Full Council:

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Report No:</b>         | <b>170/23</b>  |
| <b>Agenda Item No:</b>    | <b>10</b>  |
| <b>Committee:</b>         | <b>Finance &amp; General Purposes</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>              | <b>12<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Members' Allowance Policy Review</b>  |
| <b>By:</b>                | <b>Adam Chugg, Town Clerk</b>  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | <b>To present a review the Town Council's Members' Allowance Policy for consideration by Committee and recommendation to Full Council to adopt</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| <b>The Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee is recommended:</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the contents of the report.</li> <li>2. To recommend to Full Council to readopt the Members' Allowance Policy in its current form.</li> </ol> |

## 1. Information

### Town Council's Current Policy

- 1.1 The Town Council's Members' Allowance Policy confirms the Town Council's policy decision on paying an allowance to town councillors and access to travel expenses.
- 1.2 To confirm, since the Town Council formed in 1999, it has been the policy of the Town Council not to pay its elected members a basic annual allowance under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 1.3 Members are however able to claim for travel expenses, in accordance with the policy.
- 1.4 The current Members' Allowance Policy is included at Appendix A.

- 1.5 This was last adopted in August 2021 and due for review in the 2024 – 2025 municipal year.
- 1.6 However, Lewes District Council has recently published the report of an independent remuneration panel into recommended members' allowances for the parish and town councils within the Lewes district, and this has prompted this policy review to be brought forward sooner than expected.

Lewes District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel Report

- 1.7 The report of the independent panel is included at Appendix B.
- 1.8 The report sets out the recommended maximum allowance that can be offered to members (based on a set of pre-agreed calculations).
- 1.9 In short, the recommendations of the report are as follows:  
  
**'Basic Allowance** - the Panel recommends that those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 15% of the recommended Basic Allowance of Lewes District Council.  
  
The recommended Basic Allowance for the District Council for 2024/25 is recommended as £5,002 subject to any indexation; 15% of this is £750 per annum, subject to any indexation). This should in accordance with the statutory regulations only be paid to Councillors who are elected not those co-opted.  
  
**Chair's Allowance** - the Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a chair's allowance is appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for Lewes District Council.  
  
The recommended Chair's Allowance is therefore any amount up to £1,500, 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for Lewes District Council.
- 1.10 The Panel was of the view that whilst parish councillors did not stand for office for any financial reward, an allowance could actively support someone in the councillor role and that it was essential to be able to attract parish councillors from a wide range of backgrounds. Councillors should also not be out of pocket for undertaking the role.

- 1.11** The recommendations within the report relating to travel expenses reflect those within the Town Council's policy and available to members.

Seaford Town Council's Stance

- 1.12** In the past, there has been no indication from the Town Council of a wish to review its position of not offering its members an allowance for undertaking councillor duties. There has also been no budget set aside within the next financial year for such costs. As such, this is recommended not to change and that the Committee recommends that Full Council readopt the Members' Allowance Policy in its current form.
- 1.13** If the Committee members do wish to recommend that Full Council changes the Town Council's position regarding members allowances, it is suggested that officers would need to be instructed to research this further and present this information to a future Full Council meeting for consideration, including any budgetary considerations.

**2. Financial Appraisal**

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

**3. Contact Officer**

- 3.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Adam Chugg, Town Clerk.



**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

**FOR**

**LEWES PARISH AND TOWN  
COUNCILS**

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**NOVEMBER 2023**

**Index**

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|                                 |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| Introduction                    | Page 1 |
| Terms of Reference              | Page 2 |
| Approach                        | Page 2 |
| Arriving at the Recommendations | Page 3 |
| Recommendations                 | Page 3 |

Report from the Parish and Town Councils Independent Remuneration Panel  
November 2023

1. Introduction

---

The Parish Remuneration Panel was convened by Lewes District Council as the 'Responsible Authority' so required by the 2003 Regulations:

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003  
Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 and the amendment – Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1692

The Guidance issued on these regulations for Parish Allowances/ or Members of Parish Council is:

*"91. Parish councils may choose to pay their members an allowance, known as 'parish basic allowance', to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties. There is no obligation on parish councils to pay such allowances. Each parish council may make an allowance available to its chair only, or to each of its members. Where all members receive an allowance, the amount payable to the chair may be different to that paid to other members, but otherwise the amount paid to each member must be the same. Parish basic allowance is a discretionary allowance. It may be paid in a lump sum, or at intervals throughout the year.*

*92. If a parish council wishes to pay a basic allowance, it should have regard to a recommendation from its parish remuneration panel. This is a panel set up to make recommendations to parishes in its area. The membership of a parish remuneration panel will be the same as the independent remuneration panel of the district or county council within whose area the parish is situated. The panel will make a recommendation as to whom basic allowance should be paid, and the level of the allowance."*

*(New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances, DCLG, 2003)*

## 2. Terms of Reference

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The Panel was asked to consider and make recommendations to Parish and Town Councils regarding:

- Basic Allowance
- Chairs Allowance
- Travel and Subsistence Allowance
- Indexing

### The Parish and Town Independent Remuneration Panel

The Parish Independent Remuneration Panel comprised of the same membership as the Independent Remuneration Panel which met via MS Teams on the **14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023** to review the allowances for Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council. The members of the panel are set out below:

The Panel comprised the following members:

- Mark Palmer, Development Director, South East Employers (Chair)
- Daphne Bagshawe, .MA JP, Consultant on Local Government
- Ian Buckingham, Management Consultant and Former Local Resident.

The Panel meeting was held in private session.

The report recommendations apply to the twenty-two Parish and Town Councils within the boundaries of Lewes District Council. The last review was undertaken in January 2020.

## 3. Approach

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All Parish and Town Councils were invited to provide views through a questionnaire that was sent to all twenty-two Councils and responses were received from **eleven** of the Councils. A summary of the responses is included as Appendix 1.

The Panel paid close attention to the Government Guidance in arriving at the recommendations.

## 4. Arriving at the Recommendations

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The Panel was of the view that whilst parish councillors did not stand for office for any financial reward, an allowance could actively support someone in the councillor role and that it was essential to be able to attract parish councillors from a wide range of backgrounds. Councillors should also not be out of pocket for undertaking the role.

The recommendations are based on the information provided from the responses to the questionnaire, the interviews and consideration was given to:

- Frequency of meetings
- The number of Committees
- Levels of responsibility and
- Hours worked



## 5. Recommendations

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### Basic Allowance

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 state the basic allowance recommended by a Parish Independent Remuneration Panel can be for any amount up to 100 per cent of the Basic Allowance paid by Lewes District Council.

**The Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 15% of the recommended Basic Allowance of Lewes District Council.**

The recommended Basic Allowance for the Council for 2024/25 is £5,002 subject to any indexation; **15% of this is £750 per annum, subject to any indexation. This should in accordance with the statutory regulations only be paid to Councillors who are elected not those co-opted.**

### Chair's Allowance.

Should any Parish or Town wish to set an allowance for Chair, in addition to the civic and ceremonial allowance then the Panel is again given authority to award any amount up to 100 per cent of the basic allowance paid by Lewes District Council.

The Panel did receive responses in respect of the increasing levels of responsibility and hours worked by Chairs of the Councils.

**The Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a chair's allowance is appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for Lewes District Council**

**The recommended Chair's Allowance is therefore any amount up to £1,500, 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for Lewes District Council.**

### Travel and Subsistence.

The Panel recommends that the Parish and Town Councils should pay Travel and Subsistence Allowances in line with those agreed as part of the Members Allowances Schedule for the District Council.

### Indexation of Allowances

The indexation of the allowances paid to Members of the Parish and Town councils should be in accordance with the indexation applied to Members Allowances at the District Council. The recommended approach to indexation is in line with the District Councils annual staff salary increase when applicable.

### Forgoing Allowances.

A councillor may choose not to receive all or part of any allowance to which they would otherwise be entitled. To do so they must give written notice to the proper officer of the Parish/Town council.

## **Publicity**

With- regard to the allowances, the Panel recommends that the Parish Councils act in accordance with the following guidance (Section 5, Paragraph 30 of the Regulations (SI2003 No. 1021):

*“Parish councils are required to publicise their allowances in a notice or notices conspicuous in their area. These notices must remain in place for at least 14 days. In addition, they must make a record of the allowances they have paid available for inspection at reasonable notice. They must provide copies of this record on request and may charge a reasonable fee for this. Parishes must also publish details of the parish remuneration panel reports. Again, these are minimum requirements, and parish councils may wish to go further in making local people aware of their allowances scheme and payment levels. For- example they may wish to circulate details of their allowances in the parish newsletter, if they have one, place them on a website, or publish them in one or more local newspapers.”*

The Panel recommends that the Parish Clerk should also publicise the allowances scheme to all Parish and Town Councillors

## **Implementation**

The Panel recommends the new allowances should be implemented from May 2024. If a decision on allowances has not been made by Lewes District Council before the start of the new municipal year then allowances payable to Parish Councillors can be backdated to May 2024.

**Mark Palmer- Chair, Independent Remuneration Panel**

**Daphne Bagshawe- Independent Remuneration Panel**

**Ian Buckingham- Independent Remuneration Panel**

**November 2023**





## Seaford Town Council

### Member's Allowance Policy

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Policy Ref.</b>                         | CC5   |
| <b>Date Last Adopted</b>                   | August 2021   |
| <b>Date of Next Review</b>                 | 2024 - 2025   |
| <b>Possible Prompts for Earlier Review</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If rates within the policy change</li> </ul> |
| <b>Previous Adoption Dates</b>             | October 2018<br>September 2015  |
| <b>Author</b>                              | Assistant Town Clerk  |

## Member's Allowance Policy

### Basic Allowance

The introduction of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 gave town and parish councils the ability to pay an allowance to local councillors in order to recognise the time and effort they put into their council duties. There is however no obligation to pay such allowances.

It is the policy of Seaford Town Council not to pay its elected members a basic annual allowance under the powers of the above regulations.

### Members Travel Expenses

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowance) (England) Regulations 2003 state that a council can provide a travel allowance to be paid for:

1. A meeting of the authority;
2. A meeting of some other body to which the authority make appointments or nominations;
3. A meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority make appointments or nominations;
4. A meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or sub-committee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which the representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the authority is not divided into political groups);
5. A meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member;
6. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened
7. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and

empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises

8. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996
9. Any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

In accordance with HM Revenue & Customs rates, it is the policy of Seaford Town Council that its members are entitled to claim back travel and mileage expenses at the following rates:

Cars: 45p/pm for the first 10,000 business miles in the tax year, 25p/pm thereafter

Motorbikes: 24p/pm for the first 10,000 business miles in the tax year, 24p/pm thereafter

Bicycles: 20p/pm for the first 10,000 business miles in the tax year, 20p/pm thereafter

A mileage claim form must be completed and submitted to the Town Clerk, along with supporting documentation, for authorisation before payment is made. Travel expenses may not be claimed for travel within the town boundaries. Travel expenses may be claimed for use of public transport and/or accommodation where the most reasonable price has been sourced and upon receipts being produced.

