



Seaford Town Council Climate Change Sub-Committee Agenda – Thursday 21st November 2024

To the Members of the Climate Change Sub-Committee

Councillors C Bristow (Chair), R Buchanan (Vice Chair), R Honeyman, O Matthews, J Meek, I Taylor and L Wallraven.

A meeting of the **Climate Change Sub-Committee** will be held in the **Council Chambers, 37 Church Street Seaford, BN25 1HG** on **Thursday, 21st November 2024** at 7.00pm, which you are summoned to attend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SQ'.

Steve Quayle,
Interim Town Clerk
9th November 2024

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Public attendance at this meeting will be limited, so registration to attend is advised.**
- **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.**

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. [Climate Change Update Report – November 2024](#)

To consider report 111/24 providing the Sub-Committee with an update on the key work being undertaken by the Council in relation to the Climate Emergency (pages 5 to 6).

5. [Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve – Update & Consideration of Next Steps](#)

To consider report 110/24 providing information on the Sub-Committee making a recommendation to Full Council about the Town Council's involvement in the Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve (pages 7 to 27).

6. [Paper & Print Strategy](#)

To consider report 112/24 allowing the Sub-Committee to consider the Town Council's strategic approach towards the usage of paper and printing (pages 28 to 34)

AGENDA NOTES

For further information about items on this Agenda please contact:

Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk, 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG

Email: meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 01323 894 870

Circulation:

All Town Councillors 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.

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

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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 for 6.45pm where you will be shown into the meeting for a 7.00pm start.

Please note that the front door of the building will be locked at 7.00pm and remain locked during the meeting for security reasons. As such, if you arrive after this time, you will not be able to access the meeting.

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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 regarding business on the agenda for that meeting.
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 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.



Report No:	111/24
Agenda Item No:	4
Committee:	Climate Change Sub-Committee
Date:	21st November 2024
Title:	Climate Change Update Report - November 2024
By:	Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To provide a further update on the key work being undertaken by the Council in relation to the Climate Emergency

Recommendations
The Sub-Committee is recommended:
1. To note the contents of the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 Due to the previous Sub-Committee meeting being held in mid-September and the ongoing piece of work to review the Town Council's Committee structure, this is a somewhat paired back update report on key pieces of work.

2. Urban Grass Verge Cutting

2.1 During 2024 Seaford Town Council took on the extra responsibility of grass cutting in some parts of the town, in response to East Sussex County Council's decision to reduce the amount of cuts it provided.

2.2 A contractor was sourced and a contract was entered into, albeit this took place later in the year than the Town Council would have wished, which meant that some areas of grass were left un-cut for longer than was ideal.

2.3 This also meant that the number of cuts undertaken during 2024 was less than originally planned.

- 2.4 Despite these initial teething problems, the Town Council is confident the contractor will be able to perform their role fully and comprehensively, as per the terms of their contract throughout the mowing season in 2025.
- 2.5 Further to concerns raised by some residents that some of the cuts that did take place were missed, or that they did not know when to expect a cut to happen, the Town Council's facilities team has committed to publishing a calendar of expected dates for grass cutting to take place across the town throughout 2025. This calendar of dates will be publicised on the Town Councils' website once this is agreed with the contractor in early spring 2025.

3. Cycle Rack Installation

- 3.1 On 14th November, Full Council is considering this Sub-Committee's recommendation for cycle racks to be installed at South Hill Barn and The Salts.
- 3.2 A verbal update on the Full Council decision can be relayed at the Sub-Committee meeting.

4. South Hill Barn Proposals

- 4.1 Also on 14th November, Full Council is considering the scoping and briefing report of the South Hill Barn Working Group.
- 4.2 Whilst in its early stages – operation and use of the new facilities is provisionally programmed for 2029 – this is a key project in terms of the environmentally sustainable approach that is being taken towards the development. Section 14 of working group's briefing and scoping report sets out the considerations made and opportunities identified in this early stage to make the future use of South Hill Barn as an environmental / sustainable exemplar.

5. Financial Appraisal

- 5.1 There are no new costs for the Town Council within this report.

6. Contact Officer

- 6.1 The contact officer for this report is Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk.



Report No:	110/24
Agenda Item No:	5
Committee:	Climate Change Sub-Committee
Date:	21st November 2024
Title:	Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve – Update & Consideration of Next Steps
By:	Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To facilitate the Sub-Committee making a recommendation to Full Council about the Town Council’s involvement in the Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To consider the requests of the Town Council – set out below – and make the its recommendations for Full Council consideration:
 - a) To agree to include the land at Seaford Head currently designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve, as part of The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, by providing a letter of intent, and
 - b) To approve Seaford Town Council becoming an Approved Body via Natural England’s processes and under section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in order to manage the land as a National Nature Reserve.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2023, Full Council received a presentation from Natural England about its proposals to create the Chalk Coast National Nature Reserve and

the invite for the Town Council to become one of eight core partners in the reserve.

- 1.2 Please note that, since this meeting, the proposed reserve has been renamed from Chalk Coast to Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve.
- 1.3 The report considered by Full Council can be found online [here](#) (page 6 onwards) and the video of the meeting / presentation can be found on the [Town Council's YouTube Channel](#).
- 1.4 At this meeting, Full Council passed the following motions:
 - (a) It was **RESOLVED** to confirm that the Town Council **AGREES** with Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve being included in conversations about The Chalk Coast National Nature Reserve, with any final decisions to proceed to be made at a future Full Council meeting.
 - (b) It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that following this meeting Town Council officers will begin work on relevant considerations such as looking at the most appropriate management structures, which land to include, affiliation options and any other matters to be considered before final decisions can be taken.
 - (c) It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to nominate Town Councillor C Bristow as an outside body representative on the Chalk Coast National Nature Reserve Group, working with other councillors to share attendance at meetings as appropriate.
- 1.5 Since this Full Council meeting, Officers and the Councillor representative have attended several partner meetings hosted by Natural England, largely focussed on project development, including visioning, mapping and discussing opportunities or challenges for each of the core partners involved.
- 1.6 Natural England has updated the proposal document for the Town Council to consider and this is now included at **Appendix A**.
- 1.7 The next step required is for the Town Council to determine if it is going to commit land to the Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve (NNR) and if the Town Council is willing to become an approved body.
- 1.8 This report alongside the presentation by Natural England at this meeting, will furnish the Sub-Committee with the relevant information to make a recommendation to Full Council for consideration.

2. Format of the Discussion

- 2.1 Natural England Officers have kindly agreed to attend the Sub-Committee meeting. The format of this agenda item is therefore anticipated as follows:
- (a) Natural England will make a presentation to the Sub-Committee,
 - (b) Natural England will welcome a question and answer session on the proposals, and
 - (c) The Sub-Committee will then be asked to discuss the report and presentation, agreeing a recommendation to make to Full Council for consideration.

3. Considerations

- 3.1 The proposal document provided by Natural England (see Appendix A) provides the Sub-Committee with an introduction to the NNR proposals, the request of the Town Council and impacts of this, the risks and how they will be managed and other supporting information, such as case studies.
- 3.2 The requests of the Town Council (page 3 of the appendix) are as follows:
- (a) To agree to include the land at Seaford Head currently designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve, as part of The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, by providing a letter of intent, and
 - (b) To approve Seaford Town Council becoming an Approved Body via Natural England's processes and under section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in order to manage the land as an NNR.
- 3.3 Land to be included
- 3.4 Figure 1 on page 4 of the appendix shows the Town Council-owned land (pale orange) that is proposed to be included, as well as the land included by the other seven core partners.
- 3.5 This land was identified by Town Council officers during the project development discussions with Natural England.
- 3.6 Attached at **Appendix B** is a larger scale map focussing on the Town Council's land. Please note that this is indicative and is not exact – it is aimed to support councillors in understanding the area being proposed.
- 3.7 The area is within the current Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), that is a legal status, and also predominantly within the current Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve (SHLNR), although not covering all of the SHLNR.

- 3.8** There are some small areas where the boundary does crossover into Seaford Head Golf Course (on the left border of the area proposed).
- 3.9** There is the option to look at affiliate land to be added into the NNR at a later date.
- 3.10** *Impact on the land included*
- 3.11** Pages 5 to 11 of Appendix A set out the impacts for the Town Council of committing land to the NNR.
- 3.12** In summary:
- (a)** As the land is all already a designated SSSI, the proposed NNR does not impose any further legal requirements and the SSSI designation is the primary designation.
 - (b)** Natural England is the responsible body for notifying and assessing the SSSI designation.
 - (c)** The NNR is a voluntary declaration and Natural England is responsible for approving the organisations that will manage the NNR. In this case, this would see both the Town Council and Sussex Wildlife Trust becoming approved bodies (covered further below in 3.16).
 - (d)** The NNR would be managed in accordance with the benchmarks set out in the NNR Management Framework, which will be agreed by all approved bodies for the NNR, including the Town Council. Each landowner will be able to directly influence what happens on their own land with individual management plans.
 - (e)** The NNR Management Framework would complement the requirements of the land as a SSSI.
 - (f)** The NNR designation will provide connectivity with neighbours and provide a mechanism for climate change mitigation and resilience work to the landscape.
 - (g)** The SSSI within Seaford is currently classified as unfavourable declining (largely due to under-grazing and scrub encroachment). The NNR designation and partnership working should help with the introduction of targets to improve this condition.
 - (h)** The NNR declaration would not change the relationship that exists between the Town Council and Sussex Wildlife Trust, which manages the SHLNR on the Town Council's behalf.

- 3.13** While the proposed boundary does include parts of the golf course outside of the SHLNR, this area is still within the SSSI. Natural England's Officers have however been asked to confirm any impacts of this on operations and management of the golf course. This will be covered verbally at the Sub-Committee meeting.
- 3.14** The NNR designation would not impact on the land that is currently leased to the National Air Traffic Services within the proposed area.
- 3.15** The area in question forms part of the Seaford Head land title, which was transferred from Lewes District Council to the Town Council in 2005. The Town Council would not be required to ascertain permission from Lewes District Council to commit this land to the NNR.
- 3.16** *Risks to the Town Council*
- 3.17** Page 11 of Appendix A includes a risks table.
- 3.18** It is important to note that, whilst this is a declaration in perpetuity, this is a voluntary declaration and if it was felt necessary in the future, the land can be de-declared.
- 3.19** *Becoming an Approved Body*
- 3.20** In order to commit its land to the NNR, the Town Council would be required to become an Approved Body.
- 3.21** Natural England is responsible for considering and approving Approved Bodies. The declaration process will see the Town Council provide examples of management for nature conservation to evidence that the Town Council can manage an NNR.
- 3.22** As mentioned above, Sussex Wildlife Trust would also be a designated Approved Body, due to managing the SHLNR on the Town Council's behalf.
- 3.23** *Previous queries from the Town Council*
- 3.24** At the Full Council meeting in October 2023, Full Council queried any legislative advantage or additional protection of the proposed changes, the project being community-led and the positive impact of the proposals on drinking water availability for Seaford.
- 3.25** Appendix A should address the queries previously raised by the Town Council above. In addition, the case studies within the appendix (from page 11), are answers from Natural England to specific queries submitted by the Town Council.

3.26 The Natural England Officers present at the Sub-Committee meeting will be available to answer any further questions or points of clarification that councillors may have.

3.27 *Impacts of not joining the NNR*

3.28 There are no direct consequences if the Town Council chooses not to join the NNR, aside from the loss of the advantages set out within the report at Appendix A.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The NNR proposals provide an opportunity for the Town Council to work in partnership with its neighbours to ensure the most effective management of its land, complementing the designations and management already in place.

4.2 The proposals allow the Town Council the opportunity to support and advocate the NNR principles of nature, science and people, as well as working to mitigate the impacts of climate change on the Town Council's land and build resilience of the landscape moving forwards.

4.3 The Sub-Committee is being asked to consider the NNR proposals and make a recommendation to Full Council for consideration at its meeting in January 2025.

4.4 The recommendations for Sub-Committee to consider are:

- (a)** To agree to include the land at Seaford Head currently designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve, as part of The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, by providing a letter of intent, and
- (b)** To approve Seaford Town Council becoming an Approved Body via Natural England's processes and under section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in order to manage the land as an NNR.

5. Financial Appraisal

5.1 There are direct financial implications as a result of this report.

6. Contact Officer

6.1 The contact officer for this report is Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk.

The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve

Proposal to extend Lullington Heath National Nature Reserve

Report for Seaford Town Council

Produced by Natural England by Kerrie Curzon and Sarah Davies.



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Preface to document

This is the second presentation to the Full Council and this time we seek the approval for the inclusion of the Local Nature Reserve land managed by Sussex Wildlife Trust and owned by Seaford Town Council into the proposed Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve.

This report has been produced to outline the rationale and advantages of this project, as well as the progress the partners have made and addresses key questions for Seaford Town Council in the form of three case studies.

Recommendations

The Full Council is recommended:

1. To include the land at Seaford Head currently designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve, as part of The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, by providing a letter of intent and,
2. Seaford Town Council become an Approved Body via Natural England's processes and under section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in order to manage the land as an NNR.

Rationale

Background

STC were approached in October 2023 and agreed to continue developing the partnership NNR.

To recap, Lullington Heath is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) situated above Friston Forest in East Sussex. At only 63 hectares it is an ecological island of rare chalk heath and grassland in a landscape surrounded by farmland, as well as multiple Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), some of which are in unfavourable condition.

The ambition is to declare over 2000 hectares as The Seven Sisters NNR, which is framed by the Selection Principles for NNRs: Nature, Science and People (Link and summary, p.12). This also underpins the vision for the NNR (Link and summary below, p.12).

The eight partner organisations continuing to work together are and shown on a map in Figure 1 below:

Seaford Town Council (STC) and Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT)

South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)

South East Water (SEW)

National Trust (NT)

Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC)

Forestry England (FE)

Natural England (NE)

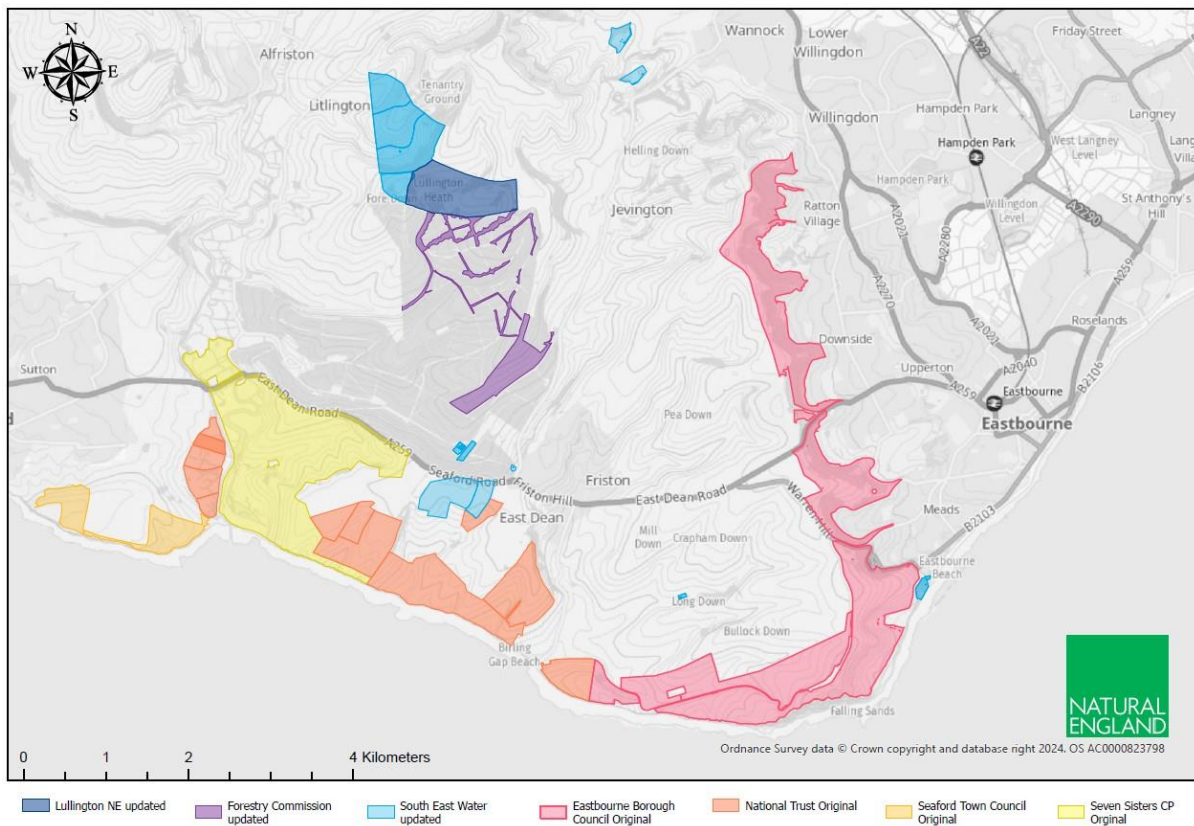


Figure 1 Current proposed partner land of The Seven Sisters NNR.

Updates:

- Regular meetings are now underway where partners are shaping the NNR, as well as connecting and involving wider stakeholders.
- Currently, we have letters of intent from SDNPA, SEW and NT.
- Partners needing to become Approved Bodies are SDNPA, SEW, EBC and STC.
- Based on the three pillars of an NNR - Nature, Science and People - the partner organisations have developed a joint vision for the NNR and Principles of how to work together. These are working documents that will develop over time and can be seen in brief below.

Vision



For Nature:

To see the special wildlife of the land and sea thrive through connected and innovative land management.



For Water:

To value and protect the water of the chalk landscape to benefit people and nature.



For People:

To help local communities, businesses and visitors enjoy, value and connect with the chalk landscape.

Inspired by water, motivated by nature, delivered for future generations.

Principles:

- Needs to add value to existing work plans
- About partnership and collaboration
- Seek and adapt innovative approaches
- Funding opportunities
- Enhancing and celebrating water and wildlife
- Nature-based solutions biodiversity double lock
- Landscape lab – support evidence and science
- Work together to educate and engage with visitors and the local community about the core work of the NNR
- Improving resilience to climate change

Differences between the current arrangements and the proposed NNR

The key differences are:

- The STC-owned land would change from a Local Nature Reserve to a National Nature Reserve.
- STC needs to become an Approved Body to manage an NNR.
- There will be an over-arching Management Framework agreed by all partners.

These differences between the current arrangements and the proposed NNR, are set out in more detail below and can be seen in summary in Table 1 and Figure 2.

NNR status:

- The voluntary declaration of the NNR will mean that the land becomes nationally recognised for its importance within, not only the NNR series, but the King's Series of NNRs, exclusively formed of partnership NNRs.
- The difference is this status will attract positive attention and funding opportunities.
- There is an essential requirement that the land is managed with the primary purpose of nature conservation.
- This does not prevent other activities occurring on the land, but asks that nature conservation is always considered first in any decision.

Approved Body status:

- As the landowner, STC need to become an Approved Body to manage the NNR.
- This involves NE putting forward examples of management for nature conservation, to ensure STC can manage an NNR, and is part of the declaration process.
- No officer capacity is required to put this case forward, however, some evidence may be requested to help support the case.

Management Framework:

- The NNR will have an over-arching Management Framework that develops the objectives from the joint vision of the NNR and builds on each organisation's Management Plan, without overruling individual plans.
- The Management Framework will be developed after the declaration and be co-designed to provide benefits for each partner and enable closer working together.
- As the partnership NNR declaration is voluntary, any agreements made within this document are voluntarily undertaken by the partners.
- The partnership working together will achieve the agreed outcomes across the NNR, without the need for each partner to necessarily contribute independently.
- Existing stewardship schemes would fit into the Management Framework, highlighting outcomes that the schemes enable, rather than dictating what should happen in the scheme.

National targets:

- This would help deliver national Environmental Improvement Plan targets by improving the condition of the SSSIs (as part of the NNR), improving the health of the chalk aquifer, and creating nature-rich land in the wider area.
- It will help to ensure that the land is managed for nature conservation, with wider environmental benefits, in perpetuity by collective agreement.

Table 1 The differences between the designations and voluntary declarations.

Designation	Underlying policy	Regulations and guidance	Managing body	Status
SSSI	Originally set up by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, but the current legal framework is provided by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in England and Wales	There are certain activities that cannot be carried out on SSSI land without consulting Natural England and getting consent first - ORNECs (Operations Requiring Natural England Consent). These activities vary between sites.	Owner/occupier of the land. Natural England is the responsible authority for notifying and assessing the condition of SSSIs in England.	Designated
NNR	Established under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 .	Key principals and benchmarks for management are set out in the NNR Management Standards . Each site is supported by a Management Plan.	Natural England or an Approved Body , these are organisations approved by Natural England to manage an NNR. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 35 c supports management by Approved Bodies and allows ABs to create byelaws.	Voluntary declaration
LNR	Established under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949	The land manager needs to protect the LNR’s special interest with a Management Plan. Local authorities and town and parish councils can create LNR byelaws .	Local authority owned . Local authorities can run LNRs independently or can involve groups such as community groups, conservations bodies and Natural England.	Voluntary

Table 1 demonstrates how the different designations and declarations compare. Figure 2 sets out how these structures interact.

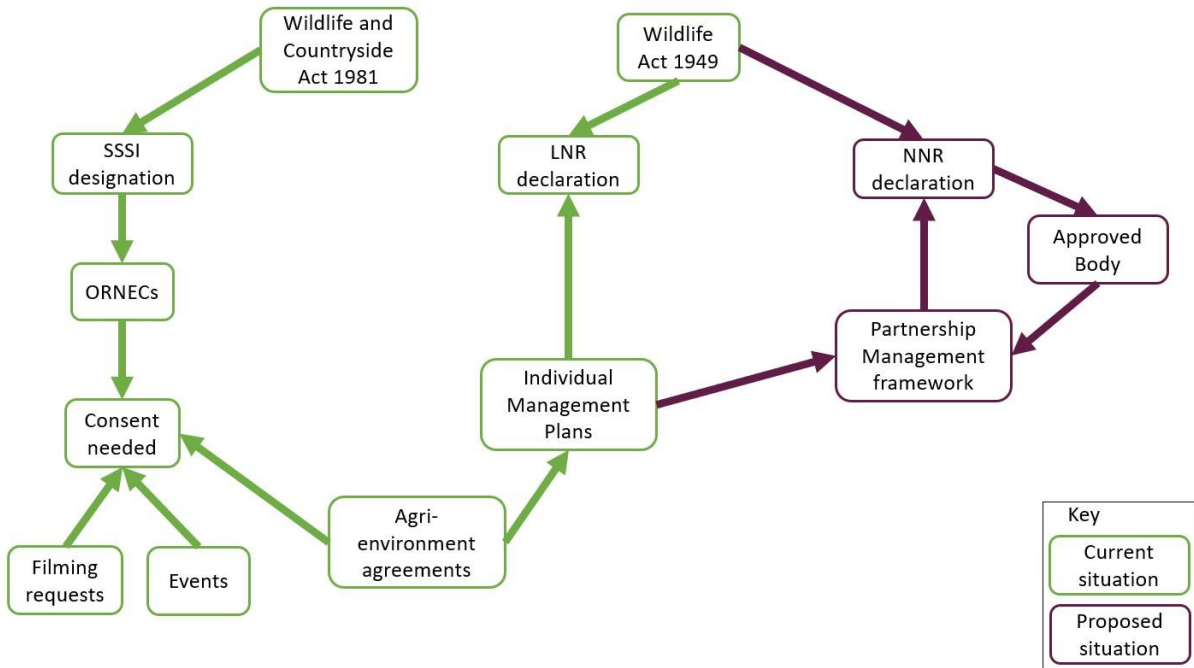


Figure 2 Showing the current and proposed management arrangements.

The policy context for NNRs is set out below:

The **National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949** states the purpose of NNRs is for ‘*preserving flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features of special interest in the area and/or for providing opportunities for the study of, and research into, those features*’

Section 35 (1) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 states that an NNR will be:

c) held by an ‘Approved Body’ (any other organisation approved by Natural England) and managed as a nature reserve.

The **Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006** extended the role of NNRs to include the provision of opportunities for public enjoyment of nature and/or open-air recreation, where these purposes don’t conflict with the nature conservation purpose.

The area suggested for inclusion into The Seven Sisters NNR, is the Local Nature Reserve, currently managed by SWT, and part of the Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI, as shown below in Figure 3.

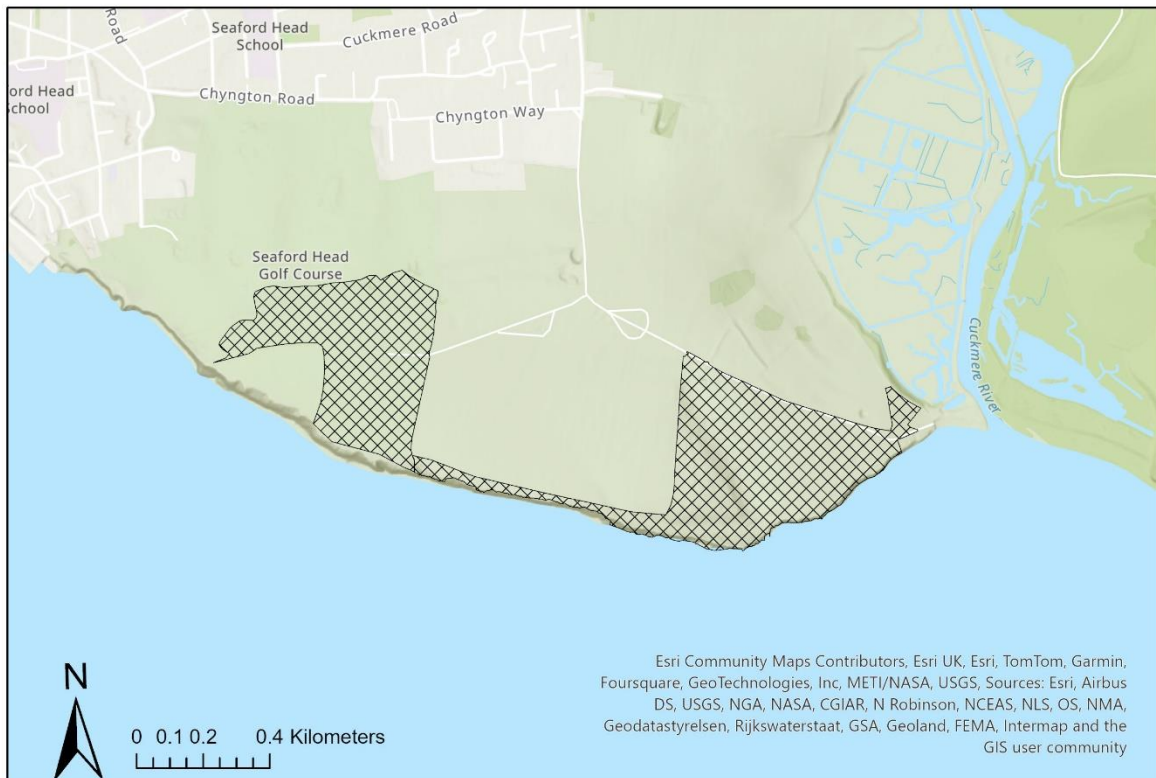


Figure 3 Map of STC land to be included in the NNR.

In summary, the differences are:

- STC-owned land would change from a Local Nature Reserve to a National Nature Reserve.
- STC need to become an Approved Body.
- An over-arching Management Framework will be created in partnership.

Key aspects that would remain the same (described in more detail below):

- The SSSI status and related consents.
- The Management Plan and agri-environment agreements
- The working relationship between STC and SWT.

Despite these differences, each organisation will be able to directly influence what happens on their own land, as the individual Management Plans will feed into the Management Framework and will not dictate activities. In practise, the situation will largely remain the same, with the positive additions highlighted below.

Advantages of joining the NNR

Outline:

NNRs are nationally important sites and are increasingly recognised for their qualities both by decision makers and by wider public audiences. Partnership NNRs secure joined-up working across the landscape, with all partners committing for the long-term, which takes it beyond specific, short-lived projects. The declaration secures the land for nature conservation in perpetuity. Operating at scale across the landscape will provide a better and more cost-effective way of managing this land. Experience from other recently declared King's Series partnership NNRs has proven that there are also novel funding opportunities.

Management Framework and supporting documents:

- The vision and objectives are agreed and shared by partners within the Management Framework, across the whole site.
- The local benefits are determined by the partners themselves, who are embedded within the landscape.
- Individual sites bring value to the NNR series, especially in this proposal, with the iconic Seven Sisters, which will increase the recognition of the NNR 'brand'.
- To meet and demonstrate NNR Strategy and Selection Principles, innovative management techniques can be tested as a partnership, without risk to all partners, and once trialled can be rolled out to benefit all partners with improvements in biodiversity, grazing, interpretation and connectivity, while being more cost-effective.
- Novel funding opportunities can be accessed and applied for together, rather than needing individual capacity from each organisation.
- The Seven Sisters NNR can be a legacy for the Changing Chalk project, which aims to improve rare chalk habitats, protect archaeological sites and improve health and wellbeing for those in urban and rural areas.

Landscape-scale:

- Connecting the landscape will help nature to thrive and Seaford Head has a key role to play in linking the town with the Country Park and the rest of Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI.
- The national status and recognised brand of the NNR series, along with strengthening working relationships with other landowners across the local landscape, will build resilience and create confidence that partners can do more together.
- The initial inspiration for the NNR came from the need to protect the chalk aquifers, this is particularly relevant for STC, as the chalk aquifers provide drinking water to the town and surrounding areas.

Climate change:

- This landscape is exposed to the changes brought about by climate change.
- STC has declared a climate emergency and supports efforts to adapt and mitigate these impacts.
- The Seven Sisters NNR sits within a landscape that is ever-changing and there are conflicts of interest within this space.
- The partnership working together can help resolve these issues and bring resilience to the landscape and support the organisations who look after it (see Case studies, below).

Risks and how they will be managed

The risks to STC in the inclusion of The Seven Sisters NNR are outlined below in Table 2.

Table 2 Potential risks to STC.

Risk	How the risk will be managed
Officer capacity	The partnership will work together to maintain the partnership, suggestions for a Partnership Officer have been raised, with SDNPA willing to host the role. This will need to be funded and this is being explored, as each partner does not want to incur additional costs.
Finances	Additional spending is not expected, any risks around finances would be through officer capacity, as above. Each partner would contribute time and expertise to their ability, it is not expected to be equal, the partnership will come together to provide their unique skills and knowledge. Additional and novel funding sources would be available as an NNR, such as potential mitigation opportunities as part of the Government’s Environmental Improvement Plan.
In perpetuity	While NNR declaration seeks to be in perpetuity, should anything change significantly, this is a voluntary declaration, and land can be de-declared if necessary.
Loss of momentum	There are risks associated with projects not maintaining momentum, however, as this is a long-term declaration, not a project, it will act as a legacy to other projects within this landscape and as a vehicle for promoting significant biodiversity gains and access to funding.

Case studies

Case study 1: The Hope Gap steps

Situation:

The steps at Hope Gap are currently closed, as they are unsafe due to erosion. These steps are a popular location for visitors and are a safe way for people to leave the beach when the tide comes in. On the other hand, fewer people are being caught out by the tide and having to escape through the Coastguard Cottage gardens.

STC has to determine whether to:

- Permanently close the steps and leave them to erode (potential environmental impacts)
- Permanently close the steps and remove them (cost implications)
- Reinstate the steps (cost implications and continued garden issues)

Question:

Can the NNR structures help STC to navigate the decisions, as permissions needed from NE and others for any works to be done?

Answer:

The partnership can help STC navigate the decisions, by drawing on their experience of working within this iconic landscape and by sharing previous case studies. An example is the National Trust owned land at Birling Gap and the experience they have had with cliff erosion at the popular visitor site. The partnership can also offer support with any decisions made, to support the wider landscape and nature conservation.

Permissions needed from NE would be covered by the SSSI designation under the ORNECs and consents procedure, which STC officers are already familiar with.

Case study 2: Income from filming

Situation:

STC has a current filming policy to govern any filming that takes place on site.

Questions:

Will any of this jurisdiction involve the NNR in the future?

STC currently determines what happens to this income – will this change?

Answer:

Put simply, the answer to these questions is no. The current filming policy is part of a consent from Natural England, which determines the activities on the SSSI.

The SSSI is a legal designation, which dictates the operations that can happen within this area. The NNR is a voluntary declaration, which does not have the same legal restrictions. The NNR has a primary purpose of nature conservation, which will inform all activities within the area. As long as the activities are permissible on a SSSI, they are permissible on the NNR. The activities on the SSSI or NNR will preferentially benefit nature conservation, while allowing filming to occur.

The income that each partner generates will remain its own to do as they choose. Partner decisions on the NNR will be made in partnership, and any income for the project is anticipated to be generated via funding. There is the expectation that partner activities will be carried out by the current officers within each organisation, but with a partnership overview that provides the advantages outlined above.

Case study 3: Visitor numbers

Situation:

Seaford Head is experiencing a rise in visitor numbers

Question:

How can being in the NNR help STC to respond to this?

Answer:

Visitor numbers are increasing across Seven Sisters and partnership working across the NNR can help inform decisions made. One of the main aims for The Seven Sisters NNR is to engage visitors to the area in the important chalk habitats and species they support. Being involved in the partnership NNR will allow STC to easily access how the other partners manage visitors, drawing on vast organisational experience of past efforts that had positive or negative results, and will avoid repeating mistakes. There are also opportunities for funding for signage and a Visitor Strategy, which has been produced by other partnership NNRs, such as Purbeck Heaths NNR.

Closing statement and contact details

Embracing the independent spirit of the town of Seaford, we invite you to join your voice to this landscape-scale project to protect and enhance nature. Working in partnership provides the ability to access experience and knowledge from those who face similar challenges in this popular area for visitors and nature alike.

Inspired by water, motivated by nature, delivered for future generations.

Contact Officer: Adam Chugg Email: adam.chugg@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

External consultees:

Natural England

Kerrie Curzon Email: kerrie.curzon@naturalengland.org.uk

Sarah Davies Email: sarah.davies@naturalengland.org.uk

Background documents

[Nature recovery projects to boost wildlife and access to nature - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nature-recovery-projects-to-boost-wildlife-and-access-to-nature)

A film of the wider Nature Recovery Project and inspiration for the NNR.

[The Strategy for England's National Nature Reserves - NE807 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://naturalengland.org.uk/strategy-for-englands-national-nature-reserves)

Summary of The Strategy:

The Strategy sets the direction and ambition for NNRs. It sets out the vision, partnership working and priorities. NNR declaration secures nationally important sites for nature and nature recovery, environmental science and people, managed to high standards. The Strategy provides a framework for all those involved to increase the contribution of NNRs to 21st century conservation, within and beyond their boundaries.

[The Selection Principles for National Nature Reserves in England - NE808 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://naturalengland.org.uk/selection-principles-for-national-nature-reserves-in-england)

Summary of The Selection Principles:

The Selection Principles for National Nature Reserves set out the three core purposes of NNRs: Nature, Science, People. The document states the requirements that NNRs must meet: primary land use is nature conservation; site is declared in perpetuity or for the long term (>30 years). It outlines the core purposes through attributes and secondary attributes.

[Natural England Standard: National Nature Reserve Management Standards - NESTND029](https://naturalengland.org.uk/natural-england-standard-national-nature-reserve-management-standards)

Summary of NNR Management Standards:

The Standards set out the key principles for Management of NNRs by Natural England or Approved Bodies. Examples include: the best places for biodiversity; management plans; management of designated features; community involvement; and public enjoyment. The process to become an Approved Body closely follows these Standards.

Report 110/24 Appendix B

Map Showing Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve and Proposed Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve

Please note that this map is indicative for the purposes of aiding the Town Council to understand the proposed boundaries, and not completely to scale / the exact boundary



Key:

Green hashed = Current Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve boundary

Faded orange = Proposed Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve boundary



Report No:	112/24
Agenda Item No:	6
Committee:	Climate Change Sub-Committee
Date:	21st November 2024
Title:	Print & Paper Strategy
By:	Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To kick start efforts to consider ways in which the operation of the Council offices could seek to reduce its reliance on printing and paper usage.

Recommendations
The Sub-Committee is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the contents of the report. 2. To approve future steps proposed by officers, to bring a comprehensive print and paper strategy proposal to Full Council for their consideration.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** In 2020 the Town Council declared a climate emergency. As part of this declaration, a Climate Emergency Policy was devised and published in 2024 with the key strategic aim being for the Town Council “to help create a sustainable Seaford, resilient to the effects of climate change”.
- 1.2** Within that policy are a list of themes the Town Council has committed to undertaking, including “Ensure the Town Council’s operations have the lowest environmental impact” and “Instigate environmentally sustainable initiatives and projects”.
- 1.3** As a first step towards reducing the carbon footprint of the Town Council’s offices, the Interim Town Clerk has asked the Assistant Town Clerk to embark on a print and paper strategy, reviewing the Town Council’s use of

stationery and equipment to ensure this is both sustainable and cost efficient.

- 1.4 It is noted that currently a significant proportion of the toner ink and paper usage at the Town Council is in its printed copies of Council meeting paperwork. Officers have therefore researched this further with a view to identifying opportunities to reduce the paper usage.
- 1.5 The Town Council undertook a similar research exercise in January 2019 albeit this was prior to the Climate Emergency being declared and at that time the Town Council resolved to remain with the status quo. Five years on, and following the adoption of the Climate Emergency Policy earlier in 2024, it is felt appropriate by officers to review this position.
- 1.6 It should be noted that this work forms part of a wider evaluation of the carbon footprint of the Town Council, however at this stage this report considers solely town council meeting paperwork.
- 1.7 This report sets out:
 - Section 2 - Current paper and printer usage for Town Council meetings
 - Section 3 - Environmental impact
 - Section 4 - Proposed future steps
 - Section 5 - Other considerations
 - Section 6 – Conclusion
 - Section 7 - Financial implications

2. Current Paper & Printer Usage for Town Council Meetings

- 2.1 Each municipal year, the Town Council holds around 45 Full Council and committee meetings.

Paper Usage:

- 2.1 Some town councillors have opted to receive papers electronically only and some receive papers both electronically and in hard copy. The current estimate* of actual paper usage is as below:

Table A

Meeting Type	Requested hard copies	Average sheets per agenda	No. Meetings	Total sheets per year
Full Council	18	45 sheets	10	8,100 sheets

Community Services	9	35 sheets	4	1,260 sheets
Climate Change	6	15 sheets	4	360 sheets
Finance and General Purposes	8	25 sheets	4	800 sheets
Golf and The View	7	15 sheets	3	315 sheets
Planning and Highways	7	8 sheets	18	1,008 sheets
Personnel	4	10 sheets	2	80 sheets
Total				11,923 sheets

*This does not include extraordinary meetings and averages were calculated using the 2023-2024 municipal year papers.

- 2.2** In total therefore, the Town Council is using nearly 12,000 sheets of paper per year, on average, simply for printing Town Council meeting papers for Town Councillors.
- 2.3** The financial cost of 12,000 sheets (equivalent to five boxes) of paper is £75-100, depending on the stationery supplier used.
- 2.4** The usage and costs above do not include 'Exempt' papers, which are printed on orange paper to denote their confidentiality, which is yet more costly and has a greater environmental impact. The number of sheets printed on orange papers is variable and difficult to assess given the variable number of Exempt agenda items each municipal year.
- 2.5** In the period 1st October 2023 to 30th September 2024, the Town Council offices purchased 12 boxes of paper. Printed meeting paperwork therefore equates to around 50% of the Town Council's total paper usage.
- 2.6** Town Council officers already take steps to ensure printing is kept to a minimum, but where required it is undertaken double-sided and in black and white ink only, wherever possible.
- 2.7** Officers reuse single-sided paper as scrap paper, where possible (and where not confidential).

Printer Usage:

- 2.8** The Town Council uses double-sided printing for its meeting papers and in mono (not colour prints).
- 2.9** Based on the figures in Table A above, 24,000 prints are used for printing meeting papers which uses 3.5 toner cartridges per year, costing a total of £220.50.

3. Environmental Impact

3.1 According to Kunak Air¹ – a company that measures and provides solutions for air pollution:

‘The paper industry is one of the main consumers of water, using it in every process, from the transformation of wood into pulp to the bleaching of paper. It requires 10 litres of water to produce one sheet of paper (47 gallons per ream), and this puts great pressure on a natural resource which is essential for life on Earth.

Furthermore, the chemicals used to produce wood pulp and those used in the final bleaching processes, mostly chlorine dioxide, are also harmful to both the environment and human health.

Effluent water eventually reaches natural bodies of water, thereby contaminating their ecosystems and harming aquatic life. This also has a direct impact on the quality of the water we drink and use in our daily lives. During the pulp and paper manufacturing process, organic solid residues are produced such as wood waste, sludge, hemicellulose, lignin, resins, bark, caustic soda, removable organic halides, phenols and volatile organic compounds. Other inorganic residues are also produced, such as ash, slag and inorganic salts.

As well as the various chemical discharges resulting from paper production, the industry generates many other pollutants. These include the paper itself, as it can generate huge volumes of waste if it is not recycled or properly processed after use.

White paper can take up to five years to decompose in nature. In turn, as this waste accumulates, it can cause degradation of the soil and habitats. Used paper and cardboard make up one of the biggest categories of household waste.

As wood is the main source of fibre to make paper pulp, producing paper requires the felling of large areas of forest. It is estimated that about 17 trees are needed to produce one tonne of white paper.

Indiscriminate logging of forests without a sustainable management plan leads to deforestation. In turn, this has significant implications for climate

¹ SOURCE - <https://kunakair.com/environmental-impact-paper-industry/#:~:text=The%20main%20gas%20emitted%20during,the%20acceleration%20of%20climate%20change.>

change as trees are an important sink of CO₂, one of the main greenhouse gases.

The disappearance of forests also has serious consequences on biodiversity because their ecosystems are home to a wide range of species of flora and fauna.'

- 3.2** The Town Council has a rental agreement for a Sharp printer and one of the reasons this product was chosen was for its sustainability².
- 3.3** Sharp's multifunctional printers are engineered to minimise environmental impact through advanced energy-efficient technologies to reduce energy consumption, contributing to lower carbon emissions and a smaller carbon footprint.
- 3.4** The Town Council recycles toner cartridges through the Sharp Toner Recycling Scheme.
- 3.5** Nevertheless, not only do printer cartridges make use of natural resources such as oil and iron ore to produce, their ink and toner contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that cause damage to both human health and the natural environment³.

4. Proposed Future Steps

- 4.1** In order to reduce the paper and toner ink usage associated with providing printed copies of meeting papers for town councillors, officers propose to research and identify suitable IT devices that could be issued to all Town Councillors which they would be happy to use in place of paper.
- 4.2** The Town Council's IT support provision, Schools ICT (part of East Sussex County Council) has confirmed they would be able to source, set up, train and help officers in managing these devices in the same way they currently do for officer's IT devices.
- 4.3** IT devices would enable Town Councillors to carry out their duties and tasks (such as managing emails, viewing agendas/minutes, taking notes at and for meetings, and attending virtual meetings/training) from a device owned, managed and security-protected by the Town Council.
- 4.4** Officers would be committed to ensuring that Town Councillors are supported with accessibility, physical or technical, and where required

² SOURCE - <https://www.sharp.co.uk/sustainability>

³ SOURCE - <https://greenoffice.co.za/the-environmental-costs-of-office-printing/>

reasonable adjustments could be made to IT devices to suit Councillors' needs.

5. Other Considerations

- 5.1** When taking office, Town Councillors are currently required to use their own personal devices in order to fulfil the electronic and online aspects of their role.
- 5.2** This is not ideal, is not best practice, and represent some risks, for example:
- (a)** Councillors are required to provide their own device and the Town Council does not have oversight that they have suitable and sufficient cyber security protocols in place,
 - (b)** The risk of confidentiality or data breaches occurring where devices are used for both personal and council purposes,
 - (c)** This approach increases the risk of confidentiality or data breaches where a device is lost, stolen or disposed of,
 - (d)** There are data protection concerns related to data existing outside the control of the Town Council's IT provider, this is especially important for personal data where the Town Council is data controller and responsible for the handling of the data, and
 - (e)** The current approach does not help town councillors distinguish between work and personal time which can have the effect of discouraging them from "switching off" because their personal devices are being used for Town Council purposes. Personal time is not being protected and this is not healthy, nor does it promote Councillors' wellbeing.
- 5.3** The provision of hard copy confidential papers also carries an additional risk of them being viewed or accidentally left outside of the Town Council, whereas an electronic device would protect against this via password access.
- 5.4** When their term of office ends, town councillors would be required to return devices which could then be wiped of data and recycled for use by a new intake of town councillors.
- 5.5** The device software management system would allow the Town Council to protect the devices and also maintain them should passcodes be lost or a device return mid-term to change user.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1** The Town Council has declared a Climate Emergency and making a significant change in its paper consumption would be a significant and proportionate step in fulfilling the commitments detailed in the Climate Emergency Policy 2024.
- 6.2** The current situation with meeting paperwork being printed in bulk is financially costly, in addition to being unsustainable from a climate change perspective.
- 6.3** Officers believe a proportionate response to this issue would be to provide town councillors with a Town Council device to manage their online work as part of their civic role. This would enable town councillors to access meeting paperwork electronically and so meeting paperwork could be drastically reduced.
- 6.4** In support of the above, officers will make a parallel commitment to not use printed copies of meeting paperwork, except if necessary for a specific reason.
- 6.5** The Sub Committee is recommended to approve the future steps proposed by officers, which are to identify an appropriate IT device for Town Councillors, including costings, and bring a comprehensive print and paper strategy to Full Council for consideration and approval.

7. Financial Appraisal

- 7.1** There is no direct financial impact as a result of this report.

8. Contact Officer

- 8.1** The contact officer for this report is Isabelle Moulard, Assistant Town Clerk.