



Seaford Town Council Full Council Agenda – Thursday, 27th March 2025

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, Seaford Head Golf Course, Southdown Rd, Seaford, BN25 4JS** on **Thursday, 27th March 2025** at **7.00pm**, which you are summoned to attend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SQ' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Steve Quayle

Interim Town Clerk

22nd March 2025

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Public arrival time is from 6.45pm**
- **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**
- **The Mayor has requested that a short poem is read before the meeting. Anyone not wishing to take part in this poem reading is invited to wait until 6.55pm before attending the meeting**

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	23 rd January 2025	<u>23.01.25 Full Council Draft Minutes</u>
5.2	Planning & Highways	9 th January 2025	<u>09.01.25 Planning & Highways Draft Minutes</u>
		4 th February 2025	<u>04.02.25 Planning & Highways Draft Minutes</u>
		20 th February 2025	<u>20.02.25 Planning & Highways Draft Minutes</u>
5.3	Climate Change	6 th February 2025	<u>06.02.25 Climate Change Sub-Committee Draft Minutes</u>
5.4	Personnel	13 th February 2025	<u>13.02.25 Personnel Draft Minutes</u>
5.5	Community Services	6 th March 2025	<u>06.03.25 Community Services Draft Minutes</u>
5.6	Golf & The View	10 th December 2024	<u>10.12.24 Golf & The View Draft Minutes</u>

6. [Mayor's Report March 2025](#)

To consider report 189/24 presenting the Mayor's update and details of engagements attended (page 8 to 10).

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

To consider report 182/24 presenting updating Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Council (pages 11 to 26).

8. Town Council Working Group Reports

A standard agenda item to accommodate reports from active Town Council Working Groups.

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. [Memorial Policy – Exception to Pause, Number 1](#)

To consider report 200/24 seeking approval from Full Council for an exception to be made to the hold on the Memorial Policy (pages 27 to 28).

12. [Memorial Policy – Exception to Pause, Number 2](#)

To consider report 183/24 seeking approval from Full Council for an exception to be made to the hold on the Memorial Policy (pages 29 to 32).

13. [VE Day and Armed Forces Day](#)

To consider report 187/24 presenting Full Council with options to consider in relation to the 80th VE Day Celebration on 8th May 2025 and the Town Council's involvement in Armed Forces Day. (pages 33 to 37).

14. [Final Review of the Town Council Financial Regulations 2025](#)

To consider report 203/24 presenting the revised Financial Regulations, as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, for consideration and adoption by Full Council (pages 38 to 64).

15. [Introduction of a Whistleblowing Policy](#)

To consider report 199/24 presenting the draft Whistleblowing Policy that the Finance & General Purposes Committee has recommended for adoption by Full Council (pages 65 to 74)

16. [Introduction of a Probationary Period Policy](#)

To consider report 201/24 presenting the draft Probationary Period Policy that the Personnel Committee has recommended for adoption by Full Council (pages 75 to 87).

17. [Mayor's Portfolio Review](#)

To consider report 198/24 presenting a review of the Mayor's Portfolio (pages 88 to 130).

18. Review of the Committee Chair's Management Group Policy

To consider report 204/24 presenting a review of the Committee Chairs' Management Group Policy (pages 131 to 144).

19. Annual Review of Corporate Risk Register 2024 - 2025

To consider report 192/24 which is presenting the review of the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register and subsequent action plan (pages 145 to 159).

20. Annual Review of Internal Controls

To consider report 193/24 allowing Full Council to Review and approve the Town Council's Internal Controls (pages 160 to 167).

21. Annual Investment Strategy 2025 - 2026

To consider report 194/24 presenting the Annual Investment Strategy 2025 – 2026 for adoption (pages 168 to 173).

22. Appointment of an Internal Auditor

To consider report 188/24 updating Full Council on the selection of a new internal auditor with the recommendation to appoint 'Parish and Town Audit Services' as the new internal auditor (pages 174 to 195).

23. Martello Entertainments Area Memorial Funds

To consider report 195/24 recommending that Full Council offers partial refunds on payments made for the Martello Entertainment Area for reasons set out within this report (pages 196 to 200).

24. 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 remaining item of business for the reasons as set out below. The resolutions of the item will be recorded publicly in the minutes of this meeting.

The Proper Officer considers that discussion of the following items 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 items 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

25. Concession Request EXEMPT

To consider exempt report 205/24 seeking Full Council's consideration of a request to delay the start of one concession licence (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:

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.

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 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 between 6.45 – 6.55pm 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 councillors.

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:	189/24
Agenda Item No:	6
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Mayor's Report March 2025
By:	Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To present the Mayor's update report and details of engagements

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended:

1. To note the content of the report.

1. Information

- 1.1 The Mayor's update report can be found at Appendix A.
- 1.2 Details of mayoral engagements between 17th January and 20th March 2025 can be found below.
- 1.3 The Mayor of Seaford has attended the following:

EVENT	DATE	ORGANISATION
Visit Year 12 at Seaford Head School	22.01.25	Seaford Head School
Polegate Panto	25.01.25	Polegate Drama Group
SeaFriends Memory Cafe	31.01.25	SeaFriends
Visit to Annecy School	04.02.25	Annecy Catholic Primary School
Tour of the Sanctuary Refugee Hub	05.02.25	The Sanctuary
Fruit Tree Planting	06.02.25	Friends of Walmer Road
Men's Shed Official Opening	19.02.25	SeaFriends
Handover of the Bishopstone Estate Defibrillator	21.02.25	Rotary Club of Seaford

EVENT	DATE	ORGANISATION
Licensing of the Reverend Simon James Earnshaw	03.03.25	The United Benefice of East Blatchington & Bishopstone
Inaugural Community Networking Lunch	11.03.25	SeaFriends

1.4 The Deputy Mayor of Seaford has attended the following:

EVENT	DATE	ORGANISATION
Cocktail/Mocktail evening for young carers	15.03.25	Seaford Youth Forum

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

EVENT	DATE	ORGANISATION
Lord Brett's 50th Birthday Charity Concert	22.03.25	Lord Brett McLean
Mayor of Seaford's Incognito Evening – Charity Fundraiser	29.03.25	Seaford Town Council
Litfest	02.04.25	Seaford Poets
Spring Concert	05.04.25	Seaford Choral Society
Seaford Rotary Club – Guest Speaker	09.04.25	Seaford Rotary Club
St George's Day Celebration & Dinner	23.04.25	Royal Society of St George
Rotary Young Writers Competition 2025	28.04.25	Seaford Rotary Club
Seaford Town Forum	01.05.25	Seaford Town Council

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 189/24 Appendix A

Mayor's Report to March 2025 Town Council

I have been privileged this year to work alongside SeaFriends as my chosen charity. We have been able to develop many ideas together that has led to us providing a number of occasions to engage with local organisations and groups across the generations.

My thanks go to all our volunteers across Seaford for their compassion and commitment. I remain in awe of the golden thread that connects our residents to a robust core of community concern which identifies local need and harnesses the skills and energy of local volunteers.

Meeting these organisations at our recent Seaford community networking lunch identified opportunities for further connections between groups; finding pathways of friendship and support to be further explored with residents as we planned how to address the challenges faced by different age groups.

I have been so grateful to all those groups that have also supported all my Mayoral functions thus far and the never ceasing encouragement of local residents who come and support this work and remain our champions.

None of this could be carried out without the determination of our Civic officers and councillors, and especially the support of previous Mayors Cllrs Olivia Honeyman and Linda Wallraven; my appreciation to you all for your commitment and hard work.

A special thanks also goes to our Interim Town Clerk whose dedication to Seaford from day one of his appointment has enabled us to address so many concerns over the past 6 months – thank you. Finally, to my ever patient and incredibly diligent Deputy Mayor Cllr Maggie Wearmouth, I am indebted to your judicious assistance at all times of need.

Councillor Sally Markwell, Mayor of Seaford 2024 to 2025



Report No:	182/24
Agenda Item No:	7
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Interim Town Clerk's Update Report – March 2025
By:	Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To update Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Council

Actions

Full Council is advised:

1. To consider and discuss the updates presented within the report.
2. To consider the proposal relating to the Bönningstedt temporary wall blocks.
3. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations

Full Town Council is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To approve the proposal to dispose of the Bönningstedt Wall temporary wall blocks to Newhaven Port & Properties at no cost to the Town Council.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** It has continued to be a very busy and relentless time since I joined the Town Council as Interim Town Clerk, now nearly six months ago. Throughout that time, I have been ably supported and assisted by a small but dedicated team of committed officers who have, despite working under

intense workloads, done their very best to serve the town and the Town Council admirably.

- 1.2** Since my last report to January's Full Council many pieces of work have been undertaken and/or concluded, some of which are detailed below.
- 1.3** The staff review consultation process has been concluded and implemented, with a commencement date for new roles from 1st April 2025.
- 1.4** Recruitment towards the vacancies created by the staff review have begun to be recruited to. At the time of writing, the Maintenance Officer and Assets & Contracts Manager have been appointed, whilst the Project & Facilities Officer roles, the Project & Facilities Assistant role, and the Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager roles are in the process of being shortlisted ready for interview. Several other roles will be recruited to following on from these roles being filled.
- 1.5** The Martello Tower lease has been finalised in conjunction with the Seaford Museum and Heritage Society, securing the home for the museum for the next seven years.
- 1.6** The concessions process has been undertaken for five concessions whose licenses expire on 31st March 2025. The concessions process was overhauled and agreed at November 2024 Full Council, from which numerous applications were received for the various opportunities. Following on from panel scoring against the published scoring matrix, five businesses were offered the opportunity to establish their businesses across the town from 1st April onwards.
- 1.7** The Town Council has been monitoring and analysing the ongoing and fast-moving devolution agenda taking place across the county at District and County level.
- 1.8** Strong representations were made to relevant County Councillors in relation to the East Sussex County Council proposed closure of the Exceat Bridge for 22 weeks, that would cause significant travel disruption for the town. The decision at County level was postponed while more investigatory work is undertaken.
- 1.9** The Town Council has consulted extensively with Seaford residents across three Planning & Highways meetings (two formal committee meetings and

one informal session) to enable the collation and preparation of a formal response to the initial Lewes District Council Local Plan proposals.

- 1.10** The Town Council has also consulted and prepared a formal response to the South Downs National Park Authority's Local Plan proposals.
- 1.11** Extensive investigations have been undertaken into the Martello Entertainment Area concerns to understand the situation and this has led to proposals being brought forward (elsewhere on this agenda).
- 1.12** The Town Clerk has received at least seven requests for two Memorial Policy exceptions and brought forward recommendations accordingly (elsewhere on this agenda).
- 1.13** Discussions have been launched with Lewes District Council officers to investigate the proposal for Seaford's beach to attain 'Blue Flag' status.
- 1.14** Council-wide discussions have been facilitated to review the wide-ranging responsibilities for the position of the Mayor, given concerns expressed that the extent of the role was becoming prohibitive for Councillors to be able to commit to. This has led to proposals to rearrange some of these responsibilities across other Councillor positions (elsewhere on the agenda).
- 1.15** Officers have worked in conjunction with Seaford Community Partnership to take steps towards progressing the commencement of the Cliff Gardens project, following on from the notification of the granting of the necessary Stopping Up order.
- 1.16** A number of outstanding lease and tenancy issues across a number of the Town Council's assets have been progressed.
- 1.17** A significant number of assets and facilities projects that have continued throughout the winter and spring.
- 1.18** As ever, there is a vast array of other workstreams ongoing within the Town Council, which officers will continue to attend to and progress as we move forwards.

2. Bönningstedt Temporary Block Structure

- 2.1** As previously announced, during April 2025 works will commence to replace the Bönningstedt Wall that failed during Storm Eunice in February 2022.

- 2.2** At Full Council on 16th November 2023, to help to mitigate the risk of the failed wall, the Town Council approved the investment in 30 large concrete blocks (160cm x 80cm x 80cm) weighing 2.4 tonnes each, to be placed in front of the failed wall to act as a temporary sea defence. These blocks now need to be removed to allow the works to the replacement of the Bönningstedt Wall.
- 2.3** The concrete blocks and their siting cost £17,993 plus VAT in 2023.
- 2.4** Officers at the time appear to have believed the Town Council would be in a position to sell these blocks, using the seller as a broker to find a prospective owner. It has become clear this was an optimistic endeavour as this now seems not possible.
- 2.5** Officers have undertaken research to find a new purpose or home for these blocks. We have explored the possibility of placing the blocks along the northern edge of the shingle to act as a barrier to try to prevent shingle washing onto the promenade, however the Environment Agency has strongly objected to this proposal as they believe it would interfere with their bi-annual shingle recycling process, and have pointed out that some shingle would still overtop the blocks and this would then be very difficult to recover to the beach.
- 2.6** Officers have asked Best Demolition if they would be willing to purchase the blocks, or if they know anyone who might, but this enquiry has drawn a blank.
- 2.7** Subsequently, officers asked Best Demolition for quotes to collect and dispose of the blocks, which has elicited a quote of between £5,000-£10,000, given the sheer weight of the blocks.
- 2.8** Most recently, Newhaven Port & Properties Ltd (NPP) has offered to take them away for its own use, with no charge to the Town Council. Given the unfavourable other options this appears to be the most cost-effective way of disposing of the concrete blocks that officers can find.
- 2.9** It is therefore recommended to approve for NPP to take the blocks for its own use, at no cost to the Town Council, enabling the works to take place to replace the failed Bönningstedt Wall.

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 2025.

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).

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
May 2024	Election of Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs, Appointment of Memberships of Committees	Changes enacted
May 2024	Changes to Outside Body Arrangements and Appointment of Councillor representatives	Changes enacted
May 2024	Annual Subscriptions	List agreed and enacted
May 2024	25 th Anniversary of the Town Council	The measures agreed are being progressed, including logos, publicity, signage, an expanded Seaford Town Forum meeting and securing a Town Council flag
May 2024	Youth Ambassador Board	This project has been put on hold to enable this to run in parallel to a full academic year – work to prepare for this will continue in mid-2025
May 2024	Councillor Training	Code of Conduct and Social Media training was

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
		held with councillors in October Further training opportunities are being explored
May 2024	Civility and Respect – Councillor Officer Protocol	Adopted and being implemented
May 2024	Leases	Work is underway on the leases that require review in 2024 - 2025, as listed in the May Full Council report
May 2024	Policies Schedule of Work	Reviews and implementation ongoing – a forward plan was discussed at the March 2025 Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting
June 2024	Annual Governance Statement (AGAR) 2023 - 2024	Signed off by June Full Council. Public notice period published accordingly. Objections have been received by the External Auditor and are currently being investigated – these will therefore need to be resolved before the external audit can be completed. This process is

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
		likely to take a number of months
June 2024	Tree Planting in The Crouch	Arrangements agreed with Trees for Seaford being progressed.
June 2024	Bönningstedt Steps Concession	Temporary Concession agreed with Skipper Watersports.
July 2024	Seaford Health Stakeholder Working Group	The working group has been established and is meeting
July 2024	Standing Orders Review	Published accordingly following adoption
July 2024	Internal Communications Procedure	Further work on this policy is required following feedback received at July Full Council. This work is to be undertaken by Officers
July 2024	Complaints Procedure Review	Further work on this policy is required following feedback received at July Full Council. This work is to be undertaken by Officers.
October 2024	Staffing Structure Review	The revised staff structure was agreed by Full Council in December 2024 and the final structure confirmed in February 2025 following a period of staff consultation.

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
		Recruitment is now underway to fill the new permanent roles
November 2024	South Hill Barn Working Group	<p>The scoping report of the Working Group was received and considered by Full Council.</p> <p>The group has continued to progress Stage 1 of the works, including the commissioning of a traffic survey carried out onsite. The required funds were included in the 2025 – 2026 budget to fully fund Stage 1.</p> <p>The group continues to meet regularly and has been driving forward the work into interim measures involving parking at South Hill Barn</p>
November 2024	Interim Concessions Process	<p>The interim concessions process was agreed by Full Council and the tender processes ran in the first quarter of 2025.</p> <p>The Town Council awarded five concessions and these are currently being finalised, ready for the new three-year</p>

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
		licenses from 1 st April 2025
November 2024	Cycle Rack Installation	The Salts: quotes are being sought for the groundworks required. South Hill Barn: the application has been submitted to the South Downs National Park Authority. Quotes for groundworks are also being sought
November 2024	The View Lease	The View lease was signed in December 2024. There was a minor error discovered with a date on the lease – the Town Council's solicitor is getting this corrected to enable the final, signed copy of the lease to be completed
November 2024	Bönningstedt Wall	There is a recommendation above to dispose of the temporary wall blocks. Once moved, the contractors are ready to get onsite and carry out the rebuild of the permanent Bönningstedt Wall in April 2025

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
December 2024	Committee Structure Review	The revised Committee Structure was approved by Full Council, to be trialled in the 2025 – 2026 municipal year. Work is underway to prepare for the introduction of the new structure
January 2025	Members' Allowance Policy	The policy was adopted by Full Council – with the status quo being maintained, thus no members' allowance to be paid. Full Council has requested to review this again by December 2026, ahead of the new administration in May 2027
January 2025	Final Budget & Precept Setting 2025 - 2026	The precept requirement was agreed by Full Council and submitted to Lewes District Council. The Town Council's Council Tax leaflet has been issued with the Council Tax demands that have been posted to residents by Lewes District Council. The Town Council issued a press release explaining

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
		the budget and precept setting process and outcome
January 2025	Memorials Policy Update	The Memorials Policy has formally been paused. An exceptions process was agreed and since then, two exceptions have been supported by councillors both of which appear elsewhere on this agenda
January 2025	Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve (NNR)	The Town Council has confirmed its commitment to joining the NNR and becoming an approved body. Officers continue to work with Natural England and other partners to progress the creation of the NNR, expected later in 2025
January 2025	Seaford Cricket Club	Officers have been working with the Cricket Club to progress the granting of a new lease to incorporate the area containing the practice nets
January 2025	2025 – 2026 Meeting Timetable	The 2025 – 2026 meeting timetable has been issued and preparations are underway for the new

DATE	MOTION	UPDATE
		municipal year beginning in May 2025
January 2025	Richmond Road Car Park	Lewes District Council has been informed that the Town Council has agreed to correct the administrative ownership error and transfer the site back to the District Council. Officers await next steps from the District Council

3.3 Complaints

No new formal complaints have been received by the Town Council since the last Full Council meeting in January 2025.

- 3.4** 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.

3.5 FOI Requests Table

DATE	FOI REQUEST	UPDATE
April 2024	The View Lease	In Progress
April 2024	Councillor's expenses or wages	Response Sent
July 2024	The View Tenancy at Will	Response Sent
July 2024	Crouch Gardens - Town Council charges for using mini pitch by children's playground and charges for using the main football pitch	Response Sent
August 2024	Crouch Gardens – Seaford Town Football Club and Crouch Bowling Club booking invoices 1/4/2022 to 31/3/2024	Response Sent

DATE	FOI REQUEST	UPDATE
August 2024	Seaford Town Football Club Pitch Maintenance	Response Sent
August 2024	The Salts Recreation Ground	Response Sent
August 2024	Grounds Maintenance enquiry	Response Sent
September 2024	Copy of Report 63/07	Response Sent
September 2024	Agreements between Seaford Town Council and Seaford Town Football Club	Response Sent
October 2024	Salaries of Senior Officer Roles	Response Sent
October 2024	Crouch Gardens – Seaford Town Football Club and Crouch Bowling Club booking invoices 1/4/2024 to latest date	Response Sent
October 2024	Memorial Plaque and Performing Arts at the Martello Tower	Response Sent
November 2024	Lands adjacent to Seaford Seafront	Response Sent
December 2024	Land Leases and Maintenance	Response Sent
December 2024	Seaford Head Estate	Response Sent
January 2025	Salts Café Rent	Response Sent
February 2025	Martello Cafe Licence	Response Sent
February 2025	Town Clerk Appointment	Response Sent
March 2025	Local Businesses	In Progress
March 2025	South Hill Barn Concessions Tender	In Progress
March 2025	Martello Café	In Progress

3.6 Appeals

There are no new appeals to report.

4. Forward Planning

- 4.1** The Town Council has a heavy workload at present, exacerbated by carrying a number of vacancies, meaning some priorities are not being progressed as we would like. Going forwards it is hoped the staff review will resolve some of the staffing issues and the Town Council should then be in a better position to progress priorities more effectively. Please find

below an update against 11 key priorities for this year that form part of the implementation of the Town Council's Strategic Plan.

No.	Priority	Update
1	Complete and implement staff review, structure and committee reviews	The revised staff structure was agreed by Full Council in December 2024 and the final structure confirmed in February 2025 following a period of staff consultation. Recruitment is now underway to fill the new permanent roles
2	D-Day celebrations / Updated Christmas Magic	The successful D-Day event was held in June as the nation came together to mark the 80 th anniversary. Christmas Magic took place on 30 th November 2024, with Seaford Trader's Group and Seaford Chamber of Commerce working together to bring events to the town on the same day.
3	Golf Course Longer Term Plan / 17 th green project	A new, long term plan for the golf course will be developed going forwards. The 17 th green and 18 th tee proposals are being progressed and further investigated following a report to July Golf & The View Committee
4	The View 'year one'	The Town Council and The View tenants have an ongoing dialogue that seeks to resolve outstanding matters and operational issues that arise.
5	Projects and Tenders – Martello toilets, café and Changing Places; urban verges; toilet cleaning	The Martello toilets are fully open. A trial period is being run with access to the Changing Places Facility by RADAR key. Alongside this, a consultation with users is being undertaken, enabling feedback on the preferred access method. A report will be

No.	Priority	Update
		<p>brought back to the Assets & Facilities Committee to review this.</p> <p>The second year of the Town Council's urban grass verge cutting is due to begin in April. Officers have liaised with Trees for Seaford and the cutting contractor to agree an approach with the new trees planted on some verges. Officers are preparing for the grass cutting season and the approach to be taken with handling queries and the required communications</p>
6	25 th Anniversary	<p>The measures agreed are being taken forward including logos, publicity, signage, expanded Seaford Town Forum meeting and securing a Town Council flag</p>
7	Seaford Head – South Hill Barn; National Nature Reserve (NNR) Proposals	<p><u>South Hill Barn</u> - The scoping report of the Working Group was received and considered by Full Council in November. The group has continued to progress Stage 1 of the works, including commissioning a traffic survey carried out onsite. The required funds were included in the 2025 – 2026 budget to fully fund Stage 1. The group continues to meet regularly and has been driving forward the work into interim measures involving parking at South Hill Barn</p> <p><u>NNR</u> - The Town Council has confirmed its commitment to joining the NNR and becoming an approved body. Officers continue to work with Natural England and other partners to progress the creation of the NNR</p>
8	Climate Action	<p>The Climate Change Sub-Committee had its final meeting in February 2025 and has laid the</p>

No.	Priority	Update
		necessary groundwork for the new Golf, Open Spaces and Climate Action Committee to take forward work on the Climate Action Plan
9	Camper Van Parking	Officers and Councillors continue to explore what options can be undertaken within the Town Council's powers, including liaising with District and County colleagues, to try to alleviate the problem of camper van parking, especially along the seafront
10	Youth Ambassador Board	This project has been put on hold to enable this to run in parallel to a full school academic year – work to prepare for this will continue in mid-2025
11	Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority Local Plans	The relevant stages of each plan were considered by the Town Council's Planning & Highways Committee. The Town Council has prepared and issued a response to both initial Local Plan proposals following consultation with residents

5. Conclusion

5.1 I am hopeful this report provides an overview of key Town Council business for Councillors and residents, demonstrating the varied mix of operational and strategic activities that are currently being undertaken. As mentioned previously, once the staff review process has been finalised and approved, and new staff appointed, I am confident that adequate resources will then be in place to fully progress the Town Council's full agenda of priorities and initiatives.

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 Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk.



Report No:	200/24
Agenda Item No:	11
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Memorial Policy – Exception to Pause, Number One
By:	Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval from Full Council for an exception to be made to the hold on the Memorial Policy

Actions
Full Council is advised:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the proposal to make an exception to the Memorial Policy. 2. To move to a vote on the motion below.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the exception to the pause on the Memorial Policy in this one off circumstance.

1. Information

- 1.1 In 2023, Officers took a policy decision to place memorial requests temporarily on pause given the lack of available locations with the town, the lack of officer resources, and concerns around the increasing cost of maintenance and upkeep for memorial benches.
- 1.2 At Full Council in January 2025, this pause was formalised to last until 31st March 2026 while officers investigated various options.
- 1.3 Alongside the formal pause it was agreed that an exceptions process would be created allowing for exceptional one-off cases to be considered, in the event of at least seven elected Councillors writing to the Town Clerk expressing clear support for an exception to be made.

- 1.4 The Interim Town Clerk has confirmed that at least seven Councillors have written to him expressing clear support for an exception to the pause to be considered in the case of a memorial for Gareth Wheddon.

2. Background to Exception

- 2.1 Gareth Wheddon was born and raised in Seaford and educated at Annecy Primary School. He enlisted on 25th May 1976 and served in K Company 42 Royal Marine Commando.
- 2.2 In 1978, his Company was posted to Northern Ireland as part of Operation Banner, the operational name for the British armed forces operation in Northern Ireland between August 1969 to July 2007.
- 2.3 During the last week of his tour of duty, he was seriously injured whilst on foot patrol, by a bomb attack in Crosmaglen, County Armagh, Northern Ireland on 9th November 1978.
- 2.4 He subsequently died of his injuries in Musgrave Hospital on 12th November 1978 aged 19 years. He is buried in Seaford Cemetery.
- 2.5 He is survived by family members including his brother and mother who still live in Seaford. His family were awarded the Elizabeth Cross, given to families whose family member has died in hostile action.
- 2.6 Gareth's name is also on the Roll of Honour at the Armed Forces Memorial, National Arboretum in Staffordshire.

3. Proposal Details

- 3.1 The proposal is for a remembrance plaque to be sited within the footprint of the War Memorial island (not on the War Memorial itself).
- 3.2 Officers would work with the family to identify the most suitable type of plaque and assess the best location onsite.
- 3.3 A local benefactor has agreed to cover all the costs.
- 3.4 Given this is not a bench or other type of furniture, there is envisaged to be no extra costs for the upkeep and maintenance of one plaque being added within the campus of the War Memorial island.

4. Financial Appraisal

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

5. Contact Officer

- 5.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk.



Report No:	183/24
Agenda Item No:	12
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Memorial Policy – Exception to Pause, Number Two
By:	Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval from Full Council for an exception to be made to the hold on the Memorial Policy

Actions
Full Council is advised:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the proposal to make an exception to the Memorial Policy. 2. To move to a vote on the motion below.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the exception to the pause on the Memorial Policy in this one off circumstance. 2. To approve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. that the Town Council will take on ownership of the memorial bench upon its completion, subject to the Assets & Projects Manager approving the final design, bench location and installation plans, and b. to delegate power to the Town Clerk to enter into a suitable management agreement with Plastic Free Seaford for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the bench.

1. Information

- 1.1 In 2023, Officers took a policy decision to place memorial requests temporarily on pause given the lack of available locations with the town, the lack of officer resources, and concerns around the increasing cost of maintenance and upkeep for memorial benches.
- 1.2 At Full Council in January 2025, this pause was formalised to last until 31st March 2026 while officers investigated various options.
- 1.3 Alongside the formal pause it was agreed that an exceptions process would be created allowing for exceptional one-off cases to be considered, in the event of at least seven elected Councillors writing to the Town Clerk expressing clear support for an exception to be made.
- 1.4 The Interim Town Clerk has confirmed that at least seven Councillors have written to him expressing clear support for an exception to the pause to be considered in the case of a memorial for Claire Sumner.

2. Background to Exception

- 2.1 Plastic Free Seaford have provided a rationale in support of their proposals as follows
- 2.2 *"Since 2018 Claire Sumners was an incredibly important part of our community in Seaford. She worked tirelessly as a volunteer and regional representative of Surfers Against Sewage, helping to educate the East Sussex communities and beyond about the importance of protecting our coastlines from plastic waste and pollution.*
- 2.3 *Claire was an instrumental part of founding Plastic Free Seaford and worked with many local businesses and schools to help them adopt better approaches to their business' plastic consumption and carbon footprints.*
- 2.4 *Claire visited schools, councils, and businesses across the county, and where she went people listened, change happened, and people of all generations were inspired to make the change. She worked closely with Seaford Town Council supporting their efforts to achieve 'Plastic Free Community' status which was given in 2020.*
- 2.5 *In November 2021 Claire was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and she passed away in March 2022. She left behind her husband and two small children along with an incredible legacy which she worked so hard for and we do not want to be forgotten."*

3. Proposal Details

- 3.1** Plastic Free Seaford have provided the following narrative in support of their memorial proposal:
- 3.2** *“Many members of the Seaford community support the idea of a memorial to Claire on Seaford beach, which not only can be a place for reflection and memory, but also continue to educate and inspire residents and visitors to love and protect our coastline and uphold the principles of a plastic free community.*
- 3.3** *We propose to install an interactive and functional sculpture/bench to celebrate the tireless environmental work of Claire Sumners.*
- 3.4** *This is a great opportunity for Seaford Town Council to celebrate their support of the Plastic Free Seaford campaign and to educate the public on the problems of plastic pollution, the impact of the plastic free communities campaign and what all individuals can do to help and be part of the solutions.*
- 3.5** *This structure will enhance Seaford beach, will provide a cultural pull to visitors and local residents, while demonstrating Seaford’s commitment to protecting its seas and honouring the legacy of an incredible woman.”*
- 3.6** The proposal is that the Town Council would take on ownership of the bench once installed. Plastic Free Seaford have confirmed they will cover the costs of the manufacture and siting of the bench/structure and will also cover the ongoing costs of maintenance and upkeep for the memorial bench going forwards. It is proposed that power be delegated to the Town Clerk to enter into a suitable management agreement with Plastic Free Seaford for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the bench with costs covered by Plastic Free Seaford.
- 3.7** The Town Council would be obliged to add this extra item of street furniture to its public liability insurance policy; however it is expected this will make negligible to no impact to the premiums for the existing insurance policy.

4. Design Proposal

- 4.1** Plastic Free Seaford (PFS) have provided a miniature sample of the bench/structure design which Councillors have the opportunity to view at the Church Street offices.

- 4.2** Rich Dean Metal Sculpture & Fabrication has been awarded the commission by PFS to manufacture the bench/structure and have confirmed that the structure will have no sharp edges or places to trap fingers, etc.
- 4.3** The entire frame will be made from Marine Grade 313 stainless steel, with the seat being constructed of FSC certified European Oak
- 4.4** The Town Council's Inspector has undertaken a risk assessment of the proposal and has signed this off as acceptable.
- 4.5** The bench permission is recommended to be subject to the Assets & Projects Manager approving the final design, bench location and installation plans.

5. Location Proposal

- 5.1** Plastic Free Seaford have requested their preference site for the bench/structure would be along the stretch of promenade between the new Dane Road concession and Frankie's kiosk. Officers are supportive of this proposed location.

6. Financial Appraisal

- 6.1** There is the possibility of a negligible increase to the Town Council's public liability insurance premiums to add the memorial bench to the existing insurance policy.

7. Contact Officer

- 7.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk.



Report No:	187/24
Agenda Item No:	13
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	VE Day and Armed Forces Day
By:	Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To present Full Council with options to consider in relation to the 80th VE Day Celebration on 8th May 2025 and the Town Council's involvement in Armed Forces Day

Actions
Full Council is advised:
1. To consider the revised recommendations relating to the 80 th VE Day and Armed Forces Day.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<p>1. To approve that the Civic team deliver the following activities to mark VE day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Raise a dedicated 80th VE Day anniversary flag and lay a wreath at the war memorial b. Facilitate a gathering at Splash Point to hear the Town Crier read the Tribute alongside Seaford Bonfire Society lighting the beacon c. Encourage shops to decorate windows d. Dedicate a page on the Seaford Town Council website for members of the public and community groups to list street / garden parties (where they are open to the public). <p>2. To approve that from this year Seaford Town Council marks Armed Forces Day by delivering the following activities:</p>

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Raises a flag and lays a wreath at Seaford War Memorial.b. Raises awareness through communications, as normal practice for such awareness days, including the sharing of information about Armed Forces Day events taking place in the South East. |
|--|

1. Information

- 1.1** At its meeting on 12th September 2024, the Community Services Committee considered commemorations for VE Day and Armed Forces Day.
- 1.2** At this meeting, it was resolved to agree to mark the 80th VE Day celebration on 8th May 2025 by raising a flag and laying a wreath at Seaford War Memorial.
- 1.3** It was also resolved to defer the Town Council's plans to commemorate Armed Forces Day. This was to allow officers to speak with partnership organisations about the possibility of sharing or handing over delivery of any large-scale event in Seaford.
- 1.4** Since the September Community Services Committee, the Town Council has been informed of new guidance suggesting that there is an expectation for more to be delivered for the 80th VE Day celebration, and officers have spoken to partnership organisations about the future of Armed Forces Day, this report therefore presents revised recommendations for consideration.

2. VE Day 80th Anniversary

- 2.1** Guidance has now been circulated and is available online here: <https://ve80.com/> . Within the guidance, parish and town councils are encouraged to lead the community through celebration on 8th May 2025.
- 2.2** Full Council is invited to consider that the Town Council, through its Civic Team, delivers the following on the 8th May to celebrate the 80th VE Day Anniversary:
 - (a)** At 9.00am, raise a dedicated 80th VE Day Anniversary flag at Seaford War Memorial and the Mayor of Seaford will lay a wreath on behalf of the town.
 - (b)** At 9.30pm, facilitate a gathering at Splash Point where the Town Crier will read the VE Day Tribute while the Seaford Bonfire Society light the beacon.

- 2.3** Officers have researched the possibility of putting up union flag bunting in Broad Street, however, unfortunately the bunting bought and used for D-Day in 2024 is in a state of disrepair.
- 2.4** It is not recommended that the Town Council purchases new bunting as this cost just under £1,000 and has proved to be not durable and unsustainable, it also costs over £500 for it to be installed and removed for each event.
- 2.5** Officers researched the possibility of purchasing lamppost union flag banner flags and asked Lewes District Council if the Town Council could use its sponsorship spaces along Sutton Park Road, however, these have already been booked by a paying sponsor.
- 2.6** In light of no sustainable bunting options, it is suggested that the Town Council instead encourages shops in the town to decorate windows.
- 2.7** In the lead up to, and on the day, there is likely to be street / garden parties taking place throughout Seaford. It is suggested that the Town Council dedicates a page on its website to list street / garden parties taking place (where open to anyone) to encourage attendance. This may also lead to invites for the Mayor of Seaford to attend street / garden parties.
- 2.8** To clarify Full Council, is being recommended to approve the alteration to the approval of 12th September 2024 Community Services Committee and instead its Civic Team delivers the following activities to mark the 80th VE Day anniversary:
- (a)** Raise dedicated 80th VE Day anniversary flag and lay a wreath on behalf of the town at the war memorial
 - (b)** Facilitate a gathering at Splash Point to hear the Town Crier read the Tribute while Seaford Bonfire Society light the beacon.
 - (c)** Encourage shops to decorate windows
 - (d)** Dedicate a page on the Seaford Town Council website for members of the public and community groups to list street/garden parties (where they are open to the public)

3. Armed Forces Day

- 3.1** At the Community Services Committee meeting on 12th September 2024, the Committee considered a revised approach to Armed Forces Day.

- 3.2** The report presented recommendations that Seaford draws a close to future large-scale events for Armed Forces Day, with the rationale for the changes as follows:
- **Diminished Public Interest:** Recent years have shown a decrease in public attendance and enthusiasm for Armed Forces Day events.
 - **Engagement:** The diminishing public interest has impacted the viability of the event, alongside the significant amount of officer time required to organise it.
 - **Consultation with Neighbouring Councils:** Officers have consulted with neighbouring councils and conducted research into similar events, and it is felt that this new approach aligns with the consensus on how to appropriately mark such occasions.
- 3.3** In September, the Committee decided to defer any decision until officers had been able to speak with suggested partner organisations about whether Armed Forces Day could be delivered jointly or by another organisation in Seaford.
- 3.4** Officers have spoken with the relevant organisations and have been advised that there are no plans for any other organisations to deliver an Armed Forces Day event in Seaford.
- 3.5** It is therefore recommended that from this year that Seaford Town Council marks Armed Forces Day by delivering the following activities:
- (a) Raises a flag and lays a wreath at Seaford War Memorial.
 - (b) Raises awareness through communications, as normal practice for such awareness days, including the sharing of information about Armed Forces Day events taking place in the South East.
- 3.6** To reiterate that which was reported in September to the Committee:
- (a) Discussions have been had about these proposed changes, and the Chair of the Armed Forces Day Committee is aware of these proposals.
 - (b) Moving forward, any additional events or celebrations related to Armed Forces Day would need to be organised by external parties. These would follow the usual event process and policy, ensuring that they align with the council's standards and requirements.

- (c) This streamlined approach allows Seaford Town Council to continue to honour our Armed Forces in a respectful and dignified manner, while also addressing the practical challenges associated with larger events.

4. Financial Appraisal

- 4.1** At the time of writing, it is not yet clear what direct financial implications arise as a result of this report, but a verbal update will be provided at the meeting detailing the costs involved.
- 4.2** £2,000 has previously been allocated in 2025 - 2026 budget under 'D-Day/Victory Days' which can be used to cover costs as needed and there may be unknown costs, for example, if the Beacon at Splash Point requires any preparation/repair work.
- 4.3** The 80th VE Day anniversary flag has already been purchased in this financial year from the 'Civic Other' budget.

5. Contact Officer

- 5.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk



Report No:	203/24
Agenda Item No:	14
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Final Review of the Town Council Financial Regulations 2025
By:	Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer
Purpose of Report:	To present the revised Financial Regulations, as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, for consideration and adoption by Full Council

Actions
Full Council is advised:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the revised Financial Regulations, including the updates that have been made that were requested by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. 2. To consider the query raised regarding obtaining three quotes as a minimum (see 2.4 – 2.8 of the report) and, if deemed required, to suggest an amendment to the Financial Regulations. 3. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To adopt the revised Financial Regulations as presented.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Town Council's adopted Financial Regulations exist to govern the conduct of financial management by the Town Council and are reviewed by Full Council annually.
- 1.2** The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) produces a model template which covers the needs of local councils of all size. All parish and town councils are encouraged to use this model as a basis for their own version, adjusting this as appropriate to reflect the financial circumstances and activities of their council.
- 1.3** The model template was reviewed and published by NALC in May 2024 but also reviewed again in March 2025 following the introduction of the Procurement Act 2025 from 24th February 2025.
- 1.4** At its meeting on 19th March 2025, the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee considered a report presenting the revised Financial Regulations. The Committee reviewed the revised document and has recommended that Full Council adopts the revised regulations, subject to a number of changes that were discussed by Committee and are detailed further below.
- 1.5** Full Council is now asked to consider and adopt the final draft Financial Regulations.

2. Information

- 2.1** Should councillors wish to review the report considered by the F&GP Committee this can be viewed on the [Town Council's website](#) (report 130/24, page 33).
- 2.2** Appendix A to this report includes the revised Financial Regulations with a number of tracked changes to reflect the amendments requested by the F&GP Committee.
- 2.3** The tracked changes are as follows:
 - (a)** Page 7, section 4.8 – further wording added to aid with the interpretation of this clause. There is further information set out at 2.9 below as this was discussed in some depth by the F&GP Committee
 - (b)** Page 19, section 4 a & b – expanded to set out the correct process depending on estimated contract value
 - (c)** Page 19, section 7 – small addition to signpost the reader to the procurement table

- (d) Page 22, procurement table – an addition to include the evaluation process within the steps taken for contracts over £30,000 and over £60,000.
- 2.4** Page 20 & 22, procurement table, Minimum number of quotes: a query was raised in F&GP as to the appropriateness of the requirement to obtain a minimum of three quotes for contract values of over £30,000 and over £60,000 given that contracts of these values require an open tender process and therefore there is no control over the number of quotes that will be received. Similarly, there is a requirement to invite three bidders to tender from contracts over £60,000. These stipulations are included in the procurement table on pages 20 – 22.
- 2.5** Having researched this, whilst there is no mandated minimum number of quotes, many public sector bodies do introduce a three-quote minimum as local policy – this is to ensure that the process is competitive and achieving best value.
- 2.6** NALC’s model regulations recommend that for contracts over £3,600 (including VAT), three quotes are sought.
- 2.7** Where three quotes have not been received, the Town Council’s current process is to bring a report to Full Council seeking that Financial Regulations are waived to allow acceptance of a quote despite not meeting the minimum number of quotes required.
- 2.8** Full Council is therefore asked to consider whether it would like to amend or remove the requirement for a minimum of three quotes for contracts over £30,000 and over £60,000, and inviting a minimum of three bidders to tender for contracts over £60,000.
- 2.9** Page 7, section 4.8 – following the discussion of the F&CP Committee, officers have sought the advice of the District Council’s Monitoring Officer who has confirmed that:
- “Under data protection, we wouldn’t be able to tell the Town Council which Cllrs are in arrears. It is the responsibility of the clerk to remind members of this obligation to declare and not vote on the budget if they have an outstanding council tax debt of two months or more
Failure to do so would constitute a criminal offence under the legislation.*

There is not an issue with monthly payments, as a Cllr are not in arrears from an expected payment”

- 2.10** There is therefore an amendment suggested at 4.8 of the regulations to clarify that this relates to reflect the advice of the Monitoring Officer above.
- 2.11** To ensure that councillors are reminded of the obligation to declare and not vote on the budget in this situation, a prompt will be added to the January Full Council agenda when the budget and precept are being set each year.
- 2.12** To confirm, Full Council is asked to consider the revised Financial Regulations – with regard to the considerations at 2.4 to 2.8 above – and pass a motion to adopt these.

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 Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer.



Seaford Town Council

Financial Regulations

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

SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL - DRAFT FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Town Council at its meeting held on [enter date].

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the Town Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of Full Council. They are one of the Town Council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the Town Council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - 'Approve' refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - 'Authorise' and 'authorised' refers to a decision by the Town Council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in The Practitioners' Guide
 - The Practitioners' Guide refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the Town Council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the Town Council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the Town Council. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the Town 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 control systems
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of Town Council resources, and

- produces financial management information as required by the Town Council.

1.6. Full Council must not delegate any decision regarding:

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement)**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements**
- **approving an annual governance statement**
- **borrowing**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence, and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors.**

1.7. In addition, Full Council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all Town Council bank accounts, and
- approve bad debt write-offs above the delegated limit of £5,000

2. Risk management and internal control

2.1. The Town Council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.

2.2. The Town Clerk with the RFO shall prepare, for approval by Full Council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the Town Council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Town Council at least annually.

2.3. When considering any new activity, the Town Clerk with the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the Town Council.

2.4. At least once a year, the Town Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.

2.5. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions**
- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud**
- **allow the reconstitution of any lost records**

- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions, and**
 - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. 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. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any Town Council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The Town Council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any Town Council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Town Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the Town Council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the Town Council and the matters to which they relate, and**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the Town Council.**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the Town Council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The Town Council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the Town Council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider**

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.

- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the Town Council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the Town Council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The Town Council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the Town Council,
 - reports to the Town Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year,
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships, and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the Town Council.
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the Town Council,
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions,
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future 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.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. 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 documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of the Town Council any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. Before setting a precept, the Town Council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed at least annually during the budget setting process for the following financial year and a final version shall be evidenced by a schedule signed by the Town Clerk. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft budgets.
- 4.3. No later than December each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all revenue income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following four financial years taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair and replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the Finance & General Purposes Committee or Full Council.
- 4.5. Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance & General Purposes Committee not later than the end of December each year.
- 4.6. The draft budget with any committee proposals and four-year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee and a recommendation made to the Town Council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and four-year forecast, the Town Council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The Town Council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax debt unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them. This is not automatically an issue with councillors who pay council tax in monthly instalments as they are not in arrears from an expected payment.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. 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. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from more than one supplier.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made or as soon as possible after the order is placed by the authorised Department Manager.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the Town Council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Town Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.6. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 5.7. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.8. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the Town Council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.9) obtain prices in accordance with the Procurement Table in Appendix 1.
- 5.9. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (viii) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage, and telephone services
 - ii. specialist services, such as legal professionals, accountants, surveyors and consultants;

- iii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iv. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - v. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price;
 - vi. for additional 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);
 - vii. contracts of employment;
 - viii. any contract for the sale or purchase of any right in or over land or premises.
- 5.10. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Town Council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.11. The Town Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.12. 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 the Town Council when setting the Annual Budget, subject to the requirements of the Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- 5.13. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Town Council.
- 5.14. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for a Committee Budget other than by resolution of the Town Council, except in an emergency. 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 must be within budget unless approved otherwise by Full Council. 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.
- 5.15. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of Town Council services or to public safety on Town Council premises, the Town Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget

for such expenditure. The Town Clerk shall report such action to the Mayor of the Town Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

- 5.16. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into, or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the Town Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.17. 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, along with evidence of receipt of goods where necessary.
- 5.18. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO and authorised Department Managers.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The Town Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the Town Council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The Town Council has resolved to bank with the Co-operative Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed at least every five years for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The Town Council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the councils bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO. Where certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a batch header signed by the RFO that the invoices listed have been examined, verified and certified.
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. Wherever possible, payments shall be made by online banking, in accordance with a resolution of the Town Council (or duly delegated committee) or a delegated decision by an officer.

- 6.6. A list of regular payments and Direct Debits shall be submitted to the Finance & General Purposes Committee every two years.
- 6.7. The Town Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments and transfers in the following circumstances:
- i. payments of up to £10,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - ii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled payment run, where the Town Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
 - iii. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements provided that a list of such transfers shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 6.8. The Finance Assistant shall present a weekly schedule of payments requiring authorisation. These will be reviewed by the RFO for approval before seeking authorisation from two Members. This authorisation may be given via email or in person.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Town Clerk and RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrators. The bank mandate agreed by the Town Council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.
- 7.2. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the Town Council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the Town Council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.3. The Finance Assistant shall set up all items due for payment online after authorisation from two Members has been given as per 6.8.
- 7.4. Once set up by the Finance Assistant, the RFO will check the details and then release the funds. In the prolonged absence of either the Finance Assistant or RFO, other authorised persons may be appointed to complete the online payment process by the Town Clerk.
- 7.5. With the approval of the Town Council, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made

by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are approved by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the Town Council at least every two years.

- 7.6. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are approved by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the Town Council at least every two years.
- 7.7. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Town Clerk or RFO. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.8. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.9. Remembered password facilities should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members and countersigned by the RFO or Town Clerk.
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any credit, debit or payment card issued for use will be specifically restricted to use in accordance with the Town Council's Purchase Ordering and Payment for Goods Policy.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. The RFO shall hold a petty cash float of £250 and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.
 - a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.

- b) Cash 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 any schedule of payments presented for approval.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1. **As an employer, the Town Council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the Town Council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross 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.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook.
- 11.7. The confidential pay records are not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
 - a) by any member who can demonstrate a need to know
 - b) by the internal or external auditor
 - c) by any person authorised under The Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation
- 11.8. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the Town Council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the Town Council other than in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the Town Council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the Town Council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the Town Council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The Town Council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Town Council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the Town Council shall be in the name of the Town Council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the Town Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the RFO. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported by the RFO to Full Council if £3,000 or more, or to the Finance & General Purposes Committee if under £3,000 and shall be written off in the year. The relevant approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the Town Council shall be deposited intact with the Town Council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.

- 13.7. Where sums of cash exceeding £500 are received by the Town Council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation or addition or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Town Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the Town Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed contract sum by 5% or more or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 15.2. 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.
- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Town Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Town Council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the Town Council, their 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.
- 16.3. 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.

- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Town Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to Town 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 where required by law).
- 16.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Town Council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £5,000.

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the Town Council's review of risk management.
- 17.2. The Town Clerk and Section Managers shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the Town Council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 17.4. 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 the Town Council.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 18.1. The Town Council shall review these Financial Regulations annually. The Town Clerk and RFO shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the Town Council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The Town Council may, by resolution 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 presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 18.3. The Town Council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local

government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances

19. Earmarked Reserves (EMR)

- 19.1. 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.
- 19.2. Reserves can be spent or Earmarked at the discretion of the Town Council. They can result from:
- (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.
- 19.3. 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.
- 19.4. 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.
- 19.5. 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 to Full Council 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.

20. Concessions

- 20.1. The Town Council has an adopted Concessions Policy that governs the concessions tendering process. Whilst not a procurement process, the concessions tendering process is designed to align with the principles set out within procurement legislation, ensuring a fair, transparent and robust process.

Appendix 1 - Tender process and Procurement Table

- 1) Any invitation 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.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm 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. 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 council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the Town Council shall use a specific email address that can only be accessed by the Town Clerk and RFO. After the tender period closes:
 - a) For tender processes with an estimated value of £29,999 or less (including VAT), the Town Clerk or RFO will forward all tenders to the appropriate Department Manager who will recommend a contractor as per the Procurement Table.
 - a)b) For tender processes with an estimated value of £30,000 or more (including VAT), the Town Clerk or RFO will forward all tenders to the department manager (for contracts £30,000 - £59,999) or appointed evaluation panel (for contracts over £60,000) which will recommend a contractor as per the Procurement Table.
- 4)5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to the Town Council's adopted Standing Orders and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 5)6) Where 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, 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.
- 6)7) Where the estimated costs of works, goods, services or materials are as set out in the procurement table below, after the required budget provision has been agreed, the arrangements for the invitation of tenders or quotes as appropriate and the subsequent acceptance thereof shall be as shown in the table below.

7)8) _____ When estimating contract values, the Town Council must include: the full term of the contract, any potential extension periods, all renewal options, and the total cost including VAT.

8)9) _____ Providing a genuine estimate has been reached prior to launching the procurement process, if the quotes come in higher than expected and cross another threshold within the table below, the process need not be restarted.

Procurement Table

Estimated Value (Including VAT)	Method of Procurement	Acceptance By
Up to £3,599	Best practice and value for money in line with FR 5.1 – power to spend.	Department Manager (Town Clerk or RFO must countersign spend over £2,000)
£3,600 to £29,999	Minimum 3 quotes - no quote must be accepted without approval from the Town Clerk or RFO.	Town Clerk / RFO
£30,000 to £59,999	<p>Minimum 3 quotes from at least three different firms. <u>A QUERY HAS BEEN RAISED ON THIS POINT AND IS SET OUT WITHIN THE COVERING REPORT</u></p> <p>All contracts over £30,000 including VAT to be scrutinised by the Town Clerk or RFO prior to advertising of contract.</p> <p>Advertise all contracts over £30,000 including VAT on the Town Council's website and the Central Digital Platform website within 24 hours of advertising elsewhere. Unless the Town Council chooses to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).</p> <p>A contract for over £30,000 (including VAT) is subject to the Procurement Act 2025.</p> <p><u>Tender documents shall be handled as confidential and shared with the department manager or suitably delegated officer for evaluating. The</u></p>	Town Clerk / RFO plus 1 member of the Town Council (Chair of relevant committee where possible)

	<u>evaluation and suggested chosen tender will be shared with the Town Clerk, RFO and chosen councillor (who will have been identified in the planning stages of the tender process. The department manager/delegated officer, Town Clerk / RFO and chosen councillor will come together to agree the chosen tender</u>	
£60,000 and over	<p>Minimum 3 quotations from at least three firms. <u>A QUERY HAS BEEN RAISED ON THIS POINT AND IS SET OUT WITHIN THE COVERING REPORT</u></p> <p>All contracts to be scrutinised by the Town Clerk or RFO prior to advertising of contract.</p> <p>Tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up; • an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Town Council's specification, b) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders, c) the date of the Town Council's written response to the tender, and d) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender 	<p>£60,000 - £199,999</p> <p>Town Clerk / RFO plus 2 Members of the Town Council (Chair of the relevant committee plus 1 other committee member or the Town Mayor)</p> <p>ALL TENDERS OVER £200,000 TO BE ACCEPTED BY FULL COUNCIL</p>

	<p>outside the prescribed process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All contracts shall be advertised on the Town Council's website and the Central Digital Platform website within 24 hours of advertising elsewhere. Unless the Town Council chooses to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement). • 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. • Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010. • A minimum of three tenders shall be invited to tender. <u>A QUERY HAS BEEN RAISED ON THIS POINT AND IS SET OUT WITHIN THE COVERING REPORT</u> • <u>Tenders shall be opened by the Town Clerk/Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed.</u> • <u>Tender documents shall be handled as confidential and shared with the evaluation panel for scoring. The evaluation panel members will have been identified in the planning stages of the tender process. The evaluation panel will come together to agree final scores assigned and identify the chosen tender</u> 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender. <p>The outcome of the tender process will be recorded in the Town Council's tender file held by the RFO and will be reported to the next appropriate meeting.</p>	
In excess of £214,904 (including VAT) for goods and services or £5,372,609 (including VAT) for a public works/construction contract	<p>A public contract regulated by the Procurement Act 2025 with an estimated value in excess of £214,904 for a goods or services contract or in excess of £5,372,609 for a public works/construction contract shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Procurement Act 2025 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Central Digital Platform website.</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 £429,809 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>	ALL TENDERS OVER £200,000 CAN ONLY BE ACCEPTED BY FULL COUNCIL



Report No:	199/24
Agenda Item No:	15
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Introduction of a Whistleblowing Policy
By:	Georgia Raeburn, HR & Governance Manager
Purpose of Report:	To present the draft Whistleblowing Policy that the Finance & General Purposes Committee has recommended for adoption by Full Council

Actions
Full Council is advised:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the draft Whistleblowing Policy recommended for adoption by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. 2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To adopt the Whistleblowing Policy as presented.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Whistleblowing is the action someone takes to report wrongdoing at work that affects others. Legally this is known as 'making a disclosure in the public interest'.
- 1.2** It is important that any fraud, misconduct, or wrongdoing by staff or others working on behalf of the Town Council is reported and properly dealt with. Individuals should therefore be encouraged to raise concerns about the conduct of others or the way the Town Council is run.

- 1.3** The Town Council must respond appropriately to concerns and create a culture of openness where disclosers feel confident that their concerns will be dealt with.
- 1.4** A Whistleblowing Policy will ensure that staff and others doing work for the Town Council know the process they can follow where they believe there is any wrongdoing and how the Town Council will respond upon these concerns being shared.
- 1.5** At its meeting on 19th March 2025, the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee considered a report presenting a draft Whistleblowing Policy and has recommended that Full Council adopts the policy.
- 1.6** Full Council is now asked to consider and adopt the draft Whistleblowing Policy.

2. Information

- 2.1** Should councillors wish to review the report considered by the F&GP Committee this can be viewed on the [Town Council's website](#) (report 181/24, page 62).
- 2.2** The F&GP Committee asked officers to include a hierarchical table as an appendix to the policy, clearly setting out who would handle concerns raised depending on who the concern relates to. This has been included as an appendix and will be considered a 'live document' that officers can update as required, to ensure the correct point of contact is always listed. This may be required following a change in job title, for example, or a change in role responsibilities.
- 2.3** The F&GP Committee did also discuss the scope of the policy and whether this would apply to councillors looking to raise concerns. It was discussed that whistleblowing is a legal protection that is afforded to employees (or those working for the Town Council) to ensure they suffer no detriment as a result. This therefore does not transfer to councillors – as holders of public office – but it was recognised that the planned work on the Town Council's Communications Strategy and Complaints Procedure can make sure that it is clear how councillors do raise concerns.
- 2.4** Full Council is asked to consider the draft Whistleblowing Policy and pass a motion to adopt these.

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 Georgia Raeburn, HR & Governance Manager.



Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Ref.	XX
Date Last Adopted	TBC – March 2025
Date of Next Review	TBC – March 2030
Possible Prompts for Earlier Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change in NALC model whistleblowing policy• Use of policy that prompts review and possible improvement
Previous Adoption Dates	n/a
Author	HR & Governance Manager

DRAFT VERSION NOTES – this is the draft Whistleblowing Policy that the National Association of Local Councils recommends all parish and town councils adopt. There are a number of changes tracked below to ensure the policy is relevant for Seaford Town Council.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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Policy	2
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Procedure	3
Data protection	4

Policy

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by staff or others working on behalf of the council is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore require all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the council.

This policy sets out the way in which staff or other working on behalf of the council may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

Background

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters in the public interest. These are called "qualifying disclosures". A qualifying disclosure is one made by an employee who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation; or
- concealment of any of the above;

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for you to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is the council's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

If you make a protected disclosure you have the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because you have made a disclosure. We encourage you to raise your concerns under this procedure in the first instance.

Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Staff and others working on behalf of the council should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- No employee or other person working on behalf of the council will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the worker will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure our disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the Town Clerk or the Mayor and Chair of Personnel.

Procedure

If you believe a Councillor has breached the councillor Code of Conduct, then raise it with the Town Clerk or Mayor and Chair of Personnel. Concerns relating to an alleged breach of the councillor Code of Conduct will be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation by the Town Clerk or Mayor and Chair of Personnel on behalf of the whistleblower.

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of your own contract of employment, which should be raised via the Grievance Procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, any concerns should be raised with your line manager or the HR & OD Manager, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. Your statement will be taken into account, and you will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained.

The investigating officer will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to the Council, or any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. The investigating officer will also invoke any disciplinary action if required. On conclusion of any investigation, insofar as confidentiality allows, you will be told the outcome and what the council has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

Stage 2

If you are concerned that the you line manager or the HR & OD Manager is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the relevant person, you should escalate the matter to the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk. They will arrange for a review of the investigation to be carried out and make any necessary enquiries.

Stage 3

If on conclusion of stages 1 and 2 you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body. This includes:

- HM Revenue & Customs
- The Health and Safety Executive
- The Environment Agency
- The Serious Fraud Office
- The Charity Commission
- The Pensions Regulator

- The Information Commissioner
- The Financial Conduct Authority

You can find the full list in The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496899/BIS-16-79-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person.pdf

Data protection

When an individual makes a disclosure, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with the data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the disclosure.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

— policy ends here —

Notes

The wording of this policy is based on an employee's statutory right to make a disclosure in the public interest. Adopting and applying this policy as it stands will support the council to comply with this right.

Legal considerations:

An employee making a genuine disclosure under this policy is protected from victimisation and any unfavourable treatment. If a member of staff believes they have been treated differently because they have made a disclosure, they may be able make a claim to an Employment Tribunal irrespective of whether they are a casual, fixed term worker, or an established member of staff.

Important notice

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This document was commissioned by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication. This document has been written by Worknest HR – a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish councils.

APPENDIX 1 [ADDED FOLLOWING A REQUEST FROM THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE]

Hierarchical Table – Whistleblowing Process

Depending on who the concern relates to, this table aims to clarify:

- who concerns should be raised with
- who may then be taking forward any subsequent investigation
- who the matter can be escalated to if you feel unhappy with the outcome or process

Concerns Relating To:	Stage 1 - Send To:	Stage 1 - Investigating Officer Options:	Stage 2 – Escalate to:
Town Clerk	Your line manager OR HR & OD Manager	Deputy Town Clerk (supported by Chair of Disciplinary & Grievance Panel)	Mayor & Chair of Personnel
Deputy Town Clerk	Your line manager OR HR & OD Manager	Town Clerk	Mayor & Chair of Personnel
Head of Place	Your line manager OR HR & OD Manager	Town Clerk	Mayor & Chair of Personnel
All others staff	Your line manager OR HR & OD Manager	HR & OD Manager	Town Clerk
Councillor	Town Clerk OR Mayor & Chair of Personnel	External – District Council's Monitoring Officer	n/a
A Council decision	Your line manager OR HR & OD Manager	Town Clerk OR Deputy Town Clerk OR Head of Place	Mayor & Chair of Personnel

Report 199-24 Appendix A

Draft for consideration by
Full Council 27-Mar-25

This appendix and the table within are a live document and as such, this will be updated by officers as required e.g. where there are changes in job titles or role responsibilities. Where there are changes, this will be reissued to staff and uploaded to the Town Council's website.

DRAFT



Report No:	201/24
Agenda Item No:	16
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Introduction of a Probationary Period Policy
By:	Georgia Raeburn, HR & Governance Manager
Purpose of Report:	To present the draft Probationary Period Policy that the Personnel Committee has recommended for adoption by Full Council

Actions
Full Council is advised:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the draft Probationary Period Policy recommended for adoption by the Personnel Committee. 2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To adopt the Probationary Period Policy as presented.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** When a new employee joins the Town Council on a permanent basis, a certain period of time is designated as a 'probationary period'. It is during this time that the individual's suitability for the role can be assessed and the employee can satisfy themselves that they are happy with the role / working for the Town Council.
- 1.2** At present, the Town Council's probationary period process is coordinated by the Town Council's HR & Governance team and the relevant line manager.

- 1.3** Whilst it has been fit for purpose as a process, there are improvements that can and should be made to strengthen this, to protect the Town Council and to ensure transparency with employees.
- 1.4** At its meeting on 13th February 2025, the Personnel Committee considered a report presenting a draft Probationary Period Policy and has recommended that Full Council adopts the policy.
- 1.5** Full Council is now asked to consider and adopt the draft Probationary Period Policy.

2. Information

- 2.1** The draft Probationary Period Policy is included at Appendix A.
- 2.2** The policy is split into the following sections:
 - (a)** Purpose of a probationary period
 - (b)** Length of a probationary period
 - (c)** Responsibilities and expectations
 - (d)** Induction
 - (e)** Training / development
 - (f)** Feedback and support
 - (g)** Formal Reviews
 - (h)** Conduct
 - (i)** End of probationary period
 - (j)** Appended - Probationary Period Review Process
- 2.3** The aim of the policy is to:
 - (a)** ensure absolute clarity of the process for all involved including, crucially, those new employees joining the Town Council
 - (b)** ensure the period is capitalised on in terms of reviewing the employee's performance and progress, as well as the training and support being offered by the line manager / Town Council
 - (c)** reduce the risk of timescales not being adhered to by line managers
 - (d)** preventing the potential of the policy being open to abuse by employees taking absence from work immediately prior to their six month anniversary so as to be deemed completed by the passage of time
 - (e)** ensure the policy is applied consistently and fairly across the board

- (f) ensure that the nuances of the Town Clerk's probationary period review process are facilitated.

2.4 The Personnel Committee requested a small number of the changes to the policy as presented in February – these are tracked on the appendix, with the main changes being

- (a) Page 6, Step 1 - an additional paragraph at setting out a minimum frequency for the informal probationary period review discussions between line manager and employee.
- (b) Page 8, Step 4b – changed time periods to months to maintain consistency throughout the process.

2.5 Full Council is asked to consider the draft Probationary Period Policy and pass a motion to adopt these.

3. Implementation

- 3.1** It is recommended that Full Council adopts this policy with effect from 1 April 2025 to ensure that the policy is live at the point of taking on any new employees with the current recruitment processes.
- 3.2** In terms of changes to working practices, the revised process does introduce additional formal steps within a probationary period (the current process just allowing for a formal end of probationary period review).
- 3.3** When rolling out the new policy and process, any training needs within the management team will be assessed and training and support arranged.
- 3.4** The other supporting documentation – such as the review forms – will be created by officers and rolled out with the newly adopted policy.
- 3.5** When issuing offer paperwork to prospective new employees, a copy of the Probationary Period Policy would be included within the offer bundle and then discussed with them as part of their induction process.

4. Financial Appraisal

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

5. Contact Officer

- 5.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Georgia Raeburn, HR & Governance Manager.



Seaford Town Council

Probationary Period Policy

1. Purpose of a probationary period

A probationary period is about helping a newly hired employee settle into their role whilst also giving the line manager the opportunity to assess how they are doing in the role.

As a new employee, a probationary period gives the employee the chance to:

- Get a good understanding of their role and what is expected of them.
- Make sure they get the training and support they need to do their job well.
- Assess if this is an organisation / team they want to work for and feel aligned with.

As an employer, the probationary period gives the Town Council the chance to assess:

- The skills, competencies and knowledge of the employee on the job.
- The employee's progress on given assignments.
- Their reliability, trustworthiness, integrity, honesty and other relevant personality characteristics of the employee.
- The employee's relations and collaboration with subordinates, supervisors and peers.

2. Length of a probationary period

The length of a probationary period is usually six months but this may vary. The probation length will be discussed with the employee at the point of offering the post and confirmed in writing with the offer paperwork.

3. Responsibilities and expectations

Employees are responsible for:

- Engaging with the induction and probationary period processes and reaching the required level of performance.
- Familiarising themselves with the organisation's rules, policies and procedures; particularly those relating to security, equal opportunities, conduct, discipline and grievance.
- Ensuring that they understand the probationary procedure.
- Ensuring that they are familiar with the standards and requirements of the job role, both those specified within the job description and how their role fits into the wider team and further organisational contribution.
- Ensuring that they take an active part in the probationary review meetings.
- Undertaking any learning and development activities agreed with the line manager; including any mandatory training and familiarity with specified policies such as health and safety.

Line managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring the employee is aware of this probation policy and procedure.
- Explaining the expected standard of performance, how performance will be monitored, and expected standards of conduct by the new employee.
- Completing probation review meetings as appropriate for the new employee.
- Ensuring probation documentation is completed in a timely manner.
- Notifying the employee of any probation review meetings in advance so that both parties have time to prepare.
- Identifying any potential for the employee to fail to meet the standards required and taking appropriate action quickly whilst maintaining liaison with HR if appropriate.
- Ensuring that systems are in place to support and monitor the employee's work throughout the probationary period in order that they receive such

assistance as is reasonable to help them fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the role.

4. Induction

The Town Council wants its employees to settle in and get to know their new role and employer as quickly as possible - so everyone who joins the Town Council will have an induction within their probationary period.

The line manager will set out the details of your induction plan on your first day in post.

5. Training / development

Some roles have specific training/development periods or programmes for new starters which need to be successfully completed as well as the probationary period. If this applies, the employee will be advised of this at the point of being offered the role and it will be explained how this fits in with the probationary period review process.

6. Feedback and support

The line manager will give feedback regularly throughout the probationary period, so the employee knows what is going well and if there are any areas where they might need some more training and support.

Employees will be encouraged to talk to their line manager about how things are going for them and advise their line manager if there is anything they are not clear about or need more support with.

7. Formal reviews

As well as ensuring ongoing feedback, the line manager will hold formal review meetings during the probationary period. These are an opportunity for both parties to talk about progress in the role and to make sure they are both happy with the way things are going.

There is more information about reviews in the Probationary Period Review Process detailed below.

8. Conduct

If the Town Council has any concerns about the employee's conduct during their probationary period, these will be addressed in accordance with the Probationary Period Review Process.

9. End of probationary period

By the end of the probationary period, if all has gone well, it will be confirmed that the employee has successfully completed their probationary period.

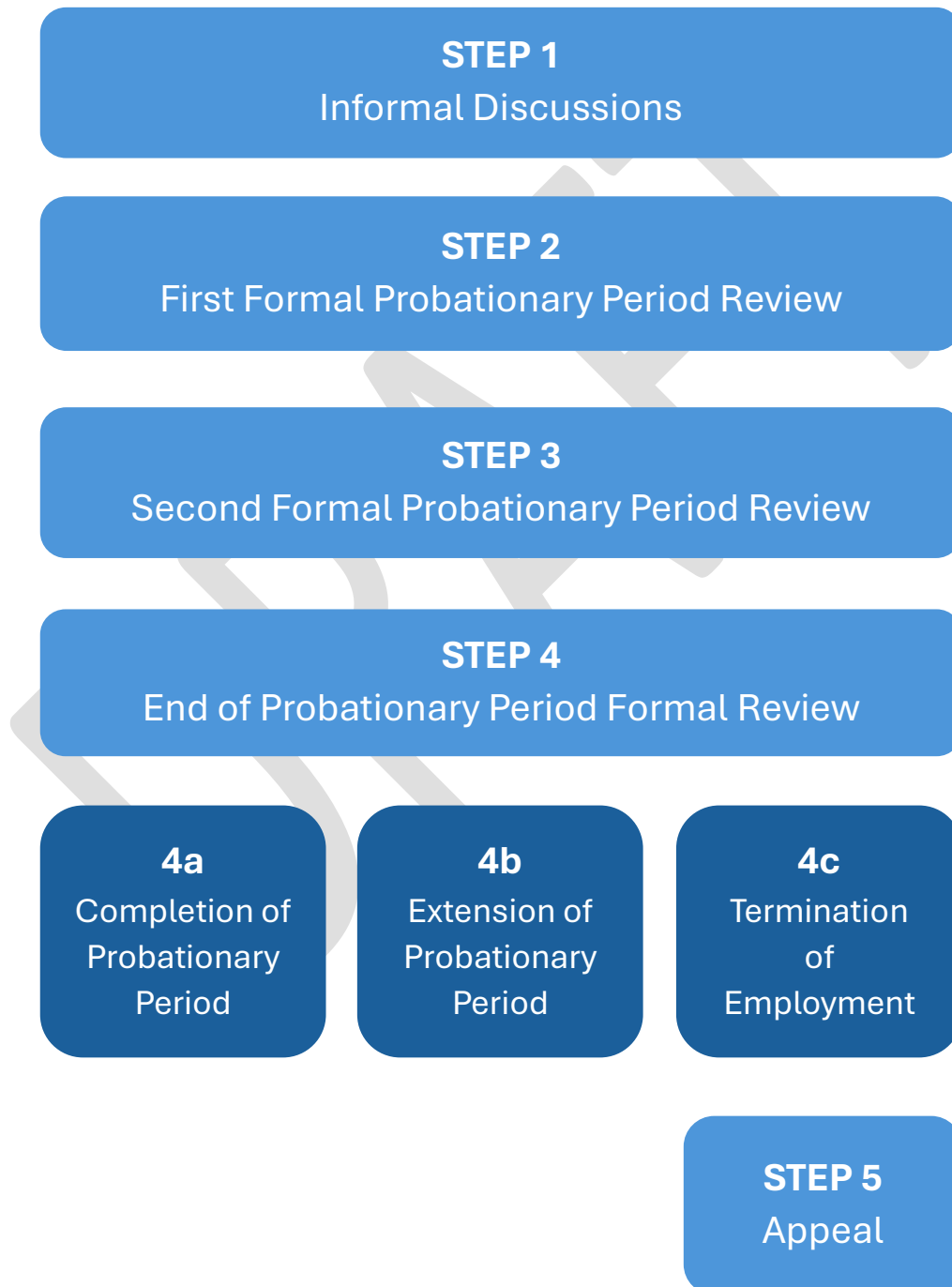
If things have not worked out as planned, there is more information about the end of probationary periods in the Probationary Period Review Process below.

Whatever the outcome, the probationary period review process must have been completed before the expiry date of the probationary period. Failure to approve the end of the probationary period or inform the employee of an extension to the probationary period prior to the six month anniversary of the start date will result in the employee automatically being deemed to have completed their probationary period on their six month anniversary of commencing employment. The only exception to this rule is if the employee is absent from work immediately prior to their six month anniversary, in which case the probationary period will be deemed to continue until the End of Probationary Period meeting can take place promptly once the employee returns to the workplace.

Probationary Period Review Process

The probationary period review process is carried out by the line managers in consultation with the HR team for the appropriate guidance, support and document provision.

The probationary period review is a possible five-step process:



Please find further detail of each step set out below.

Step 1 - Informal discussions

Line managers should provide the employee with ongoing feedback throughout their probationary period so they know how things are going.

If line managers have any concerns about the employee's performance, conduct or attendance, they should not wait for a formal review to raise this, but should instead discuss this informally with the employee as soon as possible and agree the steps needed to make improvements.

Line managers should be meeting with the employee on a monthly basis, as a minimum, and ideally face-to-face, to review how the probationary period is going. This should be flexed as required i.e. fortnightly meetings may be more suitable earlier in the probationary period, when challenges are being experienced or with spikes in workload, for example. Line managers should take notes of key discussion points and share these with the employee after the meeting.

The line manager should alert the HR team where there are concerns being discussed and ensure relevant notes are saved in the employee's personnel file.

Step 2 - First Formal Probationary Period Review

Employees will normally have a First Formal Probationary Period Review with their line manager halfway through their probationary period, although this may be held earlier if there are serious concerns about the employee that have not been able to be resolved informally.

The HR team will provide the line manager with specific wording for the review meeting invitation. The employee will have the chance to be accompanied by either a trade union representative or a work colleague if they would like. Line managers will also be provided with a First Formal Probationary Period Review Form to support this meeting.

During the review, line managers will follow the prompts on the review form, discussing what has gone well so far in the probationary period and what has not (exploring the possible reasons for this), and what extra training or support could be required.

By the end of the review, the line manager should agree aims for the remainder of the probationary period with the employee – a template for this is included in the review form. This sets out any further progress for the employee to make and by when, as well as any training or support that the line manager will provide.

Step 3 - Second Formal Probationary Period Review

If there are any areas of significant concern at the first review, the line manager should inform the employee of a date for a Second Formal Probationary Period Review - usually one month later. Again, employee can choose to be accompanied by either a trade union representative or a work colleague if they like.

At this meeting the line manager should assess the employee's progress towards their probationary period aims and agree any further actions that need to be taken.

Again, the HR team will provide the line manager with specific invitation wording and a Second Formal Probationary Period Review Form to support the meeting.

Step 4 - End of Probationary Period Formal Review – this meeting **MUST** take place before the employee's six month anniversary has elapsed. In the event the employee is absent from work immediately prior to the six month anniversary of their commencement of employment, then the probationary period will be deemed to continue until this meeting can take place promptly once the employee returns to the workplace.

At the end of the probationary period, all employees will have an End of Probationary Period Formal Review Meeting, at which the employee may choose to be accompanied by either a trade union representative or a work colleague if they like.

At this meeting the line manager should review progress against the aims that were agreed in the first formal review meeting and assess whether the employee is carrying out their role effectively.

If the line manager has any concerns about the employee's performance, attendance or conduct they should give them the opportunity to discuss these during the meeting before making a decision on the outcome of the probationary period.

Step 4a – Completion of probationary period

If everything has gone well, the line manager will confirm this with the employee and request that the HR team issue a letter congratulating them that they have successfully completed their probationary period.

Step 4b - Extension of probationary period

At the end of the meeting, if the line manager has concerns about the employee's performance, conduct or attendance, they may decide to extend the probationary period. This will give the employee more time to receive the level of training or support that they need or to improve any performance, conduct or attendance issues.

If it is necessary to extend a probationary period, it will only be extended once, for a minimum of ~~four weeks~~one month and a maximum of ~~twelve weeks~~three months.

The HR team will issue a letter confirming the extension to the probationary period and the reasons why.

The line manager may also decide to extend an employee's probationary period if they have been off work sick, or absent for other reasons for more than one week of their contracted hours during their probationary period.

Step 4c - Termination of employment within probationary period

If a line manager believes that the employee has had the required level of training and support but still has concerns about their performance, conduct or attendance levels, they may decide to recommend terminating their employment. The decision to make this recommendation can be taken at any formal review meeting, during or before the probationary period has ended, or during an extension period. The decision to terminate employment will need to be discussed with the HR team and approved by a member of the Strategic Management Team.

The HR team will issue a letter formalising the termination of employment and setting out the appeal process.

If the employee does not make themselves available for a probationary period review meeting which may result in dismissal, it will be rearranged. If they don't turn up for the rearranged meeting, without reasonable excuse, the line manager will look at all

the evidence available in their absence and make a recommendation to the Strategic Management Team accordingly.

Step 5 - Appeal

The employee has the right to appeal against their dismissal in writing to the Town Clerk within five working days of receiving the outcome letter. In their appeal letter the employee should set out the reasons why they believe the sanction is not appropriate.

The employee will be invited to an appeal hearing with the Town Clerk. They will have the right to be accompanied by either a trade union representative or a work colleague if they choose.

During the meeting the Town Clerk will ask the employee to give their reasons for the appeal and to explain why they feel that the original decision was not appropriate. The Town Clerk will subsequently investigate the appeal and confirm their decision in writing. This will normally be within 10 working days, but if it is going to take longer they will let the employee know.

This is the end of the appeals process.

Documentation

All documentation will be managed by the HR team, and will be held securely on the employee's personnel file.

Roles in the Process

In order to make the process fit for purpose, there may be times when the roles within a process have to be varied to ensure the steps can be carried out within a certain timeframe or by appropriate managers.

Examples of this may include:

- In the absence of a line manager, their senior manager will take on the line manager role.
- In the case of the Town Clerk's direct line reports during absence of the Town Clerk, the Mayor and Chair of Personnel (or deputies if required) will take on the line manager role acting together.

- In the case of termination of employment of a member of the Strategic Management Team, this will need approval from the Personnel Committee or Full Council.
- In the case of termination of employment of the Town Clerk, this will need approval by Full Council.
- In the case of the Town Clerk not being able to consider an appeal, this will be referred to the Appeals Committee.
- In the case of the HR team not being able to provide support to the process, external HR support will be sought.

DRAFT



Report No:	198/24
Agenda Item No:	17
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Mayor's Portfolio Review
By:	Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To present a review of the Mayor's Portfolio

Actions
Full Council is advised:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the contents of the report. 2. To consider the report from the 2024 - 2025 Mayor of Seaford at Appendix A. 3. To consider the table of recommended amendments to the Mayor's Portfolio at Appendix B, including those which instigate change in other Town Council policy. 4. To consider the revised Mayor's Portfolio at Appendix C.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To agree the amendments to the Mayor's Portfolio as presented in Appendix B. 2. To instruct officers to reflect the amendments above in the upcoming review of both the Town Council's Complaints Policy and Standing Orders. 3. To adopt the revised Mayor's Portfolio.

1. Information

- 1.1 The Mayor's Portfolio exists as a tool to clearly define the range of responsibilities and activities associated with the positions within the Town

Council's Civic Office; with an aim to provide the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor an outline of their roles and to set out expectations.

- 1.2 The Mayor's Portfolio was last reviewed in 2022 and scheduled for review during the 2024 - 2025 municipal year.
- 1.3 A review has been undertaken collaboratively with the 2024 - 2025 Mayor of Seaford and the Civic Office and this report sets out the recommended amendments and revised Mayor's Portfolio for Full Council consideration.

2. Mayor's Portfolio Review

- 2.1 The review of the Mayor's Portfolio was carried out in a two-part process:
 - (a) An informal reflection exercise with town councillors, led by the 2024 - 2025 Mayor of Seaford, and
 - (b) A review by Civic Officers.
- 2.2 The details of the informal reflection exercise with town councillors can be found in the Mayor's Report attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3 The recommended amendments to the Mayor's Portfolio as a result of the informal reflection exercise were then shared with and considered by Civic Officers.
- 2.4 Civic Officers have then amended the Mayor's Portfolio, in collaboration with the 2024 - 2025 Mayor of Seaford, and the table of recommended amendments can be found at Appendix B.
- 2.5 The 'clean' amended version of the Mayor's Portfolio can be found at Appendix C and the current (2022) version of the Mayor's Portfolio can be found on the [Policies page](#) of the Town Council website.
- 2.6 Full Council is invited to consider the recommended amendments and adopt to the revised Mayor's Portfolio.

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 Isabelle Mouland, Assistant Town Clerk.

2024-2025 Mayor of Seaford's Report on the Mayor's Portfolio Review:

This report has been prepared by the Mayor, Councillor Sally Markwell, with support from the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Maggie Wearmouth and Chair of Personnel, Cllr Olivia Honeyman.

1. Background Information

1.1 As part of the Mayor's Portfolio review, I reflected on my experience of undertaking this role at an informal meeting of Councillors on 26th February 2025. There were nine attendees, involving two previous Mayors, the Deputy Mayor and a previous Deputy Mayor, with representatives across all political parties and two written contributions from those unable to attend, that contributed to the discussions.

1.2 I raised the following concerns:

a) Mayor's Engagements: To date, the Mayor (since inauguration on 10th May 2024) has attended 65 external events, many lasting over 3 hours; and chaired 11 Full Council Meetings and, attended 85 internal meetings lasting between 1-4 hours.

b) Line management: A key role for the Mayor is to line-manage the Town Clerk. This role requires regular 2:1 meetings (with Chair of Personnel) during working hours and a clear understanding of the TC's role. As employers, councillors should understand their expectations of that role. The line manager should be the one that ensures on a day-to-day basis that the TC remit is being fulfilled.

c) Working Hours: This year has seen a dramatic increase, with current estimates requiring at least 2 days per week of time required to address internal areas of responsibility in addition to external events.

d) Size of the Town Council: Our Town Council is growing, as proven by the recent staff structure review. Taking on additional officers to enable the council to meet strategic expectations will naturally increase the requirement for discussions and planning for the Mayor with the Town Clerk and officers.

e) Local devolution and transition: This will add additional workloads to officers and internal discussions which, within the Mayor's current role would be expected to be involved.

f) Time constraints: Added to the above, given many of our current councillors are working, the responsibilities of the Mayor's role needs to be recognised so that those who put themselves forward are well aware of the time commitments involved. These constraints can add stress to the role of Mayor and can make the process of due diligence in terms of line-management and involvement in the internal discussions required a considerable challenge.

g) Civic Support: The Mayor is currently supported by the Mayor's Secretary (Civic Officer) in the duties of the office which has been well received. This support is confined to, secretarial role, dealing with function invites, organising Mayoral events through assisting with attendance, upholding Civic protocol and liaison with Mayor's chosen charities. However, there is no designated support from officers identified in the Portfolio in terms of the majority of other duties that form part of the Mayor's internal role.

h) Complaints: The current complaints policy remains unsustainable in terms of the Mayor's involvement in addressing complaints involving the Town Clerk sent in to the Council. The complaints process is being reviewed. Following the structural review, it will be removed from the Mayor's Portfolio and allocated to the role of Deputy Town Clerk, (supported by the Chair of the Grievance & Disciplinary Panel).

i) Confidentiality and Decision-making: To understand and respect that the position of Mayor has no delegated powers or any powers to act on or make decisions on behalf of the Town Council needs to be recognised by councillors and residents. In lieu of the Mayor's additional roles, part of the Mayor's communications with officers, councillors and the public bring into the spotlight the need for confidentiality at a number of levels.

j) Mayor's Allowance: The Mayor outlined the challenges and limitations of this budget which does not meet price increases over the past 8 years in terms of travel, refreshments, accommodation, printing

and attendance at external events. Discussions with other Town Mayors, with much smaller populations and staff have revealed a general 50% higher allowance in comparable funding in relation to Seaford Town Council.

2. Informal Meeting Conclusions

2.1. The discussions led to a unanimous agreement from those present that a paper identifying areas for updating the Mayor's Portfolio should be tabled at the next Full Council on 27th March, which will outline a reduction in the internal STC managerial responsibilities for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

2.2. In summary, discussions during this meeting led to:

- The consideration of enhancing the responsibilities for the Chair of CCMG working alongside the Chair of Personnel.
- The removal of Mayoral responsibilities for complaints (acknowledged as part of the structural review).
- The consideration of an increase in the Mayor's Allowance.

3. Focus of impacts of specific changes

3.1. Role of CCMG Chair

3.1.1 During the discussions highlighted in 2 above, an alternative approach to allocating internal responsibilities for the Mayor was identified. The leading suggestion was to enhance the role of the Chair of CCMG. This allocation of responsibility, shared, as previously identified in the portfolio with the Chair of Personnel, was recognised as reducing many of the time-laden burdens upon the Mayor's role.

3.1.2 Those present acknowledged that changes in the role of the CCMG Chair would require amendments to the current CCMG Policy. Therefore, an additional paper for March Full Council would outline these changes for adoption, subject to the changes to the Mayor's Portfolio being agreed.

3.1.3 Specific changes to the role of CCMG Chair were identified as:

- A Chair of CCMG will be chosen at the Annual Meeting of Seaford Town Council, following election of Committee Chairs.
- Councillors able to undertake this role will need to be either the Deputy Mayor or the Chair of Assets & Facilities, Chair of Finance &

General Purposes, Chair of Golf, Open Spaces and Climate Action Committee, or Chair of Planning & Highways.

- The Chair of Personnel is unable to take on this role due to Conflicts of Interest – see previous comments in their own role as Line Manager for the Town Clerk.
- The Chair of CCMG, in accepting this role will also be accepting further internal responsibilities related to the line-management of the Town Clerk, as well as procedural and legal matters that may arise within STC.
- Internal responsibilities are further outlined in the CCMG Draft Policy Under Review March 2025 to be presented at 27th March Full Council.

3.2. Alignment with updated STC Complaints Policy

3.2.1 Previous Mayoral responsibilities included receiving and dealing with complaints regarding the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Procedure May 2021: p6.2.4(d). This responsibility is proposed to be removed from the Mayor's Portfolio in line with other areas of internal responsibility.

3.2.2 All complaints concerning officers from STC will be received and handled by the new Strategic Management Team, whereas those concerning the Town Clerk will be received and handled directly by the new role of Deputy Town Clerk (supported by the Chair of Grievance and Disciplinary Panel).

3.3 Proposed increase in the Mayor's Allowance

3.3.1 This fund currently stands at £1,500 and has not been increased for at least 8 years. Current descriptions of the use of this fund within the Mayor's Portfolio states: "The Council recognises the need for a Mayor's allowance to deal with the expectations of the office in connection with printing, travel and refreshments...For Civic events such as a Civic Service and Carol Service the Mayor has a budget which is set by the Council annually in January".

3.3.2 The Mayor has been faced with a number of challenges and limitations of the current budget of £1,500 which does not meet price increases over the

past 8 years in terms of travel, refreshments, accommodation, printing and attendance at external events.

3.3.3 A proposal to increase the Mayor's funding requires further discussion. This could be considered during 2026-2027 budget setting discussions.

3.3.4 Any necessary overspend during the 2025-2026 Mayoral year will be appropriately reported to the F&GP Committee.

3.4 Youth Ambassador Board

3.4.1 At the Full Council Meeting on 9th May 2024 (02/24) it was recommended that the Town Council develops the roles of Young and Deputy Young Mayor of Seaford, and creates a new, enhanced opportunity for younger people via a Youth Ambassador Board.

3.4.2 To remind Councillors, the Youth Ambassador Board would consist of up to 10 younger people aged between 14 and 18 years old (appointed as 'Youth Ambassadors') and relevant Seaford Town Council officers administering meetings.

3.4.3 This work has yet to be developed and any relevant additions will be recommended for the Mayor's Portfolio once the final project has been organised.

4. Summary Points

4.1 To be elected as the town's 'first citizen' is considered to be an honour and a privilege and a role one should not take up lightly, but with a commitment and determination to serve Seaford's residents to the best of one's ability, within an enabling environment that can support the Mayor's chosen focus and charities.

4.2 The role should not place a councillor in a challenging/conflicting position that, due to the complex nature of the work, causes personal stress and impacts the positive nature of the role.

4.3 Discussions and research of other Mayoral roles within local towns have identified a completely different set of responsibilities which are commensurate with the role as having both symbolic and practical importance: being non-political and representing every section of the community regardless of political persuasion. The role of the Mayor being to reflect the aims and strategies of the Council, but not to be hampered by the internal responsibilities of managing them.

4.4 By setting out an alternative vision for the mayoral role, councillors can be encouraged to aspire to this sought-after position by those with aspirations to serve their community.

Table of Recommended Amendments:

General	
	Amendment(s)
Whole Document	Added and reordered numbering to reflect recommended amendments
Whole Document	Changed 'Mayor's Secretary' to 'Civic Officer' and 'Civic Office' where necessary to reflect staffing review
Whole Document	Added 'Town' to show 'Town Council' instead of 'Council'
Whole Document	Changed 'He/She' to 'They/Their' as appropriate
Whole Document	Removal of anything regarding the Young and Deputy Young Mayor due to this being developed into the Youth Ambassador Board
Whole Document	General spelling and grammar revisions
Contents	Reordered/named to reflect recommended amendments
Specific	
Section ('S') / Paragraph ('para') Ref	Amendment(s)
S1 - Introduction	Section reorganised, title changed to 'The Mayor's Portfolio – Introduction' and content brought up from later sections.
S2	New section and title 'Overview of the Mayor's Role' – content was from previous 'introduction' section.
S3	Addition to title 'The Mayor's Role - guidance on Roles, Duties and Responsibilities
S3, para 3.4	New para heading 'Information concerning Roles and Duties'
S3, para 3.4	'Duties' para moved up to 3.4.2
S3, para 3.5	Title changed to 'Meeting Responsibilities'
S3, para 3.5	Content re-ordered and some added from later pages in Mayor's Portfolio.

S3, para 3.5 (a)	Addition – Mayor, if they decide to attend Town Council Committee meeting, this is in an ex-officio capacity and in communication with the relevant Chair of Committee.
S3, para 3.6	<p>Paragraphs removed:</p> <p><i>“To work with Town Council officers cooperatively and professionally on procedural and legal matters that may arise, including seeking officer advice on Town Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other adopted policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“To work with Town Council officers cooperatively and professionally on procedural and legal matters that may arise, including seeking officer advice on Town Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other adopted policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“With the Chair of Personnel, take on day to day line management tasks of the Town Clerk.”</i></p> <p><i>“To act as point of contact for the Town Clerk to discuss unexpected circumstances within the Town Council and the options/approach to be taken.”</i></p> <p>Tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG.</p>
S3, para 3.6 (d-f)	Added “alongside members of CCMG”.
S3, para 3.7	<p>Paragraphs removed:</p> <p><i>“To receive and deal with complaints regarding the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council’s Complaints Procedure.”</i></p> <p><i>“To approve, with the Chair of Personnel, any additional hours requested or worked by the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council’s Additional Hours Policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“To appraise the Town Clerk, with the Chair of Personnel, in accordance with the Town Council’s Appraisal Scheme Policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“To handle, with the Chair of Personnel, any misconduct/gross misconduct claims requiring disciplinary action in relation to the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council’s Disciplinary Procedure.”</i></p>

	<p><i>“In the event of a grievance being raised by the Town Clerk about the Chair of Personnel, to handle this grievance in accordance with the Town Council’s Grievance Policy”</i></p> <p>Tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG and Chair of Personnel. In regard to complaints, this will sit with the Deputy Town Clerk & RFO, with support from the Chair of Personnel in accordance with staffing review.</p>
S3, para 3.8 (a)	Amended para to reiterate support from Civic Office to professionally manage social media/digital communications.
S3, para 3.8 (b)	Minor edit to remove <i>“unless prevented by illness or other similar unexpected factors”</i>
S3, para 3.8 (c)	Addition to include the Town Council’s Civility and Respect Pledge.
S3, para 3.8 (d, e)	Points d and e brought up to S3, para 3.8, from other sections later in the Mayor’s Portfolio.
S4. Para 4.1	Re-organised and points b-f regarding tasks related to the Civic Officer brought up to this section from later in the Mayor’s Portfolio.
S4, para 4.1 (g)	Small changes: ‘Organising Mayoral events’ changes to ‘For supporting Mayoral events’ and option for Civic ‘Reception’ added.
S4, para 4.1 (k)	Addition – <i>“Providing quarterly Mayor’s Allowance updates to help plan the Mayoral functions throughout the year in office.”</i>
S5	Section re-organised and para 5.10 added – <i>“It is fairly common that invites to potential mayoral engagements are received for the period immediately following the election of the Mayor. The Civic Office will therefore liaise with the new Mayor as soon as possible after election to discuss attendance at any immediately upcoming engagements.”</i>
S6	Title changed to ‘Overview of Deputy Mayor Role’
S7	Change to title ‘The Deputy Mayor’s Role - guidance on Roles, Duties and Responsibilities

S7, para 7.2	Addition of 'duties' reflecting those from Mayor's duties in s3.
S8	Re-ordered and change of Young/Deputy Young Mayor to include information on the Youth Ambassador Board.
S9	Re-ordered
S9, para 9.2	Additional text to include more expense examples.
S9, para 9.3	Additional text to explain printing arrangements.
S9, para 9.4	Additional text to add that <i>"all expenditure is managed and recorded by the Civic Office..."</i> .
S9, para 9.5	Addition – <i>"The Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) is not authorised to commit the Town Council to expenditure, whether that be in the form of goods or services. All orders must be made and managed by the Civic Office."</i>
S10	New main heading 'Mayoral Protocol'
S10, para 10.1	Changed from 'Written & Verbal Protocol' to 'Mayor's Title' and re-organised.
S10, para 10.2	Re-organised and point d amended to include that the Deputy Mayor can wear their Chain of Office in the presence of the Mayor.
S10, para 10.4	Addition – <i>"Mayor's Community Coat:</i> <i>a) During the 2024-2025 municipal year, the Mayor worked with the local community to develop a patchwork coat representing many community and voluntary organisations across Seaford. The Coat was developed in celebration of Seaford Town Council's 25th anniversary.</i> <i>b) Although the coat is not recognised as a traditional robe of office, the coat can be worn (at the Mayor's description) to support community activities such as Seaford Christmas Magic and the Town Forum.</i>

	<i>c) The Mayor's Community Coat is stored at the Town Council offices, on display in the Council Chamber."</i>
S10, para 10.6	Addition of point c – <i>"When invited to attend outside organisation events or meetings, this is done so in capacity of Mayor. It should be noted that this is separate to the Town Council's Representation on Outside Bodies Policy."</i>
S10, para 10.7 (c)	Amended para to reiterate support from Civic Office to professionally manage social media/digital communications.
S12, para 12.2	Amended para to include information on printing costs.
S12, para 12.3	Amended para to include how card could be developed.
S13, para 13.1	Amended para to include link to Civic Awards Policy.
S13, para 13.2	Amended para to include information on award costs.
S13, para 13.4	Amended para to say <i>"Usually held in April/May each year"</i>
S13, para 13.5	Addition to include information on Highly Commended Certificates as per Civic Awards Policy.
S14, para 14.1	Amended para to include option of 'Reception'.
S14, para 14.2 (b)	Amended para to include 'usually' [held at Martello Tower].
S14, para 14.2 (c)	Amended para to remove about flag raising on Saturday closest to Sussex Day as in recent years have held ceremony on Sussex Day.
S14, para 14.3 (a)	Amended to include 'Seaford' where it mentions the War Memorial and adjusted sentence to improve.
S14, para 14.3 (b)	Removal of 'Young Mayor'
S14, para 14.4	Re-organised & wreath laying information added as point b.
S14, para 14.5	Amended to include more information about current arrangements with Seaford Christmas Magic. Including: - How it is delivered and by who - The Mayor's involvement - The Mayor being invited to take part in pre-event lantern making workshops

S14, para 14.6 (b)	Amended to include that the refreshments costs come from the Mayor's Allowance.
S14, para 14.6 (c)	Addition to include about the Town Council's involvement in previous years with the Gift Giving Campaign.
S14, para 14.7 (a)	Amended para to say <i>"Usually held in April/May each year"</i>
S14, para 14.7 (B)	Amended para order to improve.
S14	Civic events removed: Armed Forces Day – not now a large event, would be invited by engagement form as usual Mayoral engagement. Blessing of the Christmas Tree – this has not be conducted in recent years as has become less popular since changing to the Tree of Lights.
Appendix 1	Edited to remove section on 'Other STC Events' as this practice no longer exists.
Appendix 3	Amended to make more general (not naming current dignitaries by name etc.)
Policy Change	
Policy	Amendment(s)
Standing Orders	S3, para added to Mayor's Portfolio – 3.5 (a) – <i>"if the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) were to decide to attend any Committee of the Town Council, they do so in an ex-officio capacity, and in communication with the relevant Chair of Committee. Where they are appointed to a Committee, they are appointed as a Councillor not as Mayor/Deputy Mayor.</i> <i>The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will have no automatic right to attend a meeting of a non-Standing Committee; that being the Disciplinary/Grievance Sub-Committee or Appeals Committee unless they are appointed as a member of that Committee (again the appointment would be as a Councillor not as Mayor/Deputy Mayor)."</i>
CCMG Policy	Paragraphs removed from Mayor's Portfolio for tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG:

	<p><i>“To work with Town Council officers cooperatively and professionally on procedural and legal matters that may arise, including seeking officer advice on Town Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other adopted policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“To work with Town Council officers cooperatively and professionally on procedural and legal matters that may arise, including seeking officer advice on Town Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other adopted policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“With the Chair of Personnel, take on day to day line management tasks of the Town Clerk.”</i></p> <p><i>“To act as point of contact for the Town Clerk to discuss unexpected circumstances within the Town Council and the options/approach to be taken.”</i></p> <p><i>“To approve, with the Chair of Personnel, any additional hours requested or worked by the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council’s Additional Hours Policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“To appraise the Town Clerk, with the Chair of Personnel, in accordance with the Town Council’s Appraisal Scheme Policy.”</i></p> <p><i>“To handle, with the Chair of Personnel, any misconduct/gross misconduct claims requiring disciplinary action in relation to the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council’s Disciplinary Procedure.”</i></p> <p><i>“In the event of a grievance being raised by the Town Clerk about the Chair of Personnel, to handle this grievance in accordance with the Town Council’s Grievance Policy”</i></p>
Complaints Procedure	<p>Paragraphs removed from Mayor’s Portfolio for tasks to go to Deputy Town Clerk & RFO in accordance with re-structure, supported by the Chair of Personnel:</p>

	<i>"To receive and deal with complaints regarding the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Procedure."</i>
Town Council's Additional Hours Policy	<p>Paragraphs removed from Mayor's Portfolio for tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG and Chair or Personnel:</p> <p><i>"To approve, with the Chair of Personnel, any additional hours requested or worked by the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council's Additional Hours Policy."</i></p>
Appraisal Scheme Policy	<p>Paragraphs removed from Mayor's Portfolio for tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG and Chair or Personnel:</p> <p><i>"To appraise the Town Clerk, with the Chair of Personnel, in accordance with the Town Council's Appraisal Scheme Policy."</i></p>
Disciplinary Procedure	<p>Paragraphs removed from Mayor's Portfolio for tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG and Chair or Personnel:</p> <p><i>"To handle, with the Chair of Personnel, any misconduct/gross misconduct claims requiring disciplinary action in relation to the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council's Disciplinary Procedure."</i></p>
Grievance Policy	<p>Paragraphs removed from Mayor's Portfolio for tasks recommended to go to Chair of CCMG and Chair or Personnel:</p> <p><i>"In the event of a grievance being raised by the Town Clerk about the Chair of Personnel, to handle this grievance in accordance with the Town Council's Grievance Policy"</i></p>



Seaford Town Council

Mayor's Portfolio

Policy Ref.	CC4
Date Last Adopted	October 2021
Date of Next Review	March 2025
Possible Prompts for Earlier Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review in second year of new Council office • Changes in legislation or civic protocol
Previous Adoption Dates	August 2020 March 2019
Author	Assistant Town Clerk

Mayor's Portfolio

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1. The Mayor's Portfolio - Introduction

- 1.1. The definition of portfolio, in the context of this document, is a tool to clearly define the range of responsibilities and activities associated with the positions within the Civic Office of the Town Council. The aim of this Portfolio is to give to the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor an outline of the role and set out expectations.
- 1.2. The contents present several aspects of the Mayoral year, for example, general notes on the Mayor's role, enabling fundraising and annual and civic events. There are notes on etiquette and the financial arrangements, including available staff resources to assist with Mayoral engagements.
- 1.3. Requirements within this portfolio that are enshrined in legislation (statutory requirements) are highlighted in **bold** for clear identification (excluding headings in bold).
- 1.4. Whilst the Portfolio is not comprehensive on all matters, it will hopefully prove to be a useful source of general information during the Mayor's year of Office. The Portfolio will be subject to periodic updating.
- 1.5. It is important point that this portfolio offers guidelines i.e. if a Mayor chooses not to have a photo in the Chambers, they would not be breaching Town Council policy. It is vital that the status of the guidance in the document remains flexible enough to cater for the change in Mayor each year and therefore the change in personalities, aims, behaviours, approaches to situations, personal wishes etc. The above said, it is important that civic protocols and traditions should be upheld. If there is any doubt as to what this refers to, please contact the Civic Office for confirmation.

2. Overview of the Mayor's Role

- 2.1. The role of the Mayor of Seaford is a wide ranging and important one, as it carries the responsibility of ensuring an effective, open and legal administration of the town's affairs and governance.
- 2.2. It encompasses both civic and procedural responsibilities and includes fostering a full and open involvement with the community and achieves this by working closely and in collaboration with the Town Clerk, council officers and fellow councillors.

- 2.3.** The Mayor represents the town in an official capacity and most importantly acts as a link between the council and its residents and looks to achieve this by exploring ways of fostering open dialogue on local issues and encouraging community involvement in council plans and initiatives.

3. The Mayor's Role - guidance on Roles, Duties and Responsibilities

- 3.1.** As a Town Council, Seaford Town Council's Chair is entitled to the title of Mayor of Seaford.
- 3.2.** The Mayor is the public face and Chair of the Council and as such is the First Citizen of the Town of Seaford. The Mayor is the ambassador of the Town and can help in the promotion of the Town Council's objectives in the local community. In turn, the position of Mayor will often be held in the highest regard within the town and [will](#) see the Mayor invited to carry out a full range of duties on their behalf and throughout the Town.
- 3.3.** As Chair of the Town Council, the Mayor seeks to enable and encourage Councillors to discharge their elected roles to the best of their ability. Co-operation and collaboration in the Council Chamber enables good decision making on policy and strategy for Seaford Town Council and enhances the reputation of the Town Council and its elected Councillors in the town.
- 3.4. Information concerning Roles and Duties**
- 3.4.1. Role**
- a)** The Chair of the Town Council, as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s15, is known at Seaford Town Council as the Mayor of Seaford.
 - b)** To be the 'face' of the Town Council, acting as the Town Council's figurehead.
 - c)** To undertake ceremonial actions such as opening new Town Council facilities.
 - d)** To represent the Town Council at community and civic engagements, outside organisations, events, and meetings.
 - e) To chair Full Council meetings and the Annual Parish Meeting (Town Forum).**

3.4.2. Duties

- a) To sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office immediately after election as Mayor (Local Government Act 1972 s83(1)).
- b) To use the casting vote, in addition to the vote given, in the event of a tied vote when the Town Council is electing the Mayor of Seaford (Local Government Act 1972 s15(3)).
- c) (If Chair of particular Full Council meeting where AGAR is considered) to sign the Town Council's Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015).

3.5. Meeting Responsibilities

- a) The Mayor and Deputy [Mayor](#) will undertake chairpersonship training as soon as elected to office. It should be noted that if the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) were to decide to attend any Committee of the Town Council, they do so in an ex-officio capacity, and in communication with the relevant Chair of Committee. Where they are appointed to a Committee, they are appointed as a Councillor not as Mayor/Deputy Mayor.
- b) The Mayor/Deputy Mayor will have no automatic right to attend a meeting of a non-Standing Committee; that being the Disciplinary/Grievance Sub-Committee or Appeals Committee unless they are appointed as a member of that Committee (again the appointment would be as a Councillor not as Mayor/Deputy Mayor).
- c) To manage Full Council meetings including public participation, ensuring any decisions are relevant to specified items on the published agenda.
- d) To convene Extraordinary Meetings of the Town Council, in collaboration with the Chair of the relevant Committee and Town Clerk, as necessary.
- e) To ensure Full Council meetings are introduced to attendees, following the Town Council's meeting guidance.
- f) In the event of a guest speaker(s) attending a Full Council meeting or the Town Forum, to make the speaker(s) feel welcome and to facilitate questions.
- g) To move meetings through the agenda, complying with Standing Orders.

- h) To use the casting vote, in the event of a tied vote. **This becomes a statutory requirement if the tied vote is on the election of a new Mayor.**
- i) To agree draft minutes of Full Council meetings prior to them being published.
- j) To communicate regularly with the Town Clerk to discuss Full Council meeting agendas to support meeting preparation.
- k) To attend and take part in monthly meetings of the Committee Chairs Management Group (CCMG), complying with the adopted CCMG policy.

3.6. **Members and Officers**

- a) To be a source of support and encouragement to the Town Clerk in their duties and responsibilities and to cooperate with the Town Clerk in representing the Town Council to the town and its organisations.
- b) **To receive a councillor's resignation and notify the Town Clerk.**
- c) To work closely with the Deputy Mayor to ensure the Deputy Mayor is engaged and kept informed of civic activity, and so to ensure continuity should it be necessary for the Deputy Mayor to deputise in the Mayor's absence.
- d) To act, alongside members of CCMG, as a conduit between councillors and officers in order to encourage and facilitate an effective and positive working environment.
- e) To encourage councillors, alongside members of CCMG, to work in friendly and cooperative ways for the good of the town and to enhance the reputation of the Town Council in the town.
- f) To be consulted and be involved where necessary, alongside the Chair of CCMG and Chair of Personnel (by the advice of the Monitoring Officer), on any matters regarding member conduct.

3.7. **Specified within Town Council Policy:**

- a) To familiarise themselves with the Mayor's Portfolio and the traditions within, such as allowing other Mayors to wear their chains within the town, nominating a charitable cause to support, attending Town Council events to carry out key functions and civic events to be held during their year in office.

- b)** To be aware of and observe the Town Council's Standing Orders.
- c)** To manage public participation at Full Council meetings, in accordance with the Town Council's Public Participation Policy.
- d)** To be involved in the Town Council's tender selection process, if required, in accordance with the Town Council's Financial Regulations.

3.8. General

- a)** To receive support from the Civic Office to professionally manage the Mayor of Seaford's social media/digital communications (see Section 10.6 on Social media).
- b)** To be available to the Town Clerk, Senior Officers and Councillors for discussions and meetings during the year.
- c)** To 'lead by example' as a councillor by complying with the Code of Conduct and the Town Council's Civility and Respect Pledge, to assist with the promotion of best practise and engage and encourage and support fellow councillors in doing the same.
- d)** The Mayor, when performing official duties, is the visible presence of the Town Council. It is important that while being seen as warm and friendly, the office of Mayor is upheld with dignity, avoiding demeaning the role or acting in a way that could be criticised.
- e)** On occasion, the Mayor may be invited to out of town engagements. Invites to events within Seaford will usually have priority over out of town events.
- f)** To understand and respect that the position of Mayor has no delegated powers or any powers to act on or make decisions on behalf of the Town Council.

4. Civic Officer Role

- 4.1.** Aims to enable the Mayor to perform well in the duties of the Office, the Civic Officers provide the following support:

- a)** Acting as Secretary to the Mayor of Seaford and Deputy Mayor;
- b)** At the start of their term of office, the Mayor and Civic Officers will discuss their preferred working methods and approaches and, where the Civic Officers are concerns, in particular, the availability for undertaking civic

office tasks. This will help ensure clear expectations from the start of office and a mutually respectful approach to the year ahead.

- c) Mayors will be encouraged to give thought early in their term of office as to whether they may wish to hold additional events throughout the year and then discuss this with the Civic Office.
- d) Consideration should be given as early as possible to enable assessment of civic officer capacity to support ideas/events, as well as any health and safety, financial or liability implications this may hold for the Town Council.
- e) Dealing with function invites for the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) and preparations for functions being attended, ensuring the Mayor's diary is kept up to date.
- f) All invitations must come through the Civic Office; this ensures that the Mayor's diary can be kept up to date. The Mayor should notify the Civic Officer of any invitations received, so they can respond directly. If the Mayor is able to attend an engagement, there is a specific Mayoral Engagements Form which will be sent to the organiser of the event; this helps to collect all information needed for the Mayor/Deputy Mayor's attendance.
- g) For supporting Mayoral events throughout the Municipal Year such as the Mayor's Civic Service/reception, Carol Service and other events that individual Mayors wish to hold during their term in the Mayoral office.
- h) Assisting the Mayor with preparations for attendance at other Town Council events such as Remembrance Day, Armed Forces Day and Sussex Day; this will include helping with speeches or special arrangements, where required.
- i) Enabling Civic Protocol to be met and upheld.
- j) Liaising with and promoting the Mayor's chosen charities.
- k) Providing quarterly Mayor's Allowance updates to help plan the Mayoral functions throughout the year in office.

5. Election of Mayor

- 5.1. Sections 15 & 34 of Local Government Act 1972 require local Councils to elect a Mayor (from members of the Council) as the first business to be transacted at the Annual Council meeting.** Within Seaford Town Council it has been agreed that to be eligible to stand for election of Mayor, the member

of the Town Council is required to have at least one year's experience of being a Town Council member, except for in the unusual event that at election all 20 members of the Town Council are new. Full Council may however of course overturn this requirement if it deems appropriate to do so.

- 5.2. The person presiding at the Annual Council meeting must give a casting vote in the event of any equality of votes for the election of the new Mayor.**
- 5.3.** In addition to the Declaration of Acceptance to Office as a Councillor of Seaford Town Council, at the meeting at which the Mayor is elected he/she **must sign a Declaration of Acceptance to the Office of Mayor of Seaford**, and sign for care of the Mayoral Chains.
- 5.4.** The term of office will be set at one year only, unless Full Council approves otherwise. However, a Mayor can choose to re-stand as the Mayor the following Municipal Year if they so wish.
- 5.5.** Unless they have resigned or been disqualified, the outgoing Mayor continues in the post until their successor has been chosen and made a valid declaration of office.
- 5.6. The outgoing Mayor will, if present, preside at the meeting to elect their successor. If the outgoing Mayor is not present, the Deputy Mayor shall preside at the meeting to elect the successor. If neither the outgoing Mayor or Deputy Mayor are present, the members present shall elect another member of the Town Council to preside.**
- 5.7.** The Mayor may appoint support such as a Mayoresses/Mayor's Consort to accompany and assist at engagements. In the event of the Mayoress/Consort being unable to attend an engagement with the Mayor, the Mayor may choose an Escort to accompany them. It is important that the Civic Officer is informed of the Escort's planned attendance so the organisers can be informed in advance.
- 5.8.** The Mayor may also wish to appoint a Chaplain or other religious support, to support civic events such as the Mayor's Civic Service and Carol Service as appropriate. They may also attend before Full Council meetings to allow for prayers/reflection at an appropriate time before the meeting opens

- 5.9.** After the new Mayor has been elected, the Civic Office will make arrangements for an official photograph to be taken and framed, within an appropriate time frame, for display within the Council Chamber.
- 5.10.** It is fairly common that invites to potential mayoral engagements are received for the period immediately following the election of the Mayor. The Civic Office will therefore liaise with the new Mayor as soon as possible after election to discuss attendance at any immediately upcoming engagements.

6. Overview of Deputy Mayor Role

- 6.1.** The role of Deputy Mayor will often vary depending on holder of office and the preferences of the Mayor.
- 6.2.** The Deputy Mayor may act specifically as a substitute to the Mayor i.e. only usually performing in their role when standing in for the Mayor in their absence, whether this be with charring meetings or attending engagements.
- 6.3.** Alternatively, the Deputy Mayor may take on a more proactive and involved role, which sees more of a civic partnership with the Mayor. This may involve attending engagements together and supporting the Mayor in the day-to-day activities they undertake. A Deputy Mayor of this nature would not usually negate the need for a Mayoress or Mayor's Consort, unless the Mayor and Deputy Mayor agreed this to be the case.
- 6.4.** The latter of the above approaches is somewhat modernised compared to strict civic tradition and as such, may not be the approach that is welcomed by all Mayors.
It is important that civic tradition is still honoured. Below are some examples;
- 6.5.** If a partnership approach is adopted and the Mayor receives an invite to an engagement that does not specify being extended to the Deputy Mayor too (the Town Council's mayoral engagement form asks this question specifically) then the Deputy Mayor will not be able to attend unless express permission is sought from the engagement organisers.
- 6.6.** Where the Deputy Mayor is attending in the absence of the Mayor, they may choose a Deputy Mayoress/Deputy Mayor's Consort/Escort to accompany them. Where the Deputy Mayor is attending an engagement in addition to the Mayor, they should not bring a companion unless specifically invited to do so.

- 6.7.** The Civic Office will be able to advise on any situations where guidance is required as to correct civic protocol.

7. The Deputy Mayor's Role - guidance on Roles, Duties and Responsibilities

7.1. Role

- a) To deputise the Mayor of Seaford's role (above).

7.2. Duties

- a) To sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office immediately after election as Deputy Mayor (Local Government Act 1972 s83(1)).
- b) If chairing the Annual Meeting of the Town Council in the Mayor of Seaford's absence, to use the casting vote, in addition to the vote given, in the event of a tied vote when the Town Council is electing the Mayor of Seaford (Local Government Act 1972 s15(3)).
- c) (If Chair of particular Full Council meeting where AGAR is considered) to sign the Town Council's Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015).

7.3. Responsibilities

- a) To chair Full Council meetings in the absence of the Mayor of Seaford, encompassing the Mayor of Seaford's responsibilities in Section 3 above.
- b) To familiarise themselves with the Mayor's Portfolio in order to deputise for the Mayor of Seaford at civic engagements and Town Council events as and when required.
- c) To work closely with the Mayor of Seaford to be informed of civic activity, and to ensure continuity should it be necessary for the Deputy Mayor to deputise in the Mayor's absence.

8. Youth Ambassador Board

- 8.1.** In 2024, Seaford Town Council resolved to develop the previous roles it has of Young and Deputy Young Mayor if Seaford, to create a new, enhanced opportunity for younger people via a Youth Ambassador Board.
- 8.2.** The formation and work of the Youth Ambassador Board is yet to commence. Once implemented, the Civic Office will suggest additions to the Mayor's Portfolio as appropriate.

9. Mayor's Allowance

- 9.1.** Section 15(5) of LGA 1972 enables a Mayor to be granted an allowance to meet the expenses of their office, which is set by the Town Council when adopting the Town Council budget.
- 9.2.** The Town Council recognises the need for a Mayor's Allowance to deal with the expectations of the office in connection with travel, booking tickets to civic engagement events, hiring accommodation for Mayor's events, and refreshment costs for hosting and attending civic engagement.
- 9.3.** Should there be any costs associated with printing, if printing is done in-house costs are covered by the Town Council's photocopier and stationery budget, should printing be out-sourced the cost is covered by the Mayor's Allowance.
- 9.4.** All expenditure is managed and recorded by the Civic Office and payments managed in accordance with Town Council financial policies. It is important that the purpose to which the allowance is put can withstand public scrutiny.
- 9.5.** The Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) is not authorised to commit the Town Council to expenditure, whether that be in the form of goods or services. All orders must be made and managed by the Civic Office.
- 9.6.** The Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in their absence) is entitled to claim travel expenses in line with the Town Council's Members Allowance Policy.
- 9.7.** Any underspends of the Mayor's allowance will go back into the Town Council's funds.

10. Mayoral Protocol

10.1 Mayor's Title:

- a)** The full title of the Mayor is: The Mayor of Seaford.
- b)** Depending on the wishes of the individual mayor, they may be Addressed as: Dear Mr. Mayor or Dear Madam Mayor or Mayor. In the event of uncertainty, 'Mayor' can be used.

10.2 Chains of Office:

- a)** There are three chains of office under the Town Council's ownership:
 - Mayor's Chain of Office

- Mayoresses/Mayor's Consort's Chain of Office
- Deputy Mayor's Chain of Office
- b) When removed from its neck ribbon, the Mayor's Chain of Office is referred to as the Badge of Office.
- c) The Chains (or Badge) of Office should only be worn when the above individuals are undertaking official duties in their official capacity.
- d) The Deputy Mayor will wear their Chain of Office whilst deputising for the Mayor; and can also wear their Chain of Office in the presence of the Mayor.
- e) An Escort cannot wear the Mayoresses/Mayor's Consort's Chain of Office; an Escort will not have a chain or badge to wear.
- f) The Chains (or Badge) of Office may be worn where an official invitation has been received for events within the Town where the Mayor and Town Council Office considers that those present would consider it appropriate to mark the occasion.
- g) When attending an event within another Mayor's boundary, that other Mayor's permission must be given for the wearing of the Chain and worn when invited to do so. If this permission is not forthcoming, the Chain of Office cannot be worn, nor Badge of Office.
- h) The Mayor, Mayoress/Mayor's Consort and Deputy Mayor are responsible for their Chains respectively during their term of Office. It is insured by the Town Council, but the individual must ensure that it is kept safely and securely in a protective case so that it does not get damaged and should only be worn for official duties organised through the Town Council's Civic Officers. It must not be left unattended in a public place (including in a vehicle) and must be kept in their personal possession.
- i) Outgoing Mayors will be presented with a 'Former Mayor's Badge' (a replica link from the chain), on completion of a full term of office, unless they are re-elected as Mayor or have previously received a Former Mayor's Badge. For outgoing mayors that have previously received a Former Mayor's Badge, their leaving of office shall be marked with a framed certificate.

10.3. Dress Code:

- a) The Mayor and Deputy Mayor should look smart and well-groomed and appropriately dressed at all engagements.

10.4. Mayor's Community Coat:

- a) During the 2024-2025 municipal year, the Mayor worked with the local community to develop a patchwork coat representing many community and voluntary organisations across Seaford. The Coat was developed in celebration of Seaford Town Council's 25th anniversary.
- b) Although the coat is not recognised as a traditional robe of office, the coat can be worn (at the Mayor's discretion) to support community activities such as Seaford Christmas Magic and the Town Forum.
- c) The Mayor's Community Coat is stored at the Town Council offices, on display in the Council Chamber.

10.5. Political Activities:

- a) The Mayor's role is apolitical; [and as such](#) political points should not be made. The Mayor should not attend any political gatherings in their capacity as Mayor and no reference to politics should be made during conversation or during a speech.

10.6. Promotion of the Town Council:

- a) The Mayor cannot canvass, leaflet or conduct electioneering whilst in the capacity of Mayor, but may do so in their capacity as councillor.
- b) The office of Mayor is a valuable avenue through which to improve ties with the local community and the Mayor has a key role in acting as ambassador, promoting the Town to the wider community.

This may take a number of forms, including attending events arranged by other organisations as the Town Council's official representative; leading in the organisation of and hosting events that fundraise, recognise achievement and/or service by members of the community or to help in achieving a closer relationship or understanding with organisations in the town.

- c) When invited to attend outside organisation events or meetings, this is done so in capacity of Mayor. It should be noted that this is separate to the Town Council's Representation on Outside Bodies Policy.
- d) The Mayor is encouraged to enable fundraising for the Mayor's chosen charities and also lead in the organisation of appropriate fundraising events such as the Mayor's Quiz, with the support of the Civic Office.

10.7. Website / Social Media:

- a) The Civic Office will update the Mayor's section of the website.
- b) The Mayor will be supported to manage the Mayor's Facebook page (linked to the Seaford Town Council page), if they wish. Posting should be non-political. Posts should highlight the Mayoral Engagements hosted and attended, and the Mayoral Charity/Charities. The Mayor's page – as with all Seaford Town Council pages, will be from time to time monitored by officers to ensure posts and comments are appropriate.
- c) The Mayor can decide whether or not access to the Mayor's Facebook page is given to the Mayoress/Mayor's Consort and/or Deputy Mayor, to enable sharing of the responsibility of updating this page.

10.8. Gifts:

- a) When the Mayor or Deputy Mayor attends an event to which they have been invited they may find they are presented with a token of appreciation – often in the form of a bouquet of flowers. It is important to remember that, under the Code of Conduct, any such gifts over a value of £25 must be reported to the Town Council Office in writing, within 28 days of receipt.
- b) The Mayor/Deputy Mayor should familiarise themselves with the Council's Gifts & Hospitality Policy which provides useful examples of the sorts of gifts that are considered to be under the value of £25.
- c) There may be occasions when the Mayor will need to present a civic gift. Any such gifts will be paid for out of the Mayor's Allowance.

11. Mayor's Charities:

- 11.1. If the Mayor decides they wish to support a charity* and/or local projects during their term of office, they should ensure that the charity is non-political

and non-discriminatory and should benefit residents of the Town. Monies must not be donated to profit making businesses established for that purpose.

** A Mayor may choose more than one charity to raise funds for concurrently; in this instance both/all charities must be aware of this fact.*

- 11.2.** All monies raised or donated will be banked at Seaford Town Council and coded to the Mayor's Charity being presented to the charity at the end of the Municipal Year usually at the Town Forum.
- 11.3.** Before confirming their chosen charity/project, the Mayor must have had a discussion with the Town Council's Civic Officers about their preferences and agree a process for establishing the representation.
- 11.4.** Please also note that the Mayor will be encouraged to work alongside local charities to help boost their own fundraising efforts or support their priorities e.g. recruiting more volunteers.

See guidance notes in the appendix regarding charity pot collections.

12. Mayor's Festive Cards

- 12.1.** It is usual practice for the Mayor to issue festive cards each year. Many Mayors will choose to send Christmas cards, although individual Mayors may decide whether to send cards relating to another festival either in addition or instead of Christmas cards.
- 12.2.** The Mayor's festive cards can be either electronic, or printed. If printed in-house, the cost is covered by the Town Council's photocopier and stationery budgets. If printing is outsourced, there will be a cost which would be covered by the Mayor's Allowance.
- 12.3.** The Mayor should discuss with Civic Officers early in the mayoral term what festive cards they anticipate wanting to send, and how the card maybe developed e.g. a children's or local artist competition, so officers can ensure to apportion resources and advise accordingly.
- 12.4.** The Civic Office will liaise with the Mayor in the production and distribution of any Mayor's festive cards. This is sent to the selected individuals on the civic list and others as agreed by the Mayor.

13. Mayor's Awards

- 13.1.** Each year the Mayor will be asked to give thought to the civic awards; whether they will assign categories, how many they will award and, if necessary, the process for nominations. The Civic Officers will give guidance and support with either approach. Further details are available within the Town Council's Civic Awards Policy.
- 13.2.** A budget is agreed by the Town Council annually for Civic Awards, separate from the Mayor's Allowance.
- 13.3.** Nominations for awardees must reflect the Town Council's Code of Conduct and practices; awardees based solely on political or religious roles, for example, will therefore not be allowed unless a benefit to the community also outside of their 'group' can be evidenced.
- 13.4.** The Civic Awards will usually be presented at the Annual Town Forum; usually held in April/May each year.
- 13.5.** The Mayor may also consider presenting Highly Commended Certificates as appropriate during their mayoral year.

14. Civic events

14.1. Civic Service/Reception:

- a)** It is usual procedure for the Mayor to have a Civic Service/Reception around the start of their Mayoral year.
- b)** In previous years this has taken the form of a civic service reflecting religious or civic importance. However, the specifics of the event are the choice of the Mayor but must be kept within the agreed budget, must be held within the parish of Seaford and must be a suitable civic occasion inviting local and regional civic dignitaries. The Mayor must discuss and agree the proposals with the Town Council's Civic Officers so the full implications of organising and arranging the event are clear and can be monitored.

14.2. Sussex Day:

- a)** Sussex Day is celebrated officially on 16th June annually. The Civic Office will arrange a small ceremony to commemorate the day.

- b)** The ceremony is usually held at the Martello Tower on the seafront. It is led by the Town Crier and the Mayor.
- c)** Councillors and members of the public are invited to witness the raising of the Sussex Day flag at 12 noon by the Mayor and hear the proclamation given by the Town Crier. They will then sing along to a rendition of “Sussex by the Sea” if they wish to take part.

14.3 Remembrance Sunday:

- a)** This is an event that is organised by the Royal British Legion and Seaford Town Council, being held on the Sunday nearest the 11th November at Seaford War Memorial and has been followed in previous years by a service at St Leonard’s Church.
- b)** The Mayor will lay a wreath at the War Memorial. The Civic Office orders these from the appointed person at the Royal British Legion.

14.4 Commonwealth Remembrance:

- a)** Annually on the Tuesday after Remembrance Sunday, the Royal Society of St. George facilitates a Commonwealth Remembrance Service. The service is held at the Commonwealth War Memorial in Seaford Cemetery and the Mayor will be invited to attend. Dignitaries from those Commonwealth (Canadian and West Indian) and Irish states whose soldiers from World War I are at rest in the cemetery are also in attendance.
- b)** The Mayor will lay a wreath at the Commonwealth War Memorial. The Civic Office orders these from the appointed person at the Royal British Legion.
- c)** The Royal Society of St. George will advise each year with details of any planned gathering after the service.

14.5 Seaford Christmas Magic

- a)** The Town Council has jointly delivered this event with Seaford Traders Group, Seaford Street Market and the Seaford Chamber of Commerce, and contracting Seaford Contemporary Illustrators and Printmakers (SCIP) to develop lanterns for the Lantern Parade and undertake

engagement with the community in advance of the event. This collaborative working completely underpins this event.

- b)** The Town Council holds regular meetings with relevant partners throughout the year in preparation for Seaford Christmas Magic. Officers delivering Seaford Christmas Magic will invite the Mayor and Civic Officers along once needed to discuss the Mayor's involvement, such as:
- Taking part in lantern making events in the lead up to the event
 - Opening the Event
 - Window Display judging in conjunction with the Seaford Chamber of Commerce
 - Switching on the Christmas Lights

14.6 Mayor's Carol Service:

- a)** A Mayor may choose to hold a carol service, which is usually arranged in early December. In previous years, mayors have held the service in a religious building with the support of their Mayor's Chaplain. However, a mayor may choose to arrange a non-religious service should they wish to.
- b)** A retiring collection is usually donated to the Mayor's Charity. Local dignitaries such as the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex and High Sheriff for Sussex can be invited, and refreshments are usually provided after the service, the cost of which is covered by the Mayor's Allowance.
- c)** In past years, the Town Council has run a gift giving campaign in partnership with Family Support Work, a local organisation which collects Christmas gifts and distributes to local families in need. The Mayor's Carol Service has been a popular gift drop-off opportunity and, working with the Mayor, the Civic Office can make arrangements for this through communications.

14.7 Town Forum & Mayor's Awards

- a)** This is a meeting of the residents of the town of Seaford usually held in April/May, and it is important to understand that this is *not* a Council meeting. Instead, this is a meeting of the people of Seaford that the Town Council facilitates and the Mayor would preside at when in attendance.

b) The primary purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for public questions to discuss matters affecting the town. Councillors attend the meeting as the public and the meeting would usually also provide the opportunity for local organisations who have received Town Council grants to report directly to the people of Seaford.

c) This is where the Mayor would present any Civic Awards as mentioned previously in section 13.

15. Seaford Mace:

- 15.1** Attached to this policy as Appendix 2 is a short guide regarding the Seaford mace, its history and required protocol.
- 15.2** The Town Council thanks the Serjeant at Mace, Peter White, for providing this guidance.

Mayor's Portfolio Appendix 1**Seaford Town Council****Collection Pot Guidelines****(based on information from the Fundraising Regulator)****Collecting Money or other property**

At the beginning of the Mayor's Municipal Year, the Mayor may choose to nominate a charity or charities. Once the charity has been informed that they have been nominated, the Mayor needs to ask for a Certificate (letter) of Authority giving the Mayor permission to collect on their behalf if the mayor wishes to carry out any direct fundraising. If this is the case, the guidance below should be followed

Charity Pots – The labelling needs to have the charity's;

- Logos (permission must be sought to use any images or logos from the people or organisation who holds the rights),
- Name,
- Charity number, and
- Address where 'Registered in England'.

If, there are two charities it needs to be clear how the funds are going to be split, e.g. 50/50.

Pots left in commercial properties –

Each pot is numbered underneath. A spreadsheet record is kept of each pot including

- The date left at the premises,
- Who it was left with i.e. the manager,
- The date it was collected back in, and by whom
- Total amount collected

Ideally, they should be chained, and the Town Council hold the key to the lock. If not possible it should be tied to something secure.

The Mayor needs a letter of authority to collect the pots (and should wear their STC name badge when collecting).

General notes re cash collected

- Unsecured cash must not be left unattended i.e. pots must be secured.
- Charity pots must be brought into the Finance Office at Seaford Town Council to be counted by a Finance Officer.
- It must be stored in a secure place if not banked immediately
- The full amount must be given to the charity(s) or split in the way advertised if more than one charity. No deductions from the cash that you receive must be taken.
- The money will be paid into the Seaford Town Council account and coded to 'The Mayor's Charity Funds' for distribution at the end of the municipal year.

Events organised by others to raise money for the Mayor's Charities (e.g. Mad Fundraising March)

In any advertising by a 3rd party, it must state they are raising funds in support of the Mayor's Charities and the municipal year' e.g. 'In support of the Mayor's Charities 2020/2021'.

Reference:

<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code/specific-fundraising-methods/collecting-money-or-other-property>

For advice on running a raffle/tombola or sweepstake

See the Gambling Commission – Running a Lottery

www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

Mayor's Portfolio Appendix 2

The Seaford Town Mayor and the Seaford Mace: Protocol

The Mace represents the Civic Authority delegated to the Mayor as Chair of the Town Council. This responsibility is delegated to the Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's unavoidable absence.

The Seaford Mace was presented in the reign of Elizabeth I, whose Arms it bears on the coronet c.1580. It is silver but pre-dates hallmarking and is approximately 15.5" long.

- The Mace is by custom carried before the Mayor by the Serjeant at Mace at official functions. Such functions may include, Announcement of Royal Accessions, visits by the Lord Lieutenant or High Sheriff, at Mayor-making, Civic Services, other civic functions, church or military Ceremonies, Annual Council Meeting, Town Forum, and Ceremonies involving groups of Mayors and other civic dignitaries.
- The Mace is by custom, laid before the Mayor for regular and extraordinary meetings of the Full Council: on its cradle, with the coronet facing to the right of the Mayor (when facing the room).
- Meetings of the Full Council may take place without the Mace in an emergency, in alternative premises, or *in extremis*.
- The Mace may be exhibited in Council premises; or in schools, colleges and other public premises for educational purposes.
- When rested in a Church, the Coronet should face the altar / Cross / platform; OR be vertical, coronet uppermost.
- When the Mace is carried before the Mayor, it should be held by a gloved hand, upright or on the right shoulder coronet uppermost of the Serjeant at Mace or a Council Officer (NOT a Town Councillor). In the presence of the Sovereign the position is reversed (coronet downwards) as the authority then rests in the person of the Sovereign and not in the Mace.

- In the event of announcements / ceremonies following the death of persons within the 'National and Local Mourning Procedure' the top (coronet) of the Mace should be draped in a black cloth or have a black ribbon affixed.

The Mace may NOT be used for purposes of commercial advertising, entertainment or party-political advantage.

Care of the Mace: should include secure storage (especially if exhibited), sufficient insurance, cleaning with warm soapy water and not polishes, and handling / carriage with soft cloth or gloved hands.

If the Mace falls into disuse through changes in custom and practice the representatives of the Sovereign should be consulted about its removal to a suitable alternative use.

Mayor's Portfolio Appendix 3

Protocol with Key Dignitaries

1) THE LORD LIEUTENANT

1.1 The Sovereign's Representative

The Lord Lieutenant is the Sovereign's representative within the County of East Sussex. They take precedence at all official events, which they attend within the County of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove.

1.2 How To Address The Lord Lieutenant

The Civic Office can provide details of the current Lord Lieutenant. The correct mode of address when speaking directly to a Lord Lieutenant is 'Lord Lieutenant'. They can also be addressed by use of their surname e.g. 'Mr/Mrs Smith', or simply 'Sir/Madam'.

When speaking about or referring to the Lord Lieutenant the usual form of address is 'The Lord Lieutenant', e.g. 'We are delighted to have the Lord Lieutenant (and Consort Name) with us this evening'.

When a formal speech is made by the person presiding over the event they begin, 'My Lord Lieutenant' followed by 'distinguished guests', (by name or appointment if appropriate) 'ladies and gentlemen...'

1.3 The Vice Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants

When the Lord Lieutenant is represented by the Vice Lord Lieutenant or a Deputy Lieutenant, they should be accorded the same protocol as for the Lord Lieutenant. Please also note that Deputy Lieutenants should not be referred to as Deputy Lord Lieutenant but simply as Deputy Lieutenant.

1.4 Arrival of the Lord Lieutenant at a Mayor of Seaford Event

The Lord Lieutenant will always aim to arrive exactly at the time scheduled, which should be slightly later than for other invited guests (this will be arranged by the Civic Office). It is usual for the Lord Lieutenant to be received at the entrance of the venue by the Mayor of Seaford (or Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence) and escorted by

the Mayor of Seaford or another designated person until such time as he leaves the venue. Guests should be asked to rise to receive them in assembled company.

1.5 Seating at a Mayor of Seaford Event

Regardless of whether or not there is a special guest speaker at the event, where seated at table, the Lord Lieutenant is always seated on the immediate right hand of the Mayor of Seaford (or Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence).

1.6 Departure from a Mayor of Seaford Event

The Lord Lieutenant will usually be the first person to leave a formal engagement and on departure they should be escorted from the premises by the Mayor of Seaford (or Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's Absence). Their departure should be announced by calling the assembled guests to order and then announcing that the Lord Lieutenant is about to depart.

1.7 The Mayor of Seaford hosted Church Services

Arrangements are to be made by the Civic Office for the Lord Lieutenant to be met at the entrance to the Church and escorted to the front pew on the North side of the Church, or to a high chair if available, with these to be located in front of the first line of pews. Provision will also be made for the Lord Lieutenant's spouse consort. The congregation should be invited to rise at the Lord Lieutenant's entry and upon their departure. The Lord Lieutenant should enter the church immediately before the clergy and withdraw immediately after, with arrangements being made for the Lord Lieutenant to be escorted to and from their seat.

2) THE HIGH SHERIFF

2.1 The Sovereign's Representative

The chief representative of the Sovereign in the County is the Lord-Lieutenant. The High Sheriff is also appointed by the Monarch, normally for a period of one year, usually commencing the year of office in March. They take precedence within the County of East Sussex over all but the Lord-Lieutenant (or a Deputy if a Deputy Lord Lieutenant attends in place of the Lord-Lieutenant). The High Sheriff cedes

precedence as a matter of etiquette to the Mayor of a town in which an event is taking place.

2.2 How to Address The High Sheriff

The Civic Office can provide details of the current High Sheriff. The correct mode of address when speaking directly to the High Sheriff is 'High Sheriff'. They may be addressed by their name as an alternative. When introducing the High Sheriff, they again should be referred to by that title, e.g., 'We are delighted to have the High Sheriff, (name) with us'.

When a formal introduction or speech is made, the Lord-Lieutenant again takes precedence but when he is not present or a Deputy not present then the High Sheriff is first referred to.

2.3 Arrival of High Sheriff at a Mayor of Seaford Event

The High Sheriff will endeavour to arrive precisely as requested. The Civic Office will arrange to have someone there to greet them. When the Lord-Lieutenant (or a Deputy representing them) is also invited, the High Sheriff will normally arrive before the Lord-Lieutenant or their representative as the protocol is that the Lord-Lieutenant arrives last and leaves first.

2.4 Seating at a Mayor of Seaford Event

After the High Sheriff is greeted, as arranged by the Civic Office, it is customary to have reserved seating for the High Sheriff and consort and to be escorted to their seats on arrival.

2.5 Departure from a Mayor of Seaford Event

The High Sheriff will leave when appropriate but not before the Lord-Lieutenant or their representative if he is present. It is customary for someone to escort the High Sheriff from the venue and this will be arranged by the Civic Office.

2.6 The Mayor of Seaford hosted Church Services

The High Sheriff will leave when appropriate but not before the Lord-Lieutenant or their representative if they are present. It is customary for someone to escort the High Sheriff from the venue and this will be arranged by the Civic Office.



Report No:	204/24
Agenda Item No:	18
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Committee Chairs' Management Group Policy Review
By:	Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To present a review of the Committee Chairs' Management Group Policy

Actions

Full Council is advised:

1. To consider the contents of the report.
2. To consider the report from the 2024 - 2025 Mayor of Seaford at Appendix A.
3. To consider the table of recommended amendments to the CCMG Policy at Appendix B, including those which instigate change in other Town Council policy.
4. To consider the revised CCMG Policy at Appendix C.

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended:

1. To agree the amendments to the CCMG Policy as presented in Appendix B.
2. To instruct officers to reflect the amendments above which affect other Town Council policies, in the upcoming reviews.
3. To adopt the revised CCMG Policy.

1. Information

- 1.1 The Committee Chair's Management Group (CCMG) Policy sets out the terms of reference for the CCMG.

- 1.2 CCMG meetings are non-statutory meetings, and do not form part of the formal Town Council meeting arrangements.
- 1.3 The CCMG's main purpose is to hold regular meetings between Committee Chairs and the Town Clerk in order to review together how the Town Council's plans, expectations and services are meeting requirements.
- 1.4 The CCMG Policy was last reviewed in 2021 and scheduled for review during the 2024 - 2025 municipal year.
- 1.5 The review of the CCMG Policy follows on from the review of the Mayor's Portfolio due to recommended amendments which instigate a need for amendments in the CCMG Policy.
- 1.6 Following on from the review of the Mayor's Portfolio in the above agenda item, which proposed amendments to the CCMG Policy, this report sets out the recommended amendments and revised CCMG Policy for Full Council consideration.

2. CCMG Policy Review

- 2.1 The review of the CCMG Policy was carried out as part of the two-part process used for the Mayor's Portfolio review:
 - (a) An informal reflection exercise with town councillors, led by the 2024-2025 Mayor of Seaford, and
 - (b) A review by Civic Officers.
- 2.2 The details of the informal reflection exercise with town councillors can be found in the Mayor's Report attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3 The recommended amendments to the CCMG Policy, as a result of the informal reflection exercise, were then shared with and considered by Civic Officers.
- 2.4 Civic Officers have then amended the CCMG Policy, in collaboration with the 2024 - 2025 Mayor of Seaford, and the table of recommended amendments can be found at Appendix B.
- 2.5 The 'clean' amended version of the CCMG Policy can be found at Appendix C and the current (2021) version of the CCMG Policy can be found on the [Policies page](#) of the Town Council website.
- 2.6 Full Council is invited to consider the recommended amendments and adopt the revised CCMG Policy.

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 Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk.

204-24 Appendix A

2024-2025 Mayor of Seaford's Report on the CCMG Policy Review:

This report has been prepared by the Mayor, Councillor Sally Markwell, with support from the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Maggie Wearmouth and Chair of Personnel, Cllr Olivia Honeyman.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Committee Chairs Management Group Policy was previously updated on 20th May 2021.

1.2 The main purpose of this group “To hold regular meetings between Committee Chairs and the Town Clerk to review together how the Town Council’s plans, expectations and services are meeting documented requirements”.

1.3 The group has up until now selected a chair for this meeting at each meeting.

1.4 The Chair of CCMG currently holds no other role other than to Chair this meeting.

2. Background Information

2.1 Preparations for a review of the Mayor’s Portfolio was undertaken at an informal meeting of Councillors on 26th February 2025. There were nine attendees, involving two previous Mayors, the Deputy Mayor and one Deputy Mayor, with representatives across all political parties and two contributions from those unable to attend that contributed to the discussions.

2.2 To be elected as the town’s first citizen is considered an honour and a privilege and a role one should not take up lightly, but with a commitment and determination to serve Seaford’s residents to the best of one’s ability, within an enabling environment that can support the Mayor’s chosen focus and charities.

2.3 During this meeting the Mayor raised a number of concerns, documented in Report No 198/24, Agenda item 18 of March 27th Full Council.

2.4 Discussions led to Councillors present recognising that the role of the Mayor should not place a councillor in an objectionable position that, due to the complex nature of addressing both external and internal responsibilities, the workload could cause personal stress and impact the positive nature of the role.

2.5 The outcome of these discussions led to the suggestion that some of the internal responsibilities currently held by the Mayor could be transferred to the role of Chair of CCMG.

2.6 This suggestion appeared feasible for the following reasons:

a): CCMG as a focus for internal discussions: Already working closely with the Town Clerk, CCMG is the one key informal groups that regularly reflects upon developing issues within the town council. Although these meetings do not replace any Council or Committee meetings, and no decision-making power can be exercised at these meetings; there is an opportunity to discuss many current and pressing matters; for example, in relation to councillor/officer communications, understanding and sharing of concerns, and exploring how matters can be dealt with across various committees.

b) Mayor's internal responsibilities: By recognising that the role of the CCMG Chair already has an overview and insight into the internal discussions and forthcoming decisions across the council; a recognition of their role in terms of working with Town Council officers cooperatively and professionally on procedural and legal matters, could, reduce some of the burden upon the Mayor of the many internal meetings that currently arise.

c) Line management of the Town Clerk: This role directly impacts upon the increasing workload for the Mayor who is in constant contact with the Town Clerk. For the CCMG Chair to adopt the role of line manager to the Town Clerk, could realistically reduce many internal commitments which currently require the Mayor holding regular 2:1 meetings with the Town Clerk alongside the Chair of Personnel.

d) Town Clerk Appraisal: The CCMG Chair has as much insight into the working practice of the Town Clerk as the Mayor. The requirement to

appraise the Town Clerk in collaboration with the Chair of Personnel could reasonably be transferred to the Chair of CCMG, reducing a further onus upon the Mayor.

e) Local devolution and transition: This is an area that the Mayor may become involved with, which with a natural increase in the requirement for additional staff and strategic discussions, could again help reduce the burden on the Mayor through this responsibility passing to the Chair of CCMG.

f) Additional Roles for the CCMG Chair: These have been identified in Appendix C of the report within the review of CCMG Policy, transferred directly from the Mayor's Portfolio. Each overlap with another and form part of the cluster of supporting roles that the Mayor has previously undertaken in terms of facilitating an effective and positive working environment.

3. Specific changes to the role of CCMG Chair

3.1 The following changes to the CCMG Policy would be required to support the adoption of changes to the Chair of CCMG's role:

- a) A Chair of CCMG will be chosen for the municipal year at the Annual Meeting of Seaford Town Council, following election of Committee Chairs.
- b) Councillors able to undertake this role will need to be either the Deputy Mayor or the Chair of Assets & Facilities, Chair of Finance & General Purposes, Chair of Golf, Open Spaces and Climate Action Committee, or Chair of Planning & Highways.
- c) The Chair of Personnel is unable to take on this role due to Conflicts of Interest in their own role as Line Manager for the Town Clerk.
- d) The Chair of CCMG, in accepting this role will also be accepting further internal responsibilities related to the line-management of the Town Clerk, as well as procedural and legal matters that may arise within STC; these are outlined in Appendix C of this report.

3.2 Changes to the CCMG Policy of 2021 in alignment with these changes have been highlighted in Appendix B.

Table of Recommended Amendments:

Section ('S') / Paragraph ('para') Ref	Amendment(s)
S1	Title amended from 'Constitution' to 'Membership'
S1	Paras re-organised
S1, para 1.1	Amended to reflect the Town Council's revised committee structure.
S1, para 1.6	Amended to reflect the Town Council's revised staff structure.
S1 paras removed	Removed paras: <i>"A Chair of CCMG will be chosen at the first meeting of each municipal year."</i> <i>"CCMG members can elect a temporary Chair if the elected Chair cannot attend a meeting."</i>
S1, para 1.5	Amended to include that the Town Council will provide a note-taker.
S2	New section (moving the others down) titled 'Role of CCMG Chair'
S2, para 2.1 - 2.4	Addition of new paras: <i>2.1 - The Chair of CCMG will be chosen at the Town Council's Annual Meeting, following the election of Committee Chairs.</i> <i>2.2 - Councillors able to undertake this role will need to be either the Deputy Mayor or Chair of Assets & Facilities, Chair of Finance and General Services, Chair of Golf, Open Spaces and Climate Action, or Chair of Planning and Highways.</i> <i>2.3 - The Chair of Personnel is unable to take on this role due to the conflict of interest in their own role as Line Manager for the Town Clerk.</i> <i>2.4 - The Chair of CCMG, in accepting this role will also be accepting further internal responsibilities related to the line-</i>

	<i>management of the Town Clerk, as well as procedural and legal matter that may arise within the Town Council – see section 6</i>
S3	Title amended to 'Purpose of CCMG'
S3, para 3.1	Amended to include '(approximately six-weekly)'
S4, para 4.1	Amended to include that minutes will be circulated to all councillors and minutes are confidential.
S5, para 5.2	Removal of 'That councillor would then be given a summary of the discussion that took place surrounding their item' as the revised policy includes the CCMG notes being circulated to all councillors so the discussions and outcomes will be known.
S6	Completely new section – 'Additional Roles of CCMG Chair'
S7	Completely new section – 'Standard Agenda Items for CCMG Meetings'



Seaford Town Council

Committee Chairs' Management Group Policy

Policy Ref.	CC6
Date Last Adopted	20 th May 2021
Date of Next Review	2024-2025
Possible Prompts for Earlier Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in internal process prompting a review of the policy
Previous Adoption Dates	May 2018
Author	Town Clerk

Committee Chairs' Management Group (CCMG) Policy

1 Membership

- 1.1 The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of Assets & Facilities, Chair of Finance and General Services, Chair of Golf, Open Spaces and Climate Action, Chair of Personnel, and Chair of Planning and Highways, together with the Town Clerk.
- 1.2 Vice Chairs are able to stand in where the above at 1.1 are unable to attend.
- 1.3 Additional officers may be invited to attend a meeting where the Town Clerk feels their attendance at a specific meeting will help proceedings.
- 1.4 The Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer [or Head of Place](#) may attend meetings in the Town Clerk's absence or when asked to do so by the Town Clerk.
- 1.5 A note-taker will be provided through the Town Council Office. Minutes will be circulated to all councillors on a confidential basis [se](#) after the meeting.

2 Role of CCMG Chair

- 2.1 The Chair of CCMG will be [chosenelected](#) at the Town Council's Annual Meeting, following the election of Committee Chairs.
- 2.2 Councillors [able-eligible](#) to undertake this role will need to be either the Deputy Mayor or Chair of Assets & Facilities, Chair of Finance and General Services, Chair of Golf, Open Spaces and Climate Action, or Chair of Planning and Highways.
- 2.3 The Chair of Personnel is unable to take on this role due to the conflict of interest in their own role as Line Manager for the Town Clerk.
- 2.4 The Chair of CCMG, in accepting this role will also be accepting further internal responsibilities related to the line-management of the Town Clerk, as well as procedural and legal matter that may [arrive-arise](#) within the Town Council – see section 6.

3 Purpose of CCMG

- 3.1 To hold regular meetings (~~at least monthly~~approximately six-weekly) between Committee Chairs and the Town Clerk to review together how the Town Council's plans, expectations and services are meeting documented requirements.
- 3.2 To establish that timescales are being met according to the strategic and financial requirements set out by Seaford Town Council.
- 3.3 To provide information and ensure transparency.

4 Meetings

- 4.1 Meetings are non-statutory and informal, although an agenda will be issued in advance of the meeting and summary notes (minutes) will be taken at each meeting and circulated to ~~all~~ councillors. These minutes are confidential.
- 4.2 The Town Clerk and Mayor/Chairs will refer to CCMG notes when agreeing agendas for future Council/Committee meetings to ensure that any business discussed at CCMG that needs to be reported to Council/a Committee is ~~in fact~~ reported.

5 Jurisdiction

- 5.1 These meetings do not replace any Council or Committee meetings, as clearly provided for in 4.2 above. No decisions s-making power can be ~~made~~ exercised at CCMG at these meetings.
- 5.2 Any councillor with a query about or ideas for Town Council activities can raise this with the relevant Chair and request that this be discussed at the next CCMG meeting. ~~That councillor would then be given a summary of the discussion that took place surrounding their item.~~

6 Additional Roles of CCMG Chair

- 6.1 The following specific internal responsibilities include:

- a) ~~With~~ Alongside the Chair of Personnel, to take on the required day-to-day line management tasks of the Town Clerk.
- b) To approve, ~~with~~ alongside the Chair of Personnel, any additional hours requested or worked by the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council's Additional Hours Policy.
- c) To appraise the Town Clerk, ~~with~~ alongside the Chair of Personnel, in accordance with the Town Council's Appraisal Scheme Policy.
- d) To work with Town Council officers cooperatively and professionally on procedural and legal matters that may arise, including seeking officer advice on Town Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other adopted policy.
- e) To act as point of contact for the Town Clerk to discuss unexpected circumstances within the Town Council and the options / approach to be taken.
- f) To act as a conduit between councillors and officers in order to encourage and facilitate an effective and positive working environment.
- g) To encourage councillors, to work in friendly and cooperative ways for the good of the town and to enhance the reputation of the Town Council in the town.
- h) To be consulted and be involved where necessary, alongside the Chair of Personnel and the Mayor (by the advice of the Monitoring Officer), on any matters regarding member conduct.
- i) To handle, with the Chair of Personnel, any misconduct/gross misconduct claims requiring disciplinary action in relation to the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Town Council's Disciplinary Procedure.
- j) In the event of a grievance being raised by the Town Clerk about the Chair of Personnel, to handle this grievance in accordance with the Town Council's Grievance Policy.

7 Standard Agenda items for CCMG Meetings

7.1 The following standard agenda items support active discussion of issues relating to the internal management of Seaford Town Council, and the preparations for Full Council:

AGENDA ITEMS

- 1) Apologies
- 2) Minutes of last meeting
- 3) Matters Arising from the Minutes
- 4) Update by the Town Clerk
- 5) Staffing Update
- 6) Financial Position and Current Risks
- 7) Update from Chair of CCMG
- 8) Councillor Concerns
- 9) Chair's Reports
- 10) Updates on any outstanding complaints and investigations
- 11) Date and format of next meeting
- 12) AOB



Report No:	192/24
Agenda Item No:	19
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Annual Review of Corporate Risk Register 2024 - 2025
By:	Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer
Purpose of Report:	To review and approve the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register and subsequent action plans

Actions
Full Council is recommended:
1.To note the review of the Town Council's Corporate Risk Register. 2.To move to a vote on the motions below.

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Local councils are responsible for establishing 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.

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.
- 2.4** The current risks have been reviewed and updated by the Town Council's officers. 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) can 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 separate 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. These scores are then multiplied together.

- 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 x 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 2024.
- 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 required' 6. 'We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.'	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"> • The overall control environment, including Internal Audit; • The identification, evaluation and management of operational and financial risks; • Budgetary control and monitoring arrangements; and • The documentation and application of control procedures

- 4.3** This review of the Corporate Risk Register gives the assurance required for Full Council to approve the Annual Governance Statement in June 2025.

5. Financial Appraisal

- 5.1** This report has no direct financial implications.

6. Contact Officer

- 6.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer.



Seaford Town Council

General & Financial Risk Assessment

Policy Ref.	F5
Date Last Adopted	March 2024
Date of Next Review	<i>March 2025</i>
Possible Prompts for Earlier Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to its nature, amendments to this policy document are tracked throughout the year by officers, to be presented as one review each March
Previous Adoption Dates	<p><u>March 2024</u></p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March 2022</p> <p>March 2021</p> <p>July 2020</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>February 2014</p>
Author	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. The Head of Assets & Projects (HAPS) <u>Assets & Projects Manager</u> 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 <u>HAPS Projects and Facilities team</u> . Some original documentation is held by the Council's Solicitors. There are however several historical issues outstanding with regards to land ownership. 1 Some documentation is missing. 2 Some parcels of land in the Council's ownership have not been registered with Land Registry. 3 Secure details of all land documents held by Solicitors. Target to resolve all outstanding land issues by December 2024 ⁴⁵ .	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 Seaford Head Golf Course are securely stored. Planned programme of testing electrical and safety equipment in place.	Daily

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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. 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).	4 Annually
		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.	4 Annually

F5 General & Financial Risk Assessment – Adopted March 2024, Review March 2025

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Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
		M	Precept paid 6 monthly.	6
		L	RFO checks bank statements to ensure all payments are received.	1
Finance	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty	M	Petty cash at Council Offices is managed in accordance with adopted procedures, which requires receipts for all purchases. Reconciled every month.	1
		H	All cash from tills at The Golf Course 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

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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 RFO, 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

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Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
Finance	Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept	M	The RFO in consultation with the 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
		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

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Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
		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
		M	Permissions sought from the Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor's <u>members of the Youth Ambassador Board</u> 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. <u>Officers supporting the Board will undertake enhanced DBS checks.</u>	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	An overarching Safeguarding Policy to be devised in 2024-2025 <u>2025-2026</u> and adopted, addressing safeguarding arrangements across all of the Town Council's activities	Tbc

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Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
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.	WeeklyAs req'd
		M	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.	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
		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	36
		M	Privacy notices displayed explaining why personal data is collected, how it is used and stored.	As req'd

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Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
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.	As req'd
		M	All digital records can only be accessed by necessary managers 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	<u>As req'd</u>
		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

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Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
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, including assessing any permissions required are sought and/or relevant legislation compiled with.	As req'd
		M	Legal advice to be sought where necessary.	As req'd
		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 and email distribution.	As req'd

Report 192-24 Appendix A

Report 102 24 Appendix A

Area	Risk	Level	Controls (bold indicates where work is needed)	Frequency months
Legal Liability	Proper document control.	M	Original Deeds and leases stored with Barwells Solicitors and within Town Council offices.	As req'd
		M	Copies Retained within the Council Offices and stored in accordance with the adopted Document Retention Policy.	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
		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. Published annually on website. Gifts & Hospitality Policy adopted by Council in 2018.	12



Report No:	193/24
Agenda Item No:	20
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Annual Review of Internal Controls
By:	Lucy Clark, Responsible Finance Officer
Purpose of Report:	To allow Full Council to review and approve the Town Council's Internal Controls

Actions

Full Council is advised to:

1. To review and comment upon the Town Council's Internal Controls.
2. To review and consider Statements 2, 5, 6 & 7 of the Annual Governance Statement to assess that these have been complied with.
3. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended:

1. To approve the Town Council's Internal Controls as set out in Appendix A.
2. To note that Statements 2, 5, 6 and 7 of the Annual Governance Statement have been complied with, as set out in 1.4 of this report.

1. Information

- 1.1 Local councils are responsible for establishing proper arrangements for the governance of their affairs and the stewardship of their resources. Key to 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** At this point in time, Full Council is asked to review the internal controls that have existed for the current, 2024 – 2025 financial year. It is noted that a new staff structure will be implemented starting in April 2025, and a revised version of the internal controls will be presented to Council in June for the 2025 - 2026 financial year.
- 1.5** In addition to a review of the internal controls, 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 2025.

Statement	Explanatory note
2. 'We maintained an adequate system of Internal Control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and review its effectiveness'	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
5. 'We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of	These representations cover the Council's responsibility to develop, implement and regularly monitor the effectiveness of systems of internal control covering:

<p>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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall control environment, including Internal Audit; • The identification, evaluation and management of operational and financial risks; • Budgetary control and monitoring arrangements; and • The documentation and application of control procedures • Concerns raised by the External Auditor regarding the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement are currently being investigated and will be reported to Full Council in due course.
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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 Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer.

SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL**INTERNAL CONTROLS**

INTERNAL CONTROL	RESPONSIBILITY
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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

<u>1. Assets</u>	
Register of all Council assets kept and updated at least annually	HAPS / APM
Asset Register as per final accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)	RFO
<u>2. Investments</u>	
Chair of F&GP to check monthly with bank reconciliation	CHAIR OF F&GP

Income

<u>1. Cash</u>	
Cash banked frequently at least once per week	FA / RFO
<u>2. Credit Income</u>	
Check bookings match invoicing	FA / RFO
<u>3. Credit Control</u>	
Check debtor balances monthly	FA / RFO
<u>4. Bad Debts</u>	
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
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Cash & Bank

<u>1. Receipt of Money- Admin Office</u>	
Banked promptly - kept in locked tin up to £250	FA / RFO
Most income is received by bank transfer	FA / RFO
<u>2. Receipt of Money- The Golf Club</u>	
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 reconciled to accounts	GP
Collection of cash and bank weekly	GP / FA
<u>3. Bank Reconciliation</u>	
Performed at least on a monthly basis and all bank accounts agreed	RFO
Check and ensure no payments or receipts are being carried forward for a number of months	RFO
Chair of F&GP to check and sign monthly with corresponding bank statements reported to committee	RFO / CHAIR F&GP
Review cheques outstanding for over 6 months and ensure written off	RFO

SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROLS

INTERNAL CONTROL	RESPONSIBILITY
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Payments

<u>1. Payments</u>	
Purchase Orders raised for the majority of 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 and 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 and two authorised councillor signatories	RFO / FA
Payment schedule signed / authorised by email by RFO and two authorised signatories	RFO / FA
Security of cheques and petty cash - stored in locked room when key staff are out of the office	RFO
Majority of payments by BACS. One person inputs and another authorises. Impossible for one person to make a payment with the online banking set up - need two people using their own personal fob	FA / RFO
<u>2. Petty Cash</u>	
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 and reimbursements	RFO
<u>3. Debit Card payments</u>	
Debit cards issued to managers (HRGM, APM, RFO & TC)	RFO
Staff members responsible for own card	STAFF
FA updates spreadsheet and codings, councillors given sheet and receipts each month to sign	FA / RFO
Debit cards issued with an appropriate daily spend cap (including a daily ATM withdrawal limit of £250 permitted solely for replenishing petty cash)	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
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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 and Time & Attendance (TAP) forms	HRGM / HRGA
Check annual leave/pay against reporting leave cards and TAP forms	HRGM / HRGA
Check any statutory sick pay or maternity pay deductions	HRGM / RFO
TC approval for new starters	TC / HRGM
RFO to provide monthly salary sheet to outsourced payroll company and ensure the company receives accurate information	RFO
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 and mileage countersigned by TC	TC / RFO / LINE MANAGERS
Staff grading reviewed annually by Council	HRGM / TC / RFO / CLLRS

Supplier Invoices

Check purchase orders and delivery notes match invoices	FA
Check purchase orders authorisation	FA
Check unmatched purchase orders	FA
Check expenditure coding - correct budget head and 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 and ascertain why still unpaid	RFO

Insurance

Reviewed annually for accuracy	RFO / APM
Index linked	RFO / APM
Provider reviewed every 3-5 years	RFO / APM
Relevant assets added to insurance at time of aquirement	RFO / APM

General

SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL**INTERNAL CONTROLS**

INTERNAL CONTROL	RESPONSIBILITY
Check Trial Balance monthly	RFO
Perform a data check in the Omega Accounts system monthly	RFO
Check VAT return and VAT control account match monthly	RFO
At least twice each financial year - check actual expenditure against estimates and 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
Cod of Conduct adopted for members	TC

Key:

APM = Assets & Projects Manager

CLLRS = Councillors

FA = Finance Assistant

GP = Golf Professional

HAPS = Head of Assets, Projects and Services

HRGA = HR & Governance Assistant

HRGM = HR & Governance Manager

RFO = Responsible Financial Officer

TC = Town Clerk



Report No:	194/24
Agenda Item No:	21
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Annual Investment Strategy 2025 - 2026
By:	Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To present the Annual Investment Strategy 2025 – 2026 for adoption

Actions
Full Council is recommended:
1.To consider the investment strategy presented within the report and recommended to be adopted for the 2025 – 2026 financial year. 2.To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations
Full Council is recommended:
1.To note the contents of the report. 2.To adopt the Annual Investment Strategy 2025 - 2026 as set out in Appendix A.

1. Information

- 1.1 The Town Council is required to produce an Annual Investment Strategy and review it each financial year.
- 1.2 The investment strategy ensures that any Town Council investments contribute to the objectives of the Council and its functions, through

effective treasury management activities and the prudent management of its finances.

- 1.3** The 2025 - 2026 Annual Investment Strategy is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.4** The only recommended changes are dates and a few clarifications on wording.
- 1.5** It is a requirement that this strategy is made available to the public and therefore, once 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** The CCLA's interest rates have decreased this year with the rate at the end of February 2025 at 4.5376% compared with 5.2624% at the end of February 2024. Despite this reduction, the current rate remains competitive and continues to offer a favourable return compared to similar investment bodies.
- 2.3** The total interest received to 28th February 2025 is £85,076.71 compared with £90,571.97 as at 29th February 2024.
- 2.4** There is currently £1,670,000 (compared to £1,770,000 in February 2024) 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, Responsible Financial Officer.



Seaford Town Council

Annual Investment Strategy 2025 - 2026

Policy Ref.	F9
Date Last Adopted	<i>March 2025</i>
Date of Next Review	March 2026
Possible Prompts for Earlier Review	-
Previous Adoption Dates	March 2024 March 2023 March 2022 March 2021 July 2020 April 2019
Author	Responsible Financial Officer

Annual Investment Strategy ~~2024 – 2025~~2025 - 2026

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 \(DLUHC\)](#) [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government \(MHCLG\)](#) and CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services: Code of Practice and 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-MHCLG maintains states](#) that the borrowing ~~of monies solely purely to invest or to lend for the purpose of investment and lending to generate a return 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 ~~2024 – 2025~~2025 - 2026 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 ~~2024–2025~~2025 - 2026. 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.



Report No:	188/24
Agenda Item No:	22
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Appointment of an Internal Auditor
By:	Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To update Full Council on the selection of a new internal auditor with the recommendation to appoint 'Parish and Town Audit Services' as the new internal auditor

Actions

Full Council is advised:

- 1.To consider the contents of the report and give thought to approving the recommended internal auditor as laid out in 1.10 of the report.
- 2.To move to a vote on the motions below

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended:

- 1.To note the report.
2. To approve the appointment of Parish and Town Audit Services as the new internal auditor for 2025 - 2026.

1. Information

- 1.1 Mulberry and Co. Ltd have served as the Town Council's Internal Auditors for the past ten years, during which a positive working relationship has been maintained.

- 1.2** Mulberry and Co will continue in this role until the completion of their work for the 2024 - 2025 financial year, which is scheduled for the end of May 2025.
- 1.3** The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) guidance encourages councils to periodically review their internal audit arrangements. A new auditor brings independent insight, ensuring that financial procedures remain rigorous and compliant. Periodic changes also demonstrate the Town Council's commitment to maintaining high standards of financial oversight and good governance.
- 1.4** At the Full Council meeting held in March 2024, it was agreed that an assessment of options for a new Internal Auditor for the 2025 - 2026 financial year would be presented to Full Council.
- 1.5** To that end, the RFO has been researching options for a new internal auditor in preparation for the 2025 - 2026 financial year. As interim audits typically take place in the autumn, there is sufficient time for the Town Council to make an informed decision.
- 1.6** The RFO has consulted the Internal Audit Forum (IAF), which is endorsed by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). The IAF plays a crucial role in promoting high standards in local council auditing and was invited to contribute to the wording of the JPAG guidance, further evidencing its credibility. The IAF also maintains a directory of qualified internal auditors, ensuring councils have access to professionals who meet sector standards and regulatory requirements. The IAF also aims to ensure that councils contracting internal audit services from its members receive a uniform, high standard of service.
- 1.7** Following consultation with the IAF directory and neighbouring councils, information from four companies were sought:
- Parish & Town Audit Services (PATAS)
 - Pemples Business Services Ltd
 - Clarified Accounting Ltd
 - B B Business Associates Ltd
- 1.8** The information provided by each company is attached in appendices A to D.

- 1.9** A summary of each auditor, alongside their quotations and RFO's notes can be found in Appendix E.
- 1.10** Based on the information gathered, PATAS emerges as the preferred option due to its competitive pricing and sector expertise. Unlike other auditors, PATAS specialises exclusively in auditing town and parish councils, offering a high level of relevant experience. Their proposal was the most comprehensive, and they come highly recommended by Lewes Town Council.
- 1.11** Selecting PATAS as the Town Council's new internal auditor would ensure both independence and competence, aligning with best practices in financial oversight and governance.

2. Financial Appraisal

- 2.1** The annual costs to the Town Council would vary depending on the chosen company, with estimated figures detailed in Appendix E.

3. Appendices

- 3.1** There are a number of appendices included with this report, as follows:
- A1 - PATAS Quote for Seaford Town Council
 - A2 - PATAS Example Letter of Engagement
 - A3 - PATAS Internal Audit Checklist
 - A4 - PATAS List of Audit Checks
 - B1 - Pemples Quote for Seaford Town Council
 - C1 - Clarified Accounting Ltd Quote
 - D1 - BB Business Associates Quote
 - E1 – Comparison of Internal Auditor Options for 2025 - 2026

4. Contact Officer

- 4.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer.

Parish and Town Audit Services

INTERNAL AUDIT QUOTATION – SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Thank you for your invitation to provide a quotation to the Town Council for our internal auditing services. We would be delighted to work with you.

We have recently established a new auditing service called Parish & Town Audit Services (www.patasc.co.uk). We carry full Professional Indemnity Insurance which is provided by Hiscox.

The cost of the providing internal audit services to the Council will be as follows:

End of Year Internal Audit Service	£395.00
Interim Internal Audit (October/November)	£395.00
Total	£790.00

The quotation includes all aspects of the internal audit including two on-site or remote visits per annum and is valid for three years. There is no mileage charge and there will also be no increases in this fee.

We provide internal audit and examination services for Town, Parish and Community Councils. Our clients include Bude-Stratton Town Council, Barnstaple Town Council and Lewes Town Council as well as a number of small and medium sized parish and town councils. In total we audit around 60 town and parish councils annually.

Parish and Town Auditing Services (PATAS) provides an independent, professional and thorough internal auditing services to Parish and Town Councils throughout England and Wales that meets all the requirements set out in the JPAG Governance & Accountability Practitioners' Guide. We have a comprehensive, detailed understanding of Parish and Town Councils and we use this to develop and deliver a tailored support service that meets your needs. We are also members of the Internal Audit Forum.

We acknowledge our responsibility to report to members whether, in our view, the financial statements, as summarised in the statutory Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), are in accordance with the Council's accounting records, whether they are supported by appropriate systems of internal financial control in the areas specified in the Internal Audit Report embodied in the AGAR and whether they comply with the relevant legislation. In arriving at our view, we are required to consider the following matters, and to report on any in respect of which we are not satisfied:

Maintenance of appropriate accounting records;
whether the AGAR detail is consistent with the accounting records;
Effectiveness of controls and procedures over the payment of staff salaries and associated HMRC and Pension contributions, plus trader payments;
Controls over the identification and recovery of income;
Appropriateness of governance controls and risk management; and
Adherence to Government legislation.

We normally conduct our audit through an interim review, together with a final closedown review to sign off the IA Report in the year's AGAR once the Accounts for the year have been finalised. The main audit would be undertaken between March and April with the end of year

**Report 188/24 Appendix A1 –
PATAS Quote for STC**

section being completed once the year end accounts have been shut down and the AGAR finalised ready for adoption by Council.

In addition to this covering letter I have attached our Letter of Engagement and an Audit sheet which outlines the service we provide and the areas we audit.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or visit our website.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Russell', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

Paul Russell, Internal Auditor.

Paul Russell

2 School Villas, Crosslands, Tonedale, Wellington, Somerset TA21 0AF

Tel: 01823 617251

Mob: 07772 657446



Parish and Town Auditing Services
Tel: 07772 657446
Email: audit@patas.co.uk

LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT

Name of Council: XXX Parish/Town Council

This letter of engagement sets out the basis on which we will act as Internal Auditor to the Council as well as the respective areas of responsibility of the Council and Parish and Town Audit Services.

As a Council you are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records and preparing financial statements which provide a true and fair view of the Council's accounts and comply with the Local Government Act Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996, as amended periodically.

You are also responsible for making available to the Internal Auditor the Council's accounting records as and when required and any other records and related information to enable us to undertake the internal audit review in accordance with the "Governance and Accountability Manual - The Practitioners Guide", including the signed minutes of all Council and Committee meetings.

We will report to Members whether, in our view, the financial statements as summarised in Section 2 of the statutory Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) have been met. In arriving at our view we will consider the following matters and report any areas which do not meet the required standards:

- Establish whether proper accounting records have been kept by the Council;
- Establish whether the Council's Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Accounts (or Receipts and Payments Accounts) and supporting statements agree with the accounting records and returns;
- Establish whether we have obtained all the information and explanations which we think necessary for the purpose of our audit.

We do have a professional responsibility to report and issues if the accounts do not comply in any material respect with the Statements of Standard Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting Standards as relevant to local Councils, unless non-compliance is justified in the circumstances.

Our Audit will be conducted in accordance with Part 2, Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations as set out in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (amended) and the Auditing Standards issued by the accountancy bodies, and will have regard to relevant Auditing Guidelines. It will be conducted in such a manner as we consider necessary to fulfil our obligations and responsibilities including tests of transactions and ownership and valuation of assets and liabilities as we consider necessary.

We will reach an understanding of the accounting systems and relevant policies in place and assess their adequacy to enable us to prepare the financial statements and to establish whether proper accounting records have been maintained by the Council.

We will require relevant and reliable evidence needed to enable us to draw reasonable conclusions to complete the audit. The nature and extent of our tests will vary according to individual Council's accounting systems. We will bring to your attention any issues or weaknesses identified with your accounting system and internal controls. We will also review all financial risk assessments in place.

Any evidence to support the internal audit will be held and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and our GDPR policies.

Report 188-24 Appendix A2
– PATAS Example Letter of Engagement

We may ask for confirmation in writing that all transactions undertaken by the Council have been properly reflected and recorded in your accounting records and this may be referred to in the audit report.


The responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud rests with the Council but we shall endeavour to plan our audit so that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting material misstatements in the financial statements or accounting records resulting from irregularities or fraud. However, our examination should not be relied upon to disclose irregularities and fraud that may exist. In the event of any suspected irregularity being identified by the Members, the Clerk or other employees that we be advised as soon as possible and, if appropriate, consulted on the appropriate course of action that should be applied to examine the position further.

Agreement of Terms

Once it has been agreed, this letter and contract will remain effective for future years until it is either cancelled by the Council or ourselves. We respectfully ask that should Council wish to cancel the contract that due notice is given by 30th September at the latest in the financial year under review, as work may have commenced prior to or shortly after that date.

We would be grateful if you could confirm in writing your agreement to the terms outlined in this letter or let us know if they are not in accordance with your understanding of our terms of appointment.

Please indicate your agreement by signing this letter and returning by email to audit@patas.co.uk

On behalf of Parish and Town Audit Services	Signature	Council	Signature
Paul Russell Internal Auditor			

INTERNAL AUDIT CHECKLIST

Council: _____

Date: _____

Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the year AND Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year

REVIEW

Ensure the correct roll forward figures of the prior year's cashbook balances to the new financial year.

Check a sample of financial transactions in cashbooks to bank statements, etc: the sample size dependent on the size of the authority and nature of accounting records maintained.

Ensure that bank reconciliations are prepared routinely, are subject to independent scrutiny and sign-off by members.

Verify the accuracy of the year-end bank reconciliation detail and ensure accurate disclosure of the combined cash and bank balances in the AGAR, section 2, line 8.

Where the authority has bank balances in excess of £100,000 it has an appropriate investment strategy.

This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.

REVIEW

Review the procedures in place for acquisition of formal tenders and quotes, ensuring they are in line with the SOs and FRs which should be based on the latest version.

Ensure that consistent values are in place for the acquisition of formal tenders between SOs and FRs (frequently different limits are recorded in the two documents)

Review the procedures for receipt of invoices, agreement of invoice detail and confirmation of goods/services delivery and approval for payment: ideally, a suitably designed certification stamp should be in place providing for evidencing of these checks and payment authorisation.

Check that there is effective segregation between the writing of cheques or the setting up of online payments, and physical release of payments.

Check that VAT reclaims are prepared and submitted in a timely manner in line with the underlying records and in accordance with current HMRC requirements

Where debit / credit cards are in use, establish the total monthly and individual transaction limits and ensure appropriate controls over physical security and usage of the cards are in place

This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

REVIEW

Ensure that authorities have prepared, and formally adopted, at least once annually, an appropriate and comprehensive register of assessed risks, both regular and ad hoc.

Ensure that appropriate levels of insurance cover are in place for land, buildings, public, employers' and hirers' (where applicable) liability, fidelity / employees (including councillors) liability, business interruption and cyber security.

Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for monitoring play areas, open spaces and sports pitches: such reviews should be undertaken by appropriately qualified external inspectors or, if by officers or members, that they have received the appropriate training and accreditation.

Review the effectiveness of internal control carried out by the authority.

The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.
REVIEW
Ensure that the full Authority, not a committee, has considered, approved and adopted the annual precept for the coming year in accordance with the required parent Authority timetable.
Ensure that current year budget reports are prepared and submitted to Authority / Committees periodically during the year with appropriate commentary on any significant variances.
Review the budget performance either during the year or at the financial year-end seeking explanations for any significant or unanticipated variances.
Ensure that the Authority has considered the establishment of specific earmarked reserves and, ideally, reviews them annually as part of the budget assessment process
Ensure that the precept received in the accounts matches the prior year submission form to the relevant authority and the public record of precepted amounts .

Expected income was fully received based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT appropriately accounted for.
REVIEW
Review “Aged debtor” listings to ensure appropriate follow up action is in place.
Allotments: ensure that appropriate signed tenancy agreements exist, that an appropriate register of tenants is maintained identifying, that debtors are monitored.
Burials: ensure that a formal burial register is maintained that it is up-to-date and that a sample of interments and memorials are appropriately evidenced, that fees have been charged at the correct approved rate and been recovered within a reasonable time: (Authorities should also acquire and retain copies of Burial / Cremation certificates)
Hall hire: ensure that an effective diary system for bookings is in place identifying the hirer, hire times and ideally cross-referenced to invoices raised.
Leases: ensure that leases are reviewed in a timely manner in accordance with the terms of the lease and rents similarly reviewed appropriately at the due time.
Other variable income streams: ensure that appropriate control procedures and documentation are in existence to provide a clear audit trail through to invoicing and recovery of all such income.
Where amounts are receivable on set dates during the year, ensure that an appropriate control record is maintained duly identifying the date(s) on which income is due and actually received / banked.

Petty Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.
REVIEW
A number of authorities are now running down and closing their petty cash accounts and using debit / credit cards for ad hoc purchases. Consequently, a “Not covered” response is frequently required in this area.

Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the authority’s approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.
REVIEW
Ensure that, for all staff, a formal employment contract is in place together with a confirmatory letter setting out any changes to the contract.

Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.
Ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for the payment of members allowances and deduction of any tax liability
Ensure that, for a sample of staff salaries, gross pay due is calculated in accordance with the approved spinal point on the NJC scale or hourly rate, if off-scale, and also with the contracted hours.
Ensure that appropriate tax codes are being applied to each employee.
Where free or paid for software is used, ensure that it is up to date.
For the test sample of employees, ensure that tax is calculated appropriately.
Check the correct treatment of Pension contributions

Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained. This section/assurance includes loans to or by the authority
REVIEW
Tangible Assets
Ensure that the Authority is maintaining a formal asset register and updating it routinely to record new assets at historic cost price, net of VAT and removing any disposed of or no longer serviceable assets.
Physically verifying the existence and condition of high value, high risk assets may be appropriate.
The register should identify for each asset the purchase cost and, if practicable, the replacement/insured cost, the latter being updated annually and used to assist in forward planning for asset replacement.
Additions and disposals records should allow tracking from the prior year to the current.
Ensure that the asset value to be reported in the AGAR at section 2, line 9 equates to the prior year reported value, adjusted for the nominal value of any new acquisitions and / or disposals.
Compare the asset register with the insurance schedule to ensure that all assets as recorded are appropriately insured or "self-insured" by the Authority.
Fixed asset investments:
Ensure that all long-term investments (i.e., those for more than 12 month terms) are covered by the "Investment Strategy" and reported as Assets in the AGAR at section 2, line 9.
Borrowing & Lending:
Ensure that the authority has sought and obtained appropriate DMO approval for all loans acquired

Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cashbook, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and, where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.
REVIEW
To ensure that the financial detail reported at section 2 of the AGAR reflects the detail in the accounting records maintained for the financial year.
Ensure that, where annual turnover exceeds £200,000, appropriate records are maintained throughout the year on an Income and Expenditure basis to facilitate budget reporting in that vein.
Ensure that appropriate accounting arrangements are in place to account for debtors and creditors during the year and at the financial year-end.

If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in the prior year, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.

REVIEW

Ensure that, all [relevant criteria](#) are met (receipts and payments each totalled less than £25,000)

- the correct exemption certificate was prepared and minuted in accordance with the statutory submission deadline
- that it has been published, together with all required information on the Authority's website and noticeboard

The authority publishes information on a free to access website / web page, up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.

REVIEW

Review the Authority's website ensuring that all required documentation is published in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The authority, during the previous year, correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

REVIEW

Examine a copy of the required "Public Notice" ensuring that it clearly identifies the statutory 30 working day period when the Authority's records are available for public inspection.

Check whether council has minuted the relevant dates at the same time as approving the AGAR

The authority complied with the publication requirements for the prior year AGAR.

REVIEW

Ensure that the statutory disclosure/publication requirements in relation to the prior year's AGAR have been met as detailed on the front page of the current year's AGAR.

Trust funds (including charitable) - the Council met its responsibilities as a trustee

REVIEW

Confirm that all charities of which the council is a Trustee are up to date with CC filing requirements



Parish and Town Auditing Services

Tel: 07772 657446

Email: audit@patas.co.uk

A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.

- Roll forward figures of the prior year's cashbook balances to the new financial year. (copy of balance sheet for year-end 2023/24)
- Copies of the minutes from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 for Full Council, Committees and Working Groups. Link to website sufficient.
- Financial records (spreadsheets or reports from accounting system. Must include income and expenditure records).
- Links to the website of financial reports including bank reconciliations.
- Bank Statements for the financial year (1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025) (all bank and investment accounts) showing opening balance as of 1st April 2024 and final balance as at 31st March 2025. (Consider including March 2024 statement)
- Copy of the Investment policy for those Councils with savings above £100,000 and minute reference of any revision.

B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

- Sample of paid invoices received from suppliers. At least 3 from each month with small, medium and large amounts if possible. Normally 10% of paid invoices would be audited.
- Copy of Financial Regulations and minute reference of when they were last reviewed.
- Copy of Standing Orders and minute reference of when last reviewed.
- Procedure for receipt of invoices, agreement of invoice details, payment and agreement to approve payment by Council/Finance Committee.
- Copy of procedure between approval of invoice payment and the payment itself.
- Quotations and tenders for any contracts/work/services over £1,000 where payments made in the year under review. Note that the figure will be guided by the Council's Financial Regulations.
- Tender records and details of process for any projects £30,000 including VAT and above, including link to Contracts Finder website.
- All VAT submissions made during the year
- Details of any internal financial controls in place over and above Financial Regulations.
- Debit/credit card statements and reference for controls in place for use.

C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

- Copy of Risk Register or assessment of all risks faced by Council.

- Minute reference of when this was reviewed.
- Copy of insurance cover to review areas of risk covered.
- Play Areas: Copies of the annual independent risk assessment carried out.
- Sample of more regular play area monitoring reports.
- Copy of any internal control policy/procedure in place.

D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.

- Details of how computer data is backed up.
- Copy of the latest budget and minute reference where budget and precept were approved by council.
- Financial monitoring reports against the budget and minute reference(s) where council/committee considered the monitoring reports.
- Copy of Earmarked Reserves.
- Minute reference for any EMR movements.

E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

- Copy report of any Aged Debtors (3 months, 6 months and beyond)
- Action plan for debt recovery if appropriate.
- Allotment records: Copies of signed tenancy agreements, evidence of Register of Tenants, any debt monitoring.
- Burial Records: Evidence that Burial Register is in place and updated regularly.
- Sample of internment forms.
- Sample of memorial forms.
- Evidence that burial income is collected and reflects current fees and charges.
- List of all fees and hiring charges for all income generators.
- Hall Hire: Evidence that a proper diary is maintained.
- Sample of completed hire forms and related invoices/payments received.
- Copies of any leases in place for equipment or land.
- Other income streams: evidence of appropriate controls in place and internal audit trail.
- List of regular income payments (rents, hirings etc)

F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.

- Petty Cash records (if any)
- Explanation of how and where petty cash is managed and stored if petty cash is used.
- Evidence that VAT is claimed on items purchased via petty cash.

G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.

- Salary/Wages/Tax/NI records. Include evidence of PAYE submissions and calculations showing gross to net pay figures.

- Confirmation of SCP scale and annual salary for the Parish Clerk and all other employees.
- Minute reference of any staff salary increases approved by Council/Committee plus a copy of those minutes. Must include evidence of approval for any salary increases during the year.
- Employment contract of Clerk and other staff as appropriate.
- Any letters evidencing changes to staff contracts.
- Confirmation that any Member Allowances paid are included in PAYE scheme.
- Confirm whether payroll is undertaken via a contractor or in-house.
- Confirm that any payroll software is kept up to date.
- Evidence that any pension payments/contributions are correctly treated. Include any reports submitted to LGPS or other pension provider.

H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

- Copy of the Council's Asset Register as used to report assets on the AGAR and minute reference that it has been reviewed/updated.
- Evidence of any high value asset to be provided.
- Copy of the Council's insurance policy/policies.
- Copy of the Council Risk Register and minute reference where this was considered by council. This should be reviewed annually.
- Details of any long term investments and confirmation that any investment over 12 months is contained on the asset register.
- Paperwork relating to any DMO Public Works Loan Board loans.

I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.

- Bank reconciliation reports.

J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.

- Confirm accounting method (receipts and payments or income and expenditure)
- Report of any debtors and creditors.
- Details of how any outstanding debts are written off (via Council or by Clerk/RFO)

K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered") Yes No* Internal control objective Not covered**

- Minute reference and copy of minute certifying Council exemption.
- Copy of AGAR to ensure correct version used.

L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.

- Website address with link to Annual Accounting information.

M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).

- Copy of exercise of public rights notice.
- Link to relevant page on website
- Evidence that at least 5 years' of correct public rights notices have been uploaded/displayed in the parish.
- Minute referencing relevant dates when approving the AGAR.

N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).

- Evidence that Council has complied (provide notices and links to website)

O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

- If the council has declared responsibility of Trust accounts, name and number of the charity/charities.
- Copy of Trust accounts and evidence Charity Commission filing is up to date.
- Charity number to check Charity Commission website.

Council should have the following policies/documentation in place as a minimum. Evidence of review and adoption by Council required (minute Reference):

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Additional Internal Controls document
- Risk Register identifying significant risks (Risk Management Strategy)
- Investment Policy (for those with balances of over £100,000)
- Code of Conduct
- Asset Register
- Risk assessments
- Communication protocol
- Complaints procedure
- Procurement procedure
- Disciplinary and Grievance procedure
- Volunteer policy

Councils also require an annual budget and it is good practice to develop an action plan for the year to feed into the Annual Report.



Pemples Business Services Ltd
Independent management services for your business

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Systems House, 14 Downs Park, Herne Bay,
Kent CT6 6BY
07990 830667
cheryl.howard@pemples.co.uk

Lucy Clark
Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
Seaford Town Council
37 Church Street, Seaford,
East Sussex, BN25 1HG

QUOTE

Reference: **Q2502STC**
Date: **14 February 2025**

Dear Lucy

Please accept this document as a quote for Interim and Final Internal Audits for **Seaford Town Council 2025/26**. This is based on **5 days per year** at a daily rate of **£400** (excluding VAT) plus expenses mileage (estimated £125 per audit).

Total amount estimated: **£2250.00**

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Howard (CMIIA)
Director/Independent Advisor



Clarified Accounting Ltd

We are able to carry out an annual audit service for Seaford Town Council from 2025/26 financial year.

The internal audit service will be conducted to provide an independent assurance over the Council's transactions, governance, policies and procedures. This will be based on a sample testing from all transactions in the financial year.

Our report will cover how we have obtained comfort over the assertions to be published within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, our assessment of the Council's systems and internal procedures; and our recommendations.

The fee is £70 per hour (exclusive of VAT) plus any travel expenses.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Kind regards,

Clarified Accounting Ltd

B B Business Associates

We would be happy quote for you for 25/26, we have not finalised the costs for 25/26 as yet, but I have included the costs for 24/25 to give you an idea, we offer both in person and remote audits, please see our fee schedule below:

Fee Schedule.

Fees for works are based upon the precept of a Parish Council or the turnover of a Charity.

These are set out below:

Charges based on annual income or Expenditure, whichever is higher	Cost
Up to £5000	£120
£5,001 to £15,000	£175
£15,001 to £25,000	£220
£25,001 to £50,000	£270
£50,001 to £100,000	£320
£100,001 to £150,000	£355
£100,001 to £150,000	£390
£150,001 to £200,000	£430
£200,001 to £250,000	£470
£250,001 to £300,000	£495
£300,001 to £350,000	£520
£350,001 to £400,000	£540
£400,001 to £450,000	£560
£450,001 to £500,000	£580
£500,001 +	Quoted on an individual basis

The above fees are on the understanding that all requests for documents and responses to my Internal Audit checklist are provided by the Council / Charity within the required timescales.

Scope of Work: Predominantly Internal Audit will review the governance of the Council / Charity culminating in the completion of the Internal Audit Report as stated above. We will identify if the following key areas are in place and working satisfactorily.

- a. Proper Book-keeping
- b. Payment controls in relation to Financial Regulations
- c. Review of the Internal Controls, which will include:
 - i. The Parish / Charity Risk Assessment;
 - ii. Review of the effectiveness of Internal Financial Control;
 - iii. An overall review of your Internal Controls.
- d. Budgetary controls
- e. Income controls
- f. Petty Cash procedures (if applicable)
- g. Payroll controls
- h. Asset controls
- i. Bank reconciliations
- j. Accounting statements and application of Spending Powers
- k. Exemption criteria (if applicable)
- l. Website and transparency code
- m. Public Rights notice and dates
- n. Publication of previous AGAR or equivalent
- o. Review of the status of Trusts (if applicable)
- p. Policies review
- q. Review and completeness of minutes
- r. General governance
- s. Review and completeness of audit action plans
- t. Year End procedures, which will include:
 - i. Financial Statements review;
 - ii. Review of Council / Charity balances;
 - iii. Annual Return review.

**Report 188-24 Appendix D1
- BB Business Associates Quote for STC**

Additional Charges:

Late submission of documents, including the AGAR (no later than 31 May)	£75.00
Mileage	£0.45 per mile
Virtual Meetings	£25.00 per hour
Attendance at a Meeting	£75.00 (plus mileage)

We look forward to hearing from you, if you have any questions please ask.

Shelley Boydell

Director



B B Business Associates

team@BBBAssociates.co.uk

Internal Auditor Options for 2025-2026

Company	Quote (net)	Estimated Annual Cost based on 2 Days.	Information Provided by Company	RFO Comments
Parish and Town Audit Services (PATAS)	£790 with no further additions.	£ 790.00	PATAS specialises in town and parish councils, auditing around 60 councils annually, including Lewes Town Council. They follow JPAG guidance and are members of the Internal Audit Forum. Their proposed fee is £790 per year covering both an interim and end-of-year audit, with no mileage charges or fee increases for three years. The audit process includes two site visits per year, either on-site or remote, ensuring a thorough review of governance, financial controls, and compliance with relevant legislation.	The company specialises in town and parish council audits and provided much more in-depth information than other companies, offering a competitive price. They have also supplied a Letter of Engagement and Audit Sheet detailing their services and the areas they audit. Lewes Town Council have highly recommended this auditor.
Pembles Business Services Ltd	£400 per day plus mileage at £125 per audit	£ 1,050.00	Pembles Business Services Ltd will accommodate internal audit fees from annual review of internal financial controls to more specific risk management, governance and compliance reviews.	The company expressed enthusiasm to assist and requested further details to better understand the Town Council's specific needs. After receiving this information, they provided a quote of £2,250 for five days, rather than the two initially requested. While the company is reputable and experienced in auditing, their expertise may be more aligned with the private sector.
Clarified Accounting Ltd	£70 per hour plus travel expenses	£ 900.00	The internal audit service will be conducted to provide an independent assurance over the Council's transactions, governance, policies and procedures. This will be based on a sample testing from all transactions in the financial year. Their report will cover how they obtained comfort over the assertions to be published within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, our assessment of the Council's systems and internal procedures; and our recommendations. Their fee is £70 per hour plus any travel expenses.	The company has confirmed their availability to carry out the internal audit for the 2025/2026 financial year. Their information provided demonstrates a basic understanding of the internal audit requirements for a town council.

B B Business Associates Ltd	Not supplied	TBA	Whilst the company would be happy to quote for 25/26, they had not finalised their fees for the new financial year. Fees would be based on the town councils annual income provided that all requests for documents and responses to their internal checklists are provided by the town council. The scope of work would predominantly be reviewing the governance of the council culminating in the completion of the Internal Audit Report. The would identify that all key areas are in place and working satisfactorily.	The company has confirmed their availability to carry out the internal audit for the 2025/2026 financial year. Their information provided demonstrates an understanding of the internal audit requirements for a town council. The company has taken a longer period to respond to a request for a quotation.



Report No:	195/24
Agenda Item No:	23
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	27th March 2025
Title:	Martello Entertainment Area Memorial Refunds
By:	Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To recommend that Full Council offers partial refunds on payments made for the Martello Entertainment Area for reasons set out within this report

Actions

Full Council is advised:

- 1.To consider the contents of the report.
- 2.To move to a vote on the motions below

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended:

- 1.To note the contents of the report.
- 2.To approve partial refunds for payments made towards the Martello Entertainment Area Memorials for reasons set out within this report, totalling £18,938.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Town Council has received refund requests for the Martello Entertainment Area memorial plaques purchased between 2016 to 2022, citing that the area does not reflect what was originally presented to the purchasers.

- 1.2** Officers have carried out an investigation into the background of this matter and are recommending that refunds are offered to the plaque purchasers. This report presents the findings of the officers' investigation and confirms the recommendation being made for Full Council consideration and approval.

2. Background

- 2.1** In 2013, the Town Council considered a project proposal for a seafront 'performance area'. This was agreed in principle by the Community Services Committee and, over time, evolved into the Martello Entertainment Area (MEA) project.
- 2.2** In May 2016, the Town Council informed individuals on the memorial waiting list about the proposed installation of memorial seating as part of the MEA project at the Seaford Martello Tower.
- 2.3** The correspondence detailed plans for a public performance area adjacent to the Martello Tower, incorporating new litter bins, power supply for the performance area, signage and disabled seating provision. Within this area would be the installation of curved benches consisting of stainless-steel tubing to form the structural parts and hardwood slats and seat backs.
- 2.4** The correspondence continued to advise that plaques could be purchased to be fitted to the back of the hardwood seat back. The all-inclusive cost - including supply, delivery, installation of the benches and a personal plaque (one of ten on each bench) and ongoing maintenance, to be carried out by the Council when required - would be £800.
- 2.5** There was a lot of interest in this offering and during the financial year of 2016 - 2017, works began to install the benches.
- 2.6** At the Full Council meeting on 20th July 2017, councillors considered concerns around how the area would be developed and administered. The resolution passed was to display a sign stating, 'no authorised amplified performances until further notice' and to establish a working group to research a draft policy regarding the MEA.
- 2.7** Whilst the policy work was underway, site improvements, such as bench installations, continued. However, no additional promotion or development of the MEA for entertainment purposes took place.
- 2.8** At the Full Council meeting on 19th October 2017, councillors received recommendations from the working group. Full Council agreed that the then

Town Clerk was to produce a final policy based on its recommendations, with the policy being in place by May 2018. It was further agreed that no additional development of the MEA will take place until such time as the policy is agreed and in place.

- 2.9** At the Full Council meeting on 25th January 2018, Full Council was recommended not to proceed with any policy to govern the entertainment on the MEA and that organised entertainment would take place as and when booked by officers, as was the case with other venues using the existing systems in place. There was a lot of discussion on various matters with the outcome being that it was agreed to review the Council's Events Policy, including the process for bookings of main events (not buskers) for the MEA and to create a Busking Policy, based on Brighton & Hove City Council's policy, to be brought to a Full Council meeting at a later date.
- 2.10** At the Full Council meeting on 29th March 2018, a new Busking Policy was presented and adopted, however no further details were discussed regarding the projects progression.
- 2.11** During this time, memorial plaques for the MEA continued to be purchased.
- 2.12** A report recommending the approval of the revised Seafront Improvement Plan was brought to Full Council on 18th October 2018. Whilst the plan itself did not include the MEA, a covering report implied that the project to create an entertainments area around the Martello Tower would progress irrespective of the Improvement Plan.
- 2.13** Two months later, a few of those who had already purchased a plaque began enquiring as to when the project would be progressing. In December 2018, a letter was issued by the Town Council apologising for the delay, explaining that it related to noise complaints, the need to agree the best way to manage the MEAs use for entertainment and that, whilst the policy discussions were ongoing, officers were unable to press forward with the project. The letter continued to say that a decision on how to use the area in the future would be discussed at the Full Council meeting in January 2019.
- 2.14** Whilst the MEA was not included on the agenda for the January 2019 meeting, the 2019 Memorials Brochure was issued with memorial plaques being advertised for MEA with wording stating:

“Donations will be put towards a public performance area adjacent to the Martello Tower for use by local musicians and performing artists, a power supply for the performers to use, signage and new litter bins. It is anticipated that this area, with wonderful views of Seaford Head, will become the hub and focal point in the town”. The brochure continued to quote “The all-inclusive cost, including supply, delivery, installation of the benches and a personal plaque (one of ten on each bench) and ongoing maintenance, to be carried out by the Council when required, would be £800”.

- 2.15** Following a recent officer investigation, it appears that no further work was carried out on this project. A later version of the Memorials Brochure saw the advertisement of the MEA removed. In October 2022, a complaint was received from a resident who had purchased a plaque in his son’s memory. The resident had paid £800, believing it included a donation for developing a musical entertainment space, aligning with his son’s musical passion. As no enhancements had been made, the resident requested a refund.
- 2.16** Following agreement with the then Chair of the Community Services, Town Clerk and RFO, it was agreed that as a gesture of goodwill, a full refund of £800 would be given and that the offer was ‘Without Prejudice’.
- 2.17** Subsequently, additional emails and letters have been received from residents expressing dissatisfaction, stating they feel misled regarding their plaque purchases and that they are seeking refunds.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1** Officers acknowledge that due to the project’s non-completion and unmet promises in the memorial brochure, residents were unintentionally misled.
- 3.2** Officers are therefore recommending offering refunds to each plaque purchaser, deducting the costs of installation.
- 3.3** Officers are proposing to write to each purchaser – using the contact details given at the time of purchase - explaining the situation and offering the refund.

4. Refund Recommendations

- 4.1** Between the financial years of 2016 - 2017 and 2022 - 2023, a total income of £32,210 was received. This comprises £32,000 from forty residents paying £800 each for their plaque and £210 from special engraving requests.

- 4.2** The total expenditure for the project, including engraving payments, came to £12,472, resulting in a £19,738 net income.
- 4.3** As mentioned above, one of the 40 residents has already been recompensed via a gesture of goodwill, and it is now recommended that £485.59 be refunded to each of the remaining 39 purchasers.

5. Financial Appraisal

- 5.1** The income for these plaques is currently recorded in the accounts as £9,770 in Earmarked Reserve 362 (Seafront Projects), with £9,168 allocated to general reserves.
- 5.2** If the proposed refunds are approved, totalling £18,938, the funding would be sourced as follows: £9,770 from Seafront Projects EMR362 and the remaining £9,168 from general reserves.

6. Contact Officer

The Contact Officer for this report is Lucy Clark, Responsible Financial Officer