



## Seaford Town Council

### Seaford Town Council Full Council Agenda – 23 April 2026

#### To the Members of the Full Council

Councillors S Adeniji, S Ali, L Boorman, C Bristow, R Buchanan, S Dubas, S Dunn, 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 in the **Council Chambers, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG** on **Thursday, 23 April 2026** at **7.00pm**, which you are summoned to attend.

Steve Quayle,  
Town Clerk  
14 April 2026

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- This meeting is taking place during a pre-election period (for the East Sussex County Council elections on 7 May 2026) – pre-election period guidance was issued to all councillors and staff via email on 16 March 2026
- **Public arrival time is between 6.45pm – 6.55pm, after which the front door will be locked and public will not be able to gain access to the meeting**
- The meeting will be recorded and uploaded to the Town Council's YouTube channel shortly after the meeting
- See the end of the agenda for further details of public access and participation
- Ahead of the meeting, the Mayor will invite those in attendance to join her in a one minute reflection
- Councillor queries on agenda items should be reserved for the meeting so the answer and any subsequent points are shared with all councillors. If however a councillor has a question that officers may need to know in advance to prepare a response, please send this through the contact officer of the report so an answer can be prepared to be shared verbally at the meeting, rather than in advance of the meeting via email

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies

To consider other apologies for absence for this meeting.

## 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 physically in the meeting room, 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 in the table below.

Where there are recommendations to Full Council within the minutes, these are subject to a separate report elsewhere on the agenda, at which point the recommendation will be considered.

5.1	Full Council	29 January 2026	<a href="#"><u>29.01.26 Full Council Minutes DRAFT</u></a>
		18 March 2026 – Extraordinary	<a href="#"><u>18.03.26 Full Council Minutes DRAFT</u></a>
5.2	Assets & Facilities (A&F)	26 February 2026	<a href="#"><u>26.02.26 Assets &amp; Facilities Minutes DRAFT</u></a>
		<i>N.B. Recommendation</i> <i>There is a recommendation from the A&amp;F Committee to adopt the rebranded Bookings, Hire &amp; Events Policy – this is being considered by Full Council at its extraordinary meeting on 29 April 2026</i>	
5.3	Finance & General Purposes	26 March 2026	The draft minutes have not yet been approved by the Chair, so

			will be presented at the next Full Council meeting
5.4	Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action	5 March 2026	<a href="#">05.03.26 Golf, Open Spaces &amp; Climate Action</a>
5.5	Personnel	6 January 2026	<a href="#">06.01.26 Personnel Minutes DRAFT</a>
		<i>N.B. Recommendations</i> <i>There are six recommendations within these minutes that have already been considered at a separate meeting by Full Council</i>	
		19 March 2026	<a href="#">19.03.26 Personnel Minutes DRAFT</a>
5.6	Planning & Highways	15 January 2026	<a href="#">15.01.26 Planning &amp; Highways Minutes DRAFT</a>
		12 February 2026	<a href="#">12.02.26 Planning &amp; Highways Minutes DRAFT</a>
		12 March 2026	<a href="#">12.03.26 Planning &amp; Highways Minutes DRAFT</a>
		9 April 2026	<a href="#">09.04.26 Planning &amp; Highways Minutes DRAFT</a>

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

To consider report 203/25 presenting the Mayor's update report and details of engagements (pages 9 to 14).

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

To consider report 212/25 updating Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Clerk (pages 15 to 37).

## 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**

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

## **11. [Complaints, Freedom of Information Requests and Appeals](#)**

### **Update Report – April 2026**

To consider report 202/25 updating Full Council on Complaints, Freedom of Information Requests and Appeals (pages 38 to 40).

## **12. Agenda item number not used**

## **13. [Fields in Trust](#)**

To consider report 55/25 providing an update on the Fields in Trust programme and decide if the Town Council wishes to proceed to apply for Fields in Trust status for The Crouch, The Salts Recreation Ground and Martello Fields (pages 41 to 48).

## **14. Agenda item number not used**

## **15. [Approval of a Five Year Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier](#)**

### **Agreement**

To consider report 211/25 presenting the recommendation from the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee that Full Council approves entering into a five year Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement (pages 49 to 54).

## **16. [Interim Update on the Annual Governance and Accountability](#)**

### **Return (AGAR) 2024 - 2025**

To consider report 213/25 updating Full Council on the status of the 2024 - 2025 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and provide relevant background on the ongoing external audit process relating to the 2023 - 2024 AGAR (pages 55 to 58).

## **17. [Devolution Considerations – Public Update](#)**

To consider report 206/25 providing a public update in relation to the devolution considerations being undertaken by the Town Council (pages 59 to 61).

## **18. Exclusion of the Press & Public**

The Chair will move that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion on the next items of business for the reasons as set out below.

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

*The Proper Officer considers that discussion of the following items is likely to disclose exempt information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 and Data Protection*

*legislation and may therefore need to take place in private session. The exempt information reasons are shown alongside each item below.*

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

## **19. Approval of On-Call Arrangement Spend EXEMPT**

To consider exempt report 216/25 seeking Full Council's approval of the on-call arrangements and the necessary spend to enable a six-month trial of the arrangements (exempt pages).

*Reason for exemption: to provide confidential updates surrounding the Human Resources functions of the Town Council.*

*Explanation of Reason: under Data Protection legislation, information about an individual member of staff / groups of staff is confidential between the Town Council and staff member/s.*

## **20. Devolution of Assets – Initial Considerations EXEMPT**

To consider exempt report 205/25 to facilitate Full Council's determination of which of Lewes District Council's non-housing assets the Town Council will nominate to be considered for devolution through a Local Control Transfer (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.*

## **21. Hope Gap Steps – Consideration of Survey Quotes EXEMPT**

To consider exempt report 215/25 updating Full Council on the results of the tender process and seeking Full Council's approval to engage a consultant engineer to develop plans (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.*

## **22. Update on the Sale of Hurdis House EXEMPT**

To consider exempt report 217/25 updating Full Council on the progress made on the sale of Hurdis House (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.*

### **23. The View Lease Arrangement EXEMPT**

To consider exempt report 222/25 providing an update on the financial performance of The View Seaford Ltd, and to consider their request to vary the existing financial elements of the lease agreement (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, Town Clerk, 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG

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

Telephone: 01323 894 870

### **Circulation:**

All Town Councillors and registered email recipients.

### **Public Access:**

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

1. Attending the meeting in person.

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

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

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

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

OR

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

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

If you are attending the meeting in person, please arrive between 6.45 – 6.55pm where you will be shown into the meeting for a 7.00pm start.

Please note that the front door of the building will be locked at 6.55pm and remain locked during the meeting for security reasons. As such, if you arrive after this time, you will not be able to access the meeting.

When members of the public are looking to leave, they must be escorted out of the building by a Town Council officer. There is also a signposted back door which can be exited through if required.

Entrance through the rear fire escape of the building will not be allowed.

There is a lift for those requiring it to access the first floor. Please note that motorised scooters cannot be brought into the lift. Electric and other wheelchairs can be accommodated but there is a maximum weight limit of 400kg.

## **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](mailto:meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk) or by post to the Town Council offices.



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>203/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Mayor's Report April 2026</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Isabelle Mouland, Community Engagement &amp; Democratic Services Manager</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To present the Mayor's update report and details of engagements</b>

### **Actions**

#### **Full Council is advised:**

1. To consider the update provided by the Mayor.
2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

### **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 attended/hosted since 29 January 2026, at the time of writing, can be found below:

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
Seaford Future Energy Landscape	10.02.26	Community Energy Pathways
Kings Award for Voluntary Service official ceremony	12.02.26	Friends of Bishopstone Station CIC
Visit to Women's Institute (WI) Seaford	11.03.26	Seaford WI

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve launch	19.03.26	South Downs National Park Authority
Bowden House School - Easter Family Day	26.03.26	Bowden House School
Havens Food Cooperative 2 Million Celebration	27.03.26	Havens Food
Mayor of Seaford's Charity Lunch	28.03.26	Family Support Work
Spring Concert 'Messiah'	28.03.26	Seaford Choral Society

**1.3** Future engagements, at the time of writing and up to 14 May 2026, that the Mayor plans to attend can be found below:

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
Good Friday Walk of Witness	03.04.26	Churches Together
Peacehaven Mayor's Quiz	11.04.26	Peacehaven Town Council
Coffee, Cake & Cha-Cha-Cha	17.04.26	Peacehaven Town Council
People's Emergency Briefing	17.04.26	People's Emergency Briefing
Charlie Grimble's talk on Seaford	18.04.26	Charlie Grimble
Rotary Young Writers Presentation Evening 2026	20.04.26	Seaford Rotary
Charity Quiz Night	24.04.26	Newhaven Town Council
Seaford Town Forum	30.04.26	Seaford Town Council
Bishopstone Village Fayre	02.05.26	Bishopstone Fayre Committee
Mayor of Polegate's 'Thank you' Cream Tea	06.05.26	Polegate Town Council
The Mayor of Peacehaven's Mayoral Reception	10.05.26	Peacehaven 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, Community Engagement & Democratic Services Manager.

## **Report 203/25 Appendix A**

### **Mayor's Report to April 2026 Town Council**

My year as Mayor of Seaford is rapidly coming to a close. It has certainly ended on a high point. The period after Christmas is traditionally a quiet time in the civic diary but things did not stay quiet for long.

Highlights of this season include attending the Presentation of the King's Award for Voluntary Service to Friends of Bishopstone Station in the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex on 12 February 2026. Peter White, the Seaford Town Crier and Serjeant at Mace, in his remarkable fiftieth year of service in the role, introduced the joyful procedures.

I am pleased to confirm that we have secured a Deputy Town Crier who will take up his duties towards the end of this civic year.

Peter White and I had the honour to represent the town during the visit of the His Majesty King Charles III on 19 March 2026. This celebrated two events: the announcement of the new Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve including most of Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve, and the official opening of the King Charles III English Coastal Path.

I was formally presented to The King by Mr. Andrew Blackman, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex as the representative of Seaford alongside other local dignitaries, officials and the local MP. I was able to assure His Majesty that local residents very much appreciate their beautiful natural surroundings and care deeply about their protection.

In glorious sunshine in the walled garden at Saltmarsh Farmhouse, His Majesty mixed informally with representatives from National England, National Trust and South Downs National Park Authority. His personal and detailed knowledge of rural and environmental issues was obvious. Although not allowed to take the Seaford Elizabethan Town Mace, I am pleased to report that Peter White was permitted to "raise three cheers for His Majesty!" as His Majesty left the gathering. It was a truly memorable occasion.

His Majesty then walked from Exceat to South Hill Barn along the newly renovated section of his eponymous King Charles III Path. He was accompanied by the Environment Secretary, the Chair of Natural England and the Lord Lieutenant of East

Sussex. Several members of the public were taken unawares by their famous fellow walker. He seemed to take delight in being away from crowds and formality, given the discrete but inevitable security requirements involved.

Unsurprisingly such a photogenic event received considerable national and international media coverage and has enhanced the profile and reputation of our area.

We then joined a number of other guests in an award celebration for the National Nature Reserve, stressing the role of partnership in protecting the environment. We later boarded a tractor-drawn trailer and were taken up the hill to a viewpoint on Lullington Heath which is part of the new Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, linking with Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve.

Whilst celebrating the widespread national publicity about the beauty of our local countryside we are constantly aware of our responsibility for sustainable tourism, water conservation, land management and environmental protection.

My thanks to all agencies, partners and council officers involved in making the day such a success.



My final fundraising event of the civic calendar took place at the Baptist Church on 28 March 2026. Lunch was prepared by staff and volunteers of Family Support Work, the Sussex Children's charity that I have supported this year.

We were joined by two ex-High Sheriffs of East Sussex, one of whom had stepped down from the role the previous day and one who has now become Chairman of the charity. Nearly sixty guests attended the lunch which was followed by the sale of work by a local watercolour artist, generously donated by his widow. It was a joyful, positive event and raised significant funds for charity coffers at a time when need is rising at an unprecedented rate.

Again, the behind-the-scenes work involved was considerable. My thanks to everyone involved.

Despite having lived in Seaford for more than thirty years, my civic role has allowed me to meet many fascinating people I would not have encountered – now including royalty. I am continually surprised at the variety of activities, the generosity of so many people and the community spirit and resilience I have witnessed in uncertain and challenging times.

My April – May diary is filling up with musical/charity/farewell events before mayors reach the end of their mayoral terms. I am particularly looking forward to the Seaford Town Forum on 30 April 2026, where I have the privilege of formally thanking people and organisations who have gone “above and beyond” for the community. Please join me if you can and meet our new Deputy Town Crier.

Thankyou once again to the councillor colleagues who elected me and the officers who have supported me with patience and good humour. Last, but not least, to my consort husband who has been so supportive in my role this year.

***Councillor Maggie Wearmouth,***

***Mayor of Seaford 2025 to 2026***



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>212/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Town Clerk's Update Report – April 2026</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Steve Quayle, Town Clerk</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To update Full Council on key Town Council work, and progress made towards the Strategy Programme 2025 - 2027</b>

<b>Actions</b>
<b>Full Council is advised:</b>
1. To consider the updates presented within the report. 2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

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

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The 2025 - 2026 Municipal Year has continued to be a busy and fast-moving time for the Town Council, with a vast array of workstreams ongoing.
- 1.2 On 19 March the Town Council formally joined seven other partners to launch the Seven Sisters Natural Nature Reserve (SSNNR). The launch event was marked by a royal visit from His Majesty The King and also coincided with the opening of the King Charles III England Coast Path.

- 1.3** Officers continue to work hard to progress and achieve the challenging objectives set within the Strategy Programme 2025 – 2027. Section 4 of this report provides an update on the progress made across the 25 Strategies and 79 Goals.
- 1.4** All recruitment to the Town Council's staffing structure (approved in December 2024) has now been completed. The vacant post of Maintenance Officer has been appointed to, with the appointed officer currently serving his notice with his previous employer. The new Funding & Contracts Officer started in post from 1 April undertaking a short handover period with the departing officer to help them 'hit the ground running'.
- 1.5** The Strategic Management Team (SMT) is now firmly embedded and continues to develop its focus on delivery and outcomes, seeking to set out a strategic oversight towards project completion. This is a welcome and impactful change, given the Town Council's significant period of 'firefighting' prior to the implementation of the new staffing structure. As planned, the vast majority of councillor-officer relations are now routinely conducted directly via the SMT (except for Planning & Highways matters).
- 1.6** Policy development has continued apace over the last quarter, with a multitude of new or revised policies being presented to the various Committees for onward adoption by Full Council. This workstream has had the effect of causing an Extraordinary Full Council meeting to be held on 29 April to focus predominantly on policy adoption because there was too much to fit into one agenda for this meeting.
- 1.7** As mentioned last quarter, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk are working up a proposal for specific named policies to be approved and adopted by committees without the need for Full Council ratification. This will require a safeguard to ensure a policy can be 'called in' and scrutinised by Full Council in the event several councillors are not content with the policy adoption. A proposed process for this to take place is being devised and will be brought forward to Full Council in due course, alongside the various changes that will need to be made to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers and other core documents.
- 1.8** The Town Council submitted its Expression of Interest for the UK Town of Culture 2028 towards the end of March. The former Funding & Contracts

Officer spent time pulling together an excellent entry and now we await the announcement from the Department of Culture Media & Sport to discover if the Town Council has been shortlisted for the next stage.

- 1.9** The Senior Committee Clerk has spent considerable time working on the local government reorganisation agenda, specifically in relation to the potential transfer of assets from Lewes District Council (LDC) between now and 31 March 2028 when LDC will be dissolved. This work has entailed detailed liaison with LDC leaders and much research into this complex and multi-faceted piece of work, alongside learnings from other local councils in the wider area who are further advanced along this journey. The latest update on this workstream features in two papers elsewhere on this agenda.
- 1.10** The annual Town Forum is organised for Thursday 30 April to be held at Cross Ways Church and all residents of Seaford are welcome to attend. This is not a statutory Town Council meeting and does not run with ‘Standing Orders’, but it is facilitated by the Town Council and is chaired by the Mayor. This year’s agenda features a presentation from the Town Clerk on activities over the past year and looking ahead to the 2026 – 2027 municipal year, a presentation from the Mayor’s chosen charity Family Support Works, the Mayor’s Awards and Don Mabey Award, and is finished off with a Q&A session for any topical question residents would like to pose.
- 1.11** Further to the last Full Council meeting, the Government announced on 16 February that it had changed its mind and had decided to hold the County Council elections on 7 May 2026. Since that time, the District and Borough Councils across the county (which have responsibility for running elections) have worked at pace to bring everything together to make this happen. Several of the Town Council’s officers have been appointed to act as polling staff on the day at various polling stations across the District.
- 1.12** The Town Clerk and Head of Place were recently invited to an introductory meeting with East Sussex Highways and Jackson Civil Engineering Group (Jacksons), the contractor who has been appointed for the redevelopment of the Exceat Bridge. The outline timeframe at this stage is that preliminary works will commence at the bridge site in June 2026 for a relatively short period of time, before a significant lull in the process while the pile

foundations are allowed to settle into the ground, before the extensive works to build the new bridge and decommission the existing bridge take place in the new year of 2027. Officers have now formed communication links with Jacksons' Public Liaison Officer and stressed the need for early notification of road closures wherever possible. Officers have also offered Seaford Town Council's Council Chamber as the venue for ongoing officer stakeholder meetings; an offer which has been accepted. The first such meeting is being scheduled for mid-May. This grouping will include officers from other town and parish councils affected, and representatives from other affected organisations. Officers will ensure councillors are kept abreast of news and updates as they become aware of them.

- 1.13** With the Cliff Gardens project continuing to be delivered by South Downs National Park Authority, officers are progressing the work of establishing a Maintenance and Management Agreement with Seaford Community Partnership. The plan is for a draft proposal of the Agreement to be approved by Full Council prior to the handover of the asset back to the Town Council once the work is completed.
- 1.14** In February, following auditions and interviews, the Town Council appointed a new Deputy Town Crier & Deputy Serjeant at Mace, Ben Robinson. Residents of Seaford may recognise Ben as 'Lord Monteagle' who leads the Seaford Bonfire procession each year. He will start in his new role at the aforementioned Town Forum on 30 April. For reassurance, Peter White has confirmed that he has no current intentions to retire, but as he approaches his incredible fiftieth year in the role, he recognises the advantages of imparting his vast experience and knowledge onto a deputy, who may, one day, step into the Town Crier's shoes. These are both honorary (unpaid) roles, but uniform costs and their upkeep rests with the Town Council.
- 1.15** The Town Council's largest single contract – Grounds Maintenance of its open spaces - commenced with a new supplier, Southern Land Services Ltd, on 1 April with a 3-year contract. Simultaneously two further contracts commenced, both with idverde Ltd, for urban grass verge cutting and Seaford in Bloom. Idverde have confirmed that the first cut of the urban grass verges will take place between 22-30 April. This being done late in

April should hopefully mean they should not grow too much out of control during 'No Mow May', before being cut again in June.

- 1.16** The Town Council's response to the Lewes Local Plan proposals was submitted in February 2026. Officers would like to thank the large number of residents who contributed to the process and helped inform the response submitted. In addition, the County Council's Lewes District Parking Review was responded to in February following similar engagement with residents.
- 1.17** Following approval by Full Council, officers are working at pace to introduce the trial pay and display scheme at South Hill Barn. At the time of writing, planning permission is awaited to install the parking meters, but once these are in situ the income generated will pay for car park attendants to:
- (a)** manage parking in the car park,
  - (b)** prevent parking along the side of the track,
  - (c)** allow coaches to turn around safely, and
  - (d)** create a 1-in-1-out system once the car park is full.
- 1.18** Hundreds of BN25 residents have already claimed their free resident's permit, and it is hoped that this trial will prove effective at better and more safely managing the car park, whilst not costing local residents anything extra, neither for parking, nor for the salary of the car park attendants.
- 1.19** The new Golf Course website ([www.seafordheadgolfcourse.co.uk](http://www.seafordheadgolfcourse.co.uk)) went live from the start of April. This now allows golfers to book and pay for their tee times online, and over coming months will be complemented with drone photo images and videos of the iconic golf course. It is also fully Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 compliant, which is a requirement for public sector websites. The new Town Council equivalent website is due to go live in coming months.
- 1.20** The Town Clerk successfully completed and passed the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification on 31 March 2026. This demonstrates the Town Council now has a professionally qualified Clerk and is crucial for the Town Council to be able to continue to possess the 'General Power of Competence' (Localism Act 2011), following on from the next council election in 2027.
- 1.21** This report is intended to provide a small flavour of the diverse projects and workstreams that are being worked on, as always there is myriad of other

workstreams ongoing. Officers continue to work hard to attend to all matters in a professional and timely manner for the betterment of Seaford.

## 2. Meeting Updates

- 2.1 Turning now to the various meetings involving councillors that have taken place since the last Full Council meeting on 29 January 2026:
- 2.2 **Full Council** met on 29 January to consider a very full agenda. Due to the amount to be discussed and the level of public participation, a number of items were not able to be discussed and were deferred. Amongst other items of business, Full Council did however: set the budget and precept for the 2026 – 2027 financial year; agree the meeting timetable for the 2026 – 2027 municipal year; agree the introduction of a trial of pay & display at South Hill Barn car park; consider a proposal from Seaford Lifeguards regarding a new lifeguard station and ultimately defer this to the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee for further detailed considerations; adopt the Interim Climate Action Plan January to August 2026; set new hire fees for Crouch Bowling Club, and; approve the sale of Hurdis House without planning permission on the open market.
- 2.3 **Full Council** then met again at an extraordinary meeting on 18 March to consider a number of policies that had been deferred from 29 January. Four revised policies were adopted, two were referred for further work, the risk arrangements and internal controls were reviewed and approved, and two exempt reports relating to a land and a staffing matter were considered.
- 2.4 **Assets & Facilities Committee** met on 26 February and, in addition to the usual update and financial reports: agreed the revised approach for Armed Forces Day going forwards; agreed the arrangements for the West View Seasonal Beach Huts Scheme 2026, and; rejected a request to operate a land train on the seafront for a trial period. The Committee also considered reports on a rebranded Bookings, Hire and Events Policy, which is being considered by Full Council on 29 April, and the provision of extra seafront litter bins, which also appears on 29 April Full Council agenda for consideration.
- 2.5 **Personnel Committee** met on 19 March and considered two draft policies which are now recommended for Full Council to adopt on 29 April – the Display Screen Equipment Users Policy and Staff Travel Expenses Policy.

The Committee also considered exempt reports relating to the Town Council's on call arrangements (the recommendations from which appear elsewhere on this agenda) and the approval of an external job evaluation process.

- 2.6 Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action (GOSCA) Committee** met on 5 March and, in addition to the usual update and financial reports: instructed officers to design and cost an option for the gravel strip adjacent to the Martello Tower (which is due to be considered by Full Council on 29 April); agreed to support Seaford Natural History Society's Seaford-wide biodiversity audit; approved various improvement works at High & Over and working with the National Trust's tenant farmer to introduce grazing onsite, and; considered a report on improvements to the Seaford Head Site of Special Scientific Interest, (the recommendation from which appears elsewhere on this agenda).
- 2.7 Finance & General Purposes Committee** met on 26 March and, in addition to the usual update and financial reports: has recommended a revised Interim Scheme of Delegation to Officers Policy and revised Discretionary Grants Policy to Full Council for adoption (being considered by Full Council on 29 April); formally closed the 2025 – 2026 Grants Scheme; received a status update on the work to digitalise the Town Council's systems, and wrote off a debt as unrecoverable.
- 2.8 Planning & Highways Committee** has met regularly throughout this period to consider a wide variety of planning, highways and tree works applications. Most notably, the Committee agreed its response to this stage of consultation on the Lewes Local Plan at its meeting on 12 February, and also submitted requests as part of East Sussex County Council's Lewes District Parking Review.

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

Please find below updates on formal resolutions passed since the start of the Municipal Year 2025 - 2026.

**Following councillor feedback at the last Full Council meeting, those resolutions that have been actioned and previously reported have now been removed from the list below.**

Please note these motions are only those where actions were required.

*(Comments in italic are updates from the last version of this table):*

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
June 2025	Establish a working group of GOSCA members to draft the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and review the Climate Emergency Policy (CEP)	Working Group formed at GOSCA. The CEP is due to be reviewed in 2026. <i>The CAP was approved by Full Council in January 2026.</i>
June 2025	2024 – 2025 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) approved by Full Council for submission to the External Auditor	AGAR submitted to the External Auditor and the Town Council awaits a response from the External Auditor
June 2025	Full Council agreed its response to an objection that had been submitted to the External Auditor in relation to the 2023 – 2024 AGAR	The Town Council's response was submitted to the External Auditor and objector, <i>and awaits a response from the External Auditor</i>
June 2025	Full Council appointed a new Internal Auditor for the 2025 – 2026 financial year, Parish and Town Audit Services (PATAS)	<i>The interim internal audit update report was received by Full Council in January. The final audit of the 2025 – 2026 financial year will take place in May 2026. A report will be brought to Full Council in June 2026 regarding appointing</i>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
		<i>an Internal Auditor for 2026 - 2027</i>
June 2025	South Hill Farm Business Tenancy agreed	Approved by June Full Council, with the lease finalised in September.  The Farming Objective Plan is still being finalised and will be presented to GOSCA for noting and comment on
June 2025	An update on devolution was considered, with councillors to identify preferred District Council assets to be further investigated	<i>Both a public and an exempt report appear elsewhere on this agenda relating to this workstream</i>
June 2025	Discussions were held around the Town Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract ahead of this being tendered for on the open market	<i>The Grounds Maintenance Contracts were awarded in March 2026 with the two firms commencing work from 1 April 2026</i>
June 2025	Approval of the installation of a cycle rack in The Crouch	Reinstated by GOSCA in November 2025. Resolved to increase the budget for the works to take place in 2026 - 2027 due to budget pressures.

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
July 2025	To carry out a survey in 2026 on Seaford Street Market and use the results to inform a decision on the issuing of a street market licence for 2026	<i>Projects &amp; Facilities Team are now planning to bring the results of the 2026 consultation to A&amp;F Cttee in July</i>
August 2025	Approval of the South Downs National Park Authority taking over delivery of the Cliff Gardens Project under a licence to occupy and with a Memorandum of Understanding in place, with a management and maintenance agreement to be entered into with Seaford Community Partnership	Ongoing project  <i>Officer discussions with SCP have commenced to work up the Maintenance &amp; Management Agreement</i>
September 2025	Approval of the costs to be incurred to correct and bring up to date the Town Council's Land Registry affairs	Ongoing project
September 2025	Full Council agreed its response to an objection that had been submitted to the External Auditor in relation to the 2023 – 2024 AGAR	The Town Council's response was submitted to the External Auditor and objector <i>and awaits a response from the External Auditor</i>
September 2025	GOSCA approved a new floodlight structure for the Rugby Club, subject to planning permission and officers approving the final placement, installation, coordination, and site logistics at The Salts Recreation Ground	Ongoing

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
November 2025	A&F resolved to establish a Concessions Working Group	<i>The working group held its first meeting on 25 March – five councillors are now on the group, which is due to report its recommendations back to A&amp;F Cttee in September 2026</i>
December 2025	F&GP recommended 'Option 3' of the Full Council budget for approval by Full Council	<i>Approved by Full Council on 29 January 2026</i>
January 2026	Full Council approved a storage container for Premier Football on the Salts, with the specific footprint to be identified by officers and for Premier Football to be granted a supplementary license, and for officers and relevant Chairs to finalise terms of the associated lease and license.	Officer conversations ongoing with Premier Football
January 2026	Full Council delegated authority to the Town Clerk to enter into a Collaboration Agreement with ESCC re parking enforcement at the Esplanade Car Park	<i>Collaboration Agreement formally entered into in February 2026</i>
January 2026	Full Council resolved to instruct officers to appoint the preferred bidders for the three Lots making up the Grounds Maintenance Contract, and delegated authority to the Town Clerk to agree operational details and execute	<i>Contracts entered into in March 2026. New contracts commenced on 1 April 2026</i>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
	necessary contracts and paperwork with each Lot	
January 2026	Full Council resolved to approve proposals laid out in Section 7 of exempt report regarding Staffing Situation	Ongoing
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council approved a one year trial of a pay &amp; display scheme at South Hill Barn car park, subject to necessary permissions, in addition to approval of the expenditure for legal advice on the access road and the legal process to discharge or modify the agricultural covenant on the title</i>	<i>Work ongoing to prepare for the one year trial, with resident's parking permits now available for collection and public communications issued about the trial.</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council approved the budget and precept for the 2026 – 2027 financial year</i>	<i>Actioned</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council rejected a proposal to lease Seaford Lifeguards an area within the Esplanade Car Park for a new lifeguard station and instead referred this to GOSCA for further consideration</i>	<i>Work ongoing</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council approved revised hire fees for Crouch Bowling Club due to the Club taking on the fine turf management of the bowling green</i>	<i>Actioned</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council approved the sale of Hurdis House without planning permission on the open market</i>	<i>Work is ongoing following Full Council's approval to sell the building – an exempt report</i>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
		<i>appears elsewhere on this agenda in relation to this matter</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council adopted the Interim Climate Action Plan January to August 2026</i>	<i>Actioned – work ongoing to deliver against this plan</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council agreed to extend the trial of the new Committee structure by a further year to include the 2026 – 2027 municipal year</i>	<i>Actioned – officers will bring a report back to Full Council in October 2026 facilitating a review of this extended trial</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Full Council approved the 2026 – 2027 Meetings Timetable</i>	<i>Actioned</i>
<i>February 2026</i>	<i>Planning &amp; Highways approved the final response to this stage of Lewes District Council's consultation on the Lewes Local Plan</i>	<i>Submitted</i>
<i>February 2026</i>	<i>Planning &amp; Highways agreed the Town Council's submission to be fed into East Sussex County Council's Lewes Parking Review</i>	<i>Submitted</i>
<i>February 2026</i>	<i>A&amp;F approved the revised format for Armed Forces Day, that the Town Council will use its communication channels to promote support services and digital campaigns, and that any underspend in this year's budget be earmarked for future use</i>	<i>Work ongoing</i>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
<i>February 2026</i>	<i>A&amp;F approved the details of the West View Seasonal Beach Hut Scheme 2026</i>	<i>Work ongoing – bookings are now live through Lemon Bookings and a report on the outcome of the 2026 scheme will be brought back to A&amp;F in December 2026</i>
<i>February 2026</i>	<i>A&amp;F rejected a proposal from a third party to operate a land train on Seaford seafront for a trial period in May 2026</i>	<i>Actioned and feedback provided to third party operator</i>
<i>February 2026</i>	<i>A&amp;F recommended a rebranded Bookings, Hire &amp; Events Policy to Full Council for adoption</i>	<i>Being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>GOSCA instructed officers to design and cost the option of bollards along the gravel strip adjacent to Martello Tower</i>	<i>Being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>GOSCA agreed the Town Council's support for Seaford Natural History Society's Seaford-wide biodiversity audit</i>	<i>The Town Council's support has been communicated to the Society</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>GOSCA approved various improvement works at High &amp; Over and entering into a grazing licence with the National Trust's tenant farmer</i>	<i>Work ongoing</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>GOSCA recommended that Full Council approve entering into a Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement and the spend on the capital works to be partly</i>	<i>A report appears elsewhere on this agenda relating to this matter</i>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
	<i>reclaimed from the Rural Payments Agency</i>	
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council adopted the updated Purchase Ordering and Payment for Goods and Services Policy</i>	<i>Actioned</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council adopted the new Absence Management Policy</i>	<i>Actioned</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council deferred consideration of the Sexual Harassment Policy until after a period of staff consultation on the proposed policy</i>	<i>Due to be brought back to Personnel on 21 May</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council deferred adoption to the Menopause Policy to the Personnel Committee, subject to satisfactory changes to the policy</i>	<i>Due to be brought back to Personnel on 21 May</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council agreed the revised Staff Handbook and that this no longer be classified as a policy – officers have the ability to update the handbook as required</i>	<i>Actioned – the ongoing delegated power to officers has been added to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers Policy being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council agreed a course of action relating to a confidential staffing matter</i>	<i>Work ongoing</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Full Council agreed that the Town Council would bid on a parcel of land under the powers bestowed by section 124 of the Local Government Act 1972</i>	<i>The Town Council was unsuccessful in acquiring this parcel of land</i>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Personnel recommended a revised Display Screen Equipment Users Policy to Full Council for adoption</i>	<i>Being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Personnel recommended a revised Staff Travel Expenses Policy to Full Council for adoption</i>	<i>Being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Personnel recommended that Full Council approves the necessary spend to introduce a six month trial of officer on call arrangements</i>	<i>A report appears elsewhere on this agenda relating to this matter</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>Personnel approved that an external consultant be commissioned to undertake a job evaluation process</i>	<i>Work ongoing</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>F&amp;GP recommended the revised Interim Scheme of Delegation to Officers Policy to Full Council for adoption</i>	<i>Being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>F&amp;GP formally closed the 2025 – 2026 Grants Scheme</i>	<i>No action required</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>F&amp;GP recommended the revised Discretionary Grants Policy to Full Council for adoption</i>	<i>Being considered by Full Council on 29 April</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>F&amp;GP agreed to write off a debt of £685 as unrecoverable</i>	<i>Actioned</i>

3.1 Other actions discussed within Committee meetings are captured by officers, but do not appear above as they are not formal resolutions.

#### **4. Strategy Programme 2025 - 2027**

4.1 **Appendix A** presents a narrative update for each of the 79 objectives within the Strategy Programme 2025-2027, alongside a RAG rating (red,

amber, green rating) to demonstrate the progress for each one in comparison to the timeframe envisaged in the Strategy Programme.

## **5. Conclusion**

5.1 I am hopeful this report provides councillors and residents with an overview of key Town Council activities, and provides assurance on the progress towards the new Strategy Programme 2025 - 2027.

## **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, Town Clerk.

### STC Strategy Programme 2025-2027

October 2025 - October 2027  
(To be reviewed and updated October 2026)

Strategy	Ref	Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable)	Realistic Timeframe	Committee Oversight	Lead Officers <small>(main contact underlined)</small>	Progress RAG Rating									Latest Update	
						25/26 Q3	25/26 Q4	26/27 Q1	26/27 Q2	26/27 Q3	26/27 Q4	27/28 Q1	27/28 Q2	27/28 Q3		
<b>1 ECONOMIC: Promote and develop a thriving Town, enabling future opportunities for economic wellbeing and an active community</b>																
1.1	Concession, Licence, Lease Management	A	Establish A&F 'Concessions Working Group' to review the current concession, lease and licence process/arrangements	Nov-25	A&F	Operations Manager, HOP & Town Clerk	A	G							A) The Working Group has now been properly constituted with 5 Councillor members and met for the first time in March with future meetings scheduled B) Officers plan to take WG's recommendations to A&F in September and FC in October	
		B	A&F Concessions Working Group to devise recommendations and obtain Full Council approval	Oct-26			G	G								
		C	Implement new processes and arrangements	Apr-27			G	G								
1.2	Improve Accessibility of STC website & Golf Course website	A	Identify areas of improvement required for 'WCAG 2.2' protocols compliance across both websites	Dec-25	F&GP	Comm.Eng Manager & DTC	Completed									A) Completed B) Both websites have now been made WCAG 2.2 compliant.
		B	Make necessary changes required to ensure 95% score rating is achieved	Apr-26			G	Completed								
		C	Monitor continued compliance and address failings, as necessary	Mar-27			G	G								
1.3	Improve & Refresh Signage	A	Refresh Heritage Board Signage, in conjunction with Museum & Heritage Society and Seaford Chamber of Commerce	May-26	A&F	Operations Manager & HOP	G	R							A) Museum/Chamber have advised they now wish to install digital interactive boards, this will require additional funding and further development delaying the completion of this goal B) Ongoing, on track to be completed by May 2026	
		B	Undertake signage audit across STC sites, identifying improvements available, and where amalgamation can occur	May-26			G	G								
		C	Commence incremental programme of signage changes, following on from signage audit	Jul-26			G	G								
1.4	Golf Course Improvements <small>(* Dependent on Higher Tier Funding from RPA)</small>	A	* Prepare necessary works for the redevelopment of the 17th green and 18th tees	Sep-26	GOSCA	Golf Course Manager, HOP & Town Clerk	G	G							A) Designs have been completed and NE and County Archaeologist/Historic England have been engaged C) This requires FC approval of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, which is on the 23 April FC agenda D) Due to be installed in May 2026 E) Due to be commenced in May 2026	
		B	* Achieve required approvals to commence works on 17th green and 18th tees	Sep-27			G	G								
		C	* Create new rides through scrub areas	Apr-27			G	G								
		D	Install new washdown facilities to recycle water and clippings	Apr-27			G	G								
		E	Commence a programme of extending wildflower areas	Apr-27			G	G								

Strategy	Ref	Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable)	Realistic Timeframe	Committee Oversight	Lead Officers ( <u>main contact</u> <u>underlined</u> )	Progress RAG Rating									Latest Update
						25/26 Q3	25/26 Q4	26/27 Q1	26/27 Q2	26/27 Q3	26/27 Q4	27/28 Q1	27/28 Q2	27/28 Q3	
<b>2 WELLBEING: Develop &amp; deliver projects to support the wellbeing of the Town's residents</b>															
2.1	Evidence Base for New Community Centre	A	Map the community group provision already existing in the town	Feb-26	A&F	Operations Manager & HOP	G	A							A) A Projects & Facilities Officer is working on this, but it is delayed - now aiming for completion by June 2026 B) Due to above delay - now aiming for September 2026 C) Worked up project still aiming for October refresh of Strategy Programme
		B	Engage with residents and stakeholders to map the need for further provision	Jul-26			G	A							
		C	Finalise and, if approved, work up project including next steps, as appropriate (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Oct-26			G	G							
2.2	The Salts Improvement Plan	A	Undertake consultations with key stakeholders	Mar-26	GOSCA	Operations Manager & HOP	R	A							A) As previously advised, this will now be completed by May 2026
		B	Develop a selection of plans in partnership with planning authority	Oct-26			G	G							
		C	Undertake public consultation on proposed plans, to find a preferred solution	Mar-27			G	G							
		D	Finalise and achieve Full Council resolution for preferred solution (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Oct-27			G	G							
2.3	Acquisition / Disposal of Assets	A	Work to acquire appropriate LDC assets, ensuring they deliver positive impact for Seaford and are sustainable for STC	May-27	A&F	Operations Manager, HOP & Town Clerk	G	G							A) There is a paper on the agenda for 23 April FC to consider this and progress B) The building is now for sale, following January FC approval C) Sussex Police have very recently written to Town Clerk regarding the future of Church Street ( <i>exempt subject matter so no further detail is appropriate here</i> ) D) No officer capacity to progress this has been available
		B	Reach a final decision on future of Hurdis House - then action decision	Feb-26			G	G							
		C	Devise plan for future office location of STC (including the option to remain at Church Street, if appropriate)	May-26			A	A							
		D	Review management / potential sale of STC-owned Martello Beach Huts and obtain approval for recommendation	May-26			G	R							
2.4	Parking Solutions	A	Undertake a comprehensive review all STC car parking management	Mar-27	GOSCA	Operations Manager & HOP	G	G							B) Planning permission for parking machines awaited. Agency car park attendants managed site for two weeks of Easter Holidays. Recruitment of car park attendants being progressed. Residents permits being issued. C) On agenda for 29 April FC
		B	If approved, undertake trial of pay and display (consider BN25 resident discount) at South Hill Barn car park	Jun-26			G	G							
		C	Plans for gravel strip options west of Martello Tower, and obtain approval for recommendation	Oct-26			G	G							
2.5	Emergency Plan	A	Establish links with Sussex partners and understand overarching SRF's plans and how to complement them	Jan-26	Full Council	Operations Manager, HOP & Town Clerk	R	R							A) Ongoing conversations taking place with partners. Not yet clear how STC can complement the plans of the Sussex SRF partners - more work to do
		B	Develop a Seaford Community Emergency Plan involving councillors, community groups and local emergency services	Jun-26			G	G							
		C	Seek Full Council adoption of the Seaford Community EP, and then monitor and adapt plan as circumstances dictate	Oct-26			G	G							

Strategy	Ref	Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable)	Realistic Timeframe	Committee Oversight	Lead Officers (main contact <u>underlined</u> )	Progress RAG Rating										Latest Update		
						25/26 Q3	25/26 Q4	26/27 Q1	26/27 Q2	26/27 Q3	26/27 Q4	27/28 Q1	27/28 Q2	27/28 Q3				
<b>3 FACILITIES / ASSETS: Develop and maintain assets, settings and recreational facilities</b>																		
3.1	South Hill Barn Project	A	Compile reports and studies needed to bring Stage 1 of the project to a conclusion	Dec-25	SHB WG & Full Council	Senior Projects Officer & <u>HOP</u>	R	R								A) As advised previously, the WG have paused work whilst legal issues are explored B) Stage 1 of project cannot proceed while the outstanding legal work mentioned above is unresolved C) Without Stage 1 completion and approval, Stage 2 cannot commence		
		B	Present Stage 1 of project to Full Council. Seek to obtain approval to move to Stage 2 including necessary budget	Jan-26			R	R										
		C	Commence Stage 2 of project in line with project plan (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Apr-26			A	R										
3.2	Toilet Provision	A	Review and run tender for toilet cleaning and maintenance	Feb-26	A&F	Operations Manager & <u>HOP</u>	G	A								A) Tender process run - 24 applicants - scoring process delayed due to high numbers B) Work in progress D) Quotes are being obtained		
		B	Review toilet provision - town centre, seafront and open spaces, considering options for internal/external provision	Oct-26			G	G										
		C	Develop plan for toilets provision and obtain approval for recommendation (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Jan-27			G	G										
		D	Establish viability of the reinstatement of public toilet at The Crouch (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Jul-26			G	G										
3.3	Seafront Bin Provision	A	Undertake review to ensure best possible management of seafront bins, including options to help prevent overspill	Mar-26	A&F	Operations Manager & <u>HOP</u>	G	G							A) A&F in March approved recommended proposals. Worked up paper to seek approval which appears on 29 April FC agenda			
		B	Trial various options through summer 2026 to see what has an impact	Jun-26			G	G										
		C	Review success of 2026 trials and work up future plans, informed by review (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Nov-26			G	G										
3.4	Grounds Maintenance Contract	A	Undertake tendering process to appoint Ground Maintenance Contractors	Nov-25	GOSCA	Operations Manager, <u>HOP</u> & <u>Town Clerk</u>	Completed										A) Completed B) Contracts issued and commenced on 1 April 2026	
		B	Award and onboard new Grounds Maintenance Contract appointed contractor	Apr-26			G	Completed										
		C	One year comprehensive review of Grounds Maintenance Contract	Apr-27			G	G										
3.5	Hope Gap Steps	A	Make an informed, final Full Council decision on the future of Hope Gap Steps	Oct-25	Full Council	Senior Projects Officer & <u>HOP</u>	R	R							A) FC voted to defer this decision in October FC and delay by six months whilst officers tendered for a contractor to provide a quote. Quotes and a proposal contained in 23 April FC agenda B) The above will continue to delay B			
		B	Commence process of implementing decision (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Apr-26			R	R										

Strategy	Ref	Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable)	Realistic Timeframe	Committee Oversight	Lead Officers ( <u>main contact</u> <u>underlined</u> )	Progress RAG Rating									Latest Update
						25/26 Q3	25/26 Q4	26/27 Q1	26/27 Q2	26/27 Q3	26/27 Q4	27/28 Q1	27/28 Q2	27/28 Q3	

4 ENGAGEMENT: Give voice to residents actively directing our priorities to reflect their needs																
4.1	Communications Strategy & Working Digitally	A	Review STC's website and establish need for revised website, or completely new website	Dec-25	F&GP	Comm.Eng Manager & DTC	Completed									A) Completed B) New golf course website went live from 1 April 2026. New STC website to go live in June 2026 C) New comms plan being worked up - in process of officer and councillor engagement. Resident engagement via council tax leaflet
		B	Make improvements to website resulting from review, or commence tender for new website if replacement necessary	Mar-26			G	G								
		C	Review STC's communication methods. Map audiences, preferred communication methods and branding of STC	Dec-26			G	G								
4.2	Youth Ambassador Board	A	Establish Youth Ambassador Board in conjunction with Seaford Head School and other educational settings	Oct-25	F&GP	Comm.Eng Manager	G	G						A) & B) Despite shaky start, YAB now has 7 active young people as members, supported by the school. Meetings have commenced and very positive feedback so far		
		B	Facilitate rolling schedule of meetings with Youth Ambassador Board	Nov-25			G	G								
		C	Obtain feedback from participants on effectiveness and potential improvements going forwards	Jun-26			G	G								
4.3	Weekend Cover/Seafront Management Plan	A	Review need for an on-call weekend officer or a Seafront Officer to patrol weekends in peak season	Jan-26	Personnel	HR Manager, DTC & HOP	Completed									A) Completed - officers have reviewed and agreed an optional on-call weekend rota of officers is most appropriate B) Personnel in March recommended proposals, which are on the 23 April FC agenda
		B	Obtain approval for preferred solution. Recruit appropriate officer, if necessary. Personnel policies to be updated	Mar-26			G	G								
		C	If approved, implement either on-call officer or Seafront management officer in line with new staffing budgets	May-26			G	G								

Strategy	Ref	Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable)	Realistic Timeframe	Committee Oversight	Lead Officers ( <u>main contact</u> <u>underlined</u> )	Progress RAG Rating									Latest Update	
						25/26 Q3	25/26 Q4	26/27 Q1	26/27 Q2	26/27 Q3	26/27 Q4	27/28 Q1	27/28 Q2	27/28 Q3		
<b>5 GOVERNANCE: Practice ethical and sustainable governance that demonstrates fiscal responsibility and sustainability</b>																
5.1	Land & Leases	A	Review of existing leases and contracts, including the undertaking of rent reviews	Sep-26	Full Council	<u>Assets &amp; Contracts Manager</u>	G	G							A) & B) Ongoing workstreams - continuing to progress	
		B	Register all land owned by STC correctly at HM Land Registry	Sep-26		G	G									
5.2	Financial Management	A	Identify areas of STC governance practice for review and improvement	Mar-26	F&GP	Finance Manager, <u>DTC &amp; Town Clerk</u>	G	G							A) Ongoing review of all financial management practice ongoing and being progressed by RFO and Finance Manager B) Interim internal audit done and recommendations progressed. Full Internal Audit not due until summer D) Approx. £100k of CIL funding allocated to be spent on Strategy Programme projects in 2026 - 2027. Remaining CIL money to be identified for spend in 2027 - 2028	
		B	Carry out internal audit and implement recommendations	Jul-26			G	G								
		C	Undertake a 'peer review' of STC's performance and management	Jan-27			G	G								
		D	Confirm priorities for CIL spending plans (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Oct-26			G	G								
5.3	Policy & Risk Management	A	Review all STC policies and identify priority list of those that need creating / reviewing / updating	Dec-25	Personnel/ F&GP	Policy & Risk Officer, HR Manager, <u>DTC &amp; Town Clerk</u>	Completed									A) Completed B) Ongoing, however already a large number of new/revised policies have been considered by committees and FC C) Risk Register brought to March FC. SMT quarterly review will commence from the next quarter D) Working on, but cautious of deadline
		B	Develop, seek approval, and implement policy creation, review and update for all policies	Mar-27			G	G								
		C	Update, maintain and publish Risk Register, alongside establishment of SMT quarterly review of risk register	Mar-26			G	G								
		D	Develop / test BCP for continued operation of STC in the event of fire, flood, building loss, cyber attack, etc	Jun-26			G	A								
5.4	Back Office Digitalisation	A	Establish options for digitalising and modernising processes, including base lines and improvement aspirations	Mar-26	F&GP	<u>DTC &amp; Town Clerk</u>	G	G							A) & B) Already introduced IT systems, payroll/HR, bookings, asset management, and golf bookings. Further work being done to digitalise the Purchase Order process	
		B	Commission best option/s, following on from approval	Jul-26			G	G								
		C	One year comprehensive review of efficacy and improvements gained from new option/s, alongside lessons learned	Jul-27			G	G								

Strategy	Ref	Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable)	Realistic Timeframe	Committee Oversight	Lead Officers (main contact underlined)	Progress RAG Rating									Latest Update	
						25/26 Q3	25/26 Q4	26/27 Q1	26/27 Q2	26/27 Q3	26/27 Q4	27/28 Q1	27/28 Q2	27/28 Q3		
<b>6 CLIMATE: To help create a sustainable Seaford, resilient to the effects of climate change</b>																
6.1	Climate Action Plan & Climate Emergency Policy	A	Working Group and officers to pull together final proposals and obtain approval from Committee and Full Council	Apr-26	GOSCA	<u>HOP</u>	G	A								A) CAP approved by January FC. CEP to follow, subject to GOSCA approval, but HOP arranging WG to meet to progress
		B	Ensure all features from Climate Action Plan are successfully rolled out (Oct-26 refresh to dictate next steps)	Nov-27				G	G							
6.2	Fields in Trust	A	Establish pros and cons of Fields in Trust and bring paper to Full Council enabling informed decision	Jan-26	Full Council	<u>Assets &amp; Contracts Manager</u>	A	G								A) Deferred due to clash with Lewes Local Plan. Now on agenda for 23 April FC B) Due to delay above, this may delay next steps
		B	Subject to approval of proposal, rollout Fields in Trust status to Martello Fields, The Crouch and The Salts	Jun-26			A	A								
		C	Consider Fields in Trust status on other land, including applicable land acquired from LDC's asset devolution agenda	Jan-27			G	G								
6.3	Chalk Paths - Seaford Head Estate	A	Restoration of chalk paths on route past Coastguard Cottages, consideration given to sinking fund to restore five-yearly	May-27	GOSCA	<u>Operations Manager &amp; HOP</u>	G	G								A) Partly done by SDNPA/NE/EA. Officers obtaining quotes for the remaining parts. SDNPA CIL application made. B) Officers have engaged with ESCC and SDNPA, site inspection has taken place and work requirement agreed but they have limited capacity and budget to undertake works. C) CIL application being made to SDNPA & LDC
		B	Work alongside ESCC for restoration of chalk footpath from Splash Point to Seaford Head via external funding	Apr-27			G	A								
		C	Restoration of path and improvements to access and conservation at High & Over in conjunction with SDNPA and NT	Mar-27			G	G								
6.4	Cliff Gardens	A	Establish a Memorandum of Understanding with SDNPA & SCP. Provide SDNPA with a Licence to Occupy	Oct-25	GOSCA	<u>Senior Projects Officer &amp; HOP</u>	Completed									A) Completed B) Ongoing - deadline is dependent on speed of project (out of STC's hands) C) Meetings have commenced between officers and SCP to work up M&M agreement
		B	Assist and oversee the delivery of the Cliff Gardens project - delivered by SDNPA but with STC project officer oversight	Jun-26			A	G								
		C	Establish Management & Maintenance (M&M) framework with SCP. Implement M&M to oversee ongoing maintenance	Sep-26			G	G								

**Glossary of acronyms:**

- A&F Assets & Facilities Committee
- BCP Business Continuity Plan
- CIL Community Infrastructure Levy
- Comm. Eng. Manager Community Engagement & Democratic Services Manager
- DTC Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
- EA Environment Agency
- EP Emergency Planning / Plan
- ESCC East Sussex County Council
- F&GP Finance & General Purposes Committee
- FC Full Council
- GOSCA Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee
- HLF Higher Level Funding
- HOP Head of Place
- LDC Lewes District Council
- M&M Management and maintenance
- NE Natural England
- NT National Trust
- Q Quarter (of the year)
- RAG Red, Amber, Green rating
- RPA Rural Payments Agency
- SCP Seaford Community Partnership
- SDNPA South Downs National Park Authority
- SHB South Hill Barn
- SMT Strategic Management Team
- SRF Sussex Resilience Forum
- STC Seaford Town Council
- WCAG Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- WG Working Group
- YAB Youth Ambassador Board

**RAG Rating Glossary**

- R Red = significant problems or delay in timescale or unacceptable risk
- A Amber = caution / potential issues
- G Green = good / on track
- Completed Completed



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>202/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Complaints, Freedom of Information Requests, and Appeals Update Report – April 2026</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Isabelle Mouland, Community Engagement &amp; Democratic Services Manager</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To update Full Council on complaints, Freedom of Information requests, and appeals</b>

### **Actions**

#### **Full Council is advised:**

1. To consider the updates presented within 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.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** This report provides Full Council with updates on complaints, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and appeals.

## **2. Complaints**

- 2.1** Since the last update was written, a formal complaint was received on 27 January titled '*Failure to assess current hire charges for Crouch bowling green and STC report 159/25 adopting incorrect figures*'.
- 2.2** In accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Procedure, the complaint was investigated and responded to by an appropriate Town Council Officer.

The investigation concluded that the complaint was not upheld. The response to the complaint has been appealed, please see section 4 below.

**2.3** Furthermore, a complaint was received from Seaford Town Football Club regarding the pitch markings at The Crouch. This complaint was resolved.

### **3. Freedom of Information Requests**

**3.1** The table below sets out updates regarding FOI requests since the last Full Council meeting in January 2026:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>FOI REQUEST</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>
April 2024	The View lease	In Progress - currently on hold pending resolution of a legal matter
April 2025	STC job roles enquiry	Provided in Part – this was delayed until all job descriptions were finalised following the restructure
December 2025	Cost of all of Seaford's Christmas arrangements	In Progress – timeline extended while we await the final income figures from the 2025 Seaford Christmas Magic event
February 2026	Station Approach Promotional Sign	Response Sent
February 2026	29/1/26 Full meeting - Item 4 South Hill Barn	Response Sent
March 2026	STC Report into Sites for the Newlands S106 Funding	Response Sent

**3.2** Where FOI requests are received, officers review these for patterns and identify any steps to be taken as a result of this i.e. publishing information that has not previously been published, issuing communications to better explain the Town Council's stance on a matter or actions being undertaken, or reviewing the ease of locating information on the Town Council's website, to provide examples.

### **4. Appeals**

- 4.1** The Town Clerk has received one appeal since the last Full Council meeting on 29 January 2026. The appeal challenges the conclusion of the complaint referenced in section 2 of this report.
- 4.2** In accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Procedure, the Town Clerk is able to undertake an impartial review of the appeal, as they were not involved in the original investigation or in determining the initial outcome.
- 4.3** The Appellant has been contacted and will be informed of the appeal outcome in due course.

## **5. Financial Appraisal**

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

## **6. Contact Officer**

- 6.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Isabelle Mouland, Community Engagement & Democratic Services Manager.



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>155/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Fields in Trust</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Peter Cousin, Head of Place</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To provide an update on the Fields in Trust programme and for Full Council to decide if it wishes to proceed towards Fields in Trust status for any or all of The Crouch, The Salts Recreation Ground and/or Martello Fields</b>

### **Actions**

#### **Full Council is advised:**

1. To consider the information provided on the Fields in Trust programme.
2. To discuss whether it wishes to proceed towards Fields in Trust status for any or all of the three sites listed within the report.
3. To note that (despite this contradicting the Town Council's 2022 decision), officers recommend that The Salts Recreation Ground is NOT placed into Fields in Trust status prior to the proposed Salts Improvement Plan, as detailed in the Strategy Programme 2025-2027.
4. To move to a vote on the motions below.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Full Council is recommended:**

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To agree whether an application should be made for Fields in Trust status, with the Deed/s of Dedication being brought back to Full Council for approval in due

course, for:

- a) The Crouch
- b) The Salts Recreation Ground
- c) Martello Fields

## **1. Caveat**

- 1.1** This matter has been brought to Full Council previously and has had a resolution passed in support of the proposal. Unusually, it is being brought back again to Full Council for another consideration. The reasons for this are set out below.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1** Fields in Trust (FIT) have been considered by councillors twice previously – initially in February 2021 by the former Community Services Committee and then again by Full Council in March 2022.
- 2.2** The latter of these meetings resolved to apply for FIT status for all three sites, with the associated Deeds of Dedication to be brought back to Full Council for approval.
- 2.3** For various reasons, this matter was then not progressed any further since that time.
- 2.4** Having reviewed the paperwork from 2021 and 2022, officers are concerned that councillors at that time did not receive a full briefing of the extent of what FIT status would mean for the three sites. Accordingly, it was felt proportionate that this paper would be brought to Full Council explaining the situation in greater detail and asking councillors to either ratify or reject the earlier decision.
- 2.5** Full Council is now asked to reconsider the information regarding the FIT programme and decide whether to proceed with applying for this status for any or all of the three sites.

## **3. Information**

- 3.1** The proposal for designating Town Council-owned recreational and green spaces as FIT was first reported to the former Community Services Committee at the meeting on 4 February 2021 (see report 132/20 of the [agenda available online](#), page 27 onwards).

**3.2** A further report was then brought to Full Council on 30 March 2022 (see report 132/20 of the [agenda available online](#), page 26 onwards). The motion was passed as follows:

*'It was resolved to approve that an application be made for Fields In Trust status for the three local sites, The Crouch, The Salts Recreation Ground and Martello Fields, and that the Deeds of Dedication for each site be brought to Full Council for approval in due course.'*

**3.3** In summary, the FIT programme to protect green spaces allows a 'Deed of Dedication' to be drawn up between the landowners and the Trust which creates a legal agreement that the land will be retained for use as 'a green space, usually a public park, playing field or recreation ground', 'in perpetuity'.

**3.4** The change of status does not remove the ownership of the land from the Town Council, but does ensure it remains as an open green space forever.

**3.5** Officers have been revisiting the status of this work, with a view to progressing this as part of the Strategy Programme 2025-2027. Following meetings with the Trust, and whilst beginning to identify and collate the required documents, it became apparent that there are financial and other implications of the FIT designation that were not highlighted to councillors in 2022.

#### Additional Information Not Previously Brought to Full Council

**3.6** An important factor to note is that by entering into FIT this will remove the Town Council's ability to freely and quickly make decisions on these assets outside of the limited scope and supervision enforced by FIT. Additionally, any significant changes to the green spaces may require the Town Council to pay a significant fee to the Trust for their legal consideration of the proposals.

**3.7** There are very limited routes to remove land from the FIT designation, namely that the Trust would require an equivalent piece of land to be designated in its place, and this swap would be subject to the Trust's approval and fee regime. It is highly unlikely the Town Council could ever find an equivalent alternative piece of land to be substituted, so in reality this means these pieces of land could never practically be removed from

FIT designation. This decision would therefore irrevocably bind all successor councillors.

**3.8** The Town Council must therefore be fully cognisant of:

- the potential financial implications it may incur in the future
- the potential for future proposals being refused by the Trust

**3.9** The Deed would have a certain level of flexibility built into it in discussion between the Town Council and the Trust. To this end, generally, changes to the spaces which are ancillary to its use as an outdoor space or recreational facility – ie. supporting the primary activities taking place – usually do not require consent.

**3.10** However, any changes which are not ancillary to the use of a space, such as new buildings, commercial leases, or changes of use, would require consent from FIT's Land & Planning Committee of Trustees, which may not be forthcoming. In addition, a significant fee is payable to FIT for each such request.

**3.11** Restrictions on what is permitted and what is not permitted without consent is outlined below. (Councillors are advised to read the detailed criteria available on the [Fields in Trust website](#) in advance of the meeting.) The below is intended as a summary only.

**3.12 Changes that do not require consent:**

**(a)** Any outdoor sport and recreational facilities, as long as they are open to the public.

**(b)** Changing the mix of outdoor sport and recreational facilities, including the addition of paths for cycling and/or walking.

**(c)** Licences, provided they do not give exclusive possession and are in line with the permitted use in the protection instrument.

**(d)** Fencing around sport and recreational facilities which does not restrict public access.

**(e)** Events that do not require closure of the protected green space or require closure of no more than 25% of the green space for less than 21 consecutive days (including set-up and set-down) per event.

**(f)** Tree planting or tree removal, other planting and wildflower areas, benches.

(g) Temporary compounds relating to improvement works within the protected space.

(h) Many measures to avoid, adapt or mitigate the actual or anticipated effects of climate change; and/or to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the protected space. Please see the [guidance](#) for further information.

**3.13** The following also do not require consent provided that the total structural and building footprint (including car parking) does not exceed 20% of the overall protected area:

(a) Sports pavilions

(b) Changing rooms

(c) Public toilets

(d) Storage facilities for sport and play equipment and machinery

(e) Cafes

**3.14 Changes that would require FIT consent and appropriate fees paid:**

(a) If any proposed changes are not in the lists above, the Town Council would likely need to apply for consent.

(b) Further details of changes that do or do not require consent can be found on the Fields in Trust website here [Making changes to protected parks | Fields in Trust](#)

(c) The Trust website details the fees payable for their consideration of consent, and they are not inconsiderable – ranging from £1,000 to £8,250 depending upon the complexity, with a further £2,500 being payable for a 5-day turnaround period in the event of an urgent decision.

**3.15** Specifically in relation to the Salts Recreation Ground, Strategy 2.2 of the Town Council's Strategy Programme 2025-2027 considers 'The Salts Improvement Plan'. Officers are therefore concerned about the inadvertent limitations that may be placed on such an Improvement Plan if the Salts were subject to FIT protection prior to the redevelopment taking place.

#### Existing Protection of Sites

**3.16** Both The Salts Recreation Ground and The Crouch are identified in the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan as Recreational Facilities, thus meaning that

change of use for these sites would not be supported unless:

- (a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- (b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- (c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

**3.17** The Crouch is also protected as a designated Local Green Space in the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan.

**3.18** A Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green spaces of particular importance to the local community.

**3.19** In addition to the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan's designated Local Green Spaces, Lewes District Council has identified all three sites to be assessed for designated Local Green Space status in its own Local Plan.

**3.20** Lewes District Council is currently running a *Lewes Local Plan - Local Green Space Designation - Call for Sites and Evidence* which can be found here: [https://planningpolicyconsult.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/LDC\\_LGS](https://planningpolicyconsult.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/LDC_LGS) as part of its consultation on the next stage of the Lewes Local Plan.

**3.21** The Local Government Act 1972 section 127 requires the Town Council to advertise any intended disposal of open space in a newspaper for two consecutive weeks and invite any comments or objections from the public that would then need to be taken into consideration. This affords a further level of protection and public engagement for any proposed disposal on any of the three sites.

**3.22** Seaford Town Council as a democratic public body would not be legally able to dispose or significantly change the management of the sites except by resolution from Full Council.

## **4. Conclusion**

**4.1** Designating the sites with FIT status would afford a further level of protection to the three sites, seeing them protected as a green space – usually as a public park, playing field or recreation space – in perpetuity.

- 4.2** The lack of a specific list of activities or actions that would require consent and fees to be paid does unfortunately make it impossible to quantify this as a risk / concern for the Town Council, but it is residual risk nonetheless.
- 4.3** Given this additional information, it is sensible for the Town Council to reconsider its stance before agreeing a course of action that will be binding in perpetuity and see the removal of local control (that of both the Town Council and the residents) from the decision-making around these sites.
- 4.4** Should the Town Council decide to proceed with dedicating any or all of the three sites into FIT then the requisite Deeds of Dedication would be prepared in conjunction with the Trust and brought back to Full Council for approval. There is however significant officer work required to compile the significant necessary paperwork required to progress an application, hence the need for Full Council to direct officers at this stage in the process.
- 4.5** As stated in the Actions box above, officers recommend, on balance, that the Salts Recreation Ground is NOT placed into Fields in Trust status prior to the proposed Salts Improvement Plan, as detailed in the Strategy Programme 2025 – 2027.

## **5. Consent**

- 5.1** Lewes District Council (LDC), which retains Restrictive Covenants on The Salts and The Crouch from its time as owner pre-2005, has previously advised in writing that its consent is not required for FIT designation as this does not constitute a 'disposal of land'. (Officers are working with LDC towards these Restrictions being removed before Local Government Reorganisation takes place, however at the current time they still exist.)

## **6. Added Complication**

- 6.1** At The Salts, the Cricket Club's lease, implemented in 2017, and the Rugby Club's lease, implemented in 2021, were not excluded from the provisions of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954. This means they have so-called 'security of tenure' at the site, meaning they have the right to remain in occupation at the end of their lease term. As such, FIT would likely need the Cricket Club and Rugby Club to agree to become additional parties to the FIT designation at The Salts. It is feasible, if this were not agreeable by the clubs, that the Deed could carve out the areas of the club's leases from

the designation, but this would need significant external legal work to be undertaken to bring this into effect.

## **7. Financial Appraisal**

- 7.1** This report does not have any direct financial implications, aside from significant officer time and incidental expenditure in obtaining the necessary Land Registry paperwork such as office copies, plans, title deeds, etc.
- 7.2** Should Full Council in the future decide to progress in agreeing the deeds of dedication for FIT, the deeds will require registration at HM Land Registry (HMLR) at a cost of £80 per Deed. Should Full Council wish for the deeds to be checked by a solicitor this will incur legal fees (not currently known). These costs would be advised at the point that Full Council is considering the draft Deeds of Dedication.
- 7.3** Should any or all of the three sites be placed into FIT then there would be significant costs to make changes to the sites outside of the limited scope and supervision granted by FIT as detailed above in ss.3.12-3.14, including the granting of new leases. Full details of costs can be found here [Field Change Request fees | Fields in Trust](#)

## **8. Contact Officer**

- 8.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Peter Cousin, Head of Place.



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>211/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Approval of a Five-Year Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Peter Cousin, Head of Place</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To present the recommendation from the Golf, Open Spaces &amp; Climate Action Committee, that Full Council approves entering into a five-year Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement</b>

### **Actions**

#### **Full Council is advised:**

1. To consider the recommendation set out within 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 that the Town Council enters into and executes a five-year Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement, as recommended by the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee.
3. To approve the associated spend on capital works, to be partly reclaimed from the Rural Payments Agency, as recommended by the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 5 March 2026, the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action (GOSCA) Committee considered a report regarding the Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (CSHT) Scheme and utilising this to facilitate improvements to the status of the Seaford Head Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is a strategy contained within the Town Council's Interim Climate Action Plan. The CSHT Scheme offers the opportunity to undertake important restoration work through a capital programme, albeit still requiring 20% funding from the Town Council. Alongside the capital works, the CSHT also offers the opportunity to receive annual payments to support the ongoing management of the Seaford Head SSSI.
- 1.2 The section of SSSI that is owned by Seaford Town Council is currently in "declining" status. The Town Council is therefore legally required under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to make improvements to the management of the site.
- 1.3 The CSHT Scheme is administered by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), which is an executive agency of the Government's Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), that manages a variety of schemes and distributes associated grant funding.
- 1.4 Natural England – whom the Town Council already has a good working relationship with due to the SSSI – provides technical advice on CSHT Schemes and devises CSHT agreements. Natural England also have enforcement powers over a SSSI. Natural England are very supportive of the Town Council entering into this scheme.
- 1.5 GOSCA were fully supportive of the proposal to enter the CSHT Scheme and passed the following two resolutions that this report is now presenting:
  1. [GOSCA] *resolved to recommend to Full Council to approve that officers enter into a five year Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement.*
  2. [GOSCA] *resolved to recommend to Full Council to approve the spend on capital works, to be partly reclaimed from the Rural Payments Agency.*

## **2. Information**

- 2.1** The full report to GOSCA is available on the [Town Council website here](#) (from page 55).
- 2.2** Subject to Full Council approval, Natural England will work with the Town Council and Sussex Wildlife Trust (which manages the Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve on the Town Council's behalf) to create an agreement that sets out how the land will be managed for the betterment of nature. One CSHT agreement will cover all of the Town Council's land within the SSSI at Seaford Head (the agreement will not cover High and Over) i.e. both the Nature Reserve and Golf Course. A five-year CSHT agreement is recommended to cover the required works.
- 2.3** The CSHT forms two parts; annual payments and capital payments
- 2.4** Annual payments are paid towards the ongoing management of the site and will be paid each year for the full agreement (5years)
- 2.5** Capital payments are an 80% contribution towards specific capital works that are required. The proposed plan that has been developed with Natural England requires 3 years of capital works to create rides (long thin clearings) through the scrub. The capital payments are to cover 80% of the specific costs incurred by the Town Council.
- 2.6** The CSHT agreement will consist of land management practices – initially there are 'base' actions, with 'supplemental' actions that can be applied for if the corresponding base action has been applied for.
- 2.7** The funding granted through the CSHT Scheme is assigned in two parts: an annual payment for the ongoing management of the land, and capital payments to carry out specific capital works to make improvements to the land, both in accordance with the agreement. The report to GOSCA set out more detail in relation to the annual payments and capital payments and the sorts of work that these would fund onsite.
- 2.8** With regards to the implications of entering into the CSHT Agreement, this would be a positive addition to enable important improvement works to take place onsite. The agreement would be carefully crafted for the site and the realistic actions available to achieve the outcome of benefitting the environment.

- 2.9** The SSSI designation onsite is a statutory legal designation to protect the country's wildlife, underpinned by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. The site currently being classed in 'declining' status triggers increased scrutiny on land management by Natural England and required restoration actions and conservation measures. The Environment Act 2021 aims to force action on 'declining' and 'recovering' SSSIs to achieve 'favourable' status by 2042. The CSHT Scheme provides the Town Council with the opportunity to increase the status of its SSSI through specific, tailored land management practices.
- 2.10** Making improvements to the SSSI's management is not optional, and the Town Council is obliged to ensure this happens whether it enters the CSHT or not. By entering the CSHT the Town Council can receive payments to support this work.
- 2.11** If the Town Council failed to improve its management of the SSSI, Natural England could take enforcement action.. This would initially involve "Management Notices" under *section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*. If the Town Council failed to comply with these then Natural England could escalate their enforcement action, which could include:
- (a)** Warning Letters and formal cautions
  - (b)** Conduct investigations
  - (c)** Criminal prosecutions
  - (d)** Unlimited fines in the Crown Court
  - (e)** Orders to restore damage
  - (f)** Legal costs
- 2.12** Failure to comply with the CSHT Agreement, once in place, can lead to serious financial and legal consequences, ranging from reduced payments to total contract termination and repayment of funds received. The discussions between the Town Council, Sussex Wildlife Trust and Natural England at the stage of devising the plan and agreement are therefore crucial to ensure that the parties are committing to actions that are aspirational and impactful, but those that can be achieved.

### **3. Financial Appraisal**

- 3.1** By entering into the CSHT agreement, assuming that the Town Council continues to deliver its management commitments, the Town Council will

receive an annual grant of approximately £18,776 for the five years of the agreement (£93,880 in total). These revenues are still estimates at this stage.

- 3.2** To deliver the capital works, the Town Council will have to make upfront payments of up to £125,000 per year for the first three years of the agreement, although 80% (up to £100,000 per year) can be reclaimed, leaving a total cost of £25,000 per year (£75,000 across the three years). Officers will not commit to the spend on any works on the capital programme until the agreement is fully in place with Natural England for the 80% to be recovered. The Town Council has sufficient reserves to cover the full payment whilst it awaits payment of the reclaimed amounts. Payments will be made for the works from the Rural Payment Agency (RPA) to the Town Council for the 80% contribution, and the RPA aims to pay all invoices within 2 months of receiving them. The Town Council can request the payment as soon as it has incurred the cost and the work is complete. The Capital works would all be completed within the first 3 years of the agreement, so there will not be a need for capital spend in years 4 & 5 of the agreement.
- 3.3** Due to the Town Council not holding this money in its CCLA accounts for two months while waiting for the repayment, the Town Council will lose out on interest payments on this money. The estimated loss of this is £623 (interest payable on the £100,000 over 2 months at current rate of 3.74%)
- 3.4** There is no budget allocation in place for these capital works in the 2026 – 2027 financial year, because this scheme had not been approved by the budget setting deadline. As such, Full Council’s approval is required to incur this unbudgeted spend of up to a net £25,000 for the first year, to be funded from General Reserves. The proposal is for a budget to be assigned for the £25,000 in the next two financial years, in accordance with the CSHT agreement to cover the Town Council’s 20% contribution.

## **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1** The CSHT Scheme provides the opportunity to increase the status of the Town Council's SSSI and meet the Town Council's duties to manage the land for the betterment of the environment. The capital works being

proposed within the CSHT agreement are critical to achieving the required improvements onsite.

- 4.2** Through the CSHT Scheme, the Town Council has access to vital funding to enable the necessary improvement works to be carried out onsite.

## **5. Contact Officer**

- 5.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Peter Cousin, Head of Place.



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>213/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Interim Update on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024 - 2025</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Lucy Clark, Finance Manager</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To update Full Council on the status of the 2024 - 2025 AGAR, and provide relevant background on the ongoing external audit process relating to the 2023 - 2024 AGAR</b>

### **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.

## **1. 2024 - 2025 AGAR (Current Position)**

- 1.1** Following approval by Full Council on 26 June 2025, the 2024 - 2025 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was submitted to the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP (PKF).
- 1.2** On 24 September 2025, the Town Council received correspondence from PKF advising that they had commenced their review of the AGAR but were unable to formally complete it due to correspondence received in relation to the 2024 – 2025 submission and/or prior years.

- 1.3 However, PKF has confirmed that, based on their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR, the information provided is in accordance with Proper Practices and no matters have come to their attention to suggest that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.
- 1.4 The statutory 'Notice of Audit & Right to Inspect the AGAR', along with a copy of the AGAR and details of the rights of inspection, were published on the Town Council's website on 30 September 2025, in compliance with regulatory requirements. A copy of PKF's response within section 3 of the AGAR is attached in Appendix A for reference.

## **2. 2023 – 2024 AGAR (Background – Ongoing Audit Objections)**

- 2.1 The 2023 – 2024 AGAR was approved by Full Council on 20 June 2024 and subsequently submitted to PKF.
- 2.2 On 20 September 2024, PKF advised that they were unable to complete their review due to correspondence received in relation to the 2023 – 2024 AGAR and / or prior years.
- 2.3 This included two formal objections, which are being considered in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office. PKF has confirmed that, where objections cannot be concluded within six months, updates will be provided to both the authority and the objectors at regular intervals until the matter is resolved.
- 2.4 Further correspondence from PKF confirms that audit work is being progressed in chronological order, with older cases prioritised. An update received on 23 March 2026 confirms that the two objections have now progressed to second and fifth in the queue respectively.
- 2.5 Whilst no definitive timeline for completion has been provided, this progression indicates that the outstanding objections are moving closer to a formal review. PKF has confirmed that only time spent progressing the case and related correspondence will be chargeable to the Town Council, albeit that the cost of the external auditor's work on these matters will cost the Town Council £355 per hour plus VAT.

## **3. Impact on 2024 – 2025 AGAR**

- 3.1 The delay in formally concluding the 2024 – 2025 AGAR is understood to be linked to the ongoing objections relating to the 2023 – 2024 AGAR.

- 3.2** At the time of writing, the Town Council has not received any correspondence from PKF indicating that any objections have been raised in relation to the 2024 – 2025 AGAR. As such, it is considered likely that the delay in completing the 2024 – 2025 AGAR is a result of the ongoing matters associated with the 2023 – 2024 AGAR.
- 3.3** It is believed that once PKF has finalised their reviews and completed any additional work arising from the objections, they will then provide a further report along with a certificate of completion detailing any qualifications and ‘other’ matters for both AGARs.

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

- 4.1** PKF has previously confirmed that external audit costs are set by the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointment (SAAA) and that associated work is carried out by an engagement lead at a cost to the Town Council of £355 per hour plus VAT.
- 4.2** Given that it was known that additional work is being undertaken in relation to audit objections, a provision of £10,000 was included in the 2025 – 2026 budget which will be transferred to an Earmarked Reserve at year end, as the expenditure is still outstanding and therefore will be incurred in the 2026 – 2027 financial year. An additional £2,000 was allocated in the 2026 - 2027 budget as a contingency. If costs exceed £12,000, then the shortfall will have to be met from General Reserves.

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

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

## Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of **Seaford Town Council - ES0088**

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Please see below

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We are unable to complete our review work on the AGAR and supporting documentation as a result of correspondence received in relation to 2024/25 and/or prior years. Once we have finalised our review and completed any additional work arising from that correspondence, a final report will be provided with the certificate of completion detailing any qualifications and ‘other’ matters.

Our fee note for the limited assurance review will be issued when we certify completion.

### 3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

We do not certify completion because:

We have not been able to complete our review work in time to enable to smaller authority to publish the required documentation in line with statutory requirements.

External Auditor Name

**PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP**

External Auditor Signature

Date

24/09/2025



## Seaford Town Council

<b>Report No:</b>	<b>206/25</b>
<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 April 2026</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Devolution Considerations – Public Update</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Steve Quayle, Town Clerk</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To provide a public update in relation to the devolution considerations being undertaken by the Town Council</b>

### **Actions**

#### **Full Council is advised:**

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

### **Recommendations**

#### **Full Council is recommended:**

1. To note the contents of the report.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** In June 2025, Full Council considered a report providing an update on the developments within the Government's devolution agenda and how it relates to Lewes District Council's (LDC) assets.
- 1.2** The full report to Full Council can be viewed on the [Town Council's website](#) (agenda page 215 onwards).
- 1.3** To confirm, at this meeting in June 2025, Full Council proposed not to establish a separate working group for this purpose (as mentioned in the

report) and instead instructed officers to pursue this work offline, reporting back to councillors as required.

- 1.4 This report is providing a public update on the devolution considerations being undertaken by the Town Council. A separate exempt report appears elsewhere on this agenda providing further, confidential details for discussion.

## 2. Update

- 2.1 Lewes District Council (LDC) has set out its approach to post-Local Government Reorganisation asset devolution within its Corporate Property and Assets Strategy, which is [available to view online](#).
- 2.2 The strategy includes the ability for town and parish councils to nominate key assets for a transfer from LDC where there is a clear case for retaining local management of the asset and the transfer will meet the principles outlined within the strategy; this is called a Local Control Transfer (LCT).
- 2.3 The process for an LCT is broadly as follows:
- 2.4 Nomination – the Town Council will use LDC’s prescribed nomination form to identify whether and how the nominated asset meets the LCT principles (set out in more detail in the above linked strategy). Importantly, this is non-committal and subject to contract, and the Town Council does not have to proceed with the transfer of any nominated assets. Full Council will be considering in confidential session which assets it wishes to nominate.
- 2.5 Consideration – LDC will consider any nominations and make recommendations on whether a transfer can be approved, subject to LDC governance recommendations and due diligence.
  - (a) Due Diligence – both LDC and the Town Council will need to undertake the necessary due diligence to ensure that both parties are satisfied to pursue the LCT.
  - (b) Consultation – details of the period of public consultation will be identified - there is more information on this set out in section 3 below.
- 2.6 Decision-making – following the above process, a formal resolution of Full Council will be required for each individual asset that it wishes to acquire through an LCT.

### **3. Public Consultation**

**3.1** Due to this process potentially resulting in the Town Council acquiring new assets, a period of public consultation will be undertaken. At this stage in time, there is not a set timeline for the devolution process and various stages, and it is therefore not possible for officers to identify when the period of public consultation should take place. This will however be when the proposals are at a formative stage, allowing adequate time for consideration of the consultation responses before the Town Council takes its decision/s. Ultimately, the public consultation will help to ensure that any major changes in the Town Council's asset portfolio are supported by the community, rather than imposed. When the consultation is launched the Town Council will ensure this is widely publicised through its website and social media channels enabling residents to have their say on the proposals.

### **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, Town Clerk.