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# Minutes of the Salts Stakeholder Group Meeting

**Wednesday 9th July 2025 at 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

Held at Seaford Rugby Club, The Salts Rec, Richmond Rd, Seaford BN25 1DR

## Attendees

## Steve Quayle, Town Clerk, Seaford Town Council

Sharan Brydon, Assets & Projects Manager, Seaford Town Council

**Seaford Town Councillors:**

Cllr Christina Bristow, Seaford Town Council

Cllr Rod Buchanan, Seaford Town Council

Cllr Maggie Wearmouth, Seaford Town Council

**Group representatives:**

Salts Cafe**,** Steve Rodgers

Seaford Cricket Club, Geoff Beal

Seaford Cricket Club, Ian Carter

Seaford Cricket Club, John Smith

Seaford Rugby Club, Paul Warren

Lewes District and Eastbourne Councils, Carl Smith

**Minute Taker:**

Louise Dickson, Projects & Facilities Administrator, Seaford Town Council.

# MINUTES

1. **Introductions**

A warm welcome was extended to Steve Rodgers who has recently taken over operations at *The Salts Café*.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Stephanie Dubas, (STC), Cllr Olivia Honeyman, (STC), Seaford Lifeguards, Peter Gwilliam, Seaford Rugby Club, Ian Newby, On the Verge, Mike Vingoe, The Base, Gary McKenzie, Premier Football, Duncan Savage, 6th Seaford (St. Leonard’s) Scouts, Darren Pillar, Idverde.

1. **Discuss Actions from the last meeting:-**
	1. **The distribution of the ground maintenance specifications review:-**
* *Geoff Beal* noted that if the maintenance work had adhered to the agreed schedule, the condition of the grounds would be significantly better. Although some tasks have been completed, several key activities were either missed or carried out at inappropriate times.
* A question was raised about whether pitch inspections take place after Idverde completes their work.
* *Paul Warren* expressed concern from the Rugby Club ahead of the new season, particularly about winter conditions. Last season, the club had to fork the pitch before matches to aid drainage.
* Carl Smith (LDC) asked for acknowledgement that all comments are being recorded but noted some were inaccurate. He explained that the contractor can’t complete every task perfectly, especially due to weather impacts on the maintenance schedule.
	1. **Schedule of work to be distributed to all relevant parties:-**

The Spec for Ground Maintenance and the Schedule of Work to be circulated again.

* 1. **The RFU Pitch Report** was shared amongst the group**.**
	2. **Regular monthly meetings** take place between Sharan Brydon (STC) and Carl Smith (LDC) to review and discuss the Idverde maintenance schedule.
	3. **Planning permission for the protective cricket fence**, awaiting sign-off from LDC on this matter.

**3.6 Liability if a member of the public is struck by a cricket ball**. It was confirmed that the responsibility lies with the cricket club, and a copy of their public liability insurance policy has been received.

**3.7** The overgrowth around the Scouts Hut has been cleared by Idverde.

* 1. The map for the new dual bins is currently being prepared and will be sent to Carl Smith once completed.
	2. The minutes from the October meeting, with Section 106 highlighted, have been sent to the new Town Clerk.

**3.10** The floodlight plan proposal for the Rugby club includes installing a small tower approximately 15 meters high, equipped with LED lights to illuminate the pitch.

**4. Updates**

**4.1 The Salts Café Update**

* The café has been open for 5 weeks and has received good feedback so far.
* Working to improve awareness of the café and considering installing signage on the main wall, which is owned by LDC. No objections to the signage were raised.
* *Veolia* hasn’t collected waste from the recreational ground due to safety concerns. Contact Wayne Hemmings at LDC to arrange collection.
* Enquired about rules regarding the main entrance of The Salts. The café team closes the main entrance gate after deliveries, but drivers have reported that the gate swings open and have asked for it to be secured.

*STC Action*: *To explore options for improving the security of the entrance gate***.**

**Additional Notes;-**

* Cllr Christina Bristow has noted that the main wall at The Salts is crumbling and requested that LDC be informed.
* The Rugby Club has been advised to reapply for a brown tourist sign to *The Salts*, as the previous request was declined due to its non-public amenity status. Please copy Steve Quayle and Cllr Carolyn Lambert on all future correspondence.

**4.2 Seaford Cricket Club**

**Section 106 funding and the search for a new sports pitch in Seaford:**

* The search for a new football pitch in Seaford, funded by *Section 106* from Bellway, ends on 15th July 2025. If no site is found, LDC will expand the search beyond Seaford.
* The funding was allocated to LDC by Bellway for the purpose of creating a new football pitch—it cannot be used to improve existing pitches. The search must stay within Seaford for five years; after that, it can expand. If no site is found by year seven, the funds revert to Seaford. LDC is responsible for making these decisions, not STC.
* Cllr Christina Bristow recommended that the group reaches out to the district councillors for support and to help facilitate communication with LDC.
* Ian Carter expressed concern that the current agreement appears to focus exclusively on football provision at either The Crouch or The Salts. He urged Seaford TownCouncil to advocate for investment and improvements at The Salts and to make every effort to support related recommendations. He also recommended that **15th July 2027 be diarised** as a key date for submitting a potential bid.
* Appreciation was expressed for the good work done by Steve Quayle, with thanks for his efforts.
* It was noted that the current grounds maintenance contract is coming to an end, prompting discussion about future arrangements. *Please see STC updates*.
* An incident at the cricket club was brought to attention: during the current season, a set of car keys was stolen from the cricket changing rooms, resulting in the theft of a vehicle, which was later recovered. A request was made to change the locks on the changing rooms after the incident; however, it was noted that this took a considerable amount of time to action. Steve Quayle explained that delays can occur due to the requirement for the council to obtain three quotes in accordance with financial regulations.
* A query was raised about CCTV coverage, as the cricket club contributed £1,000. A request was made to reposition some cameras toward the changing rooms.

**Additional Comments regarding Section 106**

Since the meeting, Steve Quayle has formally contacted LDC to ask whether they would consider accelerating the cascade process, allowing the funds to be used for upgrading the football pitch and facilities at The Crouch and/or The Salts before Year 7. Chris Bibb has confirmed that he has forwarded the request to LDC’s Planning and Legal teams.

*STC Actions:-*

* *Explore funding options to support the new grounds maintenance contract.*
* *Ensure the Cricket Club is kept informed of any updates regarding the CCTV.*
* *The* ***Supplementary Deed*** *will be shared alongside these minutes for reference.*

**4.3 Seaford Rugby Club**

* Last season was a great success, with four major teams winning cups and strong interest leading to a potential third men’s team. Visitor numbers also increased significantly.
* However, a downside highlighted was the condition of the pitch. The same ongoing drainage issues persisted throughout the winter months, requiring the pitch to be forked before games to improve drainage. As a result, some teams have been relocated to other nearby areas for training purposes.
* Floodlighting will enable training sessions, as noted earlier in the meeting. A question was raised about whether planning permission would be required.
* The club secured £36,000 from the RFU Football Foundation for pitch maintenance (£6,000 per year). The funds must be used or will be forfeited. Clarification is needed on spending timelines, as the new contract starts April 2026—consulting Carl Smith was suggested.
* One set of rugby posts remains in place, as Idverde was unable to remove them—one post appears to be stuck.

*STC Action: STC to consult Carl Smith on a suitable solution for removing the stuck rugby goal posts.*

**4.4 Seaford Town Council Update**

* The current Grounds Maintenance Contract ends in March 2026; Seaford Town Council will be taking this over.
	+ Full Council has approved the new contract; tendering will begin soon.
	+ Project Officer Amy Walker will be in contact with the sports clubs to gather their feedback and input.
	+ As each pitch has different standards and requirements, it may be necessary to specify these in future contracts and consider club contributions toward enhanced maintenance. While it was acknowledged that achieving the same standard and quality may be a challenge, it was agreed that the new contract would represent an improvement over the current arrangement.
	+ A suggestion was made to develop a formal policy for weed management within the contract. Cllr Christina Bristow also proposed exploring the possibility of using CEAL funding to support this, and it was agreed that this item should be actioned for further investigation.
* Cycle rack locations and quantities are being finalised, with input to be sought from the rugby club, café, and cricket club.
* Additionally, the rugby club has kindly offered their electric cupboard to house the CCTV equipment.

*Action:* *Investigate using CEAL funding.*

1. **AOB**

Geoff Beal noted increased dog fouling since new bins were installed, with some bagged waste left where old bins stood. Idverde currently empties the bins, but this will change when the contract ends.

1. **Next Meeting**

The date for the next meeting is yet to be finalised.