



Seaford Town Council

Agenda

Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting

Thursday 8 October 2026

To the Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, you are summoned to attend a meeting as follows:

Meeting Date	Thursday 8 October 2026
Meeting Time	7.00pm
Meeting Venue	Council Chambers, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG
Members	Councillors L Boorman (Chair), S Ali (Vice Chair), R Buchanan, F Hoareau, R Honeyman, J Meek, L Wallraven, and M Wearmouth

Steve Quayle, Town Clerk

25 September 2026

PLEASE NOTE:

- For members of the public that have registered to attend the meeting, please see the end of the agenda for further details of public access and participation
- 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
- 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

For further information about items on this Agenda please contact:

Email: meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 01323 894 870

Postal Address: Seaford Town Council, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive details of any apologies for absence.

In accordance with Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, to approve or not the reasons for absence.

Please see the Information for Councillors at the end of this agenda for supporting information on this.

2. Disclosure of Interests

To receive any disclosure by councillors of interests that they are aware of in relation to matters on the agenda, whether registered or not, and confirmation of any procedural steps they will take because of this.

Councillors arriving late in the meeting will be asked to confirm if they have any interests to disclose at the point that they arrive.

Please see the Information for Councillors at the end of this agenda for supporting information on this.

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 Town Council Policy.

4. [Receipts, Payments & Bank Reconciliations Reports for June, July & August 2026](#)

To consider report 110/26 advising the Committee of receipts, payments and bank reconciliation for June, July and August 2026 (pages 6 to 9).

5. [Income & Expenditure Report for the period of 1 April to 31 August 2026](#)

To consider report 111/26 presenting details of the income and expenditure position for this Committee for the period 1 April - 31 August 2026 (pages 10 to 27).

6. [Finance & General Purposes Update Report – October 2026](#)

To consider report 97/26 updating the Committee on progress and actions relating to the areas of responsibility for the Finance & General Purposes Committee (pages 28 to 35).

7. [2027 - 2028 Budget Timetable](#)

To consider report 106/26 advising the Committee of the Budget Timetable for 2027 - 2028 (pages 36 to 38).

8. [Conclusion of External Audit relating to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2025](#)

To consider report 107/26 presenting the conclusion to the external audit completed by PKF Littlejohn LLP in respect of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025 (pages 39 to 46).

9. [Youth Ambassador Board – 2026 Annual Report](#)

To consider report 71/26 providing an overview of the first year of the Town Council's Youth Ambassador Board, highlighting its achievements, contributions to Town Council projects, and the positive impact on participating young people. The report also outlines future priorities and opportunities to further strengthen youth engagement in local decision-making (pages 47 to 52).

10. [Policy Update Report – October 2026](#)

To consider report 116/26 providing the Committee with an update on the review of the Town Council's suite of policies (pages 53 to 55).

11. [Review of the Town Council's Discretionary Grants Scheme](#)

To consider report 115/26 providing an update on the review of the Town Council's Discretionary Grants Scheme and seek the Committee's approval of the revised Discretionary Grants Policy (pages 56 to 70).

12. [Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 – 2029 and Associated Communications Policies](#)

To consider report 98/26 presenting the draft Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2029 and supporting communications policies for consideration and to seek a recommendation to Full Council for adoption (pages 71 to 151).

13. [Provision of Town Councillor IT Equipment and Transition to Paperless Town Council Meetings](#)

To consider report 99/26 seeking a recommendation to Full Council to agree in principle with the purchase of laptop computers for all Town Councillors following the May 2027 local elections, subject to the necessary budget being allocated, enabling the Town Council to transition to fully paperless meetings and supporting councillors in carrying out their civic duties effectively and consistently (pages 152 to 159).

14. [Review of Members' Allowance Policy](#)

To consider report 118/26 advising the Committee to consider whether or not to recommend to Full Council the introduction of members' allowances from May 2027 (pages 160 to 175).

15. 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 item of business for the reasons as set out below.

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

The Proper Officer considers that discussion of the following 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.

16. Receipts Due for Payment as at 17 September 2026 EXEMPT

To consider exempt report 112/26 informing the Committee of unpaid receipts due as at 17 September 2026 (exempt pages).

Reason for exemption: to progress a confidential debtors matter.

Explanation of Reason: under Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, information about the financial arrangements and activities of a business or individual must remain confidential between the parties involved.

- Agenda End -

INFORMATION – MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Public Access:

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

1. Attending the meeting in person.

Due to health and safety restrictions, the number of public in attendance will be limited. The Town Council therefore asks that you contact meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01323 894 870 to register your interest in attending at least 24 hours before the meeting.

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

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

OR

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

Public Access to the Venue:

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

Public participation must take place in person during the designated agenda item. Members of the public may make a verbal statement relevant to an agenda item, for up to four minutes, when invited by the Chair. Speakers do not have to give their name and will be guided by the Chair on when to speak. Statements are recorded in summary form in the minutes of the meeting (without personal details) and public participation will normally last no more than 20 minutes, with the Chair having overall discretion.

Further guidance on public participation is available to view on the [Town Council's website](#).

Public Comments:

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

INFORMATION – COUNCILLORS

Councillor Questions:

If councillors have any questions on the reports and you think that officers may require time to prepare a response, please send these through in writing via email at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. A verbal response will be given when the officer is introducing the item in the meeting.

Councillor Apologies for Absence:

Section 85 of the Local Government Act requires that councillors must attend meetings regularly and that failure to attend any meetings for six consecutive months without an approved reason may lead to disqualification. Apologies must be submitted directly to an officer in advance, include a reason, and be formally approved by the meeting to be recorded. Absences without a reason cannot be approved.

Councillor Interests:

Please see the [Town Councillor Interests Guide](#) for information about what interests councillors must declare, when those interests become a problem for decision making, and what councillors must do if they have them.



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	110/26
Agenda Item Number:	4
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Receipts, Payments and Bank Reconciliation Reports for June, July and August 2026
Strategy Programme Ref:	N/A
Purpose of Report:	To advise the Committee of Receipts, Payments and Bank Reconciliation for June, July and August 2026
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Authored by: Lucy Clark, Finance Manager
Supporting Documents:	Appendix A – Table of Total Receipts and Payments for June, July and August 2026

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.

1. Information

- 1.1** In line with the Town Council's Financial Regulations, a councillor other than the Mayor, shall be appointed to verify the bank reconciliations. That councillor shall sign the reconciliation and the original bank statement page as evidence of verification. This activity shall then be reported, including any exceptions, to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for noting.
- 1.2** The Chair of this Committee is the appointed councillor who will view and verify they are in agreement with the bank reconciliations once reconciled by the Finance Manager.
- 1.3** In line with the above, the bank reconciliations for June and July 2026 have been verified by the Chair of this Committee, with the August 2026

reconciliations currently in the process of being reviewed. Hard copies are available upon request.

- 1.4** Attached at **Appendix A** is a table showing the total receipts and payments for the months of June, July and August 2026.
- 1.5** Cashbooks and BACS pages detailing these transactions are available on request.
- 1.6** In accordance with the Town Council's Purchase Ordering and Payment for Goods and Services Policy, and in addition to the review and approval of the RFO or Finance Manager, two councillors will also review all invoices prior to payment being made. The councillors are provided with all source documents (copies of purchase orders, supporting information, delivery notes etc) and will check and sign an authorisation sheet that is held on file by the Finance team as part of the audit trail.
- 1.7** The Finance Manager continues to monitor the Cooperative current account ensuring that there are enough funds to cover monthly outgoings, drawing down as necessary from the CCLA account, which can be organised on a day's notice, provided there are two authorised signatories.
- 1.8** For assurance purposes, the CCLA account has been set up in a way that monies within this account can only be transferred back and forth to the nominated Cooperative Account; no other type of payments from this account can be made.
- 1.9** The Town Council has funds in the CCLA's Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF). Dividends are earned daily on funds within the CCLA account and are paid at the end of each month into the Cooperative current account.
- 1.10** For the period of 1 April to 31 August 2026, a net total of £340,000 has been transferred into the CCLA account generating a total interest of £29,419.75.
- 1.11** The published yield for 31 August 2026 stood at 3.8637%, compared with 4.0842% reported on 31 August 2025. While this continues to represent a reduction in returns, the PSDF continues to offer one of the more competitive rates available to the Town Council, particularly given the flexibility of instant access to funds.
- 1.12** As previously reported, the PSDF is a low-risk fund with points to note:
 - a. Security (AAA rated)

- b. Liquidity (same day / 1 day access)
- c. Yield (above the market after management fees)
- d. £1.3bn fund - £100m from Town & Parish Councils
- e. £25,000 minimum investment
- f. A popular and widely used money market fund used by Town & Parish Councils

2. Financial Appraisal

- 2.1** As at 31 August 2026, the actual monies held in the Cooperative Current Account were £81,845.84 along with £2,210,000 being held in the CCLA Account.
- 2.2** For clarity, the balance carried forward in the accounts within Appendix A differs slightly from 2.1 above as this includes items that are showing in the accounts but have not yet cleared in the bank.

Co-Operative Bank Current Account

Month	B/F	Receipts (CR)	Payments (DR)	Balance to C/F
Jun-26	£ 209,572.44	£ 197,577.37	£ 266,478.74	£ 140,671.07
Jul-26	£ 140,671.07	£ 260,298.64	£ 212,861.72	£ 188,107.99
Aug-26	£ 188,107.99	£ 135,918.32	£ 232,893.47	£ 91,132.84

CCLA Investment Account

Month	B/F	CR (Transferred FROM Co-op Account)	DR (Transferred INTO Co-Op Account)	Balance to C/F
Jun-26	£ 2,310,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,310,000.00
Jul-26	£ 2,310,000.00	£ -	£ 100,000.00	£ 2,210,000.00
Aug-26	£ 2,210,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 2,210,000.00



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	111/26
Agenda Item Number:	5
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Finance & General Purposes Income and Expenditure Report for the period of 1 April - 31 August 2026
Strategy Programme Ref:	N/A
Purpose of Report:	To present details of the income and expenditure position for this Committee for the period 1 April - 31 August 2026
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Authored by: Lucy Clark, Finance Manager
Supporting Documents:	Appendix A – Income & Expenditure Figures 1 April to 31 August 2026 Appendix B – Significant Financial Variance Details

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.

1. Information

- 1.1** Attached at **Appendix A** is the detailed Income and Expenditure Report for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 August 2026, showing actual income and expenditure against the approved annual budget.
- 1.2** This report relates specifically to the financial position of the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee, as detailed on pages 6 - 8 of Appendix A. Financial performance relating to the Town Council's other committees is reported separately to the relevant committees; however,

any questions arising within other areas of the income and expenditure report are welcomed.

- 1.3** Details of the significant variances relating to the F&GP Committee are provided at **Appendix B**.

2. Financial Appraisal

- 2.1** As at 31 August 2026, the Town Council was five months into the financial year, equivalent to 41.7% of the full year. Percentage comparisons should therefore be considered alongside the timing of receipts and payments, including annual or advance transactions.
- 2.2** F&GP income currently stands at £682,136 representing 50.4% of the annual income budget. This is largely due to having received 50% of the annual precept together with 75% of income for Church Street having been received (please note that, whilst this is labelled as 'income rent', this income is in fact service charge recharges. Officers will look to tidy this description up going forwards).
- 2.3** Interest received of £29,420 represents 49.0% of the annual budget and relates to funds held in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. The first half of the annual precept was invested shortly after receipt with only £100,000 drawn down by the end of August. Although the rate of return continues to show a downward trend compared to the previous year, the level of funds held on deposit has supported the interest earned.
- 2.4** The F&GP expenditure currently stands at £496,007, representing 43.9% of the annual expenditure budget. This is slightly above the proportion of the financial year that has passed but remains broadly in line with the expected position for this point of the financial year.
- 2.5** The principal areas showing higher expenditure at this stage include recruitment costs, staff and member training, subscriptions, insurance, and Service Funding Agreements. In several cases, including insurance, the percentages reflect annual costs or advance payments made earlier in the financial year rather than an anticipated year-end overspend. The exception is Hurdis House, where unbudgeted insurance, business rates and utility costs have arisen while the property remains vacant. Further explanations are provided in Appendix B.

- 2.6** Grants expenditure is £35,491 against an annual budget of £26,746. The £8,745 variance is fully funded from the relevant earmarked reserve and therefore has no net impact on the General Reserves.
- 2.7** Across the Town Council as a whole, expenditure totals £1,133,745, representing 48.0% of the annual budget, while income totals £1,546,599, representing 65.4%.

15/09/2026

Seaford Town Council 2026/2027 Current Year

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

Month No: 5

Committee Report

		Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>Golf, Open Spaces & Climate</u>								
<u>101</u>	<u>Golf Course</u>							
1000	Golf Course Season Ticket	237,072	215,151	(21,921)			110.2%	
1001	Golf Course Green Fees M-F	131,587	190,000	58,413			69.3%	
1002	Golf Course Green Fees w/eb/h	102,680	150,000	47,320			68.5%	
1003	Golf Course Societies	56,308	83,200	26,892			67.7%	
1004	Golf Course Locker	1,497	2,600	1,103			57.6%	
1007	Golf Course Air Traffic	3,750	7,500	3,750			50.0%	
1019	Rechargeable Income	190	192	2			99.0%	
1050	Income Rent	0	85	85			0.0%	
1054	Income Other	1,688	1,000	(688)			168.8%	
1077	Income Sale Equipment	9,790	0	(9,790)			0.0%	9,790
1100	Income Advertising	0	700	700			0.0%	
1311	Buggy Hire	18,929	23,920	4,991			79.1%	
	Golf Course :- Income	563,491	674,348	110,857			83.6%	9,790
4000	Salaries & Wages	72,116	176,289	104,173		104,173	40.9%	
4001	Employers NI	9,254	22,693	13,439		13,439	40.8%	
4002	Employers Superannuation	13,053	31,908	18,855		18,855	40.9%	
4010	Staff Training	188	2,180	1,993		1,993	8.6%	
4011	Staff PPE / H&S	869	2,336	1,467		1,467	37.2%	
4012	Staff Expenses	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4019	Rechargeable Expenditure	190	0	(190)		(190)	0.0%	
4041	Golf Professional Retainer	25,876	62,103	36,227		36,227	41.7%	
4045	Golf Course Player Costs	374	400	26		26	93.5%	
4046	Golf Club Membership Fees	22,878	22,103	(775)		(775)	103.5%	
4051	Rates	9,757	29,392	19,635		19,635	33.2%	
4052	Water & Sewerage	1,458	735	(723)		(723)	198.4%	
4060	Refuse	516	1,076	560		560	47.9%	
4100	Telecommunications	1,549	3,157	1,608		1,608	49.1%	
4106	Stationery	69	300	231		231	23.0%	
4110	Advertising & Publicity	0	1,750	1,750		1,750	0.0%	
4112	Subscriptions	796	786	(10)		(10)	101.3%	
4113	Software Support	2,071	3,369	1,298		1,298	61.5%	
4114	Licence Fee	75	75	0		0	100.0%	
4115	Insurance	12,182	12,042	(140)		(140)	101.2%	
4116	Web Site	700	299	(401)		(401)	234.1%	
4118	IT Hardware	265	1,000	735		735	26.5%	
4156	Bank Charges	4,600	9,639	5,039		5,039	47.7%	
4201	Cleaning & Hygiene	529	1,000	471		471	52.9%	

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

Month No: 5

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	234	1,833	1,599		1,599	12.8%	
4261 General Maintenance	31,746	47,924	16,178		16,178	66.2%	
4270 Vehicles & Equipment Maint	12,158	22,452	10,294		10,294	54.2%	
4271 Vehicle & Equipment Lease	75,164	91,231	16,067		16,067	82.4%	
4272 Furniture & Equipment	169	2,000	1,831		1,831	8.5%	
4275 Building Maintenance	2,813	7,500	4,687		4,687	37.5%	
4276 Maintenance - CCTV	71	0	(71)		(71)	0.0%	
4279 Fire & Security	1,573	714	(859)		(859)	220.4%	
4285 Building Maint - GreenKeepers	91	1,000	909		909	9.1%	
4308 Golf Course Overheads	2,948	25,950	23,002		23,002	11.4%	
4309 Buggy Lease & Maintenance	5,295	11,105	5,810		5,810	47.7%	
Golf Course :- Indirect Expenditure	311,627	596,441	284,814	0	284,814	52.2%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	251,864	77,907	(173,957)				
6001 less Transfer to EMR	9,790	0	(9,790)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	242,074	77,907	(164,167)				
<u>102 Golf Course Capital Costs</u>							
4155 Professional Fees	0	20,000	20,000		20,000	0.0%	
Golf Course Capital Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0.0%	0
Net Expenditure	0	(20,000)	(20,000)				
<u>105 Salts Recreation Ground</u>							
1050 Income Rent	2,304	2,352	48			98.0%	
1051 Income Insurance Recharge	2,258	2,110	(148)			107.0%	
1058 Income Water Recharge	2,162	4,859	2,697			44.5%	
1073 Sports Pitch Hire & Green Fees	2,662	6,834	4,172			38.9%	
1095 Income Tennis Annual Pass	2,126	3,845	1,719			55.3%	
1096 Income Tennis Pay & Play	1,806	4,299	2,493			42.0%	
Salts Recreation Ground :- Income	13,318	24,299	10,981			54.8%	0
4018 Water Refill Maint	119	0	(119)		(119)	0.0%	119
4052 Water & Sewerage	6,172	10,086	3,914		3,914	61.2%	
4053 Tennis Electric	120	384	264		264	31.3%	
4055 Electricity	135	438	303		303	30.7%	
4095 Tennis Court Expenditure	925	7,460	6,535		6,535	12.4%	
4096 LTA Loan	3,250	9,625	6,375		6,375	33.8%	
4100 Telecommunications	171	403	232		232	42.4%	
4115 Insurance	3,958	3,812	(146)		(146)	103.8%	
4155 Professional Fees	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

Month No: 5

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	3,852	1,833	(2,019)		(2,019)	210.1%	
4260 Grounds Maintenance Contract	19,264	49,972	30,708		30,708	38.6%	
4261 General Maintenance	2,670	4,764	2,094		2,094	56.0%	
4275 Building Maintenance	1,105	800	(305)		(305)	138.1%	
4283 Playground & Gym Equip/Maint	2,398	12,000	9,602		9,602	20.0%	
Salts Recreation Ground :- Indirect Expenditure	44,138	103,077	58,939	0	58,939	42.8%	119
Net Income over Expenditure	(30,820)	(78,778)	(47,958)				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	119	0	(119)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(30,701)	(78,778)	(48,077)				
<u>106 Crouch Recreation Ground</u>							
1050 Income Rent	1,378	2,550	1,172			54.0%	
1051 Income Insurance Recharge	843	803	(40)			105.0%	
1058 Income Water Recharge	588	1,987	1,399			29.6%	
1073 Sports Pitch Hire & Green Fees	3,371	14,500	11,129			23.2%	
Crouch Recreation Ground :- Income	6,180	19,840	13,660			31.1%	0
4052 Water & Sewerage	6,553	13,218	6,665		6,665	49.6%	
4115 Insurance	1,127	1,089	(38)		(38)	103.5%	
4155 Professional Fees	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	195	1,833	1,638		1,638	10.6%	
4260 Grounds Maintenance Contract	11,780	30,558	18,778		18,778	38.6%	
4261 General Maintenance	4,761	4,671	(90)		(90)	101.9%	
4275 Building Maintenance	440	2,543	2,103		2,103	17.3%	
4283 Playground & Gym Equip/Maint	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	0.0%	
Crouch Recreation Ground :- Indirect Expenditure	24,857	58,912	34,055	0	34,055	42.2%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(18,678)	(39,072)	(20,394)				
<u>107 Martello Fields</u>							
1011 Income Filming	1,200	0	(1,200)			0.0%	
1050 Income Rent	6,675	3,150	(3,525)			211.9%	
Martello Fields :- Income	7,875	3,150	(4,725)			250.0%	0
4018 Water Refill Maint	41	0	(41)		(41)	0.0%	41
4115 Insurance	14	15	1		1	96.4%	
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	156	1,833	1,677		1,677	8.5%	
4260 Grounds Maintenance Contract	6,003	15,573	9,570		9,570	38.6%	
4261 General Maintenance	3,341	1,038	(2,303)		(2,303)	321.9%	
Martello Fields :- Indirect Expenditure	9,556	18,459	8,903	0	8,903	51.8%	41
Net Income over Expenditure	(1,681)	(15,309)	(13,628)				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	41	0	(41)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(1,640)	(15,309)	(13,669)				

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

Month No: 5

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
108 Other Open Spaces							
1011 Income Filming	875	0	(875)			0.0%	
1050 Income Rent	90	90	0			100.0%	
1098 Income Grass Cutting	0	13,913	13,913			0.0%	
Other Open Spaces :- Income	965	14,003	13,038			6.9%	0
4018 Water Refill Maint	41	0	(41)		(41)	0.0%	41
4052 Water & Sewerage	291	86	(205)		(205)	338.1%	
4115 Insurance	52	52	0		0	99.7%	
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	3,716	1,833	(1,883)		(1,883)	202.7%	
4260 Grounds Maintenance Contract	9,620	24,955	15,335		15,335	38.6%	
4261 General Maintenance	5,352	8,076	2,724		2,724	66.3%	
4268 Grass Verge Cutting	2,103	25,235	23,132		23,132	8.3%	
4270 Vehicles & Equipment Maint	145	0	(145)		(145)	0.0%	
Other Open Spaces :- Indirect Expenditure	21,320	60,237	38,917	0	38,917	35.4%	41
Net Income over Expenditure	(20,355)	(46,234)	(25,879)				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	41	0	(41)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(20,313)	(46,234)	(25,921)				
116 Seaford Head Estate							
1011 Income Filming	69,550	20,000	(49,550)			347.8%	
1037 Income Parking	29,237	0	(29,237)			0.0%	
1050 Income Rent	5,000	10,000	5,000			50.0%	
1054 Income Other	1	0	(1)			0.0%	
1200 Income Nature Reserve	230	600	370			38.4%	
Seaford Head Estate :- Income	104,018	30,600	(73,418)			339.9%	0
4024 SHB Parking Scheme	11,761	0	(11,761)		(11,761)	0.0%	
4115 Insurance	665	636	(29)		(29)	104.6%	
4155 Professional Fees	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	234	1,833	1,599		1,599	12.8%	
4260 Grounds Maintenance Contract	490	1,272	782		782	38.5%	
4261 General Maintenance	330	6,000	5,670		5,670	5.5%	
4275 Building Maintenance	0	1,038	1,038		1,038	0.0%	
4279 Fire & Security	0	300	300		300	0.0%	
4500 Nature Reserve Expenses	23,065	23,192	127		127	99.5%	
4501 Filming Expenses	11,050	4,000	(7,050)		(7,050)	276.3%	
4502 Toilet Hire	200	0	(200)		(200)	0.0%	
Seaford Head Estate :- Indirect Expenditure	47,795	39,271	(8,524)	0	(8,524)	121.7%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	56,222	(8,671)	(64,893)				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

Month No: 5

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
117 Seafront							
1011 Income Filming	2,625	0	(2,625)			0.0%	
1084 Income Promenade	311	0	(311)			0.0%	
Seafront :- Income	2,936	0	(2,936)				0
4018 Water Refill Maint	41	0	(41)		(41)	0.0%	41
4022 Telescope Expenditure	31	200	169		169	15.4%	
4115 Insurance	331	337	6		6	98.3%	
4251 Bin Emptying (Dog/General)	9,025	0	(9,025)		(9,025)	0.0%	
4253 Shelters	579	3,114	2,535		2,535	18.6%	
4261 General Maintenance	1,370	7,000	5,630		5,630	19.6%	
4270 Vehicles & Equipment Maint	82	150	68		68	54.6%	
Seafront :- Indirect Expenditure	11,459	10,801	(658)	0	(658)	106.1%	41
Net Income over Expenditure	(8,522)	(10,801)	(2,279)				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	41	0	(41)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(8,481)	(10,801)	(2,320)				
125 Allotments							
1050 Income Rent	1,404	1,406	2			99.9%	
Allotments :- Income	1,404	1,406	2			99.9%	0
4261 General Maintenance	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	0	500	500	0	500	0.0%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	1,404	906	(498)				
224 Projects Pool - GOSCA							
1092 Income General Maintenance	5,000	0	(5,000)			0.0%	
Projects Pool - GOSCA :- Income	5,000	0	(5,000)				0
4023 Knot Weed Eradication	450	540	90		90	83.3%	
4425 Seaford Head Fencing	221	0	(221)		(221)	0.0%	221
4426 Bonningstedt Prom Grnd Works	375	0	(375)		(375)	0.0%	375
4427 Seaford Head Chalk Path	15,014	0	(15,014)		(15,014)	0.0%	15,014
4429 Wildflower Area Extension	1,620	0	(1,620)		(1,620)	0.0%	1,620
4430 Golf Course Washdown System	25,615	0	(25,615)		(25,615)	0.0%	25,000
4432 The Salts Cycle Racks	171	0	(171)		(171)	0.0%	171
Projects Pool - GOSCA :- Indirect Expenditure	43,467	540	(42,927)	0	(42,927)	8049.4%	42,402
Net Income over Expenditure	(38,467)	(540)	37,927				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	42,402	0	(42,402)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	3,935	(540)	(4,475)				

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

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Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
Golf, Open Spaces & Climate :- Income	705,187	767,646	62,459			91.9%	
Expenditure	514,218	908,238	394,020	0	394,020	56.6%	
Net Income over Expenditure	190,969	(140,592)	(331,561)				
plus Transfer from EMR	42,643	0	(42,643)				
less Transfer to EMR	9,790	0	(9,790)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	223,822	(140,592)	(364,414)				

Finance & General Purposes201 Administration

1062	Income Telephone Recharge	404	865	461		46.7%	
1176	Precept	641,901	1,283,802	641,901		50.0%	
1190	Interest Received	29,420	60,000	30,580		49.0%	
	Administration :- Income	671,725	1,344,667	672,942		50.0%	0
4000	Salaries & Wages	317,200	724,539	407,339	407,339	43.8%	
4001	Employers NI	38,014	92,181	54,167	54,167	41.2%	
4002	Employers Superannuation	46,837	114,165	67,328	67,328	41.0%	
4003	Sub-contracted Staff	369	1,650	1,281	1,281	22.3%	
4009	Recruitment Costs	1,162	500	(662)	(662)	232.4%	
4010	Staff Training	3,379	3,500	121	121	96.5%	
4011	Staff PPE / H&S	0	500	500	500	0.0%	
4012	Staff Expenses	411	1,500	1,089	1,089	27.4%	
4015	Office Refreshments	100	200	100	100	50.2%	
4100	Telecommunications	3,325	5,500	2,175	2,175	60.5%	
4105	Postage	53	250	197	197	21.0%	
4106	Stationery	112	1,000	888	888	11.2%	
4107	Photocopier	450	1,401	951	951	32.1%	
4108	Recycling & Shredding	0	500	500	500	0.0%	
4110	Advertising & Publicity	267	2,500	2,233	2,233	10.7%	
4112	Subscriptions	5,134	5,907	773	773	86.9%	
4113	Software Support	13,325	20,114	6,789	6,789	66.2%	
4114	Licence Fee	0	80	80	80	0.0%	
4115	Insurance	2,257	2,009	(248)	(248)	112.4%	
4116	Web Site	1,224	2,500	1,276	1,276	49.0%	
4118	IT Hardware	895	2,500	1,605	1,605	35.8%	
4154	Land Registry Fees	123	250	127	127	49.2%	
4155	Professional Fees	3,574	18,584	15,010	15,010	19.2%	
4156	Bank Charges	469	1,390	921	921	33.7%	
4157	Audit Fees	(3,555)	5,000	8,555	8,555	(71.1%)	

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

Month No: 5

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4199 Other Expenditure	12	100	88		88	12.5%	
4201 Cleaning & Hygiene	5	0	(5)		(5)	0.0%	
4272 Furniture & Equipment	367	1,500	1,133		1,133	24.5%	
4284 Maintenance Tools & Equipment	244	1,500	1,256		1,256	16.3%	
Administration :- Indirect Expenditure	435,753	1,011,320	575,567	0	575,567	43.1%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	235,972	333,347	97,375				
<u>205 Premises - Church Street</u>							
1050 Income Rent	5,984	7,984	2,000			75.0%	
Premises - Church Street :- Income	5,984	7,984	2,000			75.0%	0
4050 Rent payable	12,880	25,760	12,880		12,880	50.0%	
4051 Rates	4,442	8,772	4,330		4,330	50.6%	
4059 Church Street Service Charges	0	25,172	25,172		25,172	0.0%	
4115 Insurance	503	9	(494)		(494)	5590.8%	
4270 Vehicles & Equipment Maint	232	445	213		213	52.2%	
4275 Building Maintenance	1,303	1,000	(303)		(303)	130.3%	
Premises - Church Street :- Indirect Expenditure	19,361	61,158	41,797	0	41,797	31.7%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(13,376)	(53,174)	(39,798)				
<u>210 Civic Expenses</u>							
4013 Members Expenses	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4014 Member Training	1,220	1,557	337		337	78.4%	
4113 Software Support	1,259	2,629	1,370		1,370	47.9%	
4115 Insurance	67	68	1		1	98.8%	
4118 IT Hardware	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4180 Room Hire	240	1,200	960		960	20.0%	
4181 Civic - Mayors Allowance	1,099	1,500	401		401	73.3%	
4182 Catering & Hospitality	(10)	200	210		210	(5.0%)	
4183 Civic - Awards	30	200	170		170	15.1%	
4184 Civic - other	322	1,000	678		678	32.2%	
4188 Town Crier Expenses	1,175	2,500	1,325		1,325	47.0%	
4190 Election Costs	0	20,000	20,000		20,000	0.0%	
Civic Expenses :- Indirect Expenditure	5,402	31,154	25,752	0	25,752	17.3%	0
Net Expenditure	(5,402)	(31,154)	(25,752)				
<u>215 Grants</u>							
4401 Grants	26,491	17,746	(8,745)		(8,745)	149.3%	8,745

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4406 Service Funding Agreements	9,000	9,000	0		0	100.0%	
Grants :- Indirect Expenditure	35,491	26,746	(8,745)	0	(8,745)	132.7%	8,745
Net Expenditure	(35,491)	(26,746)	8,745				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	8,745	0	(8,745)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(26,746)	(26,746)	0				
<u>226 CIL and S106 Receipts</u>							
1014 CIL Receipts	4,427	0	(4,427)			0.0%	4,427
CIL and S106 Receipts :- Income	4,427	0	(4,427)				4,427
Net Income	4,427	0	(4,427)				
6001 less Transfer to EMR	4,427	0	(4,427)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	0	0	0				
Finance & General Purposes :- Income	682,136	1,352,651	670,515			50.4%	
Expenditure	496,007	1,130,378	634,371	0	634,371	43.9%	
Net Income over Expenditure	186,129	222,273	36,144				
plus Transfer from EMR	8,745	0	(8,745)				
less Transfer to EMR	4,427	0	(4,427)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	190,447	222,273	31,826				
<u>Assets and Facilities</u>							
<u>103 The View</u>							
1050 Income Rent	30,000	60,000	30,000			50.0%	
1093 Income Rates	3,264	8,212	4,948			39.7%	
The View :- Income	33,264	68,212	34,948			48.8%	0
4051 Rates	3,464	8,212	4,748		4,748	42.2%	
4115 Insurance	3,407	3,255	(152)		(152)	104.7%	
4261 General Maintenance	25	1,000	975		975	2.5%	
4270 Vehicles & Equipment Maint	110	0	(110)		(110)	0.0%	
4275 Building Maintenance	5,165	5,000	(165)		(165)	103.3%	
4276 Maintenance - CCTV	71	0	(71)		(71)	0.0%	
4279 Fire & Security	383	808	425		425	47.4%	
The View :- Indirect Expenditure	12,625	18,275	5,650	0	5,650	69.1%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	20,639	49,937	29,298				

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>104 The View Capital Costs</u>							
4301 Public Works Loan Payment	17,103	105,000	87,897		87,897	16.3%	
The View Capital Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	17,103	105,000	87,897	0	87,897	16.3%	0
Net Expenditure	(17,103)	(105,000)	(87,897)				
<u>109 Memorials</u>							
1055 Income Memorial Bench	935	0	(935)			0.0%	
Memorials :- Income	935	0	(935)				0
4052 Water & Sewerage	101	163	62		62	61.9%	
4115 Insurance	280	282	2		2	99.3%	
4204 War Memorial (Sutton Road)	0	400	400		400	0.0%	
4250 Memorial Bench	935	1,000	65		65	93.5%	
4254 Martello Entertainments Area	800	0	(800)		(800)	0.0%	800
4255 The Shoal Maintenance	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
Memorials :- Indirect Expenditure	2,116	2,345	229	0	229	90.2%	800
Net Income over Expenditure	(1,181)	(2,345)	(1,164)				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	800	0	(800)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(381)	(2,345)	(1,964)				
<u>113 Crypt</u>							
1057 Income Electricity Recharge	312	917	605			34.0%	
1058 Income Water Recharge	91	395	304			23.1%	
1063 Income Gas Recharge	181	679	498			26.7%	
Crypt :- Income	585	1,991	1,406			29.4%	0
4052 Water & Sewerage	139	395	257		257	35.1%	
4055 Electricity	312	917	605		605	34.0%	
4056 Gas	181	679	498		498	26.7%	
4115 Insurance	358	338	(20)		(20)	105.9%	
4261 General Maintenance	25	0	(25)		(25)	0.0%	
4275 Building Maintenance	1,342	0	(1,342)		(1,342)	0.0%	
4279 Fire & Security	525	300	(225)		(225)	175.0%	
Crypt :- Indirect Expenditure	2,882	2,629	(253)	0	(253)	109.6%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(2,297)	(638)	1,659				

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
114 Public Toilets							
4115 Insurance	690	664	(26)		(26)	103.9%	
4203 Public Toilet Cleaning	20,407	45,000	24,593		24,593	45.3%	
4275 Building Maintenance	949	6,500	5,551		5,551	14.6%	
4502 Toilet Hire	2,732	10,000	7,268		7,268	27.3%	
Public Toilets :- Indirect Expenditure	24,778	62,164	37,386	0	37,386	39.9%	0
Net Expenditure	(24,778)	(62,164)	(37,386)				
115 Martello Tower							
1091 Income Building Maintenance	6,000	0	(6,000)			0.0%	
Martello Tower :- Income	6,000	0	(6,000)				0
4115 Insurance	4,027	3,805	(222)		(222)	105.8%	
4275 Building Maintenance	5,780	1,000	(4,780)		(4,780)	578.0%	
Martello Tower :- Indirect Expenditure	9,807	4,805	(5,002)	0	(5,002)	204.1%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(3,807)	(4,805)	(998)				
118 Beach Huts							
1054 Income Other	856	0	(856)			0.0%	
1057 Income Electricity Recharge	14	43	30			31.4%	
1058 Income Water Recharge	0	609	609			0.0%	
1060 Beach Huts Site Licence	30,107	30,107	0			100.0%	
1061 Beach Hut Annual Rent	12,355	12,355	0			100.0%	
1094 Income Seasonal Beach Huts	9,434	12,000	2,566			78.6%	
Beach Huts :- Income	52,764	55,114	2,350			95.7%	0
4051 Rates	2,412	5,309	2,897		2,897	45.4%	
4052 Water & Sewerage	428	1,218	790		790	35.2%	
4055 Electricity	108	311	203		203	34.8%	
4115 Insurance	709	719	10		10	98.6%	
4156 Bank Charges	212	11	(201)		(201)	1927.3%	
4258 Seasonal Beach Hut Revenue Exp	6,253	9,269	3,016		3,016	67.5%	
4275 Building Maintenance	722	30,812	30,090		30,090	2.3%	
4502 Toilet Hire	633	1,510	877		877	41.9%	
Beach Huts :- Indirect Expenditure	11,478	49,159	37,681	0	37,681	23.3%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	41,286	5,955	(35,331)				

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
121 Seaford in Bloom							
1025 Income Sponsorship	0	500	500			0.0%	
Seaford in Bloom :- Income	0	500	500			0.0%	0
4402 Seaford in Bloom	1,640	9,840	8,200		8,200	16.7%	
Seaford in Bloom :- Indirect Expenditure	1,640	9,840	8,200	0	8,200	16.7%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(1,640)	(9,340)	(7,700)				
130 Other Recreation							
4410 Swimming Pool	0	10,000	10,000		10,000	0.0%	
Other Recreation :- Indirect Expenditure	0	10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0.0%	0
Net Expenditure	0	(10,000)	(10,000)				
134 CCTV							
4055 Electricity	4,043	4,969	926		926	81.4%	
4115 Insurance	116	117	1		1	99.2%	
4276 Maintenance - CCTV	3,300	5,000	1,700		1,700	66.0%	
CCTV :- Indirect Expenditure	7,459	10,086	2,627	0	2,627	74.0%	0
Net Expenditure	(7,459)	(10,086)	(2,627)				
135 Events							
1075 Income Christmas Event	0	2,750	2,750			0.0%	
Events :- Income	0	2,750	2,750			0.0%	0
4115 Insurance	71	71	(0)		(0)	100.1%	
4195 Events Expenditure	125	1,500	1,375		1,375	8.3%	
4273 Christmas Lights	0	12,000	12,000		12,000	0.0%	
4281 Christmas Event Expenses	(1)	10,000	10,001		10,001	0.0%	
4282 Armed Forces Day Expenditure	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
Events :- Indirect Expenditure	195	24,071	23,876	0	23,876	0.8%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(195)	(21,321)	(21,126)				
140 Lifeguard Hut							
4115 Insurance	54	54	(0)		(0)	100.2%	
Lifeguard Hut :- Indirect Expenditure	54	54	(0)	0	(0)	100.2%	0
Net Expenditure	(54)	(54)	0				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2026

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Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
145 Concessions & Street Trading							
1024 Salts Cafe Concession	12,750	25,500	12,750			50.0%	
1026 South Hill Barn Concession	2,700	5,400	2,700			50.0%	
1027 Splash Point Concession	5,911	6,896	985			85.7%	
1028 Martello Cafe Concession	7,817	15,710	7,893			49.8%	
1029 West View Kiosk Concession	4,295	8,590	4,295			50.0%	
1031 Dane Road Concession	5,500	11,000	5,500			50.0%	
1032 Marine Parade Concession	13,250	21,500	8,250			61.6%	
1033 Bonningstedt Prom Concession	5,400	8,400	3,000			64.3%	
1034 Bonningstedt Steps Concession	3,429	4,000	571			85.7%	
1035 Old Town Hall Concession	1,406	2,826	1,420			49.8%	
1036 West View Beach Hut Concession	779	0	(779)			0.0%	
1057 Income Electricity Recharge	1,711	3,487	1,776			49.1%	
1058 Income Water Recharge	292	952	660			30.7%	
1083 Income Street Market	489	489	0			100.0%	
Concessions & Street Trading :- Income	65,729	114,750	49,021			57.3%	0
4052 Water & Sewerage	330	1,289	959		959	25.6%	
4055 Electricity	1,711	4,743	3,032		3,032	36.1%	
4115 Insurance	568	570	2		2	99.7%	
4275 Building Maintenance	2,450	10,000	7,550		7,550	24.5%	
Concessions & Street Trading :- Indirect Expenditure	5,060	16,602	11,542	0	11,542	30.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	60,669	98,148	37,479				
146 Martello Changing Places							
4055 Electricity	78	278	200		200	28.0%	
4115 Insurance	112	119	7		7	94.1%	
4270 Vehicles & Equipment Maint	494	0	(494)		(494)	0.0%	
4275 Building Maintenance	3,235	3,000	(235)		(235)	107.8%	
Martello Changing Places :- Indirect Expenditure	3,919	3,397	(522)	0	(522)	115.4%	0
Net Expenditure	(3,919)	(3,397)	522				
206 Premises - Hurdis House							
4051 Rates	12,143	0	(12,143)		(12,143)	0.0%	
4055 Electricity	2,214	0	(2,214)		(2,214)	0.0%	
4056 Gas	898	0	(898)		(898)	0.0%	
4115 Insurance	3,292	572	(2,720)		(2,720)	575.5%	
4155 Professional Fees	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4275 Building Maintenance	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
Premises - Hurdis House :- Indirect Expenditure	18,547	3,072	(15,475)	0	(15,475)	603.7%	0
Net Expenditure	(18,547)	(3,072)	15,475				
<u>225 Projects Pool - A&F</u>							
4274 Projects Expenditure	2,798	2,500	(298)		(298)	111.9%	
4436 New Bin Provision	2,934	0	(2,934)		(2,934)	0.0%	2,934
Projects Pool - A&F :- Indirect Expenditure	5,732	2,500	(3,232)	0	(3,232)	229.3%	2,934
Net Expenditure	(5,732)	(2,500)	3,232				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	2,934	0	(2,934)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(2,798)	(2,500)	298				
<u>301 Planning & Highways</u>							
4263 Bus Shelter Maintenance/Clean	126	1,000	874		874	12.6%	
Planning & Highways :- Indirect Expenditure	126	1,000	874	0	874	12.6%	0
Net Expenditure	(126)	(1,000)	(874)				
Assets and Facilities :- Income	159,276	243,317	84,041			65.5%	
Expenditure	123,520	324,999	201,479	0	201,479	38.0%	
Net Income over Expenditure	35,757	(81,682)	(117,439)				
plus Transfer from EMR	3,734	0	(3,734)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	39,491	(81,682)	(121,173)				
Grand Totals:- Income	1,546,599	2,363,614	817,015			65.4%	
Expenditure	1,133,745	2,363,615	1,229,870	0	1,229,870	48.0%	
Net Income over Expenditure	412,855	(1)	(412,856)				
plus Transfer from EMR	55,122	0	(55,122)				
less Transfer to EMR	14,217	0	(14,217)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	453,760	(1)	(453,761)				

1000 Codes = Income
4000 Codes = Expenditure

Financial Variance Report for Finance & General Purposes			
		09-Jul	08-Oct
		(Apr-May) - 16.67%	(June-Aug) - 41.67%
201	Administration		
1176	Precept	This income is the first half of the Precept. The balance will be paid in September.	As previously reported
4009	Recruitment Costs	This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage due to recruitment costs incurred for the recruitment of Parking Attendants at South Hill Barn.	As previously reported, the ongoing advertising for Car Parking Attendants, along with the necessary job evaluations, has taken this account over budget. However, these costs will be offset by the income received from the SHB Parking Trial.
4010	Staff Training	This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage due to the upfront cost of CiLCA training for two members of staff.	As previously reported.
4100	Telephone		The higher percentage of budget spent at this point in the year reflects changes to mobile phone contracts, the purchase of new mobile phones and alterations to the Administration Office telephone system. However, replacing the previous Q2 contracts with Town Council owned handsets and monthly SIM-only agreements is expected to reduce annual costs by almost £2,000 in future years. Current expenditure for 2026/27 is forecast to remain approximately £200 within budget.
4112	Subscriptions	This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage due to the timing of annual subscription payments, with the majority being paid in full at the start of the financial year.	As previously reported
4113	Software Support	This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage due to the timing of annual software payments with half the costs being paid in full during April.	As previously reported
4115	Insurance	This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage as the Council's insurance premium is paid in full at the start of the financial year. The premium is also slightly higher than the approved budget following the transition from a three-year insurance agreement to a new one-year contract.	As previously reported
4157	Audit Fees	The negative expenditure balance relates to accruals made for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 external audit fees. As the AGARs for both years remain under investigation by the external auditor, the audits have not yet been concluded and additional costs are anticipated. These investigations are expected to conclude within the next couple of months, at which point the accrued funds are expected to be utilised. The remaining budget provision relates to the 2026/27 AGAR external audit, for which costs are not expected to be incurred until the next financial year. A year-end accrual will therefore be required to reflect these anticipated costs.	As previously reported. However, the Town Council has since received the invoices in respect of the previous AGAR external audits and which will therefore be reflected in the financial reports for the next reporting period
4201	Cleaning & Hygiene	Expenditure to date is minimal and relates to the purchase of washing-up liquid. Further ad hoc cleaning supply costs may be incurred during the financial year but are not expected to be significant. The requirement for a dedicated budget provision will be considered as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process.	As previously reported
205	Premises Church Street		
1050	Income Rent	Income is currently higher than the expected year-to-date percentage as 75% of the annual rental income has been recognised. This reflects an accrual made at the start of the financial year for the period April to December, with the annual rental invoice being issued each December.	As previously reported. Whilst this is labelled as 'income rent', this income is in fact service charge recharges. Officers will look to tidy this description up going forwards.
4115	Insurance	This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage as the Council's insurance premium is paid in full at the start of the financial year.	In addition to what was previously reported, a LOLER statutory inspection has now been added through the Council's insurance arrangements to ensure the lift is subject to the required independent safety examinations. This additional cost was not included when the budget was originally set.
4275	Building Maintenance		Expenditure is over budget due to unplanned repair costs following an issue with the lift earlier in the year.
210	Civic Expenses		
4014	Member Training		The higher percentage of budget spent at this point in the year is due to bespoke on-site planning training, along with upfront costs for Staff Skills.

		09-Jul	08-Oct
4115	Insurance		This expenditure is higher than the expected year-to-date percentage as the Council's insurance premium is paid in full at the start of the financial year.
4181	Civic - Mayors Allowance		The Mayor's Allowance is showing a higher percentage of budget spent at this point in the year due to advance payments relating to the Mayor's Civic and Carol Services.
4182	Catering & Hospitality	The negative expenditure balance of £10 relates to an accrual brought forward from the previous financial year. This balance will be offset once the associated expenditure is incurred.	As previously reported.
4190	Election Costs		Election costs are budgeted for but are not expected to be incurred this year. The resulting underspend is planned to be transferred to the Election EMR to build up the balance towards the anticipated election costs in 2027/28.
215	Grants		
4401	Grants		The overspend showing against this account code has been covered by the relevant EMR, as approved at the time the budget was set.
226	CIL and S106 Receipts		
1014	CIL Receipts	This income relates to the 25% of CIL passed on by Lewes District Council, which was received in April. A further amount will be received in October dependent on the developments that have taken place in the area. All CIL receipts are transferred into the CIL EMR.	As previously reported.

Glossary

AGAR	Annual Governance & Accountability Return
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CILCA	Certificate in Local Council Administration
EMR	Earmarked Reserves
LOLER	Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	97/26
Agenda Item Number:	6
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Finance & General Purposes Update Report – October 2026
Strategy Programme Ref:	1.2, 4.1, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4
Purpose of Report:	To update the Committee on progress and actions relating to the areas of responsibility for the Finance & General Purposes Committee
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Supporting Documents:	N/A

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Presented below is the Finance & General Purposes update, incorporating the non-finance related areas of responsibility detailed in the Committee's Terms of Reference, in alphabetical order.
- 1.2 Officers will continue to ensure the Committee receives an update across its areas of responsibility.
- 1.3 All updates are for noting, but any questions or comments from the Committee are welcomed.

2. Approval and Award of Grants and Donations

- 2.1 A report appears elsewhere on this agenda providing recommendations based on the review of the Discretionary Grants for 2026 – 2027.

3. Civic & Ceremonial Activities

3.1 Mayoral

- (a)** The Mayor has confirmed Aspens as his chosen charity for the 2026-2027 civic year. Aspens supports autistic children, young people and adults, as well as their families and carers, through a range of specialist services designed to promote independence, wellbeing and inclusion.
- (b)** A dedicated donations page has been established to support the Mayor's fundraising efforts throughout the year. Funds raised will help Aspens provide support to local families in Seaford, including assistance with days out, transport and access to other vital services. At the time of writing, the appeal has raised £195 and continues to attract donations.
- (c)** In addition to fundraising at civic and community events, the Mayor is undertaking a number of personal fundraising challenges. On 5 September 2026, he successfully completed the Brighton Triathlon, consisting of a 1,500m open-water swim, 50km cycle ride and 10km run, in support of his chosen charity.
- (d)** The Civic Office will continue to support the Mayor's fundraising activities by raising the profile of Aspens through the Town Council's communication channels. The Mayor also intends to attend a number of Aspens events throughout the year to demonstrate the Town Council's support for the charity and its work.
- (e)** The Mayor's Civic Service took place at St Leonard's Church on Wednesday 16 September 2026. The event brought together councillors, community representatives, civic guests, and residents to mark the civic year and raise the Town Council's profile.
- (f)** The next civic event will be the Mayor's Carol Service, taking place at 7.00pm on Wednesday 16 December 2026 at St Leonard's Church. Further details will be announced in due course.
- (g)** The Mayor and Deputy Mayor have continued to represent the Town Council at a range of engagements, meetings, and community events. Details of these activities are reported via the Mayor's Report to each Full Council meeting.

4. Consideration of Annual Budget Requests of all Standing Committees for Recommendation to Full Council

- 4.1** The 2026 – 2027 budget and precept were approved by Full Council at its meeting on 29 January 2026.
- 4.2** The budget setting process for the 2027 – 2028 financial year will begin in autumn 2026, followed by this Committee considering the budget requests of all committees at its meeting on 7 January 2027.
- 4.3** A report appears elsewhere on this agenda that maps out the budget timetable for the 2027 – 2028 budget.

5. Considering and Agreeing Actions to all Internal Audit Reports

- 5.1** A report was presented to Full Council on 25 June 2026 which included the final Internal Audit Report required for the 2025 - 2026 AGAR. This agenda item can be found [here](#) (page 15 onwards).
- 5.2** The Town Council's Internal Auditor Parish and Town Auditing Services (PATAS) is due to undertake the first of its two internal audits in November 2026.

6. Electoral Matters

- 6.1** Seaford Town Council elections are scheduled to take place in May 2027. Preparatory work has commenced to support electoral awareness and encourage participation in local democracy.
- 6.2** The Town Council has launched its 'Become a Seaford Town Councillor' campaign, aimed at increasing awareness of the role of a town councillor and encouraging prospective candidates to consider standing for election. As part of the campaign, the Town Council is hosting a series of evening information sessions for residents who would like to learn more about the Town Council, the responsibilities of councillors, and the election process.
- 6.3** To support the campaign, the Town Council has been sharing information through a range of communication channels, including its website, public mailing list, and social media platforms. Promotional materials have also been displayed on Town Council noticeboards and included within Seaford Scene to maximise awareness amongst residents.
- 6.4** The campaign will continue throughout the autumn, with further information and guidance being made available to prospective candidates as the election period approaches.

- 6.5** Members will receive further updates in the new year, as the formal election process commences and key dates and requirements are confirmed by Lewes District Council's Electoral Services team.

7. Oversight of External Funding Performance

- 7.1** This area of responsibility relates to the external funding work that is coordinated and carried out by the Funding & Contracts Officer post.
- 7.2** As part of their role, funding bids totalling £61,000 have been made to Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. This is for a project in partnership with the National Trust at High & Over to provide fencing and gates to allow grazing, improve paths, and clear foliage, in order to increase accessibility, provide new signage, and improve the habitat and sustainability of this important Town Council-owned area. Officers have recently been notified that the Town Council was unsuccessful in its bid to SDNPA. Officers await an outcome from Lewes District Council.
- 7.3** A further funding bid has been placed with Sport England's Movement Fund to replace the rugby posts at The Salts. The application includes the replacement of all four posts, as well as providing a piece of equipment to assist the ground maintenance contractors with the lifting and lowering of the new posts. It is pleasing to share that officers have been successful in receiving a partial award of £4,000. Officers are now working alongside contractors to ensure the safe installation of the posts.
- 7.4** The Funding & Contracts Officer has also been working on the Discretionary Grants review process with the Deputy Town Clerk, the details of which appear elsewhere on this agenda.
- 7.5** The Funding & Contracts Officer also led on the Town Council's 2028 Town of Culture (TOC) bid. Unfortunately, officers were informed in July that the Town Council's bid was unsuccessful. There were 398 applications that needed to be shortlisted and only 5 'medium sized towns' were taken forwards..

8. Review of Full Council Budget Position

- 8.1** At each meeting, this Committee considers a Finance Report providing the income and expenditure figures for the whole Council. This report features elsewhere on this agenda.

9. Risk Management Strategy

- 9.1** Officers completed and updated the General & Financial Risk Assessment, which was reported to Full Council on 25 June 2026.
- 9.2** Officers have also completed and updated the annual review of the Local Council Risk System (LCRS) Risk Review, which formed part of the report to Full Council on 25 June 2026.
- 9.3** A review of the risk register is now scheduled on a quarterly basis with the Strategic Management Team.

10. Town Council Leases

- 10.1** Involvement in the Town Council's leases currently spans the entire committee structure. Finance & General Purposes is responsible for overseeing the lease systems of the Town Council, with individual committees responsible for reviewing first drafts or heads of terms of leases relating to their areas of responsibility. Final agreement of leases is reserved to Full Council only.
- 10.2** The Assets & Contracts Manager is continuing to work through and review the extensive details of all leases, leaseholder liabilities and responsibilities, as well as the systems for carrying out valuations, rent reviews, and disposals of land.

11. Town Council Litigation

- 11.1** Officers continue to pursue a debtor who is in the process of bankruptcy proceedings. More detail is provided in an exempt report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 11.2** Representatives of the Town Council's insurers are continuing to investigate a personal injury claim after an alleged injury on the Golf Course. No further update is available at this time.
- 11.3** Officers have received two additional claims for damage caused to local property on Chyngton Road caused by stray golf balls and are working with the Town Council's insurers to address these claims.

12. Town Council Offices (37 Church Street)

- 12.1** An exempt report providing an update on the Town Council offices was presented to the Assets & Facilities Committee on 17 August 2026.

Officers are enacting the decisions made by the Committee in relation to future premises plans for the Town Council and further exploring the options available within the current Church Street premises.

13. Town Council Policy Programme

- 13.1** A report appears elsewhere on this agenda, providing an update on all matters relating to policies.

14. Outstanding Debts in Accordance with the Town Council's Bad Debt Policy

- 14.1** An exempt report appears elsewhere on this agenda in relation to current debtors.

15. Finance & General Purposes – Strategy Programme Update

- 15.1** The Committee is reminded there are six strategies detailed within the Strategy Programme 2025 – 2027 that Finance & General Purposes Committee has oversight of. Whilst the formal RAG ratings are evaluated at each quarterly Full Council meeting, officers provide each Committee with an update on their specific strategies and goals at each Committee meeting.
- 15.2** The Town Council's Strategy Programme 2025 – 2027 is available to view on the [Town Council's website](#)
- 15.3** Strategy 1.2 – Accessibility of Websites – the existing Town Council website underwent technical work in October 2025 to ensure it meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA standard for accessibility. Officers are working hard on the production of a new Town Council website; councillors will be provided with an advance view of the new website ahead of its launch on 7 October in order to seek feedback and to demonstrate the positive changes compared to the current version.
- 15.4** Strategy 4.1 – Communications Strategy & Working Digitally – much of this area crosses over with Strategy 1.2 with regards to the websites. The other area of focus is the review of communications methods. Featured elsewhere on this report is the draft Communication Strategy and underpinning policies presented for feedback.
- 15.5** Strategy 4.2 – Youth Ambassador Board (YAB) – *see the separate report elsewhere on this agenda.*
- 15.6** Strategy 5.2 – Financial Management –

- (a) Officers continue to review all contracts in place and existing arrangements to ensure best value. Examples of recent reviews have taken place for mobile phone contracts and water contracts. Officer mobile phones contracts have been cancelled, being replaced with rolling SIM-only contracts, providing savings of approximately £2,000 per annum. Water contracts have been procured with a saving of approximately £500 per annum.
- (b) Officers are also working with lessees at The View to agree a split of all planned preventative maintenance contracts across the building, that will deliver additional savings.

15.7 Strategy 5.3 – Policy & Risk Management – see *section 9 of this report for an update on risk management.*

15.8 Strategy 5.4 – Back Office Digitalisation –

- (a) Officers have nearly finished the first season of renting the West View Beach Huts online via the Lemon booking system. Officers will complete a review of the bookings and feedback once the season has ended.
- (b) Sports pitch bookings for The Crouch and The Salts continue to be managed by officers. It would be fair to say that the transition from the previous Lewes District Council managed service has brought a number of challenges. Officers are working proactively with the sports clubs to ensure that the relationship is collaborative and meets the needs of all parties. It is the intention to complete a review of this process at the end of this financial year and invite feedback from the regular user sports clubs on this matter. The online bookings calendar is linked to from the current [Town Council's website](#) but the new Town Council website will have improved accessibility for those looking to view the calendar.
- (c) Work on the Golf Course membership system will commence in October 2026 to ensure this is ready for January 2027 launch. This will allow online membership joining and renewal and also means that membership direct debits are managed within the membership system, rather than the Town Council's Finance Team processing these manually. November will see the introduction of online payment for

non-member tee bookings. Further changes will be made to use a handicap system that links directly to the membership and booking product.

- (d) Officers have commenced the review of financial management software. This will be completed by the end of October with any potential changes to the provider being implemented from April 2027, if deemed appropriate.

16. Financial Appraisal

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



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	106/26
Agenda Item Number:	7
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	2027 - 2028 Budget Timetable
Strategy Programme Ref:	5.1
Purpose of Report:	To advise the Committee of the Budget Timetable for 2027 - 2028
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Supporting Documents:	N/A

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the proposed 2027 – 2028 Budget Timetable.

1. Introduction

1.1 Financial Regulations state that:

- Before setting a precept, the Town Council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.
- No later than December each year, the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all revenue income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following four financial years taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair and replacement.
- Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance & General Purposes Committee no later than the end of December each year.

- 1.2** During November and December, in consultation with the RFO, each committee shall formulate proposals for its own areas of responsibility in respect of revenue.
- 1.3** Once the September 2026 transactions have been finalised, these transactions from April to September 2026 will be used as a base for the projected outturn for 2026 - 2027 and initial draft budgets for 2027 - 2028 through to 2030 - 2031.
- 1.4** Individual meeting dates are arranged with budget managers (officers) to go through each committee's budget requirements line by line.
- 1.5** Last year, officers proposed to bring the Councillor's Informal Budget Briefing Session to the start of the budgeting process. This allows officers to openly discuss the potential challenges for the next financial year and to hear feedback on member priorities and views.
- 1.6** Draft budgets will be emailed to each Committee Chair and discussed with the RFO.
- 1.7** The proposed budget timetable is as follows:

Date	Meeting	Action
26 October 2026 7pm	Informal Budget Briefing Session	To provide councillors and officers with an opportunity to discuss the budget-setting process for 2027 - 2028 and consider emerging budget requirements and priorities
26 November 2026 7pm	Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action (GOSCA) Committee Meeting	GOSCA draft budget approval
10 December 2026 7pm	Assets & Facilities (A&F) Committee Meeting	A&F draft budget approval

7 January 2027 7pm	Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee Meeting	F&GP and Whole Council draft budgets approval
28 January 2027 7pm	Full Council Meeting	Consideration and final approval of Full Council Budget and setting of the precept for 2027 - 2028

2. Financial Appraisal

2.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	107/26
Agenda Item Number:	8
Meeting:	Full Council
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Conclusion of External Audit relating to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
Strategy Programme Ref:	5.2
Purpose of Report:	Presenting the conclusion to the external audit completed by PKF Littlejohn LLP in respect of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Supporting Documents:	Appendix A – Sections 1 & 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025 Appendix B – Section 3 External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024 - 2025 Appendix C – Final External Auditor Report

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report and the conclusion of the Town Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following approval by Full Council on 26 June 2025, the Town Council submitted its Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year

ending 31 March 2025 ('2024 – 2025 AGAR') to the Town Council's External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP (PKF) (Appendix A).

- 1.2 On 24 September 2025, PKF issued a report detailing the results of its limited assurance review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Town Council's 2024 – 2025 AGAR (Appendix B). PKF explained that it was unable to certify completion of the review at that time.
- 1.3 On 4 September 2026, the Town Council received an update from PKF confirming the completion of their review of the 2024 - 2025 AGAR (Appendix C).
- 1.4 This report is being presented to enable the Committee to note the conclusion of the 2024 – 2025 AGAR.

2. Information

- 2.1 PKF has certified that it has completed its review of the Town Council's 2024 – 2025 AGAR, finalising the year end process.
- 2.2 In Appendix C, PKF has provided alternative wording that supersedes that in Section 3 of the 2024 – 2025 AGAR at Appendix B. Appendix B cannot be changed retrospectively so, as such, the Town Council needs to retain and publish both documents together, to provide the full details of the Limited Assurance Review carried out by PKF.
- 2.3 As required, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, the final External Auditor Report and Certificate, together with Sections 1 and 2 of the 2024 – 2025 AGAR, have been published on the Town Council's website.

3. 2025 – 2026 AGAR

- 3.1 Full Council approved the 2025 – 2026 AGAR at its meeting on 25 June 2026.
- 3.2 In the revised wording from PKF at Appendix C, it is stated that '*the smaller authority should however consider its response to Assertion 2 on the 2025/26 AGAR*'.
- 3.3 The Town Council has already published a statement regarding Section 1 Assertion 2 of the 2025 – 2026 AGAR providing additional background and context for its decision to answer 'Yes' to this assertion. This can be found on the [Town Council's website](#).

- 3.4** The Town Council awaits the outcome of the External Auditor's Limited Assurance Review of the 2025 – 2026 AGAR. A further update will be given on this in due course.

4. Financial Appraisal

- 4.1** The cost of Limited Assurance Review of the 2024 - 2025 AGAR was £2,520 (net figure), which was within the budget allocated.
- 4.2** The Town Council will not incur any additional fees or charges beyond the cost of the Limited Assurance Review.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

26/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

C25/06/25

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

ONLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

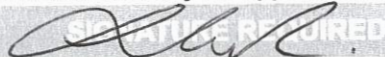
SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,742,786	1,684,721	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,061,609	1,101,019	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,590,398	1,104,847	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	1,022,372	819,598	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	119,979	123,729	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	1,567,721	1,242,024	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,684,721	1,705,236	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,694,421	1,819,319	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	10,796,043	11,074,571	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	1,325,624	1,247,348	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

02/06/2025

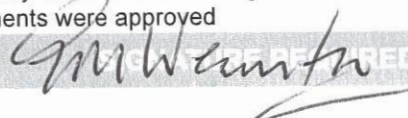
I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

26/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

C26/06/25

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



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

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

24/09/2025



Final External Auditor Report and Certificate 2024/25 in respect of Seaford Town Council ES0088

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.

External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On 24 September 2025, we issued a report detailing the results of our limited assurance review of Sections 1 and 2 of this authority's Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2025. We explained that we were unable to certify completion of the review at that time. We are now in a position to certify completion of the review.

The external auditor report given in Section 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return requires amendments as follows:

Except for the matters reported below, 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.

- 1) Section 1, Assertion 2 has been incorrectly completed and should have been answered 'No'. In our prior year report we raised an "except for" matter in respect of non-compliance with Financial Regulations regarding fees receivable for sports hire charges during the 2023/24 financial year. However, our report was not issued until June 2026 and therefore the smaller authority was not able to act on our report when completing and approving the 2024/25 AGAR. When the issue was first identified, as a result of an objection to the 2023/24 AGAR, the smaller authority commissioned an investigation into the matter. This took place during 2024/25 but it has taken time to resolve as the fee management had been outsourced to a third party via the District Council and the smaller authority was unable to get a satisfactory response from the District Council on the matter. The smaller authority therefore resolved to exit the contract with the District Council but this has taken time as it was tied in with the grounds maintenance contract and alternative arrangements had to be put in place before the whole contract

could be taken in house. The smaller authority has confirmed that from 1 April 2026 all pitch hire fees are now collected in house in line with its policies and financial regulations. The smaller authority should however consider its response to Assertion 2 on the 2025/26 AGAR.

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

None

External auditor certificate 2024/25

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

PKF Littlejohn LLP

PKF Littlejohn LLP

31/08/2026



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	71/26
Agenda Item Number:	9
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Youth Ambassador Board - 2026 Annual Report
Strategy Programme Ref:	4.2
Purpose of Report:	To provide an overview of the first year of Seaford Town Council's Youth Ambassador Board, highlighting its achievements, contributions to Town Council projects, and the positive impact on participating young people. The report also outlines future priorities and opportunities to further strengthen youth engagement in local decision-making.
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Authored by: Isabelle Mouland, Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager
Supporting Documents:	N/A

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report and the successful first year of the Youth Ambassador Board.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Youth Ambassador Board (the 'Board') was established to provide young people with a meaningful voice in local decision-making and strengthen engagement between Seaford Town Council and younger residents.
- 1.2** Following an initial recruitment campaign which attracted only two applicants, recruitment was reopened with support from Seaford Head School. This resulted in a Board of seven Youth Ambassadors aged 12-17.

2. Key Activities and Achievements

- 2.1** Since its establishment, the Board has provided youth input into strategic projects, undertaken community engagement activities, and contributed to the development of Council events.

Providing Youth Input into Strategic Projects:

- 2.2** During the Board's first meeting, Youth Ambassadors were introduced to the role of the Board and the wider work of the Town Council.
- 2.3** Youth Ambassadors participated in discussions supporting the Town Council's Town of Culture application and shared valuable insight into:
 - (a)** What it is like to be a teenager living in Seaford,
 - (b)** Activities and opportunities currently available to young people,
 - (c)** Gaps in provision for teenagers,
 - (d)** Concerns that some young people feel unwelcome in certain cafés and shops, and
 - (e)** Ideas for encouraging local businesses to become more youth-friendly.
- 2.4** This provided an early opportunity for Youth Ambassadors to influence a strategic project and ensure that young people's experiences were reflected in wider discussions about the future of the town.

Green Spaces Community Engagement Project

- 2.5** A major focus of the Board's work this year has been supporting engagement around the Town Council's open spaces, including:
 - i.** The Salts
 - ii.** The Crouch
 - iii.** Martello Fields
- 2.6** Rather than relying solely on traditional consultation methods, Youth Ambassadors helped design and deliver a youth-led engagement programme

aimed at gathering views from young people, families and the wider community.

School Engagement:

- 2.7** Youth Ambassadors worked with officers to develop plans for focus groups at Seaford Head School and creative consultation sessions with local primary schools to gather feedback on Seaford's open spaces.
- 2.8** Although the Board worked with officers to develop a programme of activities, suitable dates could not be secured with schools within the project timescale. The consultations will therefore form a key part of the Board's work programme next year.

3. Beach Hut Community Engagement Sessions

- 3.1** One of the most successful activities undertaken by the Board was a series of public engagement sessions based at the West View Beach Huts.
- 3.2** During July, Youth Ambassadors met members of the public and conducted surveys about the use of Seaford's green spaces.
- 3.3** These sessions provided young people with opportunities to:
 - (a)** Represent Seaford Town Council in an official capacity,
 - (b)** Build confidence in speaking to members of the public,
 - (c)** Develop research and consultation skills, and
 - (d)** Gather evidence to help inform future decision-making.
- 3.4** The activities demonstrated that young people can play a valuable role in community consultation and engagement – something that the Town Council will utilise going forward to positively impact future projects.

Green Spaces Survey Findings

- 3.5** Through two public engagement sessions at the West View Beach Huts, Youth Ambassadors collected 22 responses and gained first-hand experience of public consultation and evidence gathering.
- 3.6** Feedback highlighted that Seaford's green spaces are valued for their peaceful atmosphere, scenery, and recreational opportunities, with Martello Fields and The Salts identified as the most frequently used locations.
- 3.7** The most common suggestions for improvement included additional litter bins, improved facilities, better maintenance, and increased provision of activities and amenities. While most respondents reported feeling safe within

the spaces, feedback suggested there are opportunities to encourage more regular use.

- 3.8** The findings will help inform future discussions regarding the management and development of the Town Council's open spaces.

4. Supporting Seaford Christmas Magic

- 4.1** In June 2026, Youth Ambassadors met with officers involved in planning Seaford Christmas Magic to provide a youth perspective on the event.
- 4.2** The Board provided several suggestions for making the event more appealing to teenagers and young adults, including improved promotion, greater use of youth-focused communication channels, more activities aimed at older age groups, a wider variety of food stalls, and increased involvement from local businesses.
- 4.3** Youth Ambassadors also expressed an interest in volunteering at future events and supporting activities such as the grotto, face painting, and youth-led stalls.
- 4.4** This work gave Youth Ambassadors an opportunity to influence one of the Town Council's flagship events and ensure that the views of younger residents are considered in future event planning.

5. Youth Ambassador Reflections

- 5.1** At the end of the year, Youth Ambassadors were invited to reflect on their experiences.
- 5.2** Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and highlighted the impact the programme has had on participants.
- 5.3** One member described the Board as:
"An amazing opportunity to help shape the important aspects of Seaford from the point of view of a Year 12 student. The most interesting part for me was helping to improve Seaford Christmas Magic. It's really interesting to learn about local issues that I wouldn't have known if I wasn't part of this opportunity."
- 5.4** Youth Ambassadors also valued the supportive and inclusive nature of the programme:
"I have loved working with like-minded people and building friendships. Everyone here is amazing and one freedom we have is being able to express our feelings and ideas, which is incredible."

5.5 Other feedback highlighted the opportunity to influence local projects, understand how the Town Council operates, and see how young people's views can contribute to decision-making.

5.6 Across all responses, several common themes emerged:

- (a) Feeling listened to and valued,
- (b) Developing confidence and communication skills,
- (c) Learning about local government and decision-making,
- (d) Making a positive contribution to the community, and
- (e) Building friendships with like-minded young people.

6. Looking Ahead

6.1 All current Youth Ambassadors have expressed a wish to continue their involvement next year, demonstrating the value and positive impact of the programme's first year.

6.2 To maintain accessibility and encourage wider participation, officers propose operating a flexible Youth Ambassador model that allows young people to join and leave throughout the year as their circumstances change.

6.3 Priorities for 2026 will include:

- (a) Delivering the school consultation programme,
- (b) Expanding youth engagement in Town Council projects,
- (c) Supporting events and community initiatives, and
- (d) Providing further opportunities for young people to develop leadership and engagement skills.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The first year of the Board has successfully established a forum through which young people can contribute to local decision-making and community projects.

7.2 Despite an initially challenging recruitment process, the Board has provided valuable input into council initiatives, undertaken community engagement activities, and helped ensure that young people's perspectives are represented within the Town Council's work.

7.3 The fact that all current Youth Ambassadors wish to continue into a second year demonstrates the success of the programme and provides a strong foundation for expanding youth participation in local democracy and community life.

8. Financial Appraisal

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



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	116/26
Agenda Item Number:	10
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Policy Review Update – October 2026
Strategy Programme Ref:	5.3
Purpose of Report:	To provide the Committee with an update on the review of the Town Council's suite of policies
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Supporting Documents:	N/A

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This report is presenting an update on the progress of policy reviews in accordance with the risk-rated policy review schedule that was presented to this Committee in December 2025. The schedule aims to complete a review of all policies, as well as introducing those new policies that were deemed required, by December 2027.

2. Information

- 2.1** Since the last Committee meeting in July 2026, officers have been working hard to bring forward new or revised policies at pace.
- 2.2** On 23 July 2026, Full Council approved the devolution of revised policy adoption to committees. The Committee Terms of Reference Policy, available on the [Town Council's website](#), confirms the details of the policy delegations and call-in mechanism for policies to be reconsidered by Full Council, where felt required by members

- 2.3** Since the last update, the following new/revised policies have been approved by the relevant committee/s and adopted by Full Council:
- Standing Orders
 - Sexual Harassment Policy
 - Performance Management Policy
 - Capability Policy
 - Members Allowance Policy (*update to mileage claim rates only*)
- 2.4** On 10 September, the Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action Committee considered the following policy:
- Climate Emergency Policy (*recommended for Full Council consideration*)
- 2.5** On 17 September, the Personnel Committee considered the following policies:
- Menopause Policy (*adopted*)
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (*new – recommended for Full Council consideration*)
 - Pay Rewards & Benefits Policy (*new – recommended for Full Council consideration*)
- 2.6** On 24 September, the Assets & Facilities Committee considered the following policy:
- Memorials Policy (*adopted*)
- 2.7** Other policies appearing elsewhere on this agenda for this Committee to consider are:
- Discretionary Grants Policy (*Committee has delegated power to adopt*)
 - Communications and Engagement Strategy (*new – for recommendation to Full Council*). This comes with five underpinning policies listed below:
 - Press and Media Policy (*recommended for Full Council consideration*)
 - Social Media Policy (*recommended for Full Council consideration*)
 - Noticeboards Policy (*recommended for Full Council consideration*)
 - Concerns & Complaints Policy (*Committee has delegated power to adopt*)

- Unreasonable, Abusive and Vexatious Behaviour Policy
(*new - recommended for Full Council consideration*)

2.8 In addition to those listed above as recommendations to Full Council, Full Council will also be considering the following policies when it meets on 15 and 22 October:

- Business Continuity Strategy (*new – considered and recommended by this Committee in July 2026*)
- Committee Terms of Reference Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

2.9 By the conclusion of Full Council on 22 October 2026, officers will have either reviewed and updated, or created from new, a total of 40 policies since September 2025, which represents 50% of the Town Council's policies. The Town Council therefore remains well on target for a full review of all policies by December 2027.

2.10 All the policies that are newly created are due for review within 12 months of approval to ensure that these meet the requirements of the Town Council and remain valuable policies. Thereafter their ongoing review will be changed to a less frequent cycle.

3. Financial Appraisal

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

4. Post Script by Town Clerk

4.1 As a public sector, democratic, policy-driven organisation it is critical for the Town Council's suite of policies to be up to date, accurate, effective, relevant and proportionate. The substantial progress made within the last 12 months demonstrates the Strategic Management Team's aspirations to ensure that all policies are reviewed, updated and/or implemented at pace. I would like to particularly pay testament to the Deputy Town Clerk and the Policy & Risk Officer for their commitment and hard work in reaching this 50% milestone.



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	115/26
Agenda Item Number:	11
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Review of the Town Council's Discretionary Grants Scheme
Strategy Programme Ref:	N/A
Purpose of Report:	To provide an update on the review of the Town Council's Discretionary Grants Scheme and seek the Committee's approval for the revised Discretionary Grants Policy
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Supporting Documents:	Appendix A – Proposed Discretionary Grants Policy

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To adopt the revised Discretionary Grants Policy.
3. To note that officers have updated the Grant Application Form and Grant Evaluation Form.
4. EITHER
 - (a) To approve increasing the Discretionary Grants budget to £30,000 from 2027 - 2028 onwards to allow the opportunity to provide further support to local clubs, organisations and charities.
- OR
 - (b) To approve keeping the Discretionary Grants budget at its current level of £26,500 in 2027 - 2028, but offer a Service Funding Agreement to Teddys Treats Children's Charity, Seaford Bonfire Society, and Seaford Community Events

Committee (Motorfest) for the next three years, with an allocation of £6,000 overall towards these.

OR

(c) To do nothing – retaining the existing Discretionary Grants budget of £26,500 for 2027 – 2028 and requiring Teddys Treats Children’s Charity, Seaford Bonfire Society, and Seaford Community Events Committee (Motorfest) to continue to apply for funding through the Discretionary Grants Scheme.

5. To note that the 9 July 2026 Finance & General Purposes Committee agenda contained incorrect information in relation to Report 48/26 (2026 - 2027 Discretionary Grants Scheme Outcome) because Seaford Community Events Committee (Motorfest) had not previously been asked to provide details of environmental mitigation, as was incorrectly stated in the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Town Council’s Discretionary Grant Scheme offers local community groups, charities and voluntary organisations the opportunity to apply for a financial grant from the Town Council.
- 1.2** In the 2026 – 2027 scheme, just under the full budget of £26,500 was awarded in grants across small grants (up to £500) and large grants (£501 and over).
- 1.3** Officers have since undertaken a thorough review of the Discretionary Grants Scheme, with the recommendations now presented for consideration by this Committee.

2. Updates to Discretionary Grants Documents & Process

- 2.1** Delivery of the Discretionary Grants Scheme is underpinned by a number of key documents, namely the: Discretionary Grants Policy, Grant Application Forms (small and large), and Grant Evaluation Form.
- 2.2** Discretionary Grants Policy (Appendix A) - a number of recommended changes have been identified to the policy to improve the effectiveness of these documents and provide greater clarity.
 - (a)** One application form for all types of grants (large or small) because the application form for both grant types has become identical over time.

- (b) Clarification has been provided around Operational and Staff Costs to ensure that funding is only applied to deliver the specific project or event and not for core operational or staffing costs (section 2.11.d).
- (c) A new criteria specifically requiring the applicant to highlight actions taken to reduce environmental impact (section 5.1.i).
- (d) A new conflict of interest process has been introduced, with Conflict of Interest Forms to be completed by all officers and councillors prior to the Discretionary Grants Working Group meeting. Applicants will also be required to complete Conflict of Interest Forms as part of their application process. Councillors and officers with an identified conflict of interest will not take part in any discussion relating to a grant application they have identified a conflict with (section 6.5). This ensures the grant awarding process replicates the conflict of interest process used for concession awards and other tendered opportunities.
- (e) Non-Finance & General Purposes Committee councillors will be invited to participate in the Grants Working Group (section 6.6).
- (f) At the point of assessing applications, the Grants Working Group will be made aware by officers of any discounted/free venue hire and subsidies that have been provided to any applicants and are supplementary to any grant awarded. Whilst these are not a direct grant award it is a further acknowledgement of the Town Council's support and should be documented due to its 'in-kind' value (section 6.9).

2.3 Application Forms – officers have updated the Grant Application Form, but an overview of the changes is provided below for the Committee's information.

- (a) The application forms for both small and large grants have been updated to request further information to enable suitable assessment of the applications. This includes greater detail of project costings, how the applicant can demonstrate its commitment to the climate emergency (subject to this being agreed in the revised Discretionary Grants Policy, as per above), and how the need for the project was identified, with reference to relevant local plans or strategies where applicable.

- (b) Currently, separate grant application forms are used for small and large grants. The most recent revisions have seen both forms become identical as the information required to assess an application is the same regardless of the amount requested. Going forwards, officers will look to create just one form for both small and large grants.

2.4 Evaluation Form – officers have updated the Grant Evaluation Form, but an overview of the changes is provided below for the Committee’s information.

- (a) The form has been revised to include a section that must be completed to provide details of any environmental mitigations taken by the organisation to offset the Climate Emergency (subject to this being agreed in the revised Discretionary Grants Policy, as per above).

2.5 Grants Evaluation Process – the consistent, accurate and transparent evaluation of grant applications is a crucial part of the process. Officers are creating a written procedure for the grants process in order to accurately record this and ensure consistency throughout the process. Some procedural additions that have been introduced, as follows:

- (a) Prior to the Working Group’s consideration of the applications, officers will have completed an initial review of all applications to ensure that they meet the necessary criteria and clearly identify those that have not or where this is ambiguous.
- (b) Officers will provide an update to the Chair of this Committee to ensure their awareness of, and agreement with, the initial review process.
- (c) All applications will only be assessed based on the information within the application form and accompanying documents.

3. Service Funding Agreements

- 3.1** The Town Council has two Service Funding Agreements (SFA) currently in place, with Lewes District Citizens Advice (LDCA) and Cuckmere Community Buses (CCB), both of which are due to conclude ahead of the 2027 - 2028 budget setting process.
- 3.2** For this financial year, in addition to the Discretionary Grants budget, a further £9,000 was separately budgeted for the two SFAs.
- 3.3** LDCA is in the final year of a three-year agreement, being awarded £6,500 each year.

- 3.4 CCB is also in the final year of a three-year agreement, being awarded £2,500 each year.
- 3.5 This allocation is intended to cover the financial needs of these two organisations, thereby eliminating the need to draw funds from the discretionary grants budget for these purposes.
- 3.6 A further report on this will be presented to the Committee in due course.

4. Recommendations for Changes to the Funding Available for Discretionary Grants

- 4.1 As part of the review of the grants awarded through the Discretionary Grants Scheme, officers have identified that over the past 6 years there are three organisations that are the most frequent recipients of grants: Teddys Treats Children's Charity, Seaford Bonfire Society, and Seaford Community Events Committee (Motorfest).
- 4.2 Grants schemes are used to fund one-off, specific projects, rather than ongoing or running costs. Where the same organisations are applying for financial support year on year, often for similar purposes each year, but still meeting the grants criteria and therefore successfully being awarded a grant, it is sensible for the Town Council to consider the option of a separate funding agreement (such as via an SFA).
- 4.3 In addition, this year's grants scheme showed that there is an increased demand for external funding from local community groups and organisations. As such, and recognising the important role the Town Council's plays in supporting local groups that directly benefit the town, officers are recommending one of the following options:
 - (a) Increase the Discretionary Grants budget to £30,000 from 2027 - 2028 to allow the opportunity to provide further support to local clubs, organisations and charities (equating to an additional £3,500 grants to award).
 - (b) Keep the Discretionary Grants budget at its current level of £26,500 in 2027 - 2028 but offer an SFA to Teddys Treats Children's Charity, Seaford Bonfire Society, and Seaford Community Events Committee (Motorfest) for the next three years, with a budget allocation of £6,000 per year overall towards these (serving to increase the amount of grant

funding available to be awarded to other organisations by approximately £6,000).

- (c) Do nothing – retain the existing Discretionary Grants budget of £26,500 for 2027 – 2028 and require Teddys Treats Children’s Charity, Seaford Bonfire Society, and Seaford Community Events Committee (Motorfest) to continue to apply for funding through the Discretionary Grants Scheme.

- 4.4 As per Section 3 above, the future of the current two SFAs are due to be considered by this Committee at a later date and therefore have not been included in the above options.

5. Financial Appraisal

- 5.1 Depending on the decision made by this Committee in Section 4 above, the 2027 – 2028 total Grants Pool budget (covering both Discretionary Grants and SFAs) may increase by a maximum of £6,000. Any increase in budget would be incorporated into the 2027 – 2028 budget setting process.

6. Seaford Community Events Committee (Motorfest) Feedback

- 6.1 The Town Council wishes to acknowledge that part of the feedback provided to Motorfest in respect of their recent unsuccessful application for a discretionary grant for 2026 – 2027 was incorrect. Motorfest at no point have received a formal communication from the Town Council requesting that they provide mitigation to their climate impact as a result of any grant application.
- 6.2 Subject to Recommendation 5 being noted, officers will amend the feedback publicly displayed and would like to apologise for the miscommunication on this matter.



DISCRETIONARY GRANTS POLICY

This policy provides a clear and accountable approach to the allocation of discretionary grants, setting out how the Town Council uses its financial resources to enhance the wellbeing of Seaford and its community

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.5	Last Review Date	September 2026
Adopted Date	May 2015	Next Review Date	April 2029
Review Period	Three years	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
May 2015	0.1	Full Council	Adopted Policy
August 2017	0.2	Full Council	Updated Policy
May 2021	0.3	Full Council	Updated Policy
March 2024	0.4	Full Council	Updated Policy

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
F2	Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
F3	Bad Debt Policy
F6	Purchase Ordering and Payment for Goods and Services Policy

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1.0	Introduction
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8.0	Monitoring and Evaluation
9.0	Repayment of Grant Monies
10.0	Transparency and Publicity
11.0	Service Funding Agreements

1. Introduction

- 1.1. A grant is any discretionary donation made by the Town Council (the Council) to an external organisation, for the specific purpose it is applied for and is generally for the well-being of the Seaford community.
- 1.2. The Council is committed, through this policy, to promote Seaford as a vibrant, active and sustainable community, and contribute to the development of projects and activities (including services) that benefit that community.
- 1.3. In doing so, the Council is aware of its responsibility for the use of public funds and for the distribution of these funds to be managed in accordance with the law and proper standards.

2. Rules

- 2.1. Financial grants are awarded by the Council's Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee once a year; the timetable for the process is covered in Section 5.
- 2.2. The Council operates a fully documented and transparent policy for awarding grants to ensure fairness and equality throughout the process.
- 2.3. The Council offers two types of financial grants:

Large grants	£501 up to £3,000
Small grants	up to £500

- 2.4. From the 2027-2028 grants process there will be one application form for all grants (large or small); the form is available from the Council's website when that year's grants scheme is running.
- 2.5. The complete application and supporting documentation must be received on or before the closing date, as advertised. Applications submitted without the necessary supporting documentation will not be considered.
- 2.6. Only one (1) application can be submitted from an organisation each year.
- 2.7. All applications will be considered at the same time but based on their individual merits. The final decision of assessment of applications and the level of any grant offered lies solely with the F&GP Committee.

- 2.8. The F&GP Committee will award a grant at a figure it deems suitable, considering the contents of this policy and not necessarily the figure that has been applied for.
- 2.9. Grants will be judged against clear and consistent criteria, and the successful applicants are required to adhere to a number of conditions as set out below in this policy.
- 2.10. The Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant funding not being used for the purpose specified on the application form.
- 2.11. The Council states that the following **are not** eligible to apply for grants:
 - a. Individuals, businesses, commercial organisations, religious groups¹ or political parties
 - b. Projects that are the statutory responsibility of other authorities
 - c. Applicants who have an outstanding loan with or are financially indebted to the Council
 - d. Grant funding must not be used to meet staffing costs which are not directly attributable to the project delivery, core organisational costs, or general operating expenditure costs which are not directly attributable to the delivery of the funded activity (suitable evidence may be requested, if required).
- 2.12. Applicants are encouraged to apply prior to their need for the funding. Grants will not be made retrospectively (except in exceptional circumstances). As there is no guarantee an award will be made, applicants should not progress with their project on the assumption the Council will approve their request.
- 2.13. Priority will be given to applications which support or work towards one or more of the aims within the Council's Strategy Programme.

3. Large Grants

- 3.1. The maximum large grant amount that can be awarded by the F&GP Committee is £3,000. Exceptionally, grants over £3,000 may be considered but must be of potential benefit to the whole town and these will require Full Council's approval.
- 3.2. To be eligible to apply for a **large grant** from the Council, the applicant must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Be one of the following groups or organisations:
 - voluntary group,

¹ Unless the religious group can evidence that the project or activity will benefit the wider community, with no barriers as a result of religious beliefs

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- community group,
 - not for profit organisation,
 - registered charity providing a service or activity for the benefit of the residents of Seaford.
- b. All applicants must demonstrate how a grant will provide a service or activity that would be of benefit to the residents of Seaford.
- c. Applications must be made in the name of the organisation to which financial assistance is to be granted and all details on the application form must be completed.
- 3.3. Documentation Requirements: Applicants are required to submit the following, with the table showing whether this is to be provided as part of the application form or a separate document to be submitted:

	Document	Application Form	Separate Document
a.	A written statement of how the grant is to be used	Y	
b.	A written set of rules, constitution, or other governing document. They shall be current and properly authorised		Y
c.	The latest bank statement showing details of a bank account held in the name of the applicant organisation		Y
d.	The accounts of the organisation, including Balance Sheet if available, for the previous financial year prior to the date of application, and indicate expenditure, income, asset and liabilities		Y
e.	Details of funding obtained from other partner bodies, if appropriate	Y	
f.	A copy of the organisation's Public Liability Insurance to the value of at least £1 million		Y
g.	In the case of an organisation starting up, a projected budget is to be submitted along with a supporting business plan and risk management plan, for their first year of operation, in lieu of annual accounts		Y
h.	Grants requested for maintenance or improvement purposes must be supported by a minimum of two estimates for the work specified		Y
i.	A policy to ensure the safeguarding of children and/or vulnerable adults (where appropriate)		Y
j.	An Equality and/or Equal Opportunities policy (this policy may be contained within the constitution or other governing document)		Y
k.	Details of how the organisation will assess the effectiveness of the activity or project	Y	

4. Small Grants

- 4.1. Small grants are awarded up to a maximum of £500.
- 4.2. To be eligible to apply for a **small grant** from the Council, the applicant must meet the following criteria:
- a. Be one of the following groups or organisations;

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- voluntary groups,
 - community groups,
 - not for profit organisations,
 - registered charity organisations.
- b. All applicants must demonstrate how a grant will provide a service or activity that would be of benefit to the residents of Seaford.
- c. Applications must be made in the name of the organisation to which financial assistance is to be granted and all details on the application form must be completed.
- 4.3. Documentation requirements: Applicants are required to submit the following, with the table showing whether this is part of the application form or a separate document to be submitted:

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

5. Awarding Criteria

- 5.1. Applications will be considered using the following criteria:
- a. Has the applicant met the documentation requirements?
 - b. Has the applicant specified how the grant will be used?
 - c. Has the applicant specified who will benefit from the grant within the Seaford community?

- d. Is the applicant a voluntary group, community group, not for profit organisation, or registered charity organisation?
 - e. And are they Seaford-based? If not, are they offering a significant proportion of their services within Seaford or a service not offered by others within Seaford?
 - f. Does the funding support or work towards one or more of the aims of the Council's Strategy Programme? (In the event of insufficient funds being available to meet all grant requests, priority will be given to organisations supporting the Council's Strategy Programme.)
 - g. Does the grant help promote Seaford town?
 - h. Is the grant contributing to something that has not already been funded in the past by the Council? Annual events are excluded from assessment against this criterion.
 - i. Has the applicant demonstrated a commitment to reduce environmental impact in line with the Council's Climate Emergency Policy?
- 5.2. The key points of the consideration against the above criteria for each application will be recorded, ensuring a record of the justification behind the outcome of the application should this need to be scrutinised.

6. Application, Evaluation and Award of Grant Process

- 6.1. The Council will publicise the timescale for awarding grants.
- 6.2. Application forms will be available for download from the Council's website www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk
- 6.3. Forms must be submitted electronically by email to admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk
- 6.4. Council officers will assess each application for compliance in accordance with this policy as soon as practicably possible after receiving the application. Where an early application does not meet the eligibility criteria or has not provided the correct supporting documentation, officers will attempt to contact the applicant to inform them of this, but it is ultimately the applicant's responsibility to return a completed form along with all necessary supporting documentation before the closing date.
- 6.5. All officers and members involved in the Grants Working Group will complete conflict of interest forms. Officers and members will not take part in any discussion relating to any grant applicant they have an identified conflict with.
- 6.6. All grant applicants will also be required to complete a Conflict of Interest Form.

- 6.7. Applications will be reviewed by the Grants Working Group – which is open to for all members to attend, not just F&GP Committee members. The group will assess each application against this policy, making recommendations for consideration by the F&GP Committee.
- 6.8. The F&GP Committee will consider the recommendations made by the Working Group at its next scheduled meeting and make the final decision on the outcome of the grant applications.
- 6.9. After agreement of the recommendations by the F&GP Committee, appropriate arrangements will be made for payment of the agreed grants.
- 6.10. The inclusion of any free or discounted venue hire will be highlighted and assessed as part this process. The ‘in-kind’ value of this will be documented and published for clarity.

7. Payment of Awarded Grants

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

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1. All applicants will be supplied with a grant evaluation form which must be completed and returned within the timelines communicated at the point of the award. Failure to complete the grant evaluation form may result in the request for the grant funds to be returned. Future grants will not be considered from any organisation which has not completed their evaluation form.

9. Repayment of Grant Monies

- 9.1. If grant money is not spent, either for the purpose it was given or within the relevant financial year, the grant or any remaining monies must be returned to the Council. Organisations can request any unspent grant is carried forward but must provide details of the reasons for this request. The F&GP Committee will consider this at its next available meeting and if approved, the spending deadline will be extended appropriately.
- 9.2. Where an organisation requests a grant be carried forward to the next financial year, they will not be permitted to apply for a new grant in that same financial year.

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- 9.3. Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward, in addition to providing reasons, they must produce all updated documentation that is requested on the application form.
- 9.4. If for any reason the organisation ceases to be constituted during the period of the grant, the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.

10. Transparency and Publicity

- 10.1. The Council will publicise the availability of discretionary grants widely throughout the community.
- 10.2. The Council will report annually on the total spends on grants and list the groups in receipt of a grant and the use made of the grants.
- 10.3. In awarding grants, the Council recognises and supports the valuable contribution made by the voluntary sector to the well-being of the community.
- 10.4. Organisations receiving a Council grant must acknowledge the Council in any relevant publicity or publications including by using any promotional material provided by the Council.
- 10.5. All successful applicants for large and small grants will be invited to attend the next annual Town Forum to showcase their successes, their services and the benefit experienced by the grant.

11. Service Funding Agreements

- 11.1. The Council may decide to enter into service funding agreements with individual organisations. These agreements are administered outside of this policy and approved or recommended by the F&GP Committee, subject to Full Council approval if costs would be incurred outside of allocated budgets.
- 11.2. When assessing entering into a service funding agreement, the Council will however be mindful of certain aspects of this policy, namely:

Eligibility Criteria	2.11 (a), (b) and (c) (not d)
Awarding Criteria	5.1 (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g), (not a or h)

- 11.3. The service funding agreement itself will set out the documentation, monitoring, reporting and publicity requirements.



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	98/26
Agenda Item Number:	12
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2029 and Associated Communications Policies
Strategy Programme Ref:	4.1C
Purpose of Report:	To present the draft Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2029 and supporting communications policies for consideration and to seek a recommendation to Full Council for adoption
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech Deputy Town Clerk & RFO Authored by: Isabelle Mouland, Community Engagement & Democratic Services Manager
Supporting Documents:	Appendix A – Draft Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2029 Appendix B – Draft Press and Media Policy Appendix C – Draft Social Media Policy Appendix D – Draft Noticeboard Policy Appendix E – Draft Concerns and Complaints Policy (and supporting flowchart) Appendix F – Draft Unreasonable, Abusive and Vexatious Behaviour Policy

Officer Recommendations

1. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2029.

2. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Press and Media Policy and that delegated authority be given to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to oversee and re-adopt this policy in future.
3. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Social Media Policy and that delegated authority be given to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to oversee and re-adopt this policy in future.
4. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Noticeboard Policy and that delegated authority be given to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to oversee and re-adopt this policy in future.
5. To adopt the draft Concerns and Complaints Policy.
6. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Unreasonable, Abusive and Vexatious Behaviour Policy and that delegated authority be given to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to oversee and re-adopt this policy in future.

1. Background

- 1.1 Effective communication and engagement are fundamental to ensuring transparency, accountability, and meaningful engagement with residents, businesses, community organisations, visitors, and partner agencies.
- 1.2 During 2026, officers have undertaken a comprehensive review of the Town Council's communications and engagement arrangements. This included engagement with residents, councillors and officers, together with a review of existing communication methods, performance, and public feedback.
- 1.3 The findings identified opportunities to improve accessibility, increase community engagement, strengthen public understanding of the Town Council's role, and ensure greater consistency across communication channels.
- 1.4 The development of a Communications & Engagement Strategy also delivers a commitment within the Town Council's 2025 – 2027 Strategy Programme. Under Goal 4.1C, the Town Council agreed a programme of work to review its communication methods, better understand audience needs and preferences, and strengthen how it communicates with residents and stakeholders. The preparation of this Strategy forms a key part of delivering

those strategic objectives and supporting the Town Council's wider ambition to give voice to residents, and actively direct its priorities to reflect local needs.

- 1.5** The resulting Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2029 has been developed in response to this review and establishes a clear strategic framework for how the Town Council will communicate and engage with residents and stakeholders over the next three years.

2. Communications Governance Framework

- 2.1** The draft Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 – 2029 presented at **Appendix A** forms the Town Council's overarching strategic framework for communications and engagement. It establishes the Town Council's vision, objectives, priorities, and performance measures, setting out what the Town Council aims to achieve through its communications and engagement activities between 2026 and 2029.
- 2.2** The Strategy effectively sets out what the Town Council wants to achieve and why.
- 2.3** Supporting the Strategy is a suite of communications policies which provide the operational framework for delivery. These policies establish the standards, responsibilities, procedures, and controls required to ensure communications are undertaken consistently, professionally, lawfully, and in accordance with best practice.
- 2.4** The supporting policies therefore establish how the Town Council will deliver the objectives set out within the Communications & Engagement Strategy.
- 2.5** The supporting policies presented alongside the Strategy are:
- Press & Media Policy (**Appendix B**) – establishing the framework for media engagement, official statements, media enquiries, and communications during major incidents and sensitive events.
 - Social Media Policy (**Appendix C**) – establishing the standards and procedures governing the management and use of the Town Council's official social media channels.
 - Noticeboard Policy (**Appendix D**) – establishing the arrangements for managing the Town Council's public noticeboards and (soon to be available) online Community Noticeboard.

- Concerns & Complaints Policy (**Appendix E**) – establishing the framework for receiving, investigating, and responding to concerns, complaints and appeals from members of the public, ensuring these are managed fairly, consistently, and transparently.
- 2.6** Unreasonable, Abusive and Vexatious Behaviour Policy (**Appendix F**) – establishing the framework to provide a formal process for managing situations where an individual's behaviour becomes persistent, repetitive, unreasonable, or disproportionate to the matter being raised, placing an excessive burden on Town Council resources, officers or councillors. The framework is intended to protect staff wellbeing and the effective use of public resources whilst ensuring all complainants continue to be treated fairly, consistently, and with respect.
- 2.7** Officers are also undertaking a review of the Town Council's Branding Guidelines, which establish the Town Council's brand identity and provide guidance on the use of the Town Council's visual identity and logo, helping to ensure that public communications remain clear, consistent, and recognisable.
- 2.8** Together, the Strategy and supporting policies create a single communications governance framework, ensuring that the Town Council's communications are strategically planned, effectively delivered, and appropriately monitored.

3. Concerns & Complaints Policy

- 3.1** The former Complaints Policy has been comprehensively reviewed and updated to reflect current best practice, legislative requirements, and the Town Council's current organisational structure.
- 3.2** The revised policy is intended to provide a clear, transparent, and consistent process for the receipt, investigation, and resolution of concerns, complaints, and appeals ensuring complainants understand how these will be managed, the timescales involved, and the outcomes that may be available.
- 3.3** The review has also provided an opportunity to align the policy with the Town Council's wider Communications & Engagement Strategy and associated communications policies, reinforcing the Town Council's commitment to openness, accountability, transparency, and responsive customer service.

- 3.4** Whilst the Town Council receives a relatively small number of formal complaints in recent years, experience demonstrates that officers are generally able to resolve concerns at an early stage through constructive engagement, communication, and clarification. Concerns have typically been concluded swiftly and positively without the need for escalation through subsequent stages of the procedure to formal complaints and/or appeals.
- 3.5** *This Committee already possesses delegated authority to manage, oversee and re-adopt this policy. This is the reason this policy alone is not recommended to Full Council for adoption.*

4. Benefits of Adoption

- 4.1** Adoption of the Communications & Engagement Strategy and associated policies will:
- Provide a clear, consistent and coordinated approach to communications across the Town Council.
 - Support transparency, accountability, and public confidence.
 - Improve accessibility of information for residents.
 - Establish clear standards for media engagement, social media management, use of noticeboards, and complaint handling.
 - Support compliance with relevant legislation and recognised good practice.
 - Strengthen community engagement and participation in local decision-making.
 - Provide measurable objectives and performance indicators against which communication activities can be monitored and reviewed.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1** The documents presented for consideration represent a significant step in strengthening the Town Council's communications governance framework and delivering the Town Council's commitment within its Strategy Programme to improve communication and engagement with residents and stakeholders.
- 5.2** The Committee is therefore invited to review the draft Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026-2029, and recommend its adoption to Full Council.
- 5.3** The Committee is invited to review the drafts: Press and Media Policy, Social Media Policy, Noticeboard Policy, , and Unreasonable, Abusive and

Vexatious Behaviour Policy, and recommend their adoption by Full Council. Furthermore, to recommend delegated authority be granted to this Committee to oversee and re-adopt these policies in the future.

- 5.4** The Committee is also invited to review and adopt the revised Concerns & Complaints Policy.

6. Financial Appraisal

- 6.1** The new Communications and Engagement Strategy is expected to require annual funding of approximately £1,500.



SEAFORD
TOWN
COUNCIL



COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2026-2029

This strategy sets out Seaford Town Council's commitment to clear, accessible, and engaging communication. Developed following consultation with residents, councillors, and officers, it provides a roadmap for improving how the Town Council informs, listens to, and involves the Seaford community between 2026 and 2029.

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Strategy Status

Version	0.1	Last Review Date	October 2026
Adopted Date	TBC	Next Review Date	October 2027
Review Period	Annually	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
New Strategy -n/a			

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
CE7	Press and Media Policy
CE13	Social Media Policy
C5	Concerns & Complaints Policy
CE14	Noticeboard Policy
CE3	Data Protection Policy
CE12	Website Accessibility Statement
N/A	Branding Guidelines – <i>under review</i>
N/A	Unreasonable, Abusive and Vexatious Behaviour Policy

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For consideration by Finance & General Purposes on 8 October 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council (the Council) is committed to open, transparent, and effective communication with residents, councillors, officers, partners, businesses, community groups, and visitors. Communication is a two-way exchange of information, enabling the Council to inform the community while gathering feedback to help shape decisions.
- 1.2. This Communications and Engagement Strategy sets out how the Council will communicate and engage with residents, stakeholders, and visitors between 2026 and 2029, supporting the delivery of the Council's Strategy Programme, improving trust, increasing participation, and strengthening the community's voice.
- 1.3. Effective communication is a shared responsibility. The Council encourages residents, businesses, visitors, and community groups to engage with communications, participate in consultations, and share opportunities for involvement.

2. Developing This Strategy

- 2.1. This Communications Strategy has been developed through a comprehensive review of the Council's communications and engagement practices.
- 2.2. In early 2026, the Council undertook engagement with residents, visitors, councillors, and officers to better understand how information is accessed, where communication gaps exist, and how residents would like to engage with the Council. Feedback was gathered through:
 - A public communications survey distributed electronically and through community networks
 - A printed survey delivered to approximately 25,000 residents alongside the annual Council Tax leaflet
 - An internal survey of councillors and officers
 - Review of website, social media, and communication performance
 - Feedback received through consultations, public meetings, and day-to-day resident enquiries
- 2.3. All responses were anonymous to encourage honest feedback, and while response levels varied across stakeholder groups, the findings provided valuable qualitative insight and highlighted consistent themes across all audiences.
- 2.4. The consultation identified several consistent themes:
 - Residents want more information about Council projects and activities before decisions are finalised

- Many residents find Council information difficult to locate online
 - There is strong demand for clearer, simpler, more concise, and jargon-free communications
 - Digital communication is important, but reliance on digital channels may exclude some residents, who continue to value printed information
 - Residents would like greater visibility of councillors and more opportunities for face-to-face engagement
 - There is limited awareness of the Town Council's role, responsibilities, and decision-making processes
 - Participation in consultations and engagement activities is low
 - Younger people, working-age residents, digitally excluded residents, and visitors are among the hardest audiences to reach
- 2.5. This evidence has directly informed the priorities and actions contained within this strategy.

3. Aim and Scope

- 3.1. The strategy aims to:
- Ensure clear, accurate, accessible, and timely communication
 - Strengthen trust between the Council and the community
 - Increase awareness of Council decisions, services, and projects
 - Improve digital accessibility and inclusion
 - Promote two-way engagement with residents and stakeholders
 - Establish consistent, professional, and modern communication standards
- 3.2. This strategy applies to communications with residents, councillors, staff, businesses, community organisations, partner agencies, and visitors. It encompasses digital, printed, media, and face-to-face communication channels. The strategy provides the framework for how the Council communicates information, engages with stakeholders, and promotes transparency, accessibility, and public participation.

4. Who This Applies To

- 4.1. This strategy applies to all communications undertaken by the Council. It provides a framework for councillors and officers when communicating with residents, businesses, community organisations, partner agencies, visitors, and other stakeholders through digital, printed, media, and face-to-face channels.

5. Policy Framework

- 5.1. This Communications and Engagement Strategy is supported by a suite of communications-related policies, procedures, and guidance documents adopted by the Council.
- 5.2. The Strategy sets out what the Council aims to achieve between 2026 and 2029, including its communication objectives, priorities, and desired outcomes. The supporting policies set out how these objectives will be delivered in practice and provide the operational standards, responsibilities, and processes that ensure communications are consistent, lawful, professional, and accessible.
- 5.3. All communications activities delivered under this Strategy must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's adopted communications policies and procedures. Together, the Strategy and supporting policies provide a comprehensive framework for effective communication, engagement, transparency, and accountability.

6. Vision, Mission and Communications Principles

- 6.1. **Vision** - *“To communicate clearly, openly, and proactively with residents, enabling them to easily access information, understand Council decisions, and engage with their community.”*
- 6.2. **Mission** - *“We listen to, engage with, and give voice to our residents so that Town Council priorities reflect the needs of our community.”*
- 6.3. **Principles** - Communication will be:
 - Clear - using plain English, avoiding unnecessary jargon, and presenting information in an easy-to-understand format.
 - Accessible – providing information through a variety of digital and non-digital channels and ensuring communications meet accessibility standards.
 - Transparent – explaining decisions, projects, and finances openly and honestly.
 - Timely – sharing information early enough for residents to engage meaningfully in decisions and consultations.
 - Relevant – providing information that is useful and meaningful to the intended audience.
 - Visible – demonstrating the impact of the Council's work through regular updates, project progress reports, and community stories.
 - Two-Way – encouraging dialogue, feedback, and participation rather than simply broadcasting information.

7. Engagement Commitment

- 7.1. When developing significant projects, plans, or policies, the Council will seek to engage residents as early as practicable. Wherever possible, the Council will move beyond simply informing residents of decisions and instead provide opportunities for residents to influence proposals before decisions are made.

By 2029 we will:

- Be recognised as a transparent and accessible council
- Have a modern, user-friendly, and fully accessible website
- Communicate regularly through both digital and traditional channels
- Engage residents before key decisions are taken
- Demonstrate the impact of Council projects and services
- Reach a broader and more diverse audience across the community

8. Communications & Engagement Objectives (2026-2029)

- 8.1. The following Communications and Engagement Objectives have been developed directly in response to the evidence gathered through consultation, performance review, and stakeholder feedback. Together, they define the outcomes the Council aims to achieve between 2026 and 2029 and provide the framework for measuring success.
- 8.2. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and baselines for the objectives below are set out in Section 18 of this document.
- 8.3. Objective 1: Increase Reach by March 2029

- Increase website users by 50% from the established 2026/27 baseline.
- Increase Facebook followers from 4,700 to 6,500 and Instagram followers from 265 to 1,000.
- Establish an email newsletter with at least 1,000 subscribers.
- Start a regular one-page article of Council updates in Seaford Scene magazine, delivered in line with the Council's Press and Media policy.

8.4. Objective 2: Improve Accessibility by March 2027

- Launch a new fully WCAG-compliant website.
- Ensure 100% of public-facing documents meet accessibility standards and the requirements set out within the Council's communications policies and accessibility guidance.
- Re-brand the Council's communications and make templates available to staff and councillors to ensure consistent and accessible communication.
- Review all public noticeboards and introduce a refreshed noticeboard standard.

8.5. Objective 3: Increase Community Engagement by March 2029

- Increase consultation participation by 135% compared to the 2025/26 baseline.
- Achieve a minimum of 100 responses for major public consultations.
- Deliver at least six community engagement events annually.
- Establish quarterly councillor and officer surgeries.

8.6. Objective 4: Improve Public Understanding and Trust by April 2028

- Increase the number of residents who understand the Town Council's role by 25%.
- Introduce an "Engage Early" approach for significant projects, ensuring residents are given opportunities to comment on, and influence, proposals before decisions are taken.
- Publish monthly project updates.
- Publish a simplified annual summary of Council finances and achievements.
- Publish "You Said, We Did" consultation feedback summaries.

8.7. Objective 5: Reach Underrepresented Audiences by March 2028

- Deliver at least two targeted engagement campaigns annually.
- Increase engagement with under-35s by 15%.
- Develop communication partnerships with schools, youth organisations, and community groups.

- Introduce at least one new communication channel aimed at younger audiences.

9. Audience & Stakeholder Mapping

9.1. The Council has identified the following audiences:

- Residents: families, commuters, newcomers, vulnerable people, all ages from youth to elderly.
- Statutory and Civic Stakeholders: Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council, Sussex Police, South Downs National Park Authority, National Trust, Environment Agency, Natural England, other partner authorities.
- Community Organisations: charities, community groups, residents' associations, volunteer organisations, facility users, asset hirers.
- Businesses and Employers: local shops, market traders, tourism businesses, event organisers.
- Internal Audiences: Town councillors, officers, contractors, volunteers.
- Visitors & Tourists: visitors accessing the website, noticeboards, or public events.

10. Key Messages

10.1. Core Messages

- We are here to serve the community and deliver value for money.
- We work openly and transparently.
- We actively welcome feedback and participation.
- We are delivering projects, services, and facilities for Seaford's future.

10.2. Messages the Community Should Understand

- Who the Town Council is and what it does.
- How and why public money is spent.
- Our achievements and future plans.
- How residents, visitors, local businesses, and groups can engage or provide feedback.

11. Understanding Our Current Position

11.1. Key Findings from Consultation: the communications review identified a number of recurring themes:

11.1.1. What residents value:

- Information about Council projects.
- Community events and activities.
- Council decisions and consultations.
- Information delivered through multiple channels.
- The annual Council Tax leaflet.

11.1.2. What residents want improved:

- Easier-to-find information.
- More concise communications and use of plain language.
- Earlier engagement on projects and proposals.
- More regular email updates.
- Greater visibility of councillors.
- Improved use of local media and community noticeboards.

11.1.3. Key audiences requiring additional focus:

- Young people.
- Working-age adults.
- Digitally excluded residents.
- Visitors.
- Minority communities.

11.2. The Council currently uses the following communication methods:

- Website
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
- Press releases
- Council Tax leaflet (posted to every household annually)
- Annual Report (uploaded to website)
- Telephone & email contact
- Noticeboards
- Public meetings and consultations
- Youth Ambassador Board

12. Communications SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
✓ Annual Council Tax leaflet delivered to households ✓ Active social media channels ✓ Strong programme of community events ✓ Committed councillors and staff	○ Website navigation difficulties ○ Low consultation participation ○ Lack of consistent communications metrics ○ Over-reliance on digital channels
Opportunities	Threats
➤ New website development ➤ Growth of email newsletters ➤ Increased use of local media ➤ Councillor surgeries and community drop-ins ➤ Youth engagement initiatives	❖ Digital exclusion ❖ Misinformation on social media ❖ Decreasing public trust in local government ❖ Increasing competition for public attention ❖ Lack of understanding of Town Council role and responsibilities

13. Future Communication Methods

- 13.1. The Council will use an appropriate mix of digital, printed, and face-to-face channels to reach its audiences. Specific channel developments, responsibilities, timescales, and success measures are set out in the Communications & Engagement Delivery Plan (Section 17).
- 13.2. Annual Communications Calendar and Partnership Communications:
- 13.2.1. To support consistent, planned, and proactive communication, the Council maintains an Annual Communications Calendar (Appendix A) identifying national, international, and local awareness days, commemorative events, community campaigns, civic occasions, and Town Council events that the Council has agreed to recognise through its communications activity.
- 13.2.2. The Council also maintains a Partnership Communications Framework identifying categories of organisations and stakeholders, including project partners, outside bodies, tenants, open space hirers, civic charities, and other local authorities, for which the Council will routinely consider sharing information and supporting communications where this aligns with Council priorities and provides benefit to the local community.

13.2.3. Together, these frameworks support a planned, proactive, and transparent approach to communications. The appendices form part of this Strategy and will be reviewed and updated in line with the Council's review of the Communications and Engagement Strategy.

13.3. Delivery of communication activities through these channels will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's relevant communications policies and procedures.

14. Branding & Visual Identity

14.1. The Council will maintain a consistent, professional, and accessible visual identity across all communications, in accordance with its Branding Guidelines

14.2. The Council will develop a high-quality image library representing the community, local places, and Council services

15. Crisis Communications Plan

15.1. The Council will:

- Define “crisis” to ensure relevance to the community it serves
- Use a defined approval line (Town Clerk → Chair of Committee)
- Provide accurate, timely messages during emergencies
- Use website, social media, and press
- Use pre-approved templates for speed
- Avoid speculation, spread of misinformation, or political comment

15.2. Crisis communications will be managed in accordance with the Council's Press and Media Policy and any associated internal procedures.

16. Roles and Responsibilities

Communications & Engagement Team	Delivers communications on all platforms, manages branding, creates and issues content. Leads on the creation, delivery, and analysis of surveys, consultations, and other engagement activities, including community engagement events. Monitoring of delivery against this strategy, key performance indicators, and reporting on these
All Officers	Provide content relevant to their department

Town Clerk or in their absence, Deputy Town Clerk or Head of Place	Spokesperson for media Final approval of communications Taking part in surgeries
Councillors	Share updates through their communication channels Represent residents Support engagement activities Taking part in councillor surgeries
Residents / Visitors / Local Businesses / Local Groups	Stay abreast of Council updates Partake in surveys and consultations Help raise awareness of Council activities and communications

- 16.1. All councillors, officers, and volunteers acting on behalf of the Council are responsible for ensuring that their communications comply with this Strategy and the Council's associated communications policies and procedures.

17. Communications & Engagement Delivery Plan

Objective	Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
1 - Increase Reach	Launch a redesigned website	Communications & Engagement Team	2026/27	Website live and accessible
1 - Increase Reach	Establish a resident email newsletter	Communications & Engagement Team	2026/27	1,000 subscribers
1 - Increase Reach	Increase Facebook and Instagram audiences through planned content	Communications & Engagement Team	Ongoing	Social media targets achieved
1 - Increase Reach	Regular Council update article in Seaford Scene	Communications & Engagement Team	2026/27 onwards	Monthly/regular publication achieved
2 - Improve Accessibility	Deliver new WCAG-compliant website	Communications & Engagement Team	2026/27	Accessibility standards met
2 - Improve Accessibility	Develop accessible branded templates	Communications & Engagement Team	2026/27	Templates implemented / 100% of public facing documents meeting accessibility standards
2 - Improve Accessibility	Review and refresh noticeboards	Communications & Engagement Team	2027/28	New noticeboard standard introduced

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Objective	Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
3 - Community Engagement	Introduce quarterly councillor surgeries	Councillors / Democratic Services	2026/27	Four surgeries per year
3 - Community Engagement	Deliver community engagement events	All Services	Annually	Minimum six events annually
3 - Community Engagement	Increase consultation participation	Communications & Engagement Team	Ongoing	135% increase from baseline
3 - Community Engagement	Increase respondents to major public consultations	Communications & Engagement Team	Ongoing	Minimum of 100
4 - Understanding & Trust	Introduce "Engage Early" approach to major projects	All Departments	Immediate and ongoing	Engagement undertaken before significant decisions
4 - Understanding & Trust	Publish monthly project updates	Communications & Engagement Team	Monthly	12 updates annually
4 - Understanding & Trust	Publish "You Said, We Did" consultation feedback summaries	Communications & Engagement Team	Following major consultations	Summary published for all major consultations

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Objective	Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
4 - Understanding & Trust	Publish annual summary of finances and achievements	Communications & Engagement Team	Annually	Publication issued
4 - Understanding & Trust	Increase the number of residents who understand the Town Council's role by 25%	Communications & Engagement Team	Ongoing	Baseline to be identified and then improved upon
5 - Underrepresented Audiences	Develop communications with schools and youth organisations	Communications & Engagement Team	2027/28	Partnerships established
5 - Underrepresented Audiences	Deliver targeted campaigns for identified groups	Communications & Engagement Team	Annually	Two campaigns per year
5 - Underrepresented Audiences	Explore and introduce new communication channels aimed at younger audiences	Communications & Engagement Team	2027/28	New channel implemented
6 - Monitoring & Evaluation	Collect and report KPI data	Communications & Engagement Team	Quarterly	Quarterly performance reports
6 - Monitoring & Evaluation	Repeat resident, staff and councillor communications survey	Communications & Engagement Team	Annually	Survey results published

18. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

18.1. The Council recognises that effective communication contributes to improved public understanding, reduced confusion, and increased confidence in Council services and decision-making. Monitoring complaints, concerns, and communication-related enquiries will therefore form part of the Council's performance evaluation process.

18.2. The Council will monitor the following KPI baselines and targets:

KPI	2026 Baseline	2029 Target
Website users	Baseline figure not yet captured	+50% increase
Website page views	Baseline figure not yet captured	Increase year-on-year
Facebook followers	4,700	6,500
Instagram followers	265	1,000
Newsletter subscribers	510	1,000
Consultation participation	213	500
Attendance at engagement events	Baseline figure not yet captured	Increase year-on-year
Public understanding of the Town Council's role	Baseline figure not yet captured	+25%
Resident satisfaction with communications	Baseline figure not yet captured	Increase year-on-year
Accessible documents compliance	Baseline figure not yet captured	100%
Engagement with under-35s	From last survey where demographics captured = 6.5% <35s	+15%
Media coverage and press mention	Baseline figure not yet captured	Increase year-on-year

KPI	2026 Baseline	2029 Target
Communication-related complaints and/or concerns	Baseline figure not yet captured	Reduction year-on-year

18.3. Where baseline data is not currently available, monitoring arrangements will be established during 2026/27 and targets reviewed as baseline information becomes available.

18.4. Performance will be reported and reviewed by the F&GP Committee on an annual basis.

19. Review and Updating

19.1. Annual light-touch review of performance against objectives, actions, and KPIs.

19.2. Full strategy review in 2029 or sooner if significant organisational, legislative, or operational changes require it.

Appendix A - Annual Communications Calendar

This appendix sets out the national, international and local awareness days, commemorations, civic occasions, community campaigns, and Town Council events that Seaford Town Council will recognise through its communications activities. The calendar supports the delivery of the Communications and Engagement Strategy by enabling effective forward planning, promoting consistent messaging, and ensuring a coordinated approach to community engagement throughout the year.

This is a supporting document and does not form part of the adopted policy document.

National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
International Day of Education	January	24 January - To invest in people and prioritise education.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
International Holocaust Remembrance Day	January	27 January - A day to remember the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
LGBTQ+ History Month	February	An annual month-long observance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history, and the history of the gay rights.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
World Cancer Day	February	4 February - To raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
International Women's Day	March	8 March - A celebration of women who are making a difference in their communities and in the world.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Commonwealth Day	March	9 March - The annual celebration of the British Commonwealth of Nations.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Mother's Day	March	A day to honour mothers and other mother figures.	Social Media post and

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National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
			Website Calendar
The Great British Spring Clean / Keep Britain Tidy	March	13 - 29 March - The nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Earth Hour	March	Earth Hour is observed annually on the last Saturday of March. From 8:30pm to 9:30pm, people are encouraged to turn off their lights and non-essential appliances in an effort to raise awareness about the issues of climate change.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Car Boot Sales	April - October	<i>Monthly car boot sales</i> <i>*An event usually held on STC land – Dates TBC*</i>	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Community Garden Week	April	31 March - 6 April - Celebrates the amazing community and school gardens across the UK.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
St. George's Day	April	23 April - Remembering St. George, England's patron saint.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
VE Day	May	8 May - Victory in Europe Day is the day celebrating the formal acceptance by the Allies of World War II of Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces on 8 May 1945.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Mayor Making	May	The announcement of the Town Council's elected Mayor following the Annual Meeting. <i>*A Town Council event*</i>	Press Release

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National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
Volunteers Week	June	An annual celebration of the contribution millions of people make across the UK through volunteering in their communities.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
World Environment Day	June	5 June - Encourages awareness and action for the protection of the environment.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
D-Day (80th anniversary)	June	6 June - Commemoration of the D Day landings on 6 June 1944.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
HM King Charles III's Official Birthday	June	15 June	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Cycle Fest	June	A chance to network and meet local groups, encouraging cycling and showing what amazing things bikes can do.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Sussex Day	June	16 June - To celebrate the rich heritage and culture of Sussex. <i>*A Town Council event*</i>	Press Release, Social Media post and Website Calendar
Windrush Day	June	22 June - A commemoration to honour the contributions of migrants to the post-war economy.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Father's Day	June	A day to honour fathers and other father figures.	Social Media post and Website Calendar

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National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
Armed Forces Day	June	Showing support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community: from currently serving troops to Service families, veterans, and cadets.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Seaford Motorfest	June	A classic car and bike show <i>*An event usually held annually on Town Council land – Date TBC*</i>	Social Media post and Website Calendar
NHS Anniversary	July	5 July	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Her Majesty Queen Camilla's Birthday	July	17 July	Social Media post and Website Calendar
VJ Day	August	15 August - marks the day Japan surrendered, effectively ending the Second World War on 15 August 1945.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Seahaven Pride	August	A Seaford community event in celebration of the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and to raise awareness of the issues facing the LGBTQ+ community, educating and promoting equality and inclusion so people are free to live and love without fear and prejudice. <i>*An event usually held annually on Town Council land – Date TBC*</i>	Social Media post and Website Calendar
The Mayor of Seaford's Civic Service	September	A reception held by the Mayor of Seaford. <i>*A Town Council event*</i>	Social Media post and Website Calendar

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National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
The Great British Beach Clean	September	19 - 28 September - A week-long citizen science event, where hundreds of beach cleans take place up and down the UK. Litter data collected drives conservation work and also feeds into the International Coastal Clean-up (ICC).	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Art Wave	September	Art exhibition by 70+ artists across various locations (including Seaford)	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Emergency Services Day	September	9 September - Showing support for the NHS and emergency services.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
World Suicide Prevention Day	September	10 September - An awareness day in order to provide worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicides, with various activities around the world.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Battle of Britain Day	September	15 September - To mark the day on which a large-scale aerial battle in the Battle of Britain took place on 15 September 1940.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Black History Month	October	Promotes and celebrates the contributions of those with African and Caribbean heritage to British society and to foster an understanding of Black history in general.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
World Teacher's Day	October	5 October - To celebrate all teachers around the globe.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Seaford Bonfire night	October	A Seaford community event for bonfire night <i>*An event usually held annually on Town Council land – Date TBC*</i>	Social Media post and Website Calendar

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National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
World Mental Health Day	October	10 October - To raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilise efforts in support of mental health.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction	October	13 October - Celebrates how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Recycle Week	October	21 - 27 September - A dedicated campaign that aims to raise awareness about the importance of recycling.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Remembrance Sunday	November	Remembering the service and sacrifice of all those that have defended our freedoms and protected our way of life. <i>*A Royal British Legion event with the Town Council*</i>	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Commonwealth Remembrance	November	The Tuesday after Remembrance Sunday - Remembering those from the Commonwealth who have served alongside the British Armed Forces since the First World War, defending the freedoms and ways of life we enjoy today.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
World Kindness Day	November	13 November - Originating in the late 1990's through the efforts of the World Kindness Movement. World Kindness Day is observed in many different countries worldwide.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
His Majesty King Charles III's Birthday	November	14 November	Social Media post and Website Calendar

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National/International and Local days/topics	Month	Details	Comms
International Men's Day	November	19 November - A worldwide celebration of the positive value men bring to the world, their families, and communities. Highlighting positive role models and raising awareness of men's well-being.	Social Media post and Website Calendar
Seaford Christmas Magic	December	Seaford's community Christmas event. <i>*A Town Council event – Date TBC*</i>	Social Media post, Website Calendar and Press Release



PRESS AND MEDIA POLICY

This policy sets out how Seaford Town Council manages communications and engagement with the press and media. It establishes a clear and consistent framework for responding to media enquiries, issuing official statements, and ensuring communications are accurate, professional, transparent, and politically neutral.

'Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future'

Policy Status

Version	0.2	Last Review Date	October 2026
Adopted Date	May 2016	Next Review Date	Three years after adoption
Review Period	Three years	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
May 2016	0.1	Full Council	Adopted Policy

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
CE15	Communications and Engagement Strategy 2026-2029
CC2	Code of Conduct for Members Policy
CE13	Social Media Policy
C5	Concerns & Complaints Policy
CE14	Noticeboard Policy
CE3	Data Protection Policy
CE10	Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
CC9	Mayoral Role Guidance and Expectations Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council (the Council) recognises the important role of the press and media in informing the public and promoting understanding of the Council's services, decisions, and activities.
- 1.2. The Council is committed to maintaining positive, professional, and constructive relationships with local, regional, and specialist media outlets. Effective engagement with the media supports the Council's wider commitment to openness, transparency, accountability, and community engagement.
- 1.3. This policy sets out how the Council will manage communications with the press and media and identifies the roles and responsibilities of councillors and officers when engaging with media representatives.

2. Aim and Scope

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that communications with the press and media are:
 - Accurate, timely, and consistent
 - Professional and respectful
 - Aligned with Council decisions and approved policies
 - Compliant with relevant legislation and guidance
 - Supportive of the Council's reputation and public accountability

3. Who This Applies To

- 3.1. This policy applies to:
 - All Town Councillors
 - All Council employees
 - Contractors, consultants, or representatives authorised to act on behalf of the Council where media engagement forms part of their role.
- 3.2. Nothing within this policy prevents councillors from expressing personal views. However, councillors must clearly distinguish between personal opinions, political views, and the formal position of the Council.

4. Principles of Media Communications

- 4.1. The Council will:
 - Communicate openly and honestly at all times
 - Provide accurate and timely information
 - Treat media enquiries professionally and consistently

- Respect confidentiality, legal restrictions, and data protection requirements
- Ensure communications are accessible and understandable to residents
- Maintain political neutrality in all official communications

4.2. Political Neutrality and Official Representation

4.2.1. The Council is an apolitical public authority. Official Council communications, press releases, statements, and media activities must remain politically neutral at all times.

4.2.2. Council resources, publications, and communication channels must not be used to promote or oppose any political party, election candidate, campaign, or political viewpoint.

4.2.3. When acting in an official Council capacity, councillors and officers must ensure that any media engagement reflects the Council's duty of political neutrality and maintains public confidence in the impartiality of the Council.

5. Official Council Statements and Interaction with the Press

- 5.1. The Town Clerk, or a delegated officer acting with the authority of the Town Clerk, is responsible for issuing official media statements on behalf of the Council.
- 5.2. Official statements may include:
 - Council decisions and resolutions
 - Information about Council services and projects
 - Community initiatives and events
 - Responses to media enquiries
 - Matters affecting residents and stakeholders
- 5.3. Where appropriate, official statements will be published through media outlets, Council publications, and the Council's website.
- 5.4. Officers will seek to proactively invite members of the press to suitable Council activities or events, such as an opening ceremony or similarly high-profile activity.
- 5.5. In accordance with Local Government legislation, the Council facilitates any members of the press or media looking to attend, and potentially report on, a public Council meeting.

6. Major Incidents and Sensitive Events

- 6.1. The Council recognises that significant incidents, emergencies, or sensitive events may attract media attention and public interest. Such

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events may include serious crimes, fatalities, major accidents, severe weather, flooding, public emergencies, civil contingencies, or incidents causing significant community concern.

- 6.2. In the event of a major incident, the Council will recognise the lead role of the relevant emergency services, local authority, government agency, or statutory body.
- 6.3. The Council will not provide operational updates, comment on matters subject to investigation, or speculate on causes, responsibility, or future outcomes.
- 6.4. Where communications are considered appropriate, the Council will:
 - Provide factual and verified information only
 - Signpost to information issued by the lead authority
 - Support community reassurance and wellbeing
 - Communicate with sensitivity towards those affected
 - Ensure statements are proportionate to the Council's role and responsibilities
 - Avoid duplication of information already being provided by partner agencies
- 6.5. Any statement relating to a major incident or sensitive event must be approved by the Town Clerk, or by an officer acting with the authority of the Town Clerk.
- 6.6. The Council will not ordinarily issue public statements regarding incidents occurring outside the parish of Seaford unless:
 - Residents of Seaford are significantly affected
 - The Council has a direct role in supporting the response or recovery
 - The Mayor or Council has been formally involved in community, civic, or commemorative activities
 - The incident has substantial relevance to the Seaford community
- 6.7. Following incidents involving loss of life, serious injury, or significant community impact, the Council may issue messages of sympathy, condolence, or support, where considered appropriate by the Town Clerk.
- 6.8. Such statements will be respectful, proportionate, and non-political, recognising the needs of affected individuals, families, and communities.

7. Media Enquiries

- 7.1. All media enquiries relating to Council business should be directed to the Town Clerk, or to an officer acting with the authority of the Town Clerk.
- 7.2. Responses to enquiries will:
 - Be factual and evidence-based
 - Reflect approved Council policy and decisions

- Not disclose confidential, exempt, or personal information
 - Be issued by authorised officers only
- 7.3. Where a media enquiry relates to a specialist service area, the Town Clerk may coordinate a response with the relevant officer or committee chair.

8. Councillor Engagement with the Media

- 8.1. Councillors are free to engage with the media and comment on matters of public interest.
- 8.2. When doing so, councillors will:
- Make clear whether they are expressing a personal view or the Council's agreed position
 - Avoid implying they are speaking on behalf of the Council unless authorised to do so
 - Comply with the Members' Code of Conduct
 - Respect confidentiality requirements
 - Avoid making statements that could bring the Council into disrepute
- 8.3. The Mayor may act as an official spokesperson for the Council on civic, ceremonial, and community matters in accordance with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor Roles and Responsibilities Policy and the Mayoral Role Guidance and Expectations Policy.
- 8.4. Official communications issued in the name of the Mayor must reflect the civic and apolitical nature of the office and be consistent with the Council's Communications Strategy and related policies.

9. Confidentiality and Legal Compliance

- 9.1. Information that is confidential, exempt, commercially sensitive, or subject to legal restrictions must not be disclosed to the media.
- 9.2. All communications must comply with:
- Data protection legislation
 - Freedom of Information legislation
 - Local Government legislation
 - The Council's adopted policies and procedures
- 9.3. Freedom of Information requests received through media channels should be referred to the Town Clerk for handling in accordance with statutory requirements.

10. Pre-Election Period

- 10.1. During any pre-election period, the Council will ensure that its communications remain compliant with relevant legislation and guidance.

11. Review

- 11.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance, operational requirements, or Council policy.

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy governs the Council's use and management of official social media channels to share information, engage the community, support services, and ensure lawful, accurate, and accountable communication

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.1	Last Review Date	October 2026
Adopted Date	TBC	Next Review Date	One year from adoption
Review Period	Three years after first year review	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
n/a-new policy	-	-	-

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
CE9	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
CE3	Data Protection Policy
CC2	Code of Conduct for Members Policy
HRP7	Disciplinary Policy
CE15	Communications & Engagement Strategy
C5	Concerns & Complaints Policy
CE10	Freedom Of Information Requests Procedure
CE7	Press and Media Policy

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13.0	Data Protection
14.0	Freedom of Information
15.0	Non-Compliance with the Policy
16.0	Monitoring and Review

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Town Council (the Council) is committed to ensuring that all public communications are open, accurate, transparent, timely, and accessible, enabling residents, businesses, stakeholders, and the wider community to remain informed, engaged, and connected with the Council's services and work.
- 1.2. To achieve this, the Council recognises social media as an essential communication tool for sharing information, fostering meaningful engagement, promoting community participation, and supporting the Council's strategic communication objectives.
- 1.3. By adopting this Policy, the Council establishes a clear framework for the effective management and appropriate use of its official social media accounts, ensuring that officers understand their roles, responsibilities, and the standards expected, when using social media on the Council's behalf.
- 1.4. This Policy supports the delivery of the Council's Communications & Engagement Strategy by providing the operational framework for the management and use of the Council's official social media channels. The Strategy sets out the Council's communication objectives and priorities, while this Policy establishes the standards, responsibilities, and procedures that ensure social media is used effectively, consistently, and appropriately.

2. Aim and Scope

- 2.1. This policy aims to provide a framework for the responsible, consistent, and secure use of the Council's official social media accounts, ensuring that all communications are accurate, transparent, and aligned with the Council's values, strategic objectives, and responsibilities, thereby maintaining public confidence.
- 2.2. The Council recognises social media as an important communication channel that complements traditional communication methods by providing timely information, improving accessibility, and supporting

effective engagement with the public. To achieve these objectives, this policy aims to:

- Establish a consistent and coordinated approach to the management and use of the Council's official social media accounts.
- Respond effectively to the increasing use of social media as a key channel for public engagement and information sharing.
- Support the delivery of the Council's Communications & Engagement Strategy through the effective, consistent, and appropriate use of social media channels.
- Define the roles, responsibilities, and standards expected of officers authorised to manage or contribute to the Council's official social media accounts.
- Ensure that all official social media communications are clearly identifiable as representing the Council and not the personal views of individual officers or town councillors.
- Promote professional, respectful, lawful, and accessible communication in accordance with the Council's policies, values, and relevant legislation.
- Protect the Council's reputation by reducing communication risks and ensuring consistent, professional communications.
- Enhance public awareness of the Council's services, initiatives, projects, consultations, campaigns, events, and community activities.
- Provide officers with the guidance, knowledge, and awareness required to manage the Council's official social media accounts appropriately, in a timely and accurate manner

3. Who This Policy Applies To

- 3.1. This policy applies to all officers of the Council, irrespective of their employment status, i.e. whether they are engaged on a full-time, part-time, temporary, or permanent basis.
- 3.2. This policy applies to any third parties engaged in work on behalf of the Council, including but not limited to, agency personnel, consultants, and providers of services or suppliers whose staff carry out duties for or in association with the Council.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

- 4.1. The Council is committed to ensuring that all content published on its official social media accounts is free from discrimination, bullying, racial bias, hate speech, and other forms of harmful or inappropriate content, while promoting equality diversity, and inclusion, and respect for all individuals.
- 4.2. The Council recognises its responsibilities under the Online Safety Act 2023 and is committed to supporting a safer online environment by reducing the risks associated with harmful, unlawful, or inappropriate content, while ensuring that its social media activities are undertaken in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- 4.3. In addition, this Policy complies with relevant legislation and regulations, including:
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Data Protection Act 2018
 - The Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - The Communications Act 2003
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

5. Council Statement and Commitment

- 5.1. The Council supports open discussion and welcomes a range of views. It is committed to ensuring that its official social media accounts encourage constructive dialogue and enable respectful participation, provided that all contributions remain relevant, appropriate, and considerate.
- 5.2. The Council signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge ¹ in February 2023 and expects all engagement through its social media channels to be conducted in a respectful, constructive, and professional manner.
- 5.3. Officers are therefore expected to engage appropriately and avoid behaviour that may cause harm, distress, or disruption to others, or that may contribute to the spread of misinformation or the creation of content intended to provoke conflict.
- 5.4. The Council has a zero-tolerance approach to any content or behaviour that targets individuals or groups through abusive, threatening,

¹ <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/campaigns/civility-and-respect/civility-and-respect-pledge.html>

discriminatory, or offensive comments, including personal attacks, harassment, intimidation, or deliberate attempts to cause harm.

- 5.5. The Council also has zero tolerance for any content on its official social media accounts that is, or may lead to, discriminatory, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, threatening, violent, unlawful, or offensive language, comments, or statements.
- 5.6. The Council states that any content, activity, or sharing that conflicts with its zero-tolerance approach will be subject to appropriate action, including the removal of content and/or restricting or preventing users from interacting with the Council's official social media accounts.

6. Defining Social Media and Official Council Social Media Accounts

- 6.1. For the purpose of this policy, 'social media' refers to digital platforms, applications, and services that enable individuals and organisations to create, publish, share, exchange information, communicate, and engage with online audiences and communities. 'Official' refers to those accounts that are set up by authorised Council officers not, for example, accounts set up by individual councillors.
- 6.2. The Council acknowledges that social media platforms are continually evolving and that new services may emerge or existing platforms may change over time. This policy therefore applies to all official social media accounts established by the Council on current or future social media platforms for communication and engagement purposes.
- 6.3. The Council's official social media accounts currently include:
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - YouTube
 - X (formerly twitter), and
 - LinkedIn
- 6.4. The scope of the Council's social media activity includes the creation, publishing, sharing, monitoring, and management of content through the Council's official social media accounts, including posts, comments, responses, announcements, campaigns, and other forms of online interaction.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1. The Council recognises that the safe use of social media requires shared responsibility across all levels of the organisation. To support the successful implementation of this policy, the following roles and responsibilities apply:

- **Line managers** are responsible for:
 - Ensuring officers understand this policy, their responsibilities, and the expected standards when using social media.
 - Promoting appropriate online conduct and the Council's zero-tolerance approach to support respectful and professional communication.
 - Providing guidance on the proper use of social media within the workplace and addressing any concerns raised.
 - Taking appropriate action where misuse occurs and escalating matters in accordance with relevant Council policies and procedures.
 - Supporting the Council's communications function by promoting awareness, encouraging risk reporting, and enabling early identification of social media-related issues.
- **Community Engagement & Democratic Services Manager** is responsible for:
 - Managing the Council's official social media accounts effectively and ensuring that social media activity supports the objectives and priorities set out within the Council's Communications & Engagement Strategy.
 - Creating, publishing, and monitoring content that reflects the Council's values, priorities, and organisational identity.
 - Moderating online interactions consistently, including responding to enquiries where appropriate, and addressing inappropriate or abusive content in accordance with relevant guidance.
 - Maintaining appropriate security and administrative controls for official accounts, including access permissions and account management.
 - Providing advice, guidance, and support to services on effective social media use and promoting good practice across the Council, where necessary.

- **All officers will:**
 - Take responsibility for understanding and complying with this policy, related procedures, and any guidance concerning social media use.
 - Protect confidential, sensitive, and personal information and ensure that such information is not disclosed.
 - Report suspected misuse, security concerns, or content that may present a risk to the Council through the appropriate reporting channels.
 - Maintain clear distinction between personal views and official Council communications and not present personal opinions as representing the Council.

8. Purpose and Use of Council Official Social Media Accounts

- 8.1. The Council uses social media to support its communication and engagement activities, strengthen public awareness of its work, and enhance the visibility of Council activities, decisions, services, and initiatives.
- 8.2. The Council uses its official social media accounts for a range of purposes, including, but not limited to:
 - Promoting its services, decisions, projects, consultations, and actions.
 - Encouraging constructive engagement and gathering feedback to better understand community views, priorities, needs, and areas for improvement.
 - Sharing official Council-related information including notices, agendas, Full Council, and other related meeting dates, and public announcements.
 - Sharing local events, activities, initiatives, and opportunities that contribute to community life and local small businesses.
 - Supporting community connections by sharing relevant information from local organisations, groups, schools, charities, clubs, and partner organisations.
 - Fostering community cohesion, inclusion, resilience, and collaboration through online engagement.
 - Advertising Council-led events, supported activities, and available opportunities, including vacancies and fundraising initiatives.

- Supporting the Council's response during local, regional, or national emergencies by providing timely, accurate, and coordinated information in accordance with the Communications & Engagement Strategy, Business Continuity arrangements, and any approved crisis communication procedures.
 - Providing links to relevant websites and external social media accounts that support public information and engagement.
- 8.3. The Council's official social media accounts are primarily intended for sharing information and providing updates, rather than serving as public discussion forums.
- 8.4. The Council welcomes appropriate interaction and will respond to comments or messages where appropriate and practicable. Responses will normally be provided during standard working hours, subject to appropriateness, staff availability, operational priorities, and workload.
- 8.5. Media enquiries received through the Council's social media channels should be managed in accordance with the Council's Press & Media Policy. Social media accounts should not be used as a substitute for approved media response procedures.

9. Management of Social Media Accounts

- 9.1. The Council's official social media accounts will be administered and managed by authorised Council officers, who are responsible for publishing content.
- 9.2. No new official social media account may be established without the approval of the Town Clerk. Consideration must be given to the purpose of the account, intended audience, resource implications, security arrangements, and alignment with the Communications & Engagement Strategy before approval is granted.
- 9.3. In line with the Council's Communications & Engagement Strategy, public comments are enabled to encourage open and constructive engagement. Comments are moderated, and the Council reserves the right to hide, remove, or report any user-generated content that breaches this policy, including content that is:
- Abusive, threatening, sexually explicit, or racially offensive.
 - Hateful or discriminatory towards individuals or groups, including religious or minority groups.
 - Copied directly from another source where the user does not own or have permission to use the copyright.
 - Commercial advertising, marketing, or promotional content.

- Political, controversial, irrelevant, off-topic, or intended to provoke or disrupt discussion (commonly known as "trolling").
 - Written in language that may reasonably be considered offensive, particularly in relation to protected characteristics.
 - Derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory, or offensive towards any individual, including Council staff, councillors, the Council itself, or the people, businesses, and organisations the Council serves or works with, or which constitutes bullying or harassment.
- 9.4. The Council ensures that appropriate security settings are maintained on all social media accounts. No account details or settings may be changed without the permission of the Town Clerk.
- 9.5. The Council also ensures that passwords for all official social media accounts are kept secure and changed whenever necessary. Access to the Council's official social media accounts will be restricted to the Town Clerk and authorised Council officers.

10. Principles and Code of Practice for Social Media Use

- 10.1. The Council's official social media accounts embody the principles of openness, accountability, and professionalism that foster safe and respectful community-focused engagement. Thus, the Council embraces the following principles:
- **Communicate professionally** by ensuring all content is accurate, inclusive, and consistent with the Council's values, Code of Conduct, and Communications & Engagement Strategy.
 - **Protect personal and confidential information** through complying with any related data protection legislation.
 - **Ensure accessibility** by creating content that is inclusive and accessible to all users, taking account of accessibility standards and the diverse needs of the community. Where reasonably practicable, content should follow recognised accessibility good practice, including the use of plain English, image alternative text, subtitles or captions for video content, and consideration of colour contrast and readability.
 - **Maintain public trust** by communicating transparently, correcting inaccuracies where needed, and acknowledging errors where appropriate.
 - **Maintain political neutrality** by ensuring that social media content does not promote, oppose, or appear to favour or disfavour any

political party, political campaign, candidate, or elected representative.

- **Safeguard the Council's reputation** by using social media in a manner that upholds public confidence and reflects the Council's commitment to integrity, impartiality, and good governance.
- **Encourage meaningful community participation** by using social media to facilitate informed dialogue, share relevant information, and strengthen engagement with residents, businesses, and local organisations.

10.2. To uphold these principles, the Council will prioritise the following practices when managing and using its official social media accounts:

- Communicate fairly by ensuring that all content shared, published, or released is respectful, clear, and accessible to all members of the community.
- Ensure all information published is accurate, factual, and not misleading.
- Avoid any political or partisan comments or sharing content that could compromise the Council's neutrality or reputation.
- Obtain appropriate consent before publishing photographs, videos, or personal information relating to children or vulnerable individuals.
- Verify that links to third-party websites are appropriate and safe to use before sharing them, and comply with any applicable terms of use.
- Recognise that online communications can have a lasting impact, ensuring that content is carefully considered before publication and remains appropriate for a public audience.
- Protect the security and integrity of the Council's official social media accounts by ensuring access is limited to authorised individuals, appropriate security measures are maintained, and account activity is regularly monitored to prevent misuse, unauthorised access, or inappropriate use of Council social media accounts.

11. Management of Unacceptable Social Media User Behaviour

11.1. The Council is committed to maintaining a respectful, inclusive, and safe online environment. Where content breaches this policy, the Council will take appropriate action to respond to the breach.

- 11.2. In such circumstances, the Council may remove or hide content that breaches this policy and, where appropriate, take reasonable steps to identify the individual responsible to help prevent further breaches. Users who repeatedly breach this policy may be restricted or blocked from interacting with the Council's official social media accounts in accordance with the Council's Unreasonable, Abusive and Vexatious Behaviour Policy.
- 11.3. In exceptional circumstances, the Council may report the issue to the police or other relevant authorities where a comment or post shared is abusive, threatening, or unlawful.

12. Social Media Concerns & Complaints

- 12.1. Members of the Public:
- 12.2. Social media is not an appropriate channel for reporting urgent matters, serious concerns, or issues requiring immediate action. These should be directed to the Council office.
- 12.3. The Council's official social media accounts do not form part of the formal complaints procedure and should not be used as a substitute for raising official complaints. Complaints should be submitted in accordance with the Council's Concerns & Complaints Policy.
- 12.4. Officers:
- 12.5. Officers are encouraged to raise any concerns through the appropriate internal channels to ensure they are addressed effectively and sensitively. Such concerns may include, but are not limited to:
- Concerns regarding the handling or disclosure of personal information
 - The inappropriate use of the Council's official social media accounts for personal purposes (e.g., using the Council accounts to promote personal business or engage in non-Council-related discussions)
 - Any activity or behaviour that may conflict with this policy or the Council's social media standards (e.g., inappropriate interactions with users)
- 12.6. Officers who identify content, comments, or activity on social media that may breach the Council's standards, including content contrary to its zero-tolerance approach to abuse, discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour, should report it through their line manager or the designated reporting channel: admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk
- 12.7. Councillors:

- 12.8. Councillors with concerns about any content on an official Council social media channel should raise these with the Town Clerk and Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager.

13. Data Protection

- 13.1. The Council is committed to protecting personal data and ensuring that it is processed responsibly and lawfully in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 13.2. The Council therefore takes appropriate measures to avoid publishing, requesting, or storing personal data through its official social media accounts unless there is a lawful basis and appropriate justification for doing so. This includes, but is not limited to, contact details, financial information, employment details, and any other information that could identify or relate to an individual.
- 13.3. The Council may direct users to an alternative secure communication channel to protect confidentiality where an enquiry requires the discussion of personal information.
- 13.4. Social media platforms, including Facebook and X, operate under their own privacy policies and allow users to manage certain privacy settings and control how their information is shared. Users should be aware that information shared through these platforms may be subject to each platform's terms and conditions. The Council will only collect, use, or retain personal information where necessary and in accordance with its data protection obligations.

14. Freedom of Information

- 14.1. The Council recognises that information, comments, messages, and records relating to its social media activity may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and ensures that such records are appropriately managed, retained, and considered when responding to valid requests.
- 14.2. Officers and users should be aware that information provided to the Council through its official social media accounts may be disclosed where there is a valid legal requirement to do so. In such cases, officers should refer to the Council's FOI Requests Procedure for further guidance on handling and responding to FOI requests.

- 14.3. The Council's FOI Requests Procedure sets out the process for those looking to request information, including requests submitted through social media.

15. Non-Compliance with the Policy

- 15.1. All officers are required to comply with this policy to ensure the responsible use of social media.
- 15.2. The Council's official social media accounts will be regularly monitored by authorised officers for safeguarding and operational purposes.
- 15.3. Uploading, sharing, forwarding, emailing, or linking to inappropriate material through either professional or personal social media accounts may constitute serious misconduct. Any suspected breach of this policy or misuse of social media (e.g., sharing sexual content, disclosing confidential information, or posting hate speech) may be subject to further investigation and, where appropriate, managed in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy and other relevant procedures.

16. Monitoring and Review

- 16.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains current, responsive to changes in legislation, regulations, technology, and best practice, and continues to support the effective and proper use of social media by the Council.
- 16.2. The Council's Communication & Engagement Strategy sets out the Council's strategic aims in terms of measuring the effectiveness of its social media activity.
- 16.3. Officers seeking advice or clarification regarding this policy, or any social media-related matters, should contact their line manager or the Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager to ensure they receive appropriate and accurate guidance.



NOTICEBOARD POLICY

This policy provides a consistent framework for managing Seaford Town Council's physical and online noticeboards, ensuring they remain accessible, relevant, and focused on community engagement

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.2	Last Review Date	October 2026
Adopted Date	June 2015	Next Review Date	Three years after adoption
Review Period	Three years	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
June 2015	0.1	Full Council	Adopted Policy

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
CE15	Communications and Engagement Strategy
CE7	Press and Media Policy
CE3	Data Protection Policy
CE12	Website Accessibility Statement

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7.0	Online Community Noticeboard
8.0	Physical Noticeboards
9.0	Monitoring and Maintenance
10.0	Reporting Damage or Misuse

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council (the Council) maintains a number of public noticeboards throughout the town, together with an online Community Noticeboard on its website, to support the sharing of information and promote activities, events, and services that benefit the local community.
- 1.2. The Council recognises the important role that noticeboards play in enabling residents, community groups, charities, public bodies, and other organisations to share information of local interest with the wider community. They provide an accessible means of sharing information, encouraging community participation, and supporting engagement with local initiatives and opportunities.
- 1.3. This policy sets out the arrangements for the use and management of the Council's physical and online noticeboards to ensure they remain relevant, well maintained, and of value to the community.

2. Aim and Scope

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to provide a clear and consistent framework for the management and use of Seaford Town Council's physical and online noticeboards.
- 2.2. The policy seeks to:
 - Promote information, events, and activities that benefit the Seaford community.
 - Support local charities, community groups, voluntary organisations, and public bodies.
 - Ensure information displayed on Council-managed noticeboards is appropriate, lawful, and relevant.
 - Provide a fair and transparent approach to the publication and removal of notices.
 - Maintain the Council's political neutrality and protect its reputation as an impartial public authority.
- 2.3. The scope of this policy includes all Town Council-owned public noticeboards and the online Community Noticeboard hosted on the Council's website.

3. Who This Applies To

- 3.1. This policy applies to any individual, group or organisation wishing to display notices on a Council noticeboard or submit content for publication on the Council's online Community Noticeboard.
- 3.2. This includes:

- Residents
- Community and neighbourhood groups
- Charities and voluntary organisations
- Sports clubs and community associations
- Educational establishments
- Public sector organisations and statutory bodies
- Town councillors and Council officers responsible for administering the noticeboards
- Any other organisation seeking to share information through a Council-managed noticeboard

4. Accessibility and Inclusion

- 4.1. The Council is committed to ensuring that its noticeboards and communication channels are accessible, inclusive, and available to as many members of the community as possible.
- 4.2. In managing both physical noticeboards and the online Community Noticeboard, the Council will seek to:
 - Provide information in clear and straightforward language.
 - Support access to information through both digital and non-digital channels.
 - Ensure online content is published in line with recognised accessibility standards wherever reasonably practicable.
 - Consider the needs of residents who may experience barriers to accessing information.
 - Promote a diverse range of community activities and opportunities that benefit Seaford residents.
 - Encourage community participation by providing accessible routes for community groups and organisations to share information.
- 4.3. The Council recognises that not all residents' access information in the same way and will continue to use a range of communication methods, including noticeboards, printed materials, its website, social media, and direct engagement activities, to reach the widest possible audience.
- 4.4. This policy works in conjunction with the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy and any relevant accessibility guidance adopted by the Council.

5. Permitted Content

- 5.1. Community notices should normally relate to activities taking place within Seaford or demonstrate a direct benefit to Seaford residents.
- 5.2. The Council welcomes notices relating to:
 - Community events and activities
 - Charity fundraising events
 - Local clubs, societies, and voluntary organisations
 - Educational, cultural, and heritage activities
 - Health and wellbeing initiatives
 - Public consultations
 - Information from government agencies, emergency services, or other public authorities
 - Town Council business and civic events
- 5.3. Where noticeboard space is limited, priority will be given by officers to:
 - 5.3.1. notices that demonstrate a clear community benefit to Seaford residents, and
 - 5.3.2. notices from local community groups, charities, and voluntary organisations.

6. Content Not Permitted

- 6.1. The following will not be displayed on Council noticeboards or the online community noticeboard:
 - Commercial advertising intended primarily to generate private profit
 - Property sales or lettings
 - Recruitment advertisements, except those from registered charities, public bodies, or the Council itself
 - Political party campaigning, election material, candidate promotion, referendum campaigns, or any other party-political content
 - Content that is discriminatory, offensive, defamatory, misleading, or unlawful
 - Material promoting gambling, tobacco products, or other age-restricted activities
 - Duplicate notices that occupy disproportionate space
 - Any material which may bring the Council into disrepute
- 6.2. As an apolitical local authority, the Council does not endorse or promote political parties, candidates, or political campaigns. Council operated

noticeboards and the online Community Noticeboard may not be used for party-political purposes.

- 6.3. The Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager will determine whether submitted content complies with this policy.

7. Online Community Noticeboard

- 7.1. The Council operates an online community noticeboard on its website to provide an additional platform for community information.

7.2. Submission Process

7.2.1. Requests should be submitted to the Town Council by email to admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk and include:

- Organisation name
- Event or activity details
- Date, time, and location (where applicable)
- Contact details
- Any supporting poster or promotional material

7.2.2. Where there are concerns about information contained within the above or a lack of clarity, officers will endeavour to clarify this with the requester to ensure that information published meets the aims of this policy.

7.3. Commercial Advertising

7.3.1. The online Community Noticeboard is provided as a free community resource.

7.3.2. It may not be used for the promotion of commercial products, services, or activities primarily intended to generate private profit. Requests from businesses seeking to advertise or market their services will not be published.

7.3.3. The Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager may, at their discretion, permit publicity for events organised by businesses where there is a clear and significant community benefit, provided the primary purpose is not commercial promotion.

7.4. Removal of Content

7.4.1. The Community Engagement and Democratic Services Team will remove online content:

- Once it has expired

- Where information becomes inaccurate
 - Where it no longer complies with this policy
 - At the Council's discretion if necessary
- 7.5 All submissions will be reviewed by authorised Council officers prior to publication to ensure compliance with this policy.

8. Physical Noticeboards

- 8.1 The Council currently maintains public noticeboards at:
- Buckle Car Park
 - Blatchington Pond
 - East Street
 - Seaford Cemetery
 - South Hill Barn
 - Southdown Road
- 8.2 Additional noticeboards may be added, relocated, or removed by the Council as required.
- 8.3 The Council welcomes users affixing their own notices to the physical noticeboards using drawing pins. Laminated notices are preferable, as these are more weather resistant.
- 8.4 In exceptional circumstances, the Council will consider requests for officers to display notices (such as due to mobility or visual impairments). The user will need to provide the printed copies of the notices. Officers will display the notice as soon as practicably possible, but an immediate service cannot be offered.
- 8.5 Users displaying notices on physical noticeboards should:
- Ensure notices are securely displayed
 - Remove notices promptly after an event has ended
 - Respect existing notices and available space
 - Avoid damaging noticeboards through inappropriate fixings
- 8.6 The Council will remove any material that:
- Is out of date
 - Does not comply with this policy
 - Causes obstruction or excessive clutter
 - Is displayed in an unsuitable manner
- 8.7 Council notices, statutory notices, and official Council communications may be prioritised where noticeboard space is limited.

9 Monitoring and Maintenance

- 9.1 The Council will periodically inspect and maintain its noticeboards.

9.2 Outdated, damaged, or non-compliant notices will be removed without notice.

10 Reporting Damage or Misuse

- 10.1 Any damage, vandalism or misuse of a Town Council noticeboard should be reported to:
Seaford Town Council
37 Church Street
Seaford
BN25 1HG
Telephone: 01323 894870
Email: admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

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CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy sets out Seaford Town Council's approach to receiving, managing, and responding to concerns, complaints, and appeals through a staged escalation process, ensuring all matters raised are handled fairly, consistently, and transparently within a clearly defined process

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.4	Last Review Date	October 2026
Adopted Date	2016	Next Review Date	Three years after last review
Review Period	Three years	Approving Body	F&GP

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
2016	0.1	Full Council	Adopted Policy
2018	0.2	Full Council	Adopted Policy
2019	0.3	Full Council	Adopted Policy

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
CE15	Communications and Engagement Strategy 2026-2029
C6	Councillor Officer Protocol
HRP6	Dignity at Work Policy
CE11	Freedom of Information Request Procedure
HRP13	Grievance Policy
CC2	Member's Code of Conduct
[TBC – new policy]	Unreasonable, Abusive, and Vexatious Behaviour Policy

Table of Contents

Section	Title
1.0	Introduction
2.0	Scope and Objective
3.0	Principles
4.0	Procedure
5.0	Appendices

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council (the Council) aims to provide the best possible service to the residents and visitors of Seaford, but recognises that from time to time, users of the Council's services may feel that the quality of services is less than they would reasonably expect.
- 1.2. This policy sets out the Council's approach to receiving and handling concerns and complaints, supported by relevant procedural documents to ensure complete clarity for all involved as to the process and timescales to be followed.

2. Scope and Objective

- 2.1. This policy applies to members of the public and other third parties looking to raise a concern or complaint.
- 2.2. See Section 4.7 for information about complaints relating to Council Officers.
- 2.3. See Section 4.8 for information about complaints relating to Town Councillors.

3. Principles

- 3.1. Whilst not under its jurisdiction, the Council has aligned itself with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code¹ and, as such, identifies and commits to the below framework as the underlining principles of good complaint handling:

Getting It Right

- Acting in accordance with law and relevant guidance
- Ensuring good leadership and well equipped and trained staff
- Having clear governance arrangements
- Focussing on outcomes for the complainant and Council

Being Consumer Focussed

- Ensuring clear and simple procedures
- Ensuring good two-way communication channels with complainants
- Dealing with complainants promptly and sensitively
- Listening to the complainant to understand the complaint and outcome sought

¹ <https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/information-for-organisations-we-investigate/complaint-handling-code/complaint-handling-code>

- Responding flexibly and helpfully

Being Open and Accountable

- Publishing a clear process
- Publishing clear service standards for complaint handling
- Providing honest, evidence-based explanations, and giving reasons for decisions
- Keeping full and accurate records

Acting Fairly and Proportionally

- Treated all complainants impartially
- Ensuring complaints are investigated thoroughly and fairly to establish the facts
- Ensuring that decisions are proportionate, fair, and appropriate,
- Ensuring that complaints are reviewed by someone not involved in the events leading to the complaint
- Acting fairly towards staff complained about as well as towards complainants

Putting Things Right

- Acknowledging mistakes and apologising where appropriate
- Providing prompt, appropriate, and proportionate remedies
- Considering all relevant factors of the case when offering remedies
- Taking account of any injustice or hardship that results from pursuing the complaint as well as from the original dispute

Seeking Continuous Improvement

- Using feedback and lessons learned to improve service design and delivery
- Having systems in place to record, analyse, and report on learning from complaints
- Regularly reviewing lessons to be learnt from complaints
- Where appropriate, telling the complainant about the lessons learnt and changes made to services, guidance, or policy

4. Procedure

- 4.1. This section of the policy covers the raising of concerns, complaints, and Appeals procedures.

4.2. Definitions

Concern: A concern is any issue, query, request for reassurance, expression of dissatisfaction, or service-related matter raised with the Council. All matters received under this policy will be treated as a concern in the first instance and investigated by an appropriate manager.

Complaint: A complaint is an expression of continued dissatisfaction following the Council's response to a concern and represents a request for the matter to be formally reviewed by a senior manager.

Appeal: An appeal is a request for a complaint outcome to be reconsidered where the complainant remains dissatisfied following the complaint stage.

4.3. Supporting Documents

The Concerns and Complaints Flowchart (appended to this policy) provides a guide for this process, covering:

- How to raise an issue with the Council
- How issues are managed as concerns in the first instance
- How matters may be escalated to a complaint and appeal

4.4. Internal Process

4.4.1. All matters raised under this policy will be treated as concerns in the first instance and managed by the Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager.

4.4.2. Where the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may submit a formal complaint which will be investigated by a member of the Strategic Management Team.

4.4.3. Should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal complaint, they may appeal in accordance with section 4.5 of this policy.

4.4.4. The table below sets out who will usually lead on the different stages of the process.

Stage	Responsibility	Lead Officer/Body
Concerns	Concerns raised and resolved informally where possible	Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager
Formal Complaint	Investigation of formal complaints, consulting relevant officers or managers as required	Strategic Management Team Member
Appeal	Review of the complaint and previous decisions	Town Clerk or Appeals Committee

4.4.5. There may also be times when a revised process has to be followed to ensure that the principles within this policy can be met. In these cases, any change to process detailed above will be discussed with the complainant and those involved, to ensure all parties understand the process.

4.4.6. If correspondence is a request for information, this will be handled in accordance with the Council's Freedom of Information Request Procedure or Subject Access Request Procedure, depending on the nature of the information requested.

4.5. Appeals

4.5.1. If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint then an appeals process is available.

4.5.2. Appeals can be submitted in relation to the outcome of all complaints with the exception of those relating to the conduct of an officer or councillor.

4.5.3. Appeals cannot be submitted in relation to the response to the initial concern raised, as this must be dealt with via the formal complaint process before the option of an appeal is considered.

4.5.4. Appeals are normally handled by the Town Clerk who will have endeavoured to remain independent from the concerns and formal complaint stages. Where this has not been possible, the Council's Appeals Committee will be convened to consider the appeal.

4.5.5. The Town Clerk's or Appeal Committee's decision is final.

4.6. Reporting

4.6.1. All concerns, complaints and appeals received through the above process will be logged and recorded (unless they relate to an officer or councillor).

4.6.2. A report will be presented to each ordinary Full Council meeting providing an overview of concerns and complaints received and outcomes – this will include any appeals against formal complaint outcomes. All personal details will be excluded when reporting these matters to Full Council to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

4.7. Officer Conduct

Complaints about an individual officer of the Council are separate from this policy and process, and will be dealt with confidentially as an employment/HR matter

Such complaints will be investigated by the line manager or, in the case of the Town Clerk, by the Chair of Personnel Committee and Chair of

CCMG, and then handled in accordance with the relevant employment policies.

4.8. Councillor Conduct

Complaints about a councillor are separate from this policy and process, and are handled by Lewes District Council's Monitoring Officer.

Email complaints marked for the attention of 'The Monitoring Officer' can be sent to: committees@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

For more information on the process, please visit Lewes District Council's website at:

<https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/article/1409/Complaints-against-councillors> or contact Lewes District Council on 01273 471600.

5. Appendices

- Appendix A: Concerns & Complaints Flowchart

Seaford Town Council

Concerns and Complaints Flow Chart

Seaford Town Council is committed to resolving concerns and complaints fairly, consistently, and at the earliest possible stage. This flowchart explains the steps involved, the actions residents and visitors can take, and the timescales that apply.

Some key definitions:

Concerns: A concern is any issue, query, request for reassurance, expression of dissatisfaction, or service-related matter raised with the Council. All matters received under this policy will be treated as a concern in the first instance and investigated by an appropriate manager.

Complaints: A complaint is an expression of continued dissatisfaction following the Council's response to a concern and represents a request for the matter to be formally reviewed. These will be considered by the Strategic Management Team.

Appeals: An appeal is a request for a complaint outcome to be reconsidered where the complainant remains dissatisfied following the formal complaint stage. These will be considered by the Town Clerk or Appeals Committee, as appropriate

Within this document you will find:

1. Flowchart: How your issue will be handled
2. Concerns Process: Setting out the process for submitting a concern
3. Complaints Process: Setting out the process for submitting a complaint
4. Appeals Process: Setting out the process for submitting an appeal

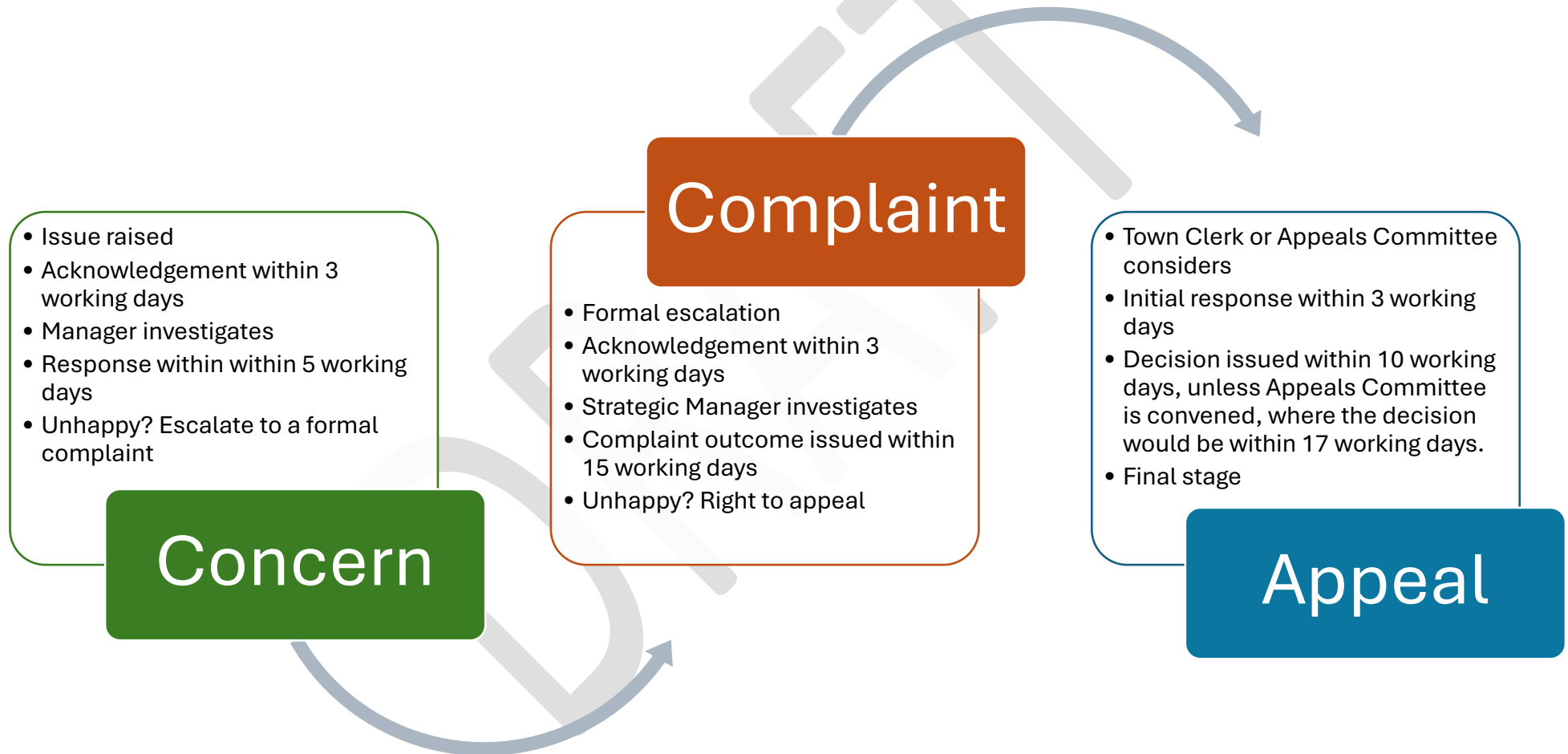
Need help?

If you require assistance in understanding or accessing this process, please contact Seaford Town Council. Officers will provide reasonable support to help you submit a concern, complaint, or appeal.

Some matters, such as complaints relating to councillor conduct, officer employment matters, Freedom of Information requests, and subject access requests, are managed through separate procedures and may not follow the process outlined within this flowchart.

Flowchart: How your issue will be handled

All matters raised with the Council are considered as concerns in the first instance. If you remain dissatisfied with the response, your concern can be escalated to a formal complaint and, ultimately, to an appeal.



CONCERNS

A concern is any issue, query, request for reassurance, expression of dissatisfaction, or service-related matter raised with the Council.

Share Concerns

- Email concern(s) to admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk; or
- Write to Seaford Town Council, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG; or
- Call in to submit concerns using 01323 894870.

Initial Response

- Concern is logged and acknowledgment sent within **3 working days**.
- This acknowledgment will detail what will happen next and may ask for further clarification if necessary.

Outcome

- An outcome to your concern will be provided in writing **within 5 working days** of the date of the acknowledgement.
- If longer is required to provide the outcome, you will be informed of an expected timescale and kept up to date on progress.

Follow on

- If you are not satisfied with the response to your concern, you may wish to consider taking this forward to a formal complaint.
- The flowchart overleaf sets out details of the complaints process.

COMPLAINTS

A complaint may be defined as dissatisfaction over actions taken - or not taken - with a resolution sought

Submit Complaint

- Email complaint to admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk using a subject title of "formal complaint"; or
- Write to Seaford Town Council 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG - clearly stating within your letter "formal complaint" and including all correspondence from the 'concerns' stage.

Initial Response

- Complaint is logged and acknowledgment sent within **3 working days**.
- This acknowledgment will detail what will happen next and may ask for further clarification if necessary.

Initial Discussion

- You will be offered the opportunity to discuss your complaint either by phone, face to face, or via email.
- This will take place with a Strategic Manager.
- This discussion will be offered within **10 working days** of your initial response.

Investigation

- Following the initial discussion, the investigation will take place by a Strategic Manager. This may include information gathering and/or meeting with other individuals and, as such, cannot have a specific timescale assigned to it. Investigations should not however take longer than **15 working days** to complete, unless they are particularly complex.
- Once an investigation plan has been identified, you will be updated with an overview of the plan, who is carrying out the investigation, and the expected timescale.
- If the investigation is expected to overrun its timescale, you will be informed of this and the reasons why. We will keep in touch with you weekly to inform you of progress.

Outcome

- An outcome to your complaint will be provided in writing as soon as possible following the conclusion of the investigation.
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may be able to appeal against its outcome.
- You will need to submit your wish to appeal in writing within **10 working days** of receiving your complaint outcome.
- The flowchart overleaf sets out details of the Appeals process.

APPEALS

An appeal is a request for a complaint outcome to be reconsidered where the complainant remains dissatisfied following the formal complaint stage.

Can you appeal?

- Appeals can be submitted in relation to the outcome of all complaints with the exception of those relating to the conduct of an officer or councillor

Appeal Request

- An appeal should be requested in writing by:
- Email to admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk; or
- Post to Seaford Town Council, 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG.

Initial Response

- You will receive an initial response within **3 working days** of your request to appeal
- This initial response will confirm the status of your appeal and set out the exact process being followed given the nature of your appeal

Appeal by Town Clerk

- Appeals will be determined by the Town Clerk in most instances, where the Town Clerk has remained independent from the original concern and complaint stages.
- The Town Clerk will notify you in writing the outcome of your appeal within **10 working days**
- If the appeal is expected to overrun its timescale, you will be informed of this and the reasons why.

Appeals Committee

- Should the Town Clerk be unable to determine the appeal, a meeting of the Appeals Committee will be convened to hear and determine your appeal.
- The Committee meeting will take place within **15 working days** of the initial response to your request to appeal.
- You may be invited to present your appeal to the Committee.
- If the appeal is expected to overrun its timescale, you will be informed of this and the reasons why.

Outcome

- Should your appeal have gone to the Appeals Committee - the outcome of your appeal will be notified to you in writing within **2 working days** of the Appeals Committee meeting.



UNREASONABLE, ABUSIVE, AND VEXATIOUS BEHAVIOUR POLICY

This policy sets out Seaford Town Council's approach to identifying and managing unreasonable, abusive, and/or vexatious behaviour, while ensuring that issues are managed appropriately through a clear and well-defined process

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.1	Last Review Date	October 2026
Adopted Date	TBC	Next Review Date	One year after adoption
Review Period	Annually	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
New policy-n/a	-	-	-

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
CE15	Communications and Engagement Strategy 2026-2029
C6	Councillor Officer Protocol
HRP6	Dignity at Work Policy
CE11	Freedom of Information Request Procedure
HRP13	Grievance Policy
CC2	Member's Code of Conduct
C5	Concerns and Complaints Policy

Table of Contents

Section	Title
1.0	Introduction
2.0	Aim of This Policy
3.0	Definitions
4.0	Imposing Restrictions
5.0	Blocking from Official Social Media Pages
6.0	New Complaints from Individuals Subject to this Policy
7.0	Review
8.0	Record Keeping

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council (the Council) is committed to maintaining a positive, professional, and respectful environment for councillors, officers, residents, service users, contractors, partners, and all others who engage with the Council.
- 1.2. The Council welcomes feedback, questions, concerns, complaints, challenges, and robust debate. However, there are occasions where the manner in which an individual engages with the Council becomes unreasonable, abusive, threatening, persistent, or vexatious. Such behaviour can have a detrimental impact on staff wellbeing, councillor welfare, the effective delivery of services, and the Council's ability to respond fairly and efficiently to all members of the community.
- 1.3. This policy sets out the Council's approach to identifying and managing unreasonable, abusive, and vexatious behaviour in all interactions with the Council whether related to a complaint, service request, enquiry, consultation, social media engagement, meeting attendance, or any other form of communication.
- 1.4. Whilst the Council will seek to resolve concerns and complaints wherever possible, it also has a duty to protect officers, councillors, and Council resources from behaviour that is unacceptable or places a disproportionate demand on services. Any action taken under this policy will be proportionate, reasonable, and balanced against an individual's right to raise legitimate concerns and challenge Council decisions.
- 1.5. The Council is committed to dealing with all complaints equitably, comprehensively, and in a timely manner. The Council will not normally limit the contact which individuals have with Council officers or councillors; however, there may be circumstances in which this needs to be reviewed.

2. Aim of this Policy

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to support the Council's commitment to maintaining professional, respectful, and constructive engagement with all individuals who interact with the Council. It sets out how the Council will identify and manage unreasonable, abusive, persistent, and/or vexatious behaviour, and the actions that may be taken in response where such behaviour has a detrimental impact on staff, councillors, Council resources, or the effective delivery of services. The policy is intended to provide a fair, consistent, and proportionate framework for officers, councillors, and members of the public.

- 2.2. This policy does not replace the Council's procedures for complaints, employee grievances, councillor conduct, freedom of information requests, safeguarding matters, or reports of criminal conduct; those matters will continue to be handled under the relevant procedures, alongside this policy where appropriate.

3. Definitions and Expectations

- 3.1. This policy addresses both:
- unreasonable, abusive, or threatening behaviour towards councillors, officers, and others acting on behalf of the Council; and
 - vexatious or unreasonably persistent complaints and complaint-related behaviour.
- 3.2. Unreasonable, Abusive or Threatening Behaviour
- 3.2.1. The Council will not tolerate unreasonable, abusive, offensive, or threatening behaviour from any individual engaging with Council officers, councillors, contractors, or volunteers.
- 3.2.2. Examples of such behaviour may include:
- Using abusive or foul language by telephone, in face-to-face interactions, in emails, letters, Council meetings, or other correspondence, or via social media;
 - Sending excessive or repetitive emails;
 - Making persistent and repeated telephone calls;
 - Leaving excessive or repetitive voicemail messages;
 - Posting excessive or repetitive content on Council social media channels; and
 - Aggressive, intimidating, or threatening conduct towards councillors, officers, contractors, or volunteers.
- 3.3. Vexatious or Unreasonably Persistent Complaints
- 3.3.1. For complaints and complaint handling, the Council adopts the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's concept of unreasonable complainant behaviour. Behaviour may be regarded as unreasonably persistent or vexatious where, because of the nature, frequency, or impact of the contact, it materially hinders the Council's consideration of that person's complaint or other people's complaints. The descriptions "unreasonably persistent" and "vexatious" may apply separately or together, but will be applied to behaviour rather than used as labels for an individual.
- 3.3.2. Examples of unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant behaviour include the following (the list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the person's behaviour will be considered as being in this category):

- Having insufficient or no grounds for a complaint despite being given the opportunity and assistance to clarify the complaint
- Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint despite offers of assistance
- Refusing to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved
- Refusing to accept that issues are not within the remit of the complaints policy and procedure despite having been provided with information about the scope of the policy and procedure
- Refusing to accept that issues are not within the power of the Council to investigate, change, or influence (examples could be a complaint about a private car park, or something that is the responsibility of another organisation)
- Insisting on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice (insisting, for instance, that there must not be any written record of the complaint)
- Making what appear to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaints, and seek to have them dismissed or replaced
- Making an unreasonable number of contacts with the Council, by any means, including social media, in relation to a specific complaint or complaints
- Making persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a complainant who insists on immediate responses to numerous, frequent, and/or complex letters, telephone calls, emails, or social media posts)
- Harassing or verbally abusing or otherwise seeking to intimidate staff dealing with their complaint, by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive and racist language
- Raising subsidiary or new issues whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the complaint at the start of the complaint process
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information whilst the complaint is being investigated and expect this to be taken into account and commented on
- Changing the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed
- Denying statements made at an earlier stage in the complaint process

- Electronically recording meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other person involved
 - Refusing to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given
 - Making the same complaint repeatedly, including with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded, and insisting that the minor differences constitute a 'new' complaint which should undergo the full complaints procedure
 - Persistently approaching the Council through different routes about the same issue
 - Persistently seeking an outcome which the Council has explained is unrealistic for legal or policy (other valid) reasons
 - Refusing to accept documented evidence as factual without identifying a relevant factual error or providing material evidence that warrants further consideration
 - Complaining about or challenging an issue based on a historic and irreversible decision or incident
 - Combining some or all of these features
- 3.4. The Council will take reasonable and proportionate action to protect officers, councillors, and Council resources from such behaviour. Where an individual's conduct is considered unreasonable, abusive, persistent, and/or vexatious, the Council will take action in accordance with this policy.
- 3.5. The Council recognises that individuals have a legitimate right to raise concerns, submit complaints, challenge decisions, and express dissatisfaction with Council services. Raising reasonable queries, concerns, or criticisms, including where agreed timescales have not been met, will not in itself result in an individual being regarded as unreasonable, abusive, persistent, or vexatious.

4. Imposing Restrictions

- 4.1. Concerns about behaviour under this policy should be supported by a written record of the relevant incidents, including dates, communication channels, the conduct observed, its impact, and any previous steps taken. The Town Clerk will assess the information against this policy and the relevant underlying procedure before deciding whether formal restrictions are warranted.
- 4.2. Before restrictions are imposed, the Town Clerk will consider the circumstances of the case and, where relevant, ensure that any complaint, enquiry, request, or other matter has been addressed

appropriately, and in accordance with the relevant Council policy or procedure.

- 4.3. In the first instance, the Town Clerk will normally contact the individual, either in writing or by email, to explain why their behaviour is causing concern and request that it ceases. The Town Clerk will also explain the actions that the Council may take if the behaviour continues.
- 4.4. If the behaviour continues, the Town Clerk will inform all councillors of the restrictions being imposed and the reasons for doing so. The individual will be notified in writing of the restrictions, the reasons for them, and the period for which they will apply.
- 4.5. Any restriction imposed by the Council will be reasonable, proportionate, and tailored to the circumstances of the case. In most cases, restrictions will apply for between three and six months, although they may be extended in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.6. Restrictions may include, but are not limited to:
 - Requiring correspondence to be directed to a single named officer or councillor;
 - Requiring contact to be made through a third party, such as a solicitor;
 - Restricting communication to a specific method of contact;
 - Restricting contact to specified days, times, or durations;
 - Requiring face-to-face meetings to take place by appointment and/or in the presence of an appropriate witness;
 - Restricting access to Council buildings or sites, except by prior appointment;
 - Restricting engagement through Council-managed social media channels; and
 - Any other reasonable and proportionate measure considered necessary to protect councillors, officers, Council resources, and the effective delivery of services.
- 4.7. The Council may decide not to respond to or acknowledge further correspondence relating to a matter that has been fully considered and concluded. In such circumstances, a designated officer may be identified to review any future correspondence to determine whether it raises any new issues requiring consideration.
- 4.8. Where an individual's behaviour continues to be unacceptable following the imposition of restrictions, the Town Clerk may determine that further contact from the individual will not receive a response, except where required by law, or where new information or circumstances are presented.
- 4.9. Where behaviour is particularly serious, including conduct which threatens the safety, wellbeing, or security of councillors, officers, contractors, volunteers, or other members of the public, the Council may

take immediate action without prior warning, including reporting the matter to the police, seeking legal remedies, or implementing additional protective measures.

- 4.10. Where an individual has been determined to have engaged in unreasonable, abusive, persistent, and/or vexatious behaviour, any restrictions imposed under this policy will be recorded and communicated to those officers and councillors who need to be aware of them in order to carry out their duties appropriately.

5. Blocking from Official Social Media Pages

- 5.1. Where an individual's behaviour on a Council-managed social media platform is considered unreasonable, abusive, threatening, persistent, and/or vexatious, the Council may restrict or remove their access to that platform in accordance with this policy.
- 5.2. When a decision is taken to apply restrictions under this policy, including blocking access to a Council-managed social media platform, the Town Clerk will notify the individual in writing, where practicable, explaining:
- Why the decision has been taken;
 - What action is being taken;
 - The duration of the restriction;
- 5.3. A copy of this policy will be provided to the individual when restrictions are imposed.

6. New Complaints from Individuals Subject to this Policy

- 6.1. Any new complaint, service request, enquiry, or concern submitted by an individual who is subject to restrictions under this policy will be considered on its own merits. The Town Clerk will determine whether any existing restrictions remain appropriate and necessary in relation to the new matter. The Council does not operate a blanket policy of disregarding genuine complaints, concerns, or service requests solely because an individual has previously been subject to this policy.

7. Review

- 7.1. Any restrictions imposed under this policy will be reviewed by the Town Clerk prior to the end of its duration and at the end of every subsequent three-month period during which the restrictions remain in force. The review will consider whether the restrictions remain necessary, reasonable, and proportionate in the circumstances. The individual concerned will be informed if the restrictions are extended, amended, or withdrawn following the review.

8. Record Keeping

- 8.1. The Council will maintain appropriate records of any cases managed under this policy, including the actions taken and the reasons for those actions.
- 8.2. The Council will retain records including:
- The name of each individual who has been subject to this policy;
 - The nature of the behaviour that resulted in the application of the policy;
 - The date any restrictions came into force and the date on which they ceased or are due to be reviewed;
 - Details of any restrictions imposed;
 - Details of any reviews undertaken;
 - When relevant officers and councillors were notified of the restrictions; and
 - Any correspondence relating to the application and review of the policy.
- 8.3. Full Council will receive an annual report summarising the use of this policy during the preceding year. The report will include information on the number of cases considered under the policy and any restrictions imposed, whilst ensuring compliance with data protection requirements.



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	99/26
Agenda Item Number:	13
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Provision of Town Councillor IT Equipment and Transition to Paperless Town Council Meetings
Strategy Programme Ref:	5.4
Purpose of Report:	To seek a recommendation to Full Council to agree in principle with the purchase of laptop computers for all Town Councillors following the May 2027 local elections, subject to the necessary budget being allocated, enabling the Town Council to transition to fully paperless meetings and supporting councillors in carrying out their civic duties effectively and consistently
Contact Officer:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Authored by: Isabelle Mouland, Community Engagement & Democratic Services Manager

Officer Recommendations

1. To recommend that Full Council agrees, in principle, with the 2027 new administration of Town Councillors being provided with Town Council laptops, subject to approval of the necessary budget in the 2027 – 2028 budget setting process.
2. To note that the proposed purchase would support a transition to fully paperless Town Council meetings from the commencement of the 2027 - 2031 administration.

3. To note that Schools ICT has confirmed support for the devices can be accommodated within the Town Council's existing IT support arrangements, at no additional cost.
4. To delegate power to the Town Clerk to undertake any associated meeting room adaptations required to facilitate device charging and secure use during meetings.

1. Current Position

- 1.1 The Town Council currently provides meeting papers in printed format for councillors who request them, alongside electronic access through the Town Council's website and Outlook.
- 1.2 Whilst some councillors already utilise digital devices to access agendas, reports and background information, the equipment used varies significantly.
- 1.3 Town Councillors are unpaid volunteers and currently rely upon a range of personal devices of differing ages, specifications, and capabilities.
- 1.4 The Town Council has previously declared a climate emergency and committed to reducing its environmental impact through improved sustainability practices. The reduction of paper consumption, where practicable, supports this commitment.
- 1.5 The election of a new Town Council administration in May 2027 presents an ideal opportunity to implement a new consistent digital approach from the outset of their term of office.

2. Considerations

2.1 Equality and Consistency:

- (a) Councillors undertake significant responsibilities on behalf of the community and are expected to read and review lengthy and complex agendas, reports, policies, planning applications, financial information, and supporting documentation in preparation for meetings. Providing a Town Council-issued laptop to each councillor would:
 - Ensure all councillors have access to the same standard of equipment.
 - Remove reliance on personal devices.
 - Promote fairness and equality amongst councillors.
 - Support councillors who may not currently own suitable equipment.

- Provide consistency in accessing Council information and systems.
- Improve cyber security and ICT management arrangements.
- Improve accessibility to information provided by enabling individual councillors to set devices according to their specific needs e.g. larger font sizes, differing background colours for ease of reading, or utilising screen reader technology.
- Break down barriers for candidates who may wish to stand for election that previously felt unable due to a lack of funds to purchase IT equipment.

(b) The provision of appropriate equipment would support councillors in undertaking their civic responsibilities effectively. A mechanism would remain in place to accommodate any councillors that need to request reasonable adjustments where Town Council documentation is concerned.

2.2 Governance and Information Security:

(a) The use of Town Council-issued equipment would provide a standardised platform for accessing council information.

(b) Benefits include:

- Consistent software and security settings.
- Improved resilience in relation to information governance.
- Easier technical support arrangements.
- Reduced risk associated with the use of multiple personal devices.
- Improved management of council information and data.
- Safeguards towards business continuity planning

2.3 Environmental Benefits:

A fully paperless approach would significantly reduce the Town Council's consumption of paper, printing consumables, and associated waste. See Section 3 below providing further data in relation to current paper usage. The proposal aligns with the Town Council's climate action ambitions and wider sustainability objectives whilst modernising operations.

2.4 Operational Benefits:

Paperless meetings would offer:

- Immediate access to reports and supporting documents.
- Improved searching of agendas and reports.

- Reduce the significant officer time currently spent printing, collating and distributing documents.
- Easier access to historic reports and background information.
- Reduced storage requirements for paper documentation.

3. Current Meeting Paper Consumption

3.1 The table below shows how much paper was used when printing agendas during the 2025 – 2026 Municipal Year. While the number of meetings and agenda sizes will inevitably fluctuate each year, the below is a reasonable representation of one year's worth of meeting paperwork.

Table A

Meeting Type	No. of Meetings	Hard Copies Requested	Total Agenda Pages	Total Printed Sheets
Full Council	10	18	1,468	26,424
Assets & Facilities	4	9	315	2,835
Finance & General Purposes	4	7	404	2,828
Golf, Open Spaces & Climate Action	4	8	456	3,648
Personnel	5	6	202	1,212
Planning & Highways	14	8	198	1,584
Total sheets printed in year:				38,531
Approximate total pages of paper used (due to double-sided printing):				19,266

3.2 In total therefore, the Council used an estimated 19,266 sheets of paper in one year, simply for printing Council meeting papers for councillors.

3.3 The financial cost of 19,266 sheets (equivalent to just under eight boxes) of paper is £120, depending on the stationery supplier used.

3.4 Although the financial impact is relatively low, printing 19,266 sheets of paper creates roughly 1,156 kilograms of carbon dioxide, consumes roughly 192,660 litres of water, and uses the equivalent of two mature trees¹².

¹ <https://www.sowesoft.com/en/blog/carbon-footprint-of-paper-vs-digital-what-is-the-real-environmental-impact>

² https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESfwHrOzAVqhurRp9z1u2W56WfkFsTc2CfDmXQ_FGXz_wP7hJsPa-pacuUNwt3_nWRicE-R1tOIDBWzh57toe2Dyr_IX462aW7DRHS9JjFiYOFnxH4I0aLNs_H5H2PQfuPiv4IC0VzMzF0tEwmJ7Gq2-a2fJecdagzUxmMYTjtkNY

- 3.5** Town Council officers already take steps to ensure printing is kept to a minimum via double-sided printing and using black and white ink only, wherever possible.
- 3.6** Officers endeavour to reuse single-sided paper as scrap paper, where possible (and where not confidential).

4. Financial Implications & Budgeting

- 4.1** The Town Council has received a quotation of £659 per laptop, inclusive of a five-year next business day on-site warranty. This is likely to increase to circa £680 per laptop by 1 April 2027.
- 4.2** To ensure business continuity, officers have also been advised to purchase one additional spare device which could be issued temporarily should a councillor's device require repair or replacement.
- 4.3** Councillors would also ideally be provided with appropriate laptop bags to protect each device.
- 4.4** Schools ICT has confirmed that support for the additional devices can be accommodated within the Town Council's existing IT support contract at no additional cost.
- 4.5** Total costs are therefore:

Table B

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
Councillor laptops	20	£680	£13,600
Spare laptop	1	£680	£680
Laptop carry cases/bags	20	£15	£300
Total cost			£14,580

- 4.6** In addition to the above, provision will also be required to contract an electrician to install additional plug sockets in the Town Council's meeting space. These costs would be identified and incorporated into any future budget allocation.
- 4.7** It is important to note that this is not an annual budget increase – the laptops would be intended to last five years – the total shown in Table B is an upfront cost to purchase the equipment.
- 4.8** However, it is recommended that an earmarked reserve be set up, with an annual amount allocated each year so there are available funds when the

laptops require replacement and re-issue. Subject to approval of purchasing laptops, officers will identify a suitable sum of money to be included in budget proposals going forwards.

5. Risks

5.1 If approved:

- Initial capital expenditure is required.
- Officer time will be needed to provide guidance and training, where necessary.
- Meeting rooms will require adaptation to support device charging.

5.2 If not approved:

- Councillors will continue to rely on a mixture of personal devices and printed papers, leaving the Town Council exposed to data and cyber security risks.
- Inconsistencies in access to technology will remain.
- Opportunities to reduce printing and paper consumption will be limited.
- The Town Council will continue to incur ongoing costs and officer time associated with the production of paper meeting packs.

6. Special Arrangement for Dual-Hatted Councillors

- 6.1** A handful of councillors have previously commented that they would prefer not to need two different council laptops where they are an elected representative of both the Town Council and the District or County Council. It has been stated that the District Council has been willing in the past to convert their District Council-issued laptop to be able to be used for both District Council and Town Council purposes. Should dual-hatted councillors wish to explore this option post-election, and subject to the aforementioned software being compatible with the District Council device, then this approach would be welcomed as it would prevent the Town Council from needing to buy so many laptops.

7. Related Works

- 7.1** Officers are currently carrying out other workstreams that sit alongside the recommendations contained in this report;

- 7.2** Meetings Software – officers are investigating options for introducing a meetings software solution, significantly improving the way the Town Council publishes its meeting documentation, and the way in which councillors can access this. This would enable the Town Council's meeting reports to be

available individually online, rather than having one large PDF document that can be difficult and cumbersome to navigate. In addition, councillors would be able to annotate papers, securely access exempt papers, and more easily search back through previous papers. Officers continue to review the options available with the intention to request a suitable allocation in the 2027 – 2028 budget to introduce this from May 2027. This software and the councillor laptops go hand in hand in terms of profoundly modernising and improving the Town Council's meeting documentation systems and data security.

7.3 Town Council Offices – work continues to explore the options for the Town Council offices and utilisation of the space available at the current Church Street premises. As there are unlikely to be any significant changes to the Town Council's offices or meetings space within the next 18 months, it is considered reasonable to upgrade the current Council Chambers with additional plug sockets. It is also worth noting that this will support all meetings held in the Council Chambers, not just Council and committee meetings.

7.4 Members Allowance Policy – a report appears elsewhere on this agenda in relation to reviewing the Town Council's stance on member's allowances. Officers are keen to clarify that the provision of councillor laptops and that of member's allowances are two separate considerations that are not directly linked.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1** The provision of Town Council-issued laptops to all councillors would represent a strategic investment in the effectiveness, accessibility and sustainability of the Town Council's democratic processes.
- 8.2** The proposal would ensure all councillors have access to consistent reliable equipment regardless of personal circumstances, support the transition to fully paperless meetings, reduce reliance on printed documentation and contribute towards the Town Council's environmental objectives.
- 8.3** The commencement of a new Town Council administration following the May 2027 elections provides an appropriate opportunity to introduce this approach from the outset of their term of office, subject to the necessary budget provision being included within the 2027 - 2028 budget.

9. Financial Appraisal

- 9.1** The financial implications have been detailed at point 4 of this report.
- 9.2** Should the Committee be minded to recommend the proposal of the Town Council meetings becoming paperless and to provide councillor IT equipment, this will require an increase of circa £14,380 to Budget Line 210/4118 Civic – IT Hardware & Equipment, which was funded at £200 in the 2026 - 2027 budget.
- 9.3** The costs related to the installation of additional plug sockets within the Council Chambers is at this stage unknown.



Seaford Town Council

Report Number:	118/26
Agenda Item Number:	14
Meeting:	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Date:	8 October 2026
Title:	Review of Members' Allowances Policy
Strategy Programme Ref:	N/A
Purpose of Report:	To consider whether or not to recommend to Full Council the introduction of members' allowances from May 2027
Contact Officer:	Steve Quayle, Town Clerk
Supporting Documents:	Appendix A – Town Council's Members' Allowance Policy Appendix B – Lewes District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel Report

Finance & General Purposes Recommendation – 19 December 2024

*It was **PROPOSED** to **RECOMMEND** that Full Council agrees to defer any amendments to the Member's Allowances Policy for the Finance & General Purposes Committee to consider in December 2026 at the latest; this **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.*

Full Council Recommendation – 23 January 2025

*It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee in deferring any amendments to the Member's Allowances Policy for the Committee to reconsider in December 2026, at the latest.*

Officer Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report
2. To approve/reject the recommendation to Full Council for the implementation of Members' Allowances to become payable from May 2027 onwards.

1. Prologue

- 1.1** In December 2024, a similar report to this was brought to this Committee for consideration of the introduction of the payment of a members' allowance for Town Councillors.
- 1.2** Through discussion, this Committee decided at that time to recommend to Full Council to defer the introduction of a members' allowances, and for the matter to be referred back to this Committee by December 2026. The discussion at that Committee meeting focused on consideration of implementing members' allowances from May 2027 onwards for the next intake of councillors after the Town Council elections.
- 1.3** The feelings expressed during the December 2024 Committee meeting focused on whether the payment of a members' allowance may potentially break down barriers which may otherwise prevent individuals from standing for election as a Town Councillor due to the added financial burdens of the role.
- 1.4** Full Council in January 2025 ratified this proposed course of action.
- 1.5** This meeting of the Committee is the last such meeting prior to December 2026.

2. Introduction

- 2.1** The introduction of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 gave town and parish councils the ability to pay an allowance to local councillors. There is, however, no obligation to pay such allowances.
- 2.2** Members' allowances are intended to support councillors in fulfilling their responsibilities without incurring personal financial burdens, promoting inclusivity, and attracting candidates from diverse backgrounds.
- 2.3** By offering a modest annual allowance, a parish or town council can acknowledge councillors' commitment and reduce financial barriers to participation, helping ensure that local representation remains accessible to all community members.
- 2.4** Since the introduction of these regulations, it has been the policy of Seaford Town Council not to pay its elected members a basic annual allowance under these powers. Members are however able to claim for travel expenses, in accordance with the policy.

2.5 In March 2024, a report was brought to the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee with the purpose of reviewing the Town Council's Members' Allowance Policy. This report was prompted by Lewes District Council's publishing the report of an independent remuneration panel into recommended members' allowances for the parish and town councils within the Lewes district.

2.6 The F&GP Committee discussed the report, but agreed to refer this to Full Council for consideration due to the need for all councillors to be involved in consideration of this matter.

2.7 At its meeting in March 2024, Full Council passed the following motion:

*'It was **PROPOSED** to **INSTRUCT** officers to research this further and present this information to a future Full Council meeting for consideration, including any budgetary considerations; this **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.'*

2.8 Despite a hiatus in progress on this matter through most of 2024, officers researched the matter further in readiness for this Committee's meeting in December 2024. What followed thereafter is detailed in Section 1 above.

3. Town Council's Current Policy

3.1 The current Town Council Members' Allowance Policy is attached at **Appendix A**. This was last reviewed in August 2021, but was updated in January 2025 to explain that this matter would be reviewed again by this committee by December 2026, at the latest.

3.2 Currently no member's allowance is paid by the Town Council, but valid travel expenses can be reclaimed.

4. Lewes District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel Report

4.1 In November 2023, Lewes District Council published the report of its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) into recommended members' allowances for the parish and town councils within the Lewes district. The IRP's report is included at **Appendix B**.

4.2 At its meeting in February 2024, the District Council accepted the IRP's recommendations in full. The IRP report set out the recommended maximum allowance that can be offered to members (based on a set of pre-agreed calculations).

4.3 For clarification, the recommendations accepted by the District Council within the IRP's report are as follows:

- i. Basic Allowance - those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 15% of the recommended Basic Allowance for councillors of the District Council.
- ii. The recommended Basic Allowance for District Council councillors for 2026 - 2027 is £5,332; 15% of this is £800 per annum.
- iii. This should be, in accordance with the statutory regulations, only be paid to councillors who are elected, not those who are co-opted.
- iv. Chair's Allowance - those parishes who feel that a chair's allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for councillors of the District Council. The recommended Chair's Allowance is therefore £1,600: 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for District Council councillors.

4.4 All of the above figures are likely to rise each April in line with indexation. (Please see Section 8 below.)

4.5 The IRP's view was that while parish and town councillors did not stand for office for financial reward, an allowance could actively support someone in the councillor role and that it was essential to be able to attract parish and town councillors from a wide range of backgrounds. Their view was that councillors should not be out of pocket for undertaking the role.

4.6 The further recommendations within the IRP report relating to travel expenses already reflect those within the Town Council's policy.

5. Taxable Income

5.1 According to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), basic allowance payments to councillors are considered taxable income. Therefore, local councils are recommended to follow the Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) system to deduct income tax and National Insurance (NI) contributions at source, where applicable. As a result councillors would be required to provide the Finance Manager with a completed P46 form immediately following their election to office.

5.2 Processing payments through payroll ensures accurate records for both the Town Council and councillors, helping meet transparency standards. Councils are legally required to publish records of councillors' allowances and

expenses, and the payroll system helps streamline these records and keep them consistent.

- 5.3** Officers who oversee the Town Council's payroll would make the appropriate deductions for Income Tax and NI as appropriate, based on the information provided by HMRC. Deduction of income tax and NI at source via the PAYE scheme prevents the risk of unpaid contributions.
- 5.4** Councillors who are liable to pay income tax or NI on their member's allowance will receive the payment net of contributions.
- 5.5** Payment would be made monthly and the first payment would be effective from the date of the Town Council election (6 May 2027)
- 5.6** If a Councillor were to resign, die, or otherwise cease being a member during the year, a pro-rata payment would be calculated to their leaving/end date.

6. Monthly Payments

- 6.1** The Town Council's payroll is now run in-house on a monthly basis, and so to avoid additional officer time being spent on a different arrangement for councillors, the proposal is for member's allowances to be paid monthly alongside officer's payroll.
- 6.2** This would mean councillors would be paid their member's allowances on or just before the 25th of each month by BACS into their dedicated bank account. An electronic pay advice would be created and emailed to councillors each month detailing their payment.
- 6.3** As well as taking up extra officer time, any other payment frequency (for example, annual or quarterly payments) would run the risk of overpayments in the event of a councillor leaving office in the meantime, and may potentially affect councillor's entitlement to benefits such as Universal Credit, where relevant.

7. Optionality

- 7.1** The member's allowance would be optional, allowing individual councillors to decline the payment should they wish to. This would be operated on an opt-out basis. Councillors may choose to opt out of some or all of the payment by confirming this in writing to the Finance Manager.
- 7.2** If councillors decided instead to donate their salary to charity the proposal is for councillors to do this themselves after they have received the payment, to prevent additional officer time administering this.

8. Indexation

- 8.1** The IRP report states that member's allowances would be subject to annual indexation "in line with the District Council's annual staff salary increase when applicable". If this Committee recommends that Full Council introduces an allowance, officers would work with the District Council to understand the logistics of this indexation and how it would work for Town Councillors.

9. Transparency

- 9.1** The IRP report provides guidance on transparency of the decision to pay Members' Allowances.
- 9.2** At the end of each financial year, the Town Council would be required to publish a notice for a period of at least 14 days stating the total amount that it had paid for all members' allowances, disclosing each Councillor's name and the amount received separately. This transparency allows the public to see exactly how much each Councillor is compensated, promoting accountability and clear reporting.

10. Other Town Councils

- 10.1** Whilst the decision to pay members' allowances is one for each individual local council to take, officers previously researched the arrangements at other Town Councils across Sussex in preparation for this matter to be considered by this Committee in December 2024.
- 10.2** The research identified that for the 2024-2025 financial year, the following Sussex-based Town Council's positions were as follows:
- i. Bexhill – No allowance paid
 - ii. Burgess Hill – Allowance paid
 - iii. Haywards Heath – Allowance paid
 - iv. Hailsham – Allowance paid
 - v. Crowborough – Allowance paid
 - vi. Lewes (Town) – Allowance paid
 - vii. Peacehaven – Allowance paid
 - viii. Newhaven – No allowance paid

11. Mayor's Expenses

- 11.1** For clarity, the members' allowance and chair's allowance would not be taken from the Mayor's Expenses budget, which is budgeted to cover specific costs

associated with civic events and other mayoral activities. This budget would remain separate from the members' allowances budget.

12. Financial Appraisal

12.1 If adopted, the annual allowance cost for 20 councillors, with one designated as Chair (the Mayor of Seaford), would be as follows:

- i. Basic Allowance for 19 Councillors: $19 \times £800 = £15,200$
- ii. Chair's Allowance for 1 Councillor: $1 \times £1,600$

iii. Total Annual Cost: £16,800

12.2 The above figures would be subject to indexation increases, as explained in Section 8 above.

12.3 Due to the relatively low level of annual earnings, no Employer NI would be payable on members' allowances.

12.4 Town Councillors are not eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), so no employer LGPS contribution would be payable.



Seaford Town Council

Member's Allowance Policy

Policy Ref.	CC5
Date Last Adopted	August 2021 <i>N.B. this policy was updated in July 2026 with new mileage claim rates</i>
Date of Next Review	December 2026 as agreed by Full Council March 2025
Possible Prompts for Earlier Review	• If rates within the policy change
Previous Adoption Dates	October 2018 September 2015
Author	Assistant Town Clerk

Member's Allowance Policy

Basic Allowance

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

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

Members Travel Expenses

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

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

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7. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
8. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996
9. Any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

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

Cars: 55p/pm for the first 10,000 business miles in the tax year, 25p/pm thereafter

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

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

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



REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
FOR
LEWES PARISH AND TOWN
COUNCILS

NOVEMBER 2023

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

1. Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Terms of Reference

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

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

The Parish and Town Independent Remuneration Panel

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

The Panel comprised the following members:

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

The Panel meeting was held in private session.

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

3. Approach

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

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

4. Arriving at the Recommendations

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

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

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

5. Recommendations

Basic Allowance

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

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

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

Chair's Allowance.

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

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

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

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

Travel and Subsistence.

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

Indexation of Allowances

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

Forgoing Allowances.

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

Publicity

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

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

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

Implementation

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

Mark Palmer- Chair, Independent Remuneration Panel
Daphne Bagshawe- Independent Remuneration Panel
Ian Buckingham- Independent Remuneration Panel

November 2023