



Seaford Town Council

Minutes of the Salts Stakeholder Group Meeting

Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

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

Attendees

Peter Cousins (PC), Head of Place, Seaford Town Council (Chair)

Sharan Brydon (SB), Assets & Projects Manager, Seaford Town Council

Seaford Town Councillors:

Cllr Christina Bristow, Seaford Town Council

Cllr Maggie Wearmouth, Seaford Town Council

Cllr Rod Buchanan, Seaford Town Council

Group representatives:

Geoff Beal (GB), Seaford Cricket Club

John Smith (JS), Seaford Cricket Club

Paul Warren (PW), Seaford Rugby Club

Duncan Savage (DS), 6th Seaford (St. Leonard's) Scouts

Minute Taker:

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

MINUTES

1. Introductions

Introductions around the room.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mike Vingoe from On the Verge, Pat White from The Base, Steve Rodgers from the Salts Café, Gary McKenzie from Premier Football, James Willis from Premier Football, Ian Carter from Seaford Cricket Club, Cllr Olivia Honeyman from Seaford Town Council.

3. Actions and Updates from Last Meeting

3.1 Scouts Lease

A meeting has been arranged for 18th April. There is significant concern regarding the ongoing maintenance of the hut, particularly the difficulty in preserving it in its original condition, which is becoming increasingly untenable.

3.2 Funding Officer Update

GB asked about the newly appointed funding officer at STC. PC confirmed that although a candidate had previously been appointed, a change in personal circumstances meant the role became vacant again. The position has now been filled, with the new funding officer due to start on 1st April 2026.

3.3 Cricket Net Inserts

GB noted that a previous STC action regarding the inspection of net inserts by the maintenance team had not appeared on the agenda. With the first match of the season scheduled for 18th April, this is time sensitive.

STC Action: Project Officer to arrange a site visit with a contractor to quote for the inserts.

4. Updates

4.1 6th Seaford (St. Leonard's) Scouts

As mentioned above about the concerns of the deterioration of the hut. The hut is used by several groups, including Beavers and a dog training group. A prospective yoga group recently viewed the facility but decided not to proceed due to the building being too cold.

Cleaning and maintenance are currently undertaken by volunteers; however, attracting and retaining volunteers is becoming increasingly challenging. PW asked whether the Council has any social media initiatives to help promote and attract local volunteers.

4.2 Premier Football (Update received from Gary McKenzie)

A planning application has been submitted in principle to Lewes District Council for the container/clubhouse. Awaiting feedback on the next steps.

A fundraising fun morning is planned at The Salts on Saturday 18th April. It has been confirmed that this will not impact any cricket or other stakeholder activities scheduled for that morning.

Discussions are ongoing with the FA regarding small grants for pitch repairs. Will update the group in the next meeting.

STC confirmed that approval has been granted for a temporary container. The club is undertaking fundraising to support the purchase of the container, along with foldable goals.

4.3 Cricket Club

The club expressed concerns regarding the new ground's maintenance arrangements. While regular updates had been requested, and some responses were provided by the Project Officer (Amy Walker), it was disappointing that the club was not consulted for its views. Although this was not entirely unexpected, it was still a source of frustration.

The club highlighted the significant time and effort it has contributed to maintaining the pitches over the years, which has resulted in cost savings for the Council. Despite this, concerns remain that the Council is not prepared to maintain the main cricket square.

The club contacted three other clubs to review their maintenance arrangements and reported similar findings. Quotations were sought from three contractors for maintenance of the cricket square, as this represents the most significant cost. Idverde was the only contractor to respond, providing an initial estimate.

Although the changing rooms are owned by the Council, the cricket club continues to undertake cleaning responsibilities.

PC confirmed that other councils had been approached but rent and fees were found to be broadly in line with Lewes District Council charges.

Cllr Wearmouth suggested that a dedicated meeting between the cricket club and STC officers would be a more appropriate forum to discuss these concerns in detail, rather than within the wider stakeholder meeting.

GB highlighted that the STC mission statement is: “*Working with our community to secure Seaford’s best future*”. PC confirmed that he would contact the cricket club to arrange a meeting. Cllr Bristow requested to attend.

Following the previous stakeholder meeting regarding the protected nets around the training area, it was noted that although permission has been granted, the club is currently unable to fund installation by a contractor due to the ongoing costs of ground maintenance.

4.4 Rugby Club

Floodlights: Still awaiting on planning permission from Lewes District Council.

The club requested a meeting with the new Grounds Maintenance contractors and relevant officers responsible for pitch maintenance. They are keen to build a positive working relationship, particularly in light of the deteriorating condition of the pitches in recent years. This has resulted in match cancellations during the winter season and associated financial losses, exacerbated by rising fuel costs. PC has requested a maintenance schedule from the new contractors.

The RFU six-month pitch inspection is due.

CCTV: PW noted that a cupboard remains available for the CCTV controls and asked for any updates. SB confirmed that CCTV arrangements are still being progressed by officers.

4.5 The Salts Café (Update received from Steve Rodgers)

No significant issues to report. Operations are progressing well, and it is hoped that other parties are satisfied with the collaborative approach. Feedback is welcomed if there are any concerns.

Seafront Gate Access: The proposed timed access system would not be suitable, as delivery times cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of wholesale deliveries.

Padlock Issue While the welded padlock has addressed the issue of it being moved, the current padlock was quickly damaged. A stronger, more robust alternative may be required.

4.6 Seaford Town Council Update

The Salts Redevelopment – Strategic Objectives (STC):

STC outlined the proposed strategic approach for the redevelopment of The Salts:

1. Questionnaires and meetings will be arranged with stakeholders to gather views on future use of the area, including pitches, facilities, and community groups.
2. The feedback collected will be used to develop four potential vision options.
3. These options will then be presented for wider public consultation and input.
4. A final plan is targeted to be in place by October 2027.

DS emphasised the importance of stakeholder consultation, noting that all stakeholders wish to be actively involved in the process. Cllr Bristow suggested that separate meetings be arranged to provide stakeholders with dedicated updates on progress. SB suggested that updates could instead be incorporated into the main stakeholder meetings as a standing agenda item.

Changing Rooms

Concerns were raised by STC regarding previous Idverde booking records, which have been difficult to interpret. Clarification was sought on the frequency of use, particularly as the Council has not received any associated income.

The Cricket Club confirmed that the changing rooms are used for every home game. It was also confirmed that Premier Football use the facilities during the winter season. It was noted that the facilities are cleaned weekly during the winter period; however, during the summer months, cleaning is undertaken by Cricket Club volunteers.

Cllr Bristow suggested that consideration be given to appointing a cleaning contractor going forward for the changing rooms.

STC action: add to cleaning contract.

Section 106

No further update was available at the time of the meeting, an actioned was raised to ask Steve Quayle for a further update. Steve has provided an update from LDC in February, which is attached at the end of the minutes.

Cllr Bristow outlined the stages of the process and advised that it is believed to be at Stage 3.

PW expressed a preference for the funding to be allocated to The Salts.

5. Any Other Business

Volunteering

It was noted that many clubs rely heavily on volunteers, and attracting new volunteers is becoming increasingly challenging.

Suggestions included using social media to promote and highlight local groups within the Seaford area. Cllr Bristow commented that volunteering trends are shifting towards areas such as gardening and health and wellbeing, rather than sports clubs. It was also noted that the cost-of-living crisis is impacting people's availability, with time increasingly seen as a financial constraint.

Booking of Pitches

Concerns were raised regarding pitch usage and ensuring that clubs are using the correct pitches as booked. Questions were raised about how this will be monitored.

PC advised that a Grounds Maintenance Project Officer has been appointed and that terms and conditions are in place on the booking platform, which users are required to adhere to.

6. Next Meeting

Meeting arranged for Thursday 1st October 2026 at 16:00 PM.

Disclaimer: These minutes are a summary of discussions and decisions made during the meeting. They **do not record every word that was spoken during the meeting**. Any corrections or amendments should be submitted to the minute taker before the next meeting for approval.

Update via Steve Quayle from LDC concerning Section 106

In July 2020 LDC entered into a S106 deed of variation which provides for a Sports Pitch Contribution of £350k and a Sports Pitch Maintenance Contribution of £72,180 which were paid prior to commencement of the Newlands development.

The intention was to secure a new sports pitch, if at all possible, due to the loss of pitches previously available at the school. As it was anticipated that this might not be possible within Seaford, a degree of flexibility was afforded in connection with the allocation of the contributions. The agreement set out the following cascade provisions to apply to the Council's expenditure of the Sports Pitch Contribution:

If the Sports Pitch Contribution is not spent on the provision of a Seaford Sports Pitch within 5 years from the Commencement Date (or such shorter period specified by the Council and notified to the Owner) THEN following provisions shall apply:

- i. On the expiry of 5 years from the Commencement Date (or such shorter period specified by the Council and notified to the Owner) the Sports Pitch Contribution can be spent on the provision of a new Sports Pitch on an alternative site to be identified in the Coastal Belt of Lewes District
- ii. If on the expiry of 7 years from the Commencement Date (or such shorter period specified by the Council and notified to the Owner) it has not been possible to secure a new sports pitch in Seaford, or an alternative site to be identified in the Coastal Belt of Lewes District THEN the Sports Pitch Contribution can be spent to upgrade the football pitch and facilities at the Salts Recreation Ground, Richmond Rd, Seaford or at the Crouch, Bramber Lane, Seaford.
- iii. If on the expiry of 9 years from the Commencement Date (or such shorter period specified by the Council and notified to the Owner) it has not been possible upgrade the football pitch and facilities at the Salts Recreation Ground, Richmond Rd, Seaford or at the Crouch, Bramber Lane, Seaford THEN the Sports Pitch Contribution can be spent to upgrade the football pitch and facilities at any appropriate site be identified in the Coastal Belt of Lewes District.

*Sports Pitch is defined as "a new sports pitch (not located within the Site) at a location to be identified by the Council [LDC] in Seaford and which is to be secured and/or delivered using the Sports Pitch Contribution".

*Coastal Belt is defined as "the parishes and towns of Newhaven, Seaford, Peacehaven and East Telscombe within the Lewes District Council boundary".

We have now had the contributions for 5 years. LDC and STC have both looked for suitable sites in Seaford during this time and discussions have taken place with Sussex Football Association and other parties. The deed of variation would allow the 7-year period to be truncated, but only on the basis it is not possible to secure a new sports pitch in Seaford, or on an alternative site to be identified in the Coastal Belt.

If LDC decides to truncate the 7-year period, the council would need to provide evidence that it has considered all the options for an alternative pitch before any money is allocated to upgrade existing facilities. The Coastal Belt definition includes Seaford so the council can continue to consider opportunities in Seaford as well as within the remaining coastal belt towns.

If we do not follow these provisions carefully, there is a risk that LDC could face a claim for the contribution to be re-paid on the basis it has not been correctly allocated in accordance with the legal agreement.

In 2025 LDC commissioned a new Playing Pitch Strategy to determine progress against the previous action plan and key changes in demand since the last strategy. This work supports the emerging local plan 2020-2040 and informs future priorities until 2040. This strategy takes a year to complete and is due for completion in spring this year. As part of the works undertaken by the consultants they have been asked to look at 6 potential sites in Seaford that have been identified through discussions with the Sussex FA and other parties. This includes some school sites.

LDC officers met again in January with Sussex FA to discuss progress. A number of actions were taken away from the meeting, but we are somewhat dependant on the ongoing appraisal works carried out by the Playing Pitch Strategy consultants. An update meeting with them is due in the coming weeks. Additionally, colleagues in Planning are reviewing SDNP and LDC planning site allocations. A further meeting is planned once we have some information back from the consultants.