



Seaford Town Council

Report 57/19

Agenda Item No:	6
Committee:	Council
Date:	15th August 2019
Title:	Clerk's Update Report
By:	James Corrigan, Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To inform Councillors of key developments and priorities going forward.

Recommendations

You are recommended:

- 1. To note the contents of the report.**
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1. Information

- 1.1 Outstanding Freedom of Information Act requests, complaints and compliments**, since the last Clerks report to the 20 June 2019 Town Council there has been one valid Freedom of Information Act request regarding the West View Beach huts which is being progressed.
- 1.2** However, there are currently five new matters of complaint, some of which are substantial matters and are being dealt with in accordance with Council policy. These, in addition to the planning matters referred to below have significantly impacted on the workload of the Town Clerk, leading to delays in producing this report.
- 1.3** As all complaints are still progressing at the time of writing this report it is not appropriate to discuss any further detail at this stage.
- 1.4 Staffing update**, the team in the office has been performing very well and the new part time administrative assistant, Julie Payne, has settled in very well. We are pleased to announce that Project Support Officer (Facilities), Sharan Brydon, will be going on maternity leave towards the end of the calendar year. Plans are therefore being made for cover during her period of absence.
- 1.5** A report will be presented to the forthcoming Personnel Committee addressing an additional chef position at The View and a part time Film and Liaison Officer within the Projects and Facilities team.
- 1.6 Officer and Councillor development training**, four office staff are making good progress with completing their CILCA training course supported well by Izzy. A further training session will be held with these staff soon. Employees are also booked on various training course relevant to their positions over the coming months to ensure the Council continues to be up to date in all areas.
- 1.7** Following the recent elections there have now been seven **induction training sessions** with all Councillors invited. These have been well attended and the feedback very positive. The courses have included Planning, Code of Conduct and site visits to the Town Councils main assets. Councillor Richard Honeyman has

attended an external training course on HR and Councillor Brown has attended a SSALC training event on GDPR.

- 1.8 Press releases, social media, and website**, since the June meeting there have been 16 press releases issued and over 50 social media posts on the various Town Council Social Media sites covering the Town Council, Seaford Head Golf Course, The View, The Mayor and Seaford Skatepark. These have covered a number of topics from promoting the recently held public meeting to consider the Newlands Housing Development to events such as Armed Forces Day, Sussex Day and the opening of the new Skatepark in the Salts.
- 1.9** The Council's social media presence has continued to increase with many posts receiving over 10,000 views. Equally, the number of people now following the Town Council Facebook site is now over 2280, which makes it the highest number for a Local Council in the South East, indeed the number following is higher than many District Councils have managed to achieve for their much bigger areas.
- 1.10 Outstanding litigation**, the pending arbitration with a former tenant relating to Hurdis House should be concluded by the time the Council meets.
- 1.11 Corporate Governance and Policy review**, as planned within the policy schedule, policies continue to be developed and reviewed with regularity: the Business Continuity Policy is presented this month by the Deputy Town Clerk. Some policies are not progressing as planned as more pressing demands, such as The Neighbourhood Plan and the Newlands development, have had to take priority.
- 1.12 Neighbourhood Plan**, the plan has progressed to Regulation 16 stage and will be submitted to the Inspector for consideration by LDC imminently. Following advice from the Neighbourhood Plan Officer it was necessary to remove the Downs Medical Centre proposal from the plan due to an administrative error in the documentation. We are aware how this occurred and was as a result of some support given to the plan by this not being completed correctly with referencing. It does not directly affect the proposal as this was included to reflect external plans in any event.
- 1.13 Leases and agreements**, all leases are now complete save for the new Seaford Town FC lease which was put on hold at the request of the club.
- 1.14 The View developments**, the performance of the venue continues to be promising for the full financial year with significant bookings. The lengthy appeal for business rate reduction is still awaiting the outcome. Well done to all of the team there.
- 1.15 Golf course developments**, the course income continues to be significantly higher than last financial year, approximately £21,000 for the first quarter. Well done to the golf pro and greenkeeping team for this monumental effort. Changes are still being evaluated as to how to better improve this. In addition, a sector-specific consultant has been appointed to review the service agreement with the Golf Pro to ensure we are maximising opportunities and have a mutually beneficial relationship. A report will be presented to the Golf and The View Committee in due course.
- 1.16** Monthly meetings take place between the Town Clerk, Golf Professional and the Head Greenkeeper to oversee the management of the course, including financial monitoring, marketing and communication, as well development of the facility.
- 1.17** The plans for the new Golf Pro Shop to allow the existing shop to be converted into a spike bar have progressed in that The South Downs Planning Authority have indicated that they have no objection in principal to the new Golf Pro Shop being built. This is to be funded from the refund of business rates if this is successful.

Detailed plans are being drawn up now for the new build which will then be ready for construction as soon as the funds are available.

- 1.18 Support for the Projects and Facilities team**, support has been given in a number of areas including the Skatepark, signage, memorial bench issues and CCTV. Regular meetings continue with the Projects and Facilities Manager to monitor progress. The team have done an amazing job this year and some financial performances are exceptional and will be reported on in due course.
- 1.19 Continuation of the Committee Chairman Management Group**, the meetings are taking place as planned and the minutes and agenda are shared with all Councillors, with some non-members attending.
- 1.20 Liaison with Lewes District Council** continues to be productive, currently working together to try and bring the developer of Talland Parade to task. Although powers are limited in this regard.
- 1.21 Liaison with East Sussex County Council**, a first meeting took place between the Town Clerk and the CEO of ESCC as well as the Director. This proved fruitful and has resulted in some positive changes in practice.
- 1.22 Newlands planning proposal**, numerous meetings have taken place leading up to the recent meeting on the 8th August where STC supported the application. There has been a large amount of correspondence also which has taken up a lot of time, as have the social media posts.
- 1.23 Downs Medical Centre proposal** has similarly been demanding on officer's time fielding enquiries and securing information. A report appears elsewhere on the agenda to establish a member working party to review this proposal.
- 1.24 Holidays**, inevitably as all staff take holidays some projects will not progress as quickly as normal but by the time the next report is presented most will be back to work. I hope everyone taking holidays, staff and Councillors, have an excellent time.

2. Financial Appraisal

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

3. Contact Officer

The Contact Officer for this report is James Corrigan, Town Clerk.



Town Clerk
