



## Seaford Town Council

Minutes of the **Annual Meeting** of the **Seaford Town Council** held at the **Council Chambers, 37 Church Street, Seaford** on **Thursday 19 June 2014** at **7.00pm**.

### **Present:**

Councillor M Brown (Mayor)

Councillors S Adeniji, R E Allen, B Burfield, G Cork, S Dunn, P Franklin, S Gauntlett, T Goodman, B Groves, A Hayder, A Latham, L Lord, S McStravick, R Needham, L Wallraven, B Warren, A White & I White.

Police Sergeant Stuart Mullins – Sussex Police

Mr James Corrigan, Locum Town Clerk – Seaford Town Council

Miss Georgia Raeburn, PA to the Town Clerk – Seaford Town Council

14 members of the public.

### **C30 Apologies**

Councillor P Heseltine and Miss Millie Hemsley, Young Mayor, had submitted their apologies.

### **C31 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on 8 May 2014 be **APPROVED**.

### **C32 Declaration of Interests**

Cllr S McStravick declared an interest other than a pecuniary interest in item 8, Nomination for Replacement Representative on Outside Bodies, as she is the Councillor being replaced on the two outside bodies.

Cllrs R E Allen and B Burfield each declared an interest other than pecuniary interests in item 10, Buildings Insurance at Martello Tower, as they are members of the Seaford Museum Heritage Society.

### **C33 Public Participation**

Bob Gower wished to congratulate Cllrs S Adeniji, S Dunn and others on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations for the Seaford railway line. Special mention was made to Jenny Thornton who works at Seaford Train Station.

also congratulated the Interim Town Clerk on the very enlightening Clerk's report.

Bob Brown wished to inform the meeting that past-Mayor and Councillor, Ralph Taylor is currently unwell in hospital with a lung condition. Mr Brown and Jon Freeman had paid him a visit in hospital.

asked about the future plans for South Hill Barn.

*Interim Town Clerk explained that the Council had recently appointed Chris Rolley Associates to carry out a review of all licences and leases, which included South Hill Barn. The report of the review is due to be submitted and will include recommendations for actions needing taken. South Hill Barn is now on the Clerk's radar and will be included on the agenda for the August Full Council meeting.*

*Mayor Brown wished to pass on the good wishes of the Council to Ralph Taylor.*

*Cllr A White requested that the Council staff arrange for a get well soon card to be sent to Mr Taylor on behalf of the Council.*

*(Mr Bob Brown passed a note with the hospital address for Mr Taylor.)*

#### **C34 Mayor's Appointments and Communications**

**C34.1** Mayor Brown explained that in the future the Mayor's engagement report (report 53/14 appendix A) would also include any engagements attended by the Deputy Mayor.

**C34.2** Mayor Brown informed the meeting that he was still planning to hold three forums over the remainder of the municipal year. Each forum would be targeted at a different audience i.e. businesses, charities etc, and give them a chance to voice any ideas or issues being experienced. Mayor Brown hopes to have these arranged for July, autumn and winter.


**C34.3** Mayor Brown reminded the meeting that his Civic Service would be taking place on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at 7.00pm at Seaford Baptist Church.

**C34.4** Cllr A White congratulated the Mayor on his achievements and engagements attended since taking office in January. Cllr A White commended the Mayor on his conduct of himself and the Council through recent situations.

*(A short two minute break was taken)*

**C34.5** Mayor Brown offered an update on the situation with appointing a Deputy Young Mayor; himself and the Young Mayor, Millie Hemsley, have given talks at school assemblies recently regarding the position of Deputy Young Mayor and what it entails. Applications have since gone out. All nominees will be invited to give presentations for elections at school before a final decision is reached. The Mayor is hoping to have a Deputy Young Mayor in position by the end of July.

**C34.6** It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** report 53/14.



## **C35 Clerk's Report**

**C35.1** Press Releases – a folder has been created with all press releases from this year and clippings from local press reports regarding the Council.

*(the press release folder was passed around for members to look at)*

**C35.2** Devolution of Grounds Maintenance – there has been further progress since the Clerk's report was written. The Interim Town Clerk believes that there is significant income for the hire of sports pitches being paid to the contractor.

**C35.3** Staff Development – Georgia Raeburn will be attending a CiLCA training course (Certificate in Local Council Administration) on Tuesday 24 June.

**C35.4** The Interim Town Clerk's will be prioritising the appointment of a Business Manager for the new Golf Clubhouse.

**C35.5** Cllr McStravick thanked the Interim Town Clerk for such a comprehensive report and put forward three questions:

- i. Is there a timescale to be met with the registering of the land for the HLS grant? (item 1.9 of the Clerk's report)
- ii. Is there a timescale to be met with the work being done on the leases? (item 1.4 of the Clerk's report)
- iii. Is there an update on the action put to the Interim Town Clerk at the Council meeting on 24 April, to look into alternative formats for access to the documents included in the Council's Publication Scheme?

Publication Scheme – the Interim Town Clerk informed the meeting that he had looked into alternative formats available:

- iv. MP3 format – software is available that will convert Microsoft Word documents into an MP3 format. The Council will be trying this method with a partially sighted resident who has requested access to documents in a suitable format.
- v. Braille – a quote for the price to convert documents into Braille has been sourced at roughly £3 per sheet. This should be satisfactory, that the Council has sourced a provider, should a request ever be received for Braille documents.
- vi. Translation – Google offer a free online translation service. A link to this service will be included on the website.
- vii. Website – the new website will allow a lot more information and documents to be accessed online. This improves access options available. As does the ability to change text size, colour, font etc on a computer.
- viii. A brief policy on information accessibility will be drafted and brought to the Council meeting in August for approval.

HLS Grant – the Interim Town Clerk confirmed that the application for the grant is progressing. The Clerk is registering additional land as this will entitle the Council to a larger grant. There are some outstanding tasks to be done with this which the Clerk will be addressing next week. There are no timescale worries.



Licences and Leases – the Interim Town Clerk clarified that Chris Rolley’s reports is due in this week, which will then be brought to the Council at the meeting in August. Work is already underway on some issues highlighted.

Mayor Brown clarified that the complaint from the partially sighted resident regarding access to information is being dealt with.

**C35.6** Cllr Adeniji commended the Interim Town Clerk on his report and asked two questions:

- i. What is the progress with the new website, and is this being prioritised? (item 2.1.v of the Clerk’s report).
- ii. Can the Council formally consider the possibility of a Neighbourhood Plan, even if just to show that it is something they have considered, that they are thinking about it, and the reasons not to do the plan if that is the case.

New Website – The Clerk confirmed that Georgia Raeburn is working on the new website. This is a priority of hers after current HR workloads being to reduce. The new website will house a lot more information and improve accessibility. Once the necessary information is uploaded the site will go live.

Neighbourhood Plan – The Clerk is aware that there have been many informal discussions regarding a neighbourhood plan. The Clerk had plans to run Councillor training sessions and include a section on neighbourhood plans.

**C35.7** Cllr A White thanked the Interim Town Clerk for his report and wished to make/raise the following points:

- i. What has happened further to a payment of around £2,100 that was paid in May 2011 for a company to create a new website for the Council?
- ii. Cllr A White was very pleased to see that a Councillors Information Pack is to be created.
- iii. Cllr A White believes that it has been proven to the Council Officers that there were no actual issues regarding the management of The Base and that everything was being done above board.
- iv. The CCTV Working Group has submitted details to the Interim Town Clerk for installing CCTV in the Council Chambers. Due to the Clerk’s workload it was unable to get this item on the agenda for this meeting, but it will be included on the agenda for the Council meeting in August.

Mayor Brown questioned whether the CCTV Working Group would be reporting back to Full Council. It was clarified that the group, consisting of Cllrs A White and T Goodman, will discuss the draft report with the Clerk before presenting it at the meeting in August.

The Interim Town Clerk felt that the figure Cllr A White mentioned for the website may be due to the company being used to create the website, In Touch, get paid in two instalments; the first up front and the second once the website has gone live.

Cllr Warren clarified that In Touch were paid the first figure for providing the Council with the software to create the website. This software allows the Council



Officers to control content management and populate the website easily despite the actual complexity of the process.

**C35.8** It was **AGREED** to **NOTE** the Clerk's report.

### **C36 Police Report**

Police Sergeant Stuart Mullins presented the written report and invited questions.

**C36.1** Cllr Adeniji mentioned an email he had received from a resident regarding anti-social behaviour over a weekend and the fact that the resident stated they had not been able to get through to the Police on the non-emergency number 101. Cllr Adeniji asked in this situation what was the best method to contact the Police?

Sgt Mullins explained that there had been some problems with the 101 contact number and that the District Inspector had been asked to enquire about the issue with the control room.

Over the end of 2013 start of 2014 similar problems with the control room for the 101 number were experienced due to the Police being instructed to officially report more crimes and the telephone operators therefore having to spend longer on the line to get all the relevant information to input.

Sgt Mullins stressed that if there is an emergency i.e. you are witnessing a crime, you think someone is going to come to harm or you feel that the Police need to present, 999 should be used. The best chance the Police have of apprehending a suspect is when 999 is used.

**C36.2** Cllr McStravick queried whether there was any link between harassment and domestic violence incidents increasing and the football World Cup?

Sgt Mullins stated that it has been identified that nationally there is a historical increase of domestic violence incidents during football events. In response to this finding, there are increased numbers of patrol cars sent out. There has been no increase as yet during this World Cup but the additional resources are in place.

**C36.3** Cllr Lord questioned whether Sgt Mullins was aware of the reports on Facebook regarding the car park at the Downs Leisure Centre and disorderly youths and keyed cars.

Sgt Mullins confirmed that the Police have had no reports of this and therefore are unable to act without anything being reported.

**C36.4** Cllr A White questioned whether the figures being reported are a true year on year comparison for Seaford, or if the moving of the goal posts affects what is reported?

Sgt Mullins informed the meeting that while the figures are based on the National Police website, he keeps his own figures for Seaford and is confident in the continuity of the figures since he began producing them 18 months ago.



**C36.5** Cllr Hayder stated that he is very glad to see that the incidents of shop lifting are down and also noted that he has not seen any shop windows broken over the last few months compared to last year where there were quite a few instances of windows being broken.

**C36.6** Cllr Needham wished to congratulate the Police team in Seaford on the action they had taken further to a UKIP sign board being defaced near to the Texaco garage, ahead of the European Elections.

Sgt Mullins confirmed that where possible the Police will always follow an enquiry as much as they can. This incident is believed to have been a one-off. The Police will always take political-based offences very seriously.

**C37 Nomination for a Replacement Representative on Outside Bodies**

Members considered report 49/14.

It was **AGREED** to **APPOINT** Cllr Anthony White to represent the Council for the Mercread Youth Centre and Seaford Youth Task Group.

**C38 Nomination for Representative to support Seaford Library**

Members considered report 50/14.

It was **AGREED** to **APPOINT** Cllr Linda Lord to support Seaford Library in the selection of outside seating style and location.

**C39 Buildings Insurance at Martello Tower**

Members considered report 51/14.

**C39.1** Cllr A White felt that it is wholly unfair to expect a voluntary group to cover the costs of buildings insurance on a building leased from the Council. The Museum provides education and also attracts tourism, it is an asset to the town.

If the Museum were to close as a result of having to pay £2100 in insurance costs, the Council would have to take on the insurance and would then also have to maintain the building and protect it against possible vandalism. The Council would also have to cover the business rates, which the Museum currently get at a hugely discounted price.

The Museum are still awaiting an apology from the Council due to it taking over a year to get a new lease agreed.

**C39.2** Cllr Adeniji added that the original lease from 1978 agrees that Seaford Town Council will pay the insurance. While it is the Councillors duty to maximise the taxpayers income and income from the building, the Council leased the building on the basis of wanting to help the museum and protect a valuable asset to the town.

**C39.3** Cllr McStravick felt that despite the report posing that the Council need to be careful not to set a precedent, there are very few ancient monuments in Seaford with the same level of significance and the Council could claim a special circumstances due to this.

**C39.4** Cllr Dunn reminded the meeting that if the Museum were to vacate the building and the Council looked to use it as a facility for a commercial venture, this would have to be done with the approval of English Heritage and meeting their criteria, which could result in the building standing empty for a period.

**C39.5** It was **PROPOSED** and **APPROVED** that Seaford Museum will not be responsible for meeting the buildings insurance costs and that this stays a condition of their lease for at least 10 years.

**C39.6** Mayor Brown offered an apology, on behalf of the Council, to the Chairman of Seaford Museum Heritage Society, who was in attendance, for the delay in dealing with the lease. The Chairman accepted the apology. Mayor Brown will also be making a public apology at his Civic Service on Thursday 26 June.

#### **C40 Coastal Futures Group Vision Plan**

**C40.1** Mayor Brown provided the meeting with a verbal update of the event he had attended on 19 June regarding Coastal Futures Group's action and vision plan, 'Waking up to Tomorrow'.

**C40.2** The plan looks at the flood lines for Newhaven and Seaford and considers the projected rise in sea level to the year 2150.

**C40.3** £1.5m has been granted to the Environment Agency to maintain the shingle for both towns, £2.2m to maintain the tidal banks on the river Ouse and £9m to improve the flood defences at Newhaven.

**C40.4** With regards to the flood defences at Newhaven, a consultant will be approached to assess works needed, then a public consultation held. Newhaven's defences are very important to Seaford because if Newhaven floods this would come round the back of Seaford. If Cuckmere flooded, Seaford could then become an island.

**C40.5** There would be no financial implication to the Council as a result of endorsing the plan.

**C40.6** Cllr A White asked if dredging had been considered in the plan in order to slow down the flow rates of the river. Cllr Latham is the representative for Coastal Futures Group so will be able to find this out at a future meeting.

**C40.7** Cllrs Adeniji and Dunn informed the meeting that as individuals, they were working with Bob Brown and Jim Skinner to look at ways to improve sea defences. They were invited along to attend the next meeting of Coastal Futures Group on 7 July at 2.00pm in the Hillcrest Centre, Newhaven.

**C40.8** It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** to defer the formal endorsement of the document until the next Council meeting in August, to allow the Councillors adequate time to read and digest the document before agreeing to any action.

**C40.9** The Interim Town Clerk is to locate and email a link to the documents online to all Councillors.

#### **C41 Freeman Board**

Members considered report 55/14.

**C41.1** Cllr A White wished to thank Kevin Gordon, on behalf of the Council, for the research he had done in finding the names and details of the others that had been awarded Freedom of the Town.

**C41.2** It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** to include the names of the three additional Freeman of the Town and also that the Interim Town Clerk would try to trace the descendants of the Freeman and invite them, along with the current Freeman, Laurie Holland, to the unveiling of the Freeman Board in the Council offices.

*(a short break was held from 8.12pm to 8.20pm)*

#### **C42 South East Local Enterprise Partnership – Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan**

Members considered report 56/14.

It was **AGREED** that all councillors could individually send an email of support, as per the letter at Appendix A of report 56/14, for the Strategic Economic Plan.

#### **C43 Standing Orders**

Members considered report 57/14.

**C43.1** Mayor Brown thanked Cllr Dunn and the Review Working Group for the work they had done on reviewing the standing orders.

**C43.2** It was confirmed that the only changes made were those ‘tracked’ on the right hand side.

**C43.3** It was **PROPOSED** and **AGREED** that councillors could send their feedback to the Interim Town Clerk who will collate all the replies and check them from a legal point of view. A session would then be arranged for Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July at 7.00pm between the Interim Town Clerk and those councillors wanting to attend, to discuss the proposed amendments to standing orders and the feedback that has been submitted ahead of submitting the document to the Council meeting in August for approval.

#### **C44 Annual Return and Final Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2014**

Members considered report 58/14.

**C44.1** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2014, as at Appendix A of report 58/14.

**C44.2** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** completing the Annual Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2014, as at Appendix C of report 58/14.

**C44.3** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2014 and authorise the Mayor, and Interim Town Clerk to sign on behalf of the Council as required.





## **C45 Allocation of Ear Marked Reserves and Review of Existing Ear Marked Reserves**

Members considered report 59/14.

**C45.1** Cllr McStravick queried whether the vision plan reserve of £16,059 could be transferred to be used as a preliminary investment towards a neighbourhood plan.

Cllr Adeniji backed this request, as the reason given for not progressing with looking into a neighbourhood plan was cost.

It was clarified that this did not mean a proposed abandonment of the vision plan, as the vision plan would be incorporated with the neighbourhood plan.

**C45.2** It was **AGREED** that no action would be taken until the Councillor training session, as per minute C35.6, has been arranged and held as the Clerk had hoped to invite an experienced clerk and consultant who has experience in setting up neighbourhood plans to present at the session.

**C45.3** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the allocation of £111,176 from the 2013/14 financial year surplus to various new earmarked reserves as set out in report 59/14.

**C45.4** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** allocating £26,012 of the 2013/14 financial year surplus to General reserves.

**C45.5** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** closing the projects reserve and instead create seafront bins reserve, £10,000. £13,000 into the Martello toilets reserve and £6094 into Community projects reserve.

**C45.6** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** closing the Grit bin reserve £6250 and transfer funds to General reserve.

**C45.7** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** closing the Seaford Residents Association reserve, £51 and transfer to Seaford in Bloom reserve.

**C45.8** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** requiring officers to review all earmarked reserves over the financial year and advise on continuing need for each reserve that remains.

**C45.9** It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** requiring officers to progress projects utilising earmarked reserves where possible and appropriate during the current financial year.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.

  
Cllr Mark Brown  
Mayor

