



Minutes of a meeting of Seaford Town Council's Full Council on Thursday 14th November 2024

Held at The View, Seaford Head Golf Course, Southdown Road, Seaford, BN25 4JS at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillor S Markwell (Mayor) and M Wearmouth (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors S Ali, L Boorman, C Bristow, S Dubas, R Honeyman, O Honeyman, J Lord, O Matthews, J Meek, G Rutland, R Stirton, L Stirton, I Taylor and L Wallraven

Steve Quayle, Interim Town Clerk

Georgia Raeburn, HR & Governance Manager

Becky Terry, HR & Governance Assistant

Natalie Simpson, Temporary Strategic Projects Officer

Sharan Brydon, Assets & Projects Manager

Paul Quanstrom, Temporary Senior Projects Officer

There were 32 members of public in attendance

C72/11/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Buchanan, R Clay, F Hoareau, G Rutland, R Stirton and L Wallraven.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor S Dubas.

C73/11/24 Disclosure of Interests

Councillor L Boorman declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 15 and that she would exit the meeting for that item.

Councillor J Lord declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 15, 16 and 17, and that he would exit the meeting for all three items.

C74/11/24 Public Participation

Speaker	Statement
Resident A	<i>Item 11 South Hill Barn – natural habitat is suffering from popularity, more coaches using bridle way and an increased</i>

Speaker	Statement
	<p><i>online presence has seen an increase in visitors. Residents carried out a traffic survey over 10 days, May to October 9am to 6pm these times exclude locals. On one day residents recorded a large amount of traffic within one hour. There has been an influx of public visitors since 2018. Increase in coaches, Seven Sisters is listed as top 4 most visited area. BBQs have been increased and the number of people arriving by coach. Every week there is a new article on the area, suggesting walks there which is increasing visitors. Must not be forgotten no caravans or campers. Councillors need to control and facilitate to preserve the area.</i></p>
Town Council Response	<p>Thanked the resident for their contribution.</p>
Resident B	<p><i>Item 13 Cycle path – Salts currently has no cycle parking. Youth use bikes as their main source of independence, there is nowhere for them to store their bike safely. There is space available on the west side of the tennis courts which would be perfect for bike parking. Another location is South Hill Barn, as there are no cycle racks there. Referring to agenda item 11 - cycling would be a low impact form of sustainable transport to get to the Barn and would reduce the traffic.</i></p>
Town Council Response	<p>Thanked the resident for their contribution.</p>
Resident C	<p><i>Item 11 South Hill Barn –weaknesses and threats: location traffic, tourism, impact dark night skies and missing data. Traffic Survey being carried out is not representative of the summer months. Birling Gap have now banned coaches. Tour guides are now approaching South Hill Barn and parking there. The route is through residential houses and past schools. Climate issue with increased pollution. Lighting would be essential which would impact on wildlife, residents and the dark night skies. Coastal change has not been recognised in this report. Natural chalk action plan up there to protect our water supply, South East Water should be part of the project. Consider emergency services being part of the report, safety</i></p>

Speaker	Statement
	<p><i>planning and risk assessment, new videos dangerously close to the cliff edge. Anti-social behaviour - how will it be managed in this location. Of the 531 who responded, what was the result of residents who requested to do nothing to the area? This figure should have been within the report – those who live locally and are passionate about preserving it for future generations - residents want to be involved.</i></p>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident D</i>	<p><i>Item 7 Lewes Local Plan – speaking on behalf of a resident that is unable to attend – residents are concerned that the Lewes Local Plan will be considered by the Planning & Highways Committee only. Resident is concerned that only seven councillors are part of the Committee. Everyone should be involved within the Lewes Local Plan if we want to influence how our area develops - housing, employment, shops and developments. Resident has requested that each stage of the Lewes Local Plan goes to Full Council.</i></p>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident E</i>	<p><i>Item 11 South Hill Barn – Resident quoted an extract from the Lewes District Council 2004 Devolution Committee stating that Plumpton College does not wish to pursue its negotiations with South Hill Barn due to the high level of costs required to supply basic infrastructure – 4th August 2005 Seaford Town Council Planning & Highways Committee.</i></p> <p><i>The road leading up to South Hill Barn and especially the bottom end of the road could be a problem over ownership, this road is a bridle path – walkers at a higher risk and increased pollution. Remedial roof work was carried out to prevent the roof from collapsing in 2013 - 2014 as a temporary measure – raised concerns regarding the West Barn having a corrugated Asbestos roof which will need to be checked by a professional. Planning use of South Hill Barn is Agricultural land, if the land is used for commercial development – Seaford</i></p>

Speaker	Statement
	<i>Town Council will need to look into permitted development rights. Significant work will need to be carried out for the agricultural building to be fit for commercial purposes. Expensive expert advice needed. Upkeep costs will outweigh the income.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident F</i>	<i>Agenda Item 11 / 14 / 16 and 17 – Resident raised concerns with the effectiveness of the Council, recent senior leader resignations and reduced staff capacity. Resident queried the exclusion of press & public agenda items and requested that the Council holds a referendum on the exempt and public exclusion policy items. The Council staff restructure is within the interest of Seaford residents, residents should have an input with the outcome. Resident feels that the Council is not including the public and not providing, such as with Armed Forces Day and the Martello toilet opening, and failing to reply to residents.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident G</i>	<i>Item 11 South Hill Barn – Reading on behalf of a resident who is unable to attend - Increasing visitor numbers and social media interest. Numbers expected to grow. Holistic things need to be put in place to manage these challenges. The Barn does not need to become a visitor attraction in its own right, The View and the Coastguard Cottages are already an international draw. Profitable walking tours are advertised at Seaford Railway station. Residents are living with an increase in numbers. Please include residents when planning the Barn. To agree the Governance Plan – where are the Local residents? Local Residents have information and professional experience of the area – engage with the public on which ideas should be pursued, this will save officer time and money.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.

Speaker	Statement
<i>Resident G</i>	<i>Item 11 South Hill Barn – Resident discussed three things happening, meeting this evening about the Barn proposals, next week on Climate Change Sub-Committee agenda the decision whether or not to join the National Nature Reserve, which is being proposed, also the requirement to bring back Hope Gap Steps, which has financial implications and management control implications. Resident suggested deferring this discussion until we have a full picture of the area.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident H</i>	<i>Item 11 South Hill Barn – Representing the Friends of the Dew Pond who are restoring the dew pond – last year a rare species of wildlife was found in the pond – Great Crested Newts were discovered, and they are protected by the Wildlife and Conservation Act. The water for the dew pond comes from the courtyard of South Hill Barn. Difficult to see how the area could be developed without harming the water quality or disturbing Great Crested Newt.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.

(7.31pm - Councillor S Dubas arrived)

C75/11/24 Petitions

There were no petitions presented for consideration at this meeting.

C76/11/24 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the following minutes:

C76.1	Full Council	24 th October 2024
C76.2	Planning & Highways	19 th September 2024
		17 th October 2024
C76.3	Finance & General Purposes	10 th October 2024
C76.4	Personnel	3 rd October 2024

C77/11/24 Mayors Update Report

Full Council considered report 103/24 presenting the Mayor's update and details of engagements attended.

The Mayor introduced the report and thanked everyone for their support.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report.

C78/11/24 Interim Town Clerk's Update Report

Full Council considered report 104/24 updating Full Council on key Town Council work and work priorities for the Town Council.

Members welcomed the new Interim Town Clerk and thanked them for the report. Members discussed the meetings attended to date on the Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, Lewes Local Plan coming to Full Council after Planning & Highways Committee, the inclusion of a sea-facing bench at Martello Café, and campervan and seafront parking and work continuing to review this and identify actions that can be taken.

C78.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report.

C78.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the Government's consultation on Enabling Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings and the encouragement of councillors to respond individually.

C78.3 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the revised 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable.

C79/11/24 Town Council Working Group Reports

There were no other Town Council Working Group Reports in addition to the South Hill Barn Working Group report at agenda item 11.

C80/11/24 Outside Body Representative Reports

A standard agenda item to enable Town Councillors appointed as representatives of outside bodies of the Town Council to give brief verbal updates on relevant business / activities of the outside body.

Representative	Statement
Councillor L Boorman, East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC)	Attended the ESALC AGM – which included a presentation from the Police - an interesting slide was presented which was about 'the day in the life of the Police', the slide included hours and incidents they deal with. They have spent a huge amount of time on this and it was very informative. New consultation going to Planning & Highways regarding the transport needs of Sussex

Councillor R Honeyman, Seaford Community Partnership (SCP)	The public enquiry into Cliff Gardens starts on 26 th November. Information is on SCP website and on their social media.
Councillor J Meek, Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve Management Committee (SHLNRMC) and Trees for Seaford	SHLNRMC's biannual meetings were well represented by all stakeholders. Trees for Seaford has tree planting happening this autumn, with over 100 trees are to be planted. Trees of Seaford welcome volunteers and will provide the necessary training and equipment.

C81/11/24 District & County Councillor Update Report

There were no District & County Councillor updates at this meeting.

C82/11/24 South Hill Barn Working Group Report

Full Council considered report 105/24 presenting to the Town Council the findings of the South Hill Barn Working Group and consider recommendations.

Members discussed the level of response to the public survey, the urgency of addressing current traffic problems and the use of a traffic survey, devising a strategic asset management plan, a condition survey of the barn to ensure wind and watertight, concerns around running utilities onsite, ensuring the pollution and impact of the area is managed, remembering the nostalgia of the areas for Seafordians, issues with large vehicles and coaches frequenting the car park, whether parking fees are feasible, the use of sustainable travel for accessing the site and running a park & ride, the use of a wind turbine, the significant concern relating to the protection of the great crested newt, previous projects to assess what could be done onsite, looking into external funding available, the plan for consultation and engagement including with local residents,

(8.21pm - two members of the public left the meeting)

(8.33pm - one member of the public left the meeting)

C82.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report.

C82.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the Governance Model.

C82.3 It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that the project progresses to Stage 1.

C82.4 It was **PROPOSED** to **REQUEST** officers allocate a budget of £40,800 in the 2025 – 2026 financial year to fully fund Stage 1. Furthermore, for officers to identify and include a cost in the budget for a study of funding options and a Consultation & Engagement Plan; the **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

C82.5 It was **PROPOSED** to **REQUEST** that officers allocate a budget of £10,000 for Stage 2 design team consultants in the 2025 – 2026 financial year; this **AMENDMENT** was **NOT CARRIED**.

C82.6 It was **PROPOSED** to **AGREE** that no further action on this project is taken, with the exception of routine maintenance, until stage 1 has been completed and comes back to Full Council for further consideration; the **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

(9.04pm - two members of the public exited the meeting)

(9.08pm - four members of the public exited the meeting)

(9.14pm to 9.22pm – a short comfort break was held and 22 members of the public left the meeting)

C83/11/24 Interim Concessions Process Review

Full Council considered report 101/24 presenting Full Council with an interim review of the Town Council's Concessions Process.

C83.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report and the steps being taken to enable the 2025 concessions programme and review of the Town Council's concession policy and process.

C83.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the new conflict of interest form at Appendix B.

C83.3 It was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the revised Concessions Policy at Appendix C.

C83.4 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPOINT** five Town Councillors to the Procurement Policy Task and Finish Group; Councillor S Dubas, L Stirton and M Wearmouth, with the remaining two spaces to be offered to the councillors not present at the meeting.

C84/11/24 Cycle Racks Installation Costs

Full Council considered report 108/24 requesting Full Council approve the installation costs of new cycle racks.

C84.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report

C84.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the payment (approximately £500) to pay for the installation of cycle racks, the provision of which is being funded externally.

C84.3 It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that the Town Council takes on ownership and future maintenance of the cycle racks.

C85/11/24 Exclusion of Press & Public

It was **RESOLVED** 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 remaining items of business for the reasons as set out within the agenda.

(9.24pm - one member of the public exited the meeting)

(9.28pm - Councillor J Lord exited the meeting and two members of the public.)

C86/11/23 The View Lease Update EXEMPT

Full Council considered exempt report 107/24 providing a confidential update relating to the lease for The View.

C86.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the exempt report.

C86.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to support the Interim Town Clerk's lease agreement proposals.

C88/11/24 Bönningstedt Wall – Determination of Next Steps EXEMPT

Full Council considered exempt report 109/24 seeking Full Council's agreement of the next steps to be taken in relation to Bönningstedt Wall.

(9.50pm - Standing Orders were suspended to extend the meeting beyond 10.00pm)

C88.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report

C88.2 It was **PROPOSED** to **AGREE** to discontinue the proceedings for the reasons set out within this report, subject to written consent being obtained from the Town Council's insurers; the **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

C88.3 It was **PROPOSED** to **APPROVE** that TMS be asked to commence the rebuilding of the wall immediately. Based upon TMS quote from 2023, this would cost the Town Council approximately £50,000; the **MOTION** was **CARRIED**.

(10.10pm Councillor L Boorman exited the meeting)

C86/11/24 Hurdis House Update EXEMPT

Full Council considered exempt report 106/24 providing a confidential update relating to Hurdis House.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of this exempt report.

The meeting closed at 10.24pm.

Councillor Sally Markwell

Mayor of Seaford