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# Salts Stakeholder Group Meeting

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

Wednesday 2ND October 2024 at 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

## Attendees

Sharan Brydon, Assets & Projects Manager, Seaford Town Council-Chair

**STC Councillors:**

Cllr Christina Bristow, Seaford Town Council

Cllr Rod Buchanan, Seaford Town Council

**Group representatives:**

Papachinos Salts Cafe**,** Nicola Papanicolaou

Seaford Action for Nature, Dinah

Seaford Cricket Club, Geoff Beal

Seaford Cricket Club, Ian Carter

Seaford Rugby Club, Paul Warren

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

Idverde, Darren Pillar

Lewes District and Eastbourne Councils, Paul Boyce

Lewes District and Eastbourne Councils, Carl Smith

**Minute Taker:**

Louise Dickson, Projects & Facilities Administrator, Seaford Town Council

## Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Maggie Wearmouth, (STC), Cllr Stephanie Dubas, (STC), Cllr Olivia Honeyman, (STC), Seaford Lifeguards, Peter Gwilliam, Seaford Rugby Club, Ian Newby, On the Verge, Mike Vingoe, The Base, Pat White, Idverde, Stefan Brown, Premier Football, Gary McKenzie.

# MINUTES

1. **Updates**

**Seaford Lifeguards Update**

In Peter Gwilliam’s absence, the following update was read to the group:-

Seaford Lifeguards have nothing to report except our continued concern over the security of the top gate on to the marine drive. We have witnessed the gate being left unsecured on many occasions.

**The Base Update**

In Pat and Luella’s absence, the following update was read to the group:-

* We submitted all the paperwork needed to renew our lease but as yet have not heard anything back from the council
* Grant from council of £350 towards a new bass amp and we have now added money to that and have bought a new amp which is now installed and in the Base being used.
* Base is still in use for adult bands, a youth band and drum teaching.
* No issues re the building other than the fact that we need to renew the locks at some point in the not too distance future as the salt affects the metalwork.
* Lighting is still poor on the path from the seafront to the Base and cafe and is more of a problem on dark nights.
* No issues with the Salts and area surrounding the Base, less problem with youngsters congregating down there as the weather has discouraged them from using it as a meeting place.

**Seaford Cricket Update**

* There are no concerns regarding the cricket pitch; the club has put in a considerable amount of effort to maintain it.
* One notable improvement has been the disc seeding of the grass earlier in the season.
* There is consensus regarding the lack of maintenance work conducted on the pitches.
* Concerns have been raised regarding the approved planning permission for the protective fencing around the nets. There is frustration that this process has taken two years. The protective fencing is essential due to incidents of vandalism, including the cutting of the nets and members of the public holding barbecues within the nets. The club provides valuable facilities for the local community and children.
* A question was raised regarding liability if a member of the public were to be struck by a cricket ball.
* There is disappointment regarding the length of time it took to receive the cricket signs from STC.

**Seaford Rugby Update**

* There is continued frustration regarding ongoing issues and the lack of preparation for the pitches for the upcoming season.
* The condition of the ground remains below the expected standard, as noted in previous minutes.
* Holes have appeared in the pitch, which pose a risk of injury when in use.
* It is imperative to explore options for bringing the pitches up to standard, and this needs to occur as soon as possible.
* Duncan Savage suggested that a clearer plan outlining costs and improvement strategies for the pitches is necessary at this time; otherwise, no progress will be made.
* Darren Pillar confirmed that verti-draining will be conducted within the next four weeks.
* Paul Warren discussed the topic of earth quaking; however, Idverde does not possess the required equipment. STC will further investigate this matter.
* Ian Carter inquired whether Idverde is adhering to the schedule and if an inspection takes place following the completion of their work. Darren Pillar confirmed that Idverde has been following the schedule. LDC indicated that an inspection by them should occur after the work is completed. STC is currently in discussions with LDC to address any outstanding issues.
* Concerns were raised by both cricket and rugby representatives regarding the lack of communication between Idverde and the relevant parties.
* Idverde was asked if there are provisions in the current contract that could assist the pitches in successfully navigating the season. Idverde indicated that they would increase their presence, although weather conditions may disrupt plans, leading to delays due to other commitments.
* Cllr Christian Bristow noted that the current contract expires in 2026. The new tender process can be designed to shape the requirements in collaboration with Project Officers from STC and stakeholders, which will then be presented to Councillors.

**6th Seaford (St. Leonard’s) Scout Group Update**

* Repairs to the scout roof have been completed, and discussions are ongoing with STC regarding the lease.
* Prior to this meeting, concerns were raised with STC regarding the goalposts situated outside the fire exit doors.
* Water flows from the car park down the grass bank toward the hut.
* Overgrowth alongside the hut, originating from the car park, currently obstructs access behind the hut. Once this area is cleared, a cage can be constructed to house the gas canister.
* Cllr Christina Bristow enquired about the structural survey, emphasizing the long-term plan for cladding and insulation. A grant was applied for but not excepted.

**The Salts Café Update**

* Concerns were raised regarding the amount of litter in the area following weekends, particularly during the summer season in the park. Staff from the café are actively collecting the litter.
* Paul Boyce informed the group that there is currently no contract in place for weekend litter collection in The Salts.
* Vandalism has occurred in the café's toilet facilities. When the public toilets in The Salts are closed due to vandalism, the café's toilet experiences significantly increased usage.
* There is a need for improved communication from STC regarding the opening and closing times of the public toilets.

**Seaford Action for Nature (Trees for Seaford) Update**

* Efforts are being made to encourage insects to thrive in the town. The initiative of not mowing in the Pump Field has been particularly successful; however, challenges have arisen with the rewilding efforts in The Salts due to the grass clippings not being collected as previously agreed.
* It would be beneficial to review the schedule regarding the management of the banks in The Salts and the decisions around mowing.
* SAFN has also agreed to refine the mowing maps for Idverde in designated areas.
* Graham, who is responsible for cutting and maintaining the grass in The Salts, has requested additional guidance on how to effectively care for the area.

**Seaford Town Council Update**

* It was encouraging to see representatives from Idverde and LDC attending the meeting. The involvement of Carl Smith at LDC marks a positive change, and communication appears to be improving.
* It is also beneficial to have SAFN participating in the group.
* Cllr Rod Buchan (STC) will update the group on the expected arrival of the cycle racks for the Cycling for Seaford initiative.
* We are currently awaiting the appointment of the HAPS manager at STC; in the interim, Sharan Brydon is assuming some responsibilities.
* A new Project Officer has recently joined the team, and there is an ongoing search for temporary maternity cover for the Events Officer.

1. **Any Other Business**

**2.1 Bins**

Cllr Christina Bristow (STC) provided an update to the group regarding the new replacement bins:

* The new bins are dual-purpose, designed for both litter and dog waste.
* The new black bins feature wildlife protection flaps.
* LDC will be responsible for the installation of the bins; however, not all bins will be placed in the exact locations as those they are replacing. They will be positioned as closely as possible to the original sites for public convenience.
* There is also an opportunity to trial a new 240-liter bin in the area, which includes an inbuilt smoke/fire alarm and sprinkler system. During the trial, the bin will be emptied by LDC as per normal procedures.
* Paul Warren mentioned that there is an ongoing issue with dog waste. To address this, all coaches are provided with dog bags to ensure that any mess is cleared up before each game or training session.

**2.2 Gate**

A new padlock and chain have been wielded to the entrance gate.

**2.3 Newlands School Section 106**

Ian Carter inquired about the Newlands School Section 106 funds and the amount available that could potentially assist with pitch maintenance at The Salts.

**Actions**

* There have been several years of inaction regarding the pitch, necessitating both a short-term and long-term plan.
* Carl Smith will distribute the specifications for the ground, which will be included with the minutes.
* Nicola Papachinno will resend details of funding opportunities for sports to STC.
* Transparency is required in the specifications for the grounds.
* A schedule of work will be distributed to all relevant parties (please contact Darren for the schedule).
* The RFU Pitch Report will be shared among the group and included with the minutes.
* A suggestion was made to create a flowchart outlining the timelines for pitch maintenance and scheduling.
* Sharan Brydon (STC) and Carl Smith (LDC) will discuss the Idverde schedule for the upcoming month.
* Sharan Brydon (STC) will consult with Isabelle Mouland regarding the planning permission for the protective fence for cricket.
* Contact Lewes District Council/Idverde regarding the removal of overgrowth (Duncan holds the necessary code).
* Nicola will send photographs of the playpark in Peacehaven.
* Plans for the new litter/dog bins will be sent to Carl Smith (LDC).
* STC will inquire about liability in the event that a member of the public is struck by a cricket ball.
* The minutes of the meeting will be sent to the Town Clerk, with Section 106 highlighted.
* Update STC on the floodlight plan for the Rugby Club.

**6. Next Meeting**

Meeting arranged for Thursday 3rd April 2025 at 4:00 PM.