

SEATON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
8th JANUARY 2020
VILLAGE HALL SEATON 7pm

Present:

Mr N Greenfield Chairman
Mr D Coop
Mr R Clarke
Mrs C Lammie
Mrs S Machin

In attendance:

Mr John Hill Clerk
Councillor Andrew Brown – Rutland County Council
Six members of the public

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES:

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

On a proposal by Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Coop, the Minutes of the meeting of 14th October 2019 were duly signed as a correct record with the approval of all present.

4. MATTERS ARISING (NOT ON THE AGENDA):

As requested, the Clerk had looked into the viability of storing Parish Council documents ‘on the Cloud’. The LRALC stated that this is becoming more commonplace amongst parishes even though full security could not be guaranteed. They suggested that sensitive material about individuals could be kept separately on a Hard Drive.

The Cloud service provider mentioned by the LRALC was approached for cost estimates which amounted to £15-20/month for a relatively basic service. Members believed that level to be quite high and **suggested that the Clerk get comparative estimates and also approach Simon Cockbill in the village and SPC website service provider 2Commune for further advice.** A figure of < £100pa was thought to be reasonable.

The Clerk had not yet had the opportunity to replace the lamps in the ex ‘phone kiosk. The work on examining the trees on SPC land has been commissioned but a definitive map of land ownership, or a meeting on site with the Tree Officer from RCC is required. **Councillor Clarke will liaise with the Clerk on this.**

The Clerk has been unable to find out who has replaced the Chairwoman of Glaston Parish Meeting. County Councillor Brown was able to provide a contact number.

5. THOMPSON'S FIELD:

Grass cutting:

The current contractor, Biffa, has raised the price per cut for the Playing Field by 1% to £33.12 (from £32.8) for 2020. All other prices for weed treatment, emptying waste bins, etc. remain the same as last season.

On a proposition by Councillor Lammie, seconded by Councillor Coop, Members agreed to retain Biffa's services for the 2020 season.

Play area development, resurfacing and equipment refurbishment:

Councillor Lammie reported that, in her monthly inspection, the general condition of the Play Area is acceptable except for slippery surfaces on the main unit. This needs urgent consideration, possibly by installing some non-slip surfacing material.

It was noted that concern was not raised by ROSPA in last year's annual inspection.

The estimated costs for essential improvements to the play equipment were around £12,000 and installation of a new pétanque pitch was around £2,000. The SPC has reserves of around £5,500 but needs to retain half of these for contingencies. The Chairman therefore proposed that SPC could set aside £3000 of reserves for the play area (plus the £500 gift from John Mulheron). The balance would need to be raised from increasing the Precept, income generation, donations and grants. The Chairman had already submitted bids of up to £9,700 to both Augean and RCC Healthy Rutland Sports Grants (HRSG) and expected responses in Feb 2020. A condition of each grant was that no work could take place before an award had been confirmed in writing. No decisions or actions can therefore be taken until these responses are known.

Results from the public survey carried out showed good support for refurbishment and development of the Play Area and this should justify a larger than normal Precept, perhaps for several years, in order to provide a reserve for future maintenance requirements.

Councillor Greenfield will continue to follow through on this project.

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Accounts update:

Petty Cash	£35.69 (-£10 for this meeting)
Current Account	
Nationwide	£2788.04 + interest
West Brom	
Deposit Account	£5561.99 + interest

Payments:

Members approved the following **retrospective** payments on a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Lammie:

Robin Clarke – Tylers hedge cutting	£40.00
Biffa – Grass cutting services	£236.16

and **new payments** on a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Machin:

HMRC – Third quarter PAYE tax	£92.25
Clerk's half-year salary	£738.00
Petty Cash top up	£75.00

Allotment rent review:

On a proposition by Councillor Coop, seconded by Councillor Lammie, Members resolved to raise allotment rents by £1/plot for the 2020 season: small plots £16; medium plots £26 and large plots £36.

Budget & Precept for 2020/21:

The Clerk had drawn up and circulated a Draft Budget for 2020/21 which resulted in an indicative Precept requirement of £4,700.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for prudent administration of the accounts during the current year.

Members Acknowledged that a significant Precept uplift for the coming year is justified by the extra spend required, particularly on the Play Area which has public support. Therefore, on a proposition by Councillor Coop, seconded by Councillor Machin, all agreed to accept the Draft budget, with minor reductions on computer accessories and potential VE Day spend, and set the level of Precept for 2020/21 to £4,700.

Update of signatories for Bank Accounts:

The Clerk reported that the Nationwide Building Society is terminating the Treasurers Trust Account that SPC has used for Current Account purposes for a number of years and therefore a new one will require setting up.

Because of this and the necessary adoption of a new councillor to replace Nic Greenfield, who intends to leave Seaton Parish Council in Spring 2020 at the end of his term as Chairman, the Clerk suggested that updating of the signature list is put back for a short period. This was agreed.

Audit arrangements for 2019/20 accounts:

Members agreed to use the services of Sue Fox, if she is available, to carry out the internal audit of SPC accounts.

7. DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING EXPENSES:

Councillor Greenfield reported that the recent Defibrillator training event had been a success and proposed that **a letter of thanks be sent to the Village Hall committee for its support**. £59.05 had been raised on the day and the Chairman has suggested that this is made up to £100 and sent to Rutland Community First Responders for providing the training.

8. SEATON COMMUNITY HEROES AWARDS EXPENSES:

This award, in the form of a certificate, flowers and a bottle of Champagne, was presented to Brian & Sally Kirby for their outstanding contribution to Seaton village life.

A letter of thanks should be sent by the Clerk to Anthony Redmayne, Parish Leader at Thorpe-by-Water, for framing two copies of the certificate free of charge.

On a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Coop, Members formally agreed that the Parish Council should meet the costs of £100 for the Defibrillator training (Item7 above), Heroes Award costs of £24.99 for the Champagne (Councillor Greenfield) and £20 for the Flowers (Helen Coop).

Councillor Greenfield also reported that he had raised £50 from the sale of DVDs at the Seaton Bazaar and wished to donate this to Seaton Parish Council to be put towards Play Area Refurbishment; he presented a balancing cheque of £84.06.

Members thanked him for this gesture.

9. ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

After review of the precirculated document, Members were in favour of a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Coop that no changes are necessary at the moment.

10. HIGHWAYS ISSUES:

Drains:

It was reported that the drains in Moles Lane are continuously overflowing. A member of the public, **Mr Graham Biggs, volunteered to report the problem on the County Council's 'Fix My Street' section of the website.**

Parking outside the George & Dragon:

Members agreed to leave this matter in abeyance for the time being. Funding for a layby in Church Lane will be considered in a future financial year.

Traffic speed through Seaton:

A group of Seaton residents had raised the urgent issue of excessive and dangerous traffic speed at the narrow point of Main Street to the West of the village. They wish to see a 20mph speed limit imposed.

Councillor Greenfield has raised this and the wider issues, including the Main Street pinch point to the East of the village, with Rutland County Council.

He was advised to enter a bid into the Integrated Transport Scheme for consideration. This has been done but will involve 6-9 months during which speed checks will be carried out and accident records checked before submission to committee. There are currently 46 other applications in progress.

Members expressed the view that a degree of caution be exercised in the implementation of any remedial measures since Seaton should retain its rural character and not be over 'urbanised' by traffic calming measures.

It was reported that the raised table opposite the West Farm entrance is deteriorating; **this will also be notified on 'Fix My Street'.**

11. ALLOTMENTS:

Tenancies:

It is believed that at least one plot will become vacant in the coming season but no formal notification has been received. The possibility of a community garden, possibly cultivated by the children of the village, was again discussed with no firm conclusion reached.

Risk Assessment:

On a proposition by Councillor Coop, Seconded by Councillor Lammie, Members agreed to keep the Allotment Risk Assessment as it is, apart from a change of date. An allotment holder, Mr David Bentley, has reported that part of the fence around the allotments is in need of repair. **Councillor Coop will liaise with Mr Bentley to get this done.**

12. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION ACT REQUIREMENTS:

Work to bring Seaton Parish Council into full and continuing compliance is ongoing.

E-mail addresses for Parish Councillors:

All Councillors now have a dedicated and separate e-mail address for Parish Council business. Where a particular computer system shares data for other purposes, Parish Council business should be kept in a specific, password protected, section.

13. VE DAY CELEBRATIONS AND FIREWORKS:

Councillor Clarke informed Members that the national celebrations for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day will take place on Friday 8th May 2020. He suggested that Seaton could join in by a short display of Fireworks from the village beacon. This was agreed with a maximum budget of £100. It was suggested that a donation could be forthcoming from the George & Dragon since it could benefit from this.

14. NEW POLICIES FOR SEATON PARISH COUNCIL:

The Clerk had circulated Draft new policies for Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding.

On a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Lammie, Members agreed to adopt the Equal Opportunities Policy as presented.

It was felt that the Draft Safeguarding Policy is overcomplicated for the size and range of activities of the small Parish Council and needs further drafting. **The Clerk will take this forward and also look at other policies that are appropriate.**

15. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence tabled:

LRALC questionnaire;

RCC: 2019/1287/CAT 2 Church Lane – no TPO required;

Stryker UK – circular re Defibrillator range of products;

Kompany – play equipment brochure;

Councillor Machin spoke of her work as a MacMillan Nurses ambassador and the associated distribution of leaflets;

Members of the public had corresponded with the Parish Council on the many difficult issues faced following the lengthy disruption to the Seaton Parishes telecoms systems caused by the severing of the feed cable during renovation work on the Coach Bridge.

Various members of the public in attendance were invited to outline their experiences of attempting to secure rectification of the problems and financial compensation.

A long discussion followed during which County Councillor Brown expressed his sympathy for the distress caused and promised to take this forward as a matter of urgency with the Members and officers at Catmose.

On behalf of the Parish Council, Councillor Greenfield agreed to give whatever support is possible, given that Parish Councils have no direct powers in situations like these. He will obtain a summary of the best methodology for securing compensation and circulate that to residents.

16. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 23rd March 2020, 7.00pm in the village hall.

The meeting closed at 21.27 hrs.