

**SEATON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2020**  
**HELD REMOTELY (CORONAVIRUS) 7pm**

Online:

Mr N Greenfield      Chairman

Mr D Coop

Mr R Clarke

Mrs C Lammie

Mrs S Machin

In attendance online:

Mr John Hill      Clerk

**MINUTES**

**1. CHANGE STANDING ORDERS:**

The Clerk presented the new Standing Orders for Parish Council meetings, issued by the NALC, to reflect the new regulations brought in by Government to allow such meetings to be held remotely due to Coronavirus restrictions.

Members agreed to adopt the new Standing Orders on a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Clarke.

**2. APOLOGIES:**

None.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Councillor Lammie declared an interest in Item 9. Following a proposition by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Clarke, Members agreed to allow Councillor Lammie to take part in Item 9 discussions to take value in her expertise on Play area issues.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

On a proposal by Councillor Greenfield, seconded by Councillor Coop, the Minutes of the meeting of 8th January 2020 were duly signed as a correct record with the approval of all present.

**5. MATTERS ARISING (NOT ON THE AGENDA):**

Members discussed whether it would be possible to recognise VE Day in some way under the present circumstances. Councillor Clarke suggested a modest firework display from the Beacon in Glaston Road. This was agreed. **Councillor Clarke will obtain suitable fireworks with the previously agreed budget limit of £100. The event will be at 9pm and will be notified on the SPC website.**

## **6. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

### **Interim banking arrangements:**

The Clerk explained that he has yet to receive formal notice of the intended closure by Nationwide Building Society of the Treasurers' Trust current account option used by Seaton Parish Council. No suitable alternative appears available with Nationwide. The best option is with Lloyds Bank but no new accounts are to be opened during the Coronavirus crisis. HSBC Bank simply hangs up on callers.

### **Accounts update:**

|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Petty Cash      | £86.93              |
| Current Account |                     |
| Nationwide      | £6005.29 + interest |
| Deposit Account |                     |
| West Brom       | £5561.99 + interest |

### **Payments:**

On a proposition by Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Coop, Members approved the following **retrospective** payments (withdrawal slips normally signed by Councillors are no longer utilised by this Building Society):

|                                    |         |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Black Velvet (Mole removal)        | £108.00 |
| RCC - Street Lighting              | £211.23 |
| HMRC – 4th quarter PAYE tax        | £92.25  |
| E.ON – Ex 'Phone Kiosk power       | £40.79  |
| McAfee – computer virus protection | £129.98 |
| 2Commune – Website support         | £330.00 |
| LRALC annual subscription          | £130.61 |

### **Audit arrangements for 2019/20 accounts:**

Sue Fox, is available, to carry out the internal audit of SPC accounts but formal notification of the accounts process and appropriate documentation has been delayed by External Auditor PKF Littlejohn.

### **Allotment tenancy:**

The tenant of Allotment Plot 4 has been seriously ill and unable to utilise her allotment tenancy for the entire year. Therefore, on a proposition by Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Machin, Members agreed to write off the £15.00 rental for 2019/20. The plot has now been relinquished and reallocated.

## **7. CORONAVIRUS UPDATE:**

Parish Councils must now meet remotely: There is no need to hold an Annual Meeting but it is recommended that they do so if possible. If the Annual Meeting is not held, posts may be held over until 2021 but can be changed at an earlier meeting if desired. Parish Annual Open Meetings will not be held.

RCC has expressed thanks to parishes which, like Seaton, have put in place a very effective community hub to support vulnerable residents during the Coronavirus crisis.

The Chairman put on record the Parish Council's thanks to the Seaton Community Hub led by Karyn Slatter, Helen Coop, Barbara Gregory and Katherine Sale.

RCC had asked parishes to encourage collections for local foodbanks as the change of shopping habits during Covid 19 had reduced their normal donations significantly. Traditionally, food bank collections in Seaton had been coordinated by the Church rather than the SPC. It was agreed that **the Clerk will send details of RCC's request to Councillor Coop who will then then liaise with the Chair of the Village Hall and PCC representatives to see if they were willing and able to help.**

## **8. ALLOTMENTS:**

### **Tenancies:**

As stated in Item 6, Allotment Plot 4 had been relinquished and taken up immediately. All allotments were now allocated and there is now a short waiting list for any that become available.

### **Implications of Covid 19:**

Many allotment holders had taken advantage of the Covid 19 Lockdown to use their free time to maintain their allotments. The allotments therefore looked the best they had been for some time.

Members discussed access to the Allotments during the lockdown period. Most people were respecting the need for social distancing and there appeared to be no need to remind tenants. However, the SPC agreed to keep this under review and place a notice about social distancing on the gate if needed.

### **Damaged fence:**

Part of the fence between the Allotments and playing field was blown down in very strong winds; costs of repair cannot be reclaimed under the Parish Council's insurance. Three options for repair have been obtained by the Chairman from Oddjobs (John Mayfield). On a proposition by Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Greenfield, Members agreed to the 'Post & Rail' option with a cost of £1100. **Councillor Clarke offered to provide some Chestnut Paling fencing, at nominal cost, to enhance the Post & Rail if required.** This was accepted with thanks.

## **9. THOMPSON'S FIELD:**

### **Play area development, resurfacing and equipment refurbishment:**

The Chairman has secured grants from Augean (£9681) and Citizens' Advice Rutland (CAR) on behalf of Healthy Rutland Grant Scheme (£5000). In Augean's case the Parish Council must pay £1080 CTP (Contributing Third Party) fee up front. The Clerk had provided a critique of the contract requirements of both Grant providers. These were discussed and agreed as follows (the SPC's comments and conclusions are noted in bold):

#### **Augean:**

Augean mentions conditionality between the two grants – they should be unconditional i.e. SPC can receive both in full; **Agreed**

Timescale – needs revision depending on Coronavirus and contractor availability; Agreed. Suggest completion by **end of March 2021 would be optimal. Ask for grants to be funded 75% on contract agreement against a pro forma invoice. Balance to be received on satisfactory completion of project.**

Matched funding?/Contribution in kind – how will volunteer help be costed? ***This is already shown in the reductions obtained in quotations with volunteer input.***

Staged receipt of grant – will need careful planning for contractor availability and cash flow; ***Agreed. Clerk to manage cash flow as required.***

Promotion letter – **Chairman to draft? Yes**

**Augean Grant Form:**

***Not sure what ‘unique financial benefit’ means? SPC Chair to confirm this.***

Somewhere we should say that the SPC donation of £1080 is conditional upon receipt of the full grant. To simply make a donation without certainty of receipt would be ultra vires. ***Agreed***

**CAR:**

Staging of grant receipts to match expenditure? ***Agreed - try for 75/25***

Risk Assessments – SPC volunteer work and contractors? ***Noted***

Safeguarding Policy – ***SPC doesn’t currently have one but a Draft has been prepared to be agreed.***

DBS cover – SPC volunteers and contractors? ***Consider fencing off works or play area temporarily to avoid the need for DBS cover.***

Timescale - ***End of March 2021 optimal.***

Councillor Greenfield had circulated an extensive written report before the meeting to update Councillors on the improvement options and associated costs.

For further guidance, the Clerk had produced a rudimentary cash flow forecast for the Parish Council year, with and without grant input.

During the discussion which followed, it was established that the overall financial position is very tight when the extra costs of painting the play equipment and repairing the Allotment fence are added in.

The three estimates for painting the play equipment were presented by the Chairman; Members agreed that Graeme Douglas at £1700 Ex VAT represented the best value for money.

**Councillor Clarke suggested that he could perhaps assist in the removal of the old ‘Rockers’ if this would help to reduce the overall costs.**

**Councillor Clarke also agreed to liaise with OddJobs regarding the siting of the Petanque pitch and creating an accessible entrance to the playing field for disabled people.**

**Councillors Machin and Lammie will look at affordable options to replace the ‘Rockers’.**

**The Chairman and Clerk agreed to work closely together to review the potential cash flow and present this to the Members.** A number of proposals to help ease the cash flow were discussed and agreed including: delaying implementation of the Petanque pitch and the purchase of boules until the end of the process; requesting proforma invoices to facilitate earlier reclaim of VAT and delaying the RCC audit of SPC tree condition and any associated work until 2021.

The aim will be to commission the Allotment fence repair and repainting the play equipment in the next 2-3 months, then begin the refurbishment of play equipment and finally commission the pétanque pitch .

It was suggested that ROSPA should be given an outline of the plans for the play equipment prior to their planned inspection in May. **Councillor Greenfield will provide the wording.**

#### **10. CORRESPONDENCE:**

##### **Correspondence tabled:**

An email sent by a resident to Rutland County Council had been copied to Seaton Parish Council. This involved a noise abatement complaint about a resident playing a commercial Wurlitzer organ at high volume for extended periods of time. A possible village petition against this was mentioned.

Members had mixed views and agreed that a light touch approach was needed, possibly asking a suitable local resident to request that the playing is toned down somewhat.

#### **11. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The Annual Parish Council meeting will be held remotely at 7pm on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

The meeting closed at 21.10 hrs.