

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

SEATON WITH SLINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

**Present: Councillor A Foots (Chair)
Councillors A Blacklock, T Foster, H Middlemiss,
D Ritchie, A Smith, A Teasdale and D Temple**

County Councillor S Morrison

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Haddick, G McAuliffe and A Slater.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 COMMUNITY POLICING

The Chair welcomed Neighbourhood Inspector D Walton and PCSO's A Guess and E Lawton to the meeting.

Members were advised that there had been 16 incidents reported which included 2 reports of anti-social behaviour involving motorbikes and 14 related to highway disruption. Reference was made to the figures reported at the July meeting which had included statistics for the whole of Seaham and were not representative for Seaton. The Officer advised that in future the Police would extract and report only the figures relative to Seaton.

Inspector Walton introduced himself and advised that crime in Seaham was down year to date and it was pleasing to note that there was no crime in Seaton.

Councillor Foster expressed concern at the number of incidents related to off road bikes/quads on the walkway. The Officer advised that the Police were aware of the situation and it was a PACT priority. Members of the public were being asked to report incidents as and when they occurred and provide as much information as possible.

The Chair made reference to shooting that took place in the fields and woods close to the village and asked if there was a minimum shooting distance required from the highway or residential properties and if this was controlled by the Police.

Inspector Walton advised that land owners would only allow people to shoot on their land with an appropriate firearms licence. He was unaware of any legal restrictions the Police could impose in relation to minimum distances between where the shooting took place and the highway.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

Seaton with Slingley Parish Council – 17 September 2014

- 4 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 16 July 2014 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Letter from Thanks

The Chair reported the receipt of the letter from Mr E Chaffe thanking Members of the Parish Council and the Community Centre for the gifts he received and the kind words expressed on his retirement.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Annual Christmas Carol Singing

The Clerk reported that the annual Christmas carol singing would be held on 15 December 2014.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Cessation of Smoking in Playgrounds

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising of a consultation on the introduction of a voluntary code banning people from smoking at outdoor play areas in the county.

As the proposal for smoke free play areas would be on a voluntary basis it was not enforceable, but through the installation of notices people would be asked to respect this request.

The County Council were consulting with park users, stakeholders and the general public to obtain their views. If the initiative was supported it was hoped to introduce the code later in the year.

Whilst the Parish Council did not have responsibility for any play parks they did support the introduction of a voluntary code.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Council supported the cessation of smoking in playgrounds.

(4) Seaham Town Council – Mayors Charity Evening

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from Seaham Town Council to attend the Mayor's Charity Evening on 6 October 2014.

Members were also advised that the Civic Carol Service would be held on 10 December 2014.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 PLANNING

(i) Approvals

DM/14/01394/FPA – Erection of two storey extension to side of dwelling and first floor extension above existing detached garage at 12 The Meadows, Seaton, Seaham, Co Durham SR7 0QB for Mr D Batth

DM/14/01733/FPA – Loft conversion including raising of the existing ridge height of existing dwelling at 68 Haverley Drive, Seaham, Co Durham SR7 0JP for Mr J Jones

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Seaton Garden Centre - DM/14/00042/RM

Councillor Foots reported no improvement at Seaton Garden Centre. There had been no reported fires in the last 3 months but the appearance of the site from the walkway was a disgrace. Councillor Foots had spoken to the case officer, B Gavillet who had advised that he would speak to an Enforcement Officer about the site.

To date Councillor Foots had not received an update from the County Council. Members expressed concern at the County Council's lack of communication with the Parish Council in relation to this matter.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised of Members on-going concerns in relation to the site and the lack of communication with the Parish Council in keeping Members up to date with progress.

7 CLERKS REPORT

(1) Budget Setting 2015/2016

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising of the indicative forecast of reductions in Local Council Tax Support Scheme Grant for the period 2014/15 to 2017/18.

The forecasts provided were useful for budget planning purposes but the current position was not final, as this would be based on the Tax Base forecasts undertaken in October 2014.

Using the updated Tax Base and the forecast grant reductions the Parish Council would see a decrease in its Tax Base of 1.1 and a reduction in grant of £86.00.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

(2) Annual Audit 2013/2014

Seaton with Slingley Parish Council – 17 September 2014

The Clerk reported that BDO LLP had completed the Annual Audit for the year ended 31 March 2014.

Members were advised that the Auditor had reported on a minor error on the annual return and had identified that grant monies received had been included in box 2, rather than box 3, other receipts.

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit would be displayed for a minimum of 14 days.

The cost of the Annual Audit was £120.00.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) The Openness of Local Government Bodies 2014

The Clerk reported that the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 issued under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 came into force on the 6 August 2014. This amended the requirements of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960.

The new provisions provided that whilst a person could not provide a verbal running commentary at a meeting they could:

- (a) Film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting,
- (b) Use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it took place or later,
- (c) Report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.

The Parish Council was now required by law to allow any member of the public to take photographs, film and audio-record the proceedings and report on all public meetings.

The Parish Council was required to provide “reasonable facilities” to facilitate reporting of public meetings. Filming and recording of private meetings would not be allowed.

Standing Orders would continue to control the behaviour and activities of those wishing to film or record meetings.

Standing Orders which currently prohibited the recording or filming of public meetings would need to be amended. The Parish Council would also need to consider adopting a policy on the filming of members of the public, and ensure that children and vulnerable adults were protected without undermining the transparency of the meeting.

RESOLVED that;

Seaton with Slingley Parish Council – 17 September 2014

- (i) the information given, be noted and Standing Orders be amended to reflect the changes,
- (ii) the Clerk draft a policy for consideration at the next meeting.

8 PAYMENTS

RESOLVED that the payments listed be endorsed.

Cheque Number	Payee	Detail	Amount
100136	E Chaffe	Reimbursement	19.05
100137	J Thompson	Reimbursement	9.39
100138	BDO LLP	Annual Audit	120.00

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) **Street Light - Seaton Grove**

It was reported that street light number 45 in Seaton Grove was out.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

.....Dated