

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SEATON WITH SLINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD REMOTELY ON WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE 2020**

**Present: Councillor A Slater (Chair)  
Councillors A Foots, S Haddick, S McAuliffe,  
A Taylor, D Temple, J Theobald, A Vila, S Williams**

Prior to the commencement of business, the Clerk advised that this meeting was being held remotely via ZOOM in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Blacklock and H Middlemiss.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor A Vila declared an interest in Item Number 6(1) planning application DM/20/01172/FPA.

**3 POLICE**

There was no Police report.

The Clerk reported that following an attempted burglary at Cairnside, Seaton the Police had identified a male who had admitted the offence and would be appearing at court in July.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**4 The MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 19 February 2020 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.**

**5 CORRESPONDENCE**

**(1) Request for Financial Assistance - Citizens Advice County Durham**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Citizens Advice County Durham.

**RESOLVED** that a donation of £50 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

**(2) Royal Garden Party 2020**

The Clerk reported that the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) had advised that the Royal Garden Party scheduled to be held on 12 May 2020 had been cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Members were advised that the Parish Council had nominated Councillor H Middlemiss to attend and it was likely that Councillor Middlemiss would be invited to the 2021 Royal Garden Party when revised dates were issued.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(3) Go North East - Number 71 Bus Service – Seaham to Chester-Le-Street**

## Seaton with Slingley Parish Council – 24 June 2020

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had been approached by residents requesting that the Number 71 bus service - Seaham to Chester-Le-Street, which ran Monday to Friday be extended to provide a Saturday service.

It was explained that Go North East had advised that due to the Coronavirus pandemic their timetables were temporary, and as lockdown was eased, they could be revised to include the reinstatement of evening and weekend journeys. Most evening and weekend services were not currently operating as most leisure and entertainment venues were closed and the number of passengers travelling on an evening and weekend was low.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### 6 PLANNING

#### (1) Applications

DM/20/01015/FPA – Erection of hipped roof to dwelling, first floor side extension, replace garage and external alterations at Seaton Town Farmhouse, The Village, Seaton, SR7 ONA for Mr P Knibb

DM/20/01172/FPA – Rear extension to connect house to garage, to replace shed with summer house in rear garden and bin store to front at The Old Forge, Seaton Lane, Seaton, SR7 OLS for Mr and Mrs Vila

DM/20/01251/FPA – Single side extension to existing driving range (Re-submission DM/19/01629/FPA) at Sharpley Golf Course, Seaton, SR7 ONP for Sharpley Golf

DM/20/00391/RM – Proposed new dwelling on Plot 14 former Seaton Garden Centre, Seaton Lane, Seaton SR7 OLT for Mrs H Akhtar

DM/20/00681/FPA – Single storey side and rear extensions at 22 Sharpley Drive, Seaham SR7 OLE for B Rushworth

#### (2) Approvals

DM/20/00442/FPA – Erection of first floor extension at side of dwelling above existing single-storey projection and construction of bay window/canopy to front at 7 Eppleton Hall Close, Seaham SR7 OLG for Mr and Mrs Neil

DM/20/00596/FPA – Two storey rear extension at 13 Seaton Crescent, Seaham SR7 OJW for Mr J Nicholson

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### 7 CLERKS REPORT

#### (1) Annual Financial Report 2019/2020

The Clerk provided details of the financial position of the Parish Council as at the end of the financial year 2019/2020.

Information related to the reconciliation of balances, Section 137/133 donations and the Parish Councils expenditure and income as at 31 March 2020, were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

#### (2) Internal Audit Report 2019/2020

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2019/2020 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

Members were advised that every smaller authority in England where the higher of gross income or expenditure was £25,000 or less, could certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review, and complete part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) at the end of the financial year. The part 2 AGAR was made up of 2 sections along with an annual internal audit report which was to be completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor, who was to give an opinion of the Parish Council's internal controls, details of which were outlined to Members.

The internal audit concluded that all the key controls contained within the internal audit section of the AGAR were examined and found to be working satisfactory.

**RESOLVED** that the internal audit report for 2019/2020 be accepted.

### **(3) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/2020**

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Clerk which reviewed the effectiveness of the council's internal controls to support the Annual Governance Statement, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that all councils were required to complete the appropriate part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) which applied to them.

The Clerk reported that part 2 was to be completed by councils where the higher of gross income or expenditure was £25,000 or less, they met the qualifying criteria, and wished to certify themselves exempt from a limited assurance review. As the Council's gross income and expenditure was less than £25,000 it was suggested that the Parish Council complete part 2 and certify themselves exempt from a limited assurance review.

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council certify itself exempt from a limited assurance review and complete part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

The Clerk proceeded to take Members through section 1, Annual Governance Statement, which was approved and then section 2, Statement of Accounts which was also approved.

**RESOLVED** that sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2020, be approved and signed by the Chair.

### **(4) Review of Policies and Procedures**

The Clerk reported that a review had been undertaken of the Councils Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy.

A review had also been undertaken of the following policies and procedures.

- Internal Audit Policy
- FOI Publication Scheme
- Data Protection Policy
- Public Participation Policy
- Public Filming, Recording and Reporting at Council Meetings
- Grants and Donations Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct

Document Retention and Disposal Policy

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Annual Insurance Premium 2019/2020

The Clerk reported that the annual insurance for the Parish Council was due for renewal on 1 June 2020. Zurich Municipal had advised that the annual premium for 2020/2021 was £257.60 the same amount as last year.

RESOLVED that the quotation from Zurich Municipal be accepted.

(6) Summer Bedding

The Clerk had previously reported that Shaw Trust were able to supply the Parish Council with bedding plants but were not able to maintain the beds. Members had previously agreed that Mr P Reay would maintain the flower beds, once a month, at a cost of £15 an hour.

Members were advised that Shaw Trust supplied the Parish Council with 1,400 summer bedding plants at a cost of £444 and Mr Reay had removed the winter bedding and planted the summer bedding at a cost of £280.

The Clerk advised that keeping the beds watered was not usually a problem, however, May was unusually warm and dry and the Parish Council were in danger of losing the plants due to a lack of water. As a temporary measure the Chair of the Parish Council had watered the beds daily which was not sustainable. Residents had also helped and watered the beds at Seaton Grove, the Seaton Lane Inn and Clarks Terrace. The Parish Council was grateful for the help and letters of thanks were sent to those involved.

Members were advised that Seaham Town Council were approached and asked if they were able to assist with watering the beds. The Town Council agreed to water the beds three times a week at a cost of £50 - £60 per week. The cost covered staff costs which were based on watering the beds 3 times a week @ 45 minutes each time by 1 member of staff.

As the Parish Council had no other option a Service Level Agreement was entered into with Seaham Town Council for the watering of the flower beds.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the actions taken be endorsed.

(7) Updates from last Meeting

The Clerk provided Members with an update on the following as the Parish Council had been unable to meet since February.

(a) Fencing – West Farm

The Clerk reported that the Chair met Durham County Council on site on 26 February 2020 to discuss the erection of birdsmouth fencing at West Farm.

Members were advised that Durham County Council had quoted £388.97 to supply and install the fencing.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic there had been no progress on this issue.

(b) Public Footpath No 3 – The Meadows

At the last meeting Members suggested that a handrail be installed down each side of the

steps leading from the walkway to The Meadows, it was also suggested that a stile be installed at the bottom of the steps.

The request was referred to Durham County Councils Public Rights of Way section. They had advised that this section of the walkway formed part of Seaton with Slingley Public Right of Way No 3.

The Public Rights of Way Officer had advised that in terms of the railings it would not be feasible for them to inspect and maintain these however they would consider reinstating the stile or maybe a gap. Durham County Council as the landowner would need to fund the stile.

It had been the intention to hold a site visit in March to look at the options but due to the Coronavirus pandemic there had been no progress on this issue.

**(c) Speeding Traffic – Hillrise Crescent**

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members had expressed concern at the noticeable increase in the speed and volume of traffic using Hillrise Crescent.

It was suggested that additional road signage be installed to encourage safer, more reliable driving which would improve safety for pedestrians as well as motorists. A refresh of the existing or additional road markings would also help to raise awareness of the speed limit on this section of road and act as a deterrent to speeding traffic.

County Councillors S Morrison and G Bleasdale were requested to raise the issue with Durham County Council on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported that due to the Coronavirus pandemic there had been no progress on this issue.

**(d) Bus Shelters**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the bus shelters in the village were cleaned and weeded.

**(e) Dog Fouling**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the dog fouling throughout the village was reported to Durham County Council.

**(f) Litter**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting litter on the B1404, particularly on the approach to the village and the wooded area adjacent the A19 slip road heading north was reported to Durham County Council.

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

**8 PAYMENTS**

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
100532	HMRC	PAYE - March 2020	116.60		116.60
100533	Payroll	Wages - March 2020	466.89		466.89
100534	JACS Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - March 2020	8.80	1.76	10.56

**Seaton with Slingley Parish Council – 24 June 2020**

100535	A Slater		Reimbursement - Fence Paint	49.97	9.99	59.96
100536	HMRC		PAYE - April 2020	116.60		116.60
100537	Payroll		Wages - April 2020	466.89		466.89
100538	JACS Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - April 2020	12.10	2.42	14.52
100539	County Durham Association of Local Councils		Annual Subscription	197.26		197.26
100540	Open Spaces Society		Annual Subscription	45.00		45.00
100541	G Fletcher		Internal Audit	100.00		100.00
100542	HMRC		PAYE - May 2020	116.60		116.60
100543	Payroll		Wages - May 2020	466.89		466.89
100544	JACS Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - May 2020	8.80	1.76	10.56
100545	Zurich Municipal		Annual Insurance Premium	257.60		257.60
100546	Mr P Reay		Grounds Maintenance	325.00		325.00
100547	Shaw Trust		Summer Bedding Plants	370.00	74.00	444.00
100548	HMRC		PAYE - June 2020	116.80		116.80
100549	Payroll		Wages - June 2020	466.69		466.69
100550	JACS Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - June 2020	8.80	1.76	10.56
100551	Citizens Advice County Durham		Section 137 Donation	50.00		50.00

**RESOLVED** that the payments listed be endorsed.

**9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**(1) Japanese Knotweed**

**Councillor S McAuliffe** reported Japanese Knotwood on the old road near Seaton Waterworks.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

**10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting be held remotely via ZOOM on Wednesday 15 July 2020 at 6pm.

.....Signed

.....Dated