

## **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2018**

Present: The Mayor, Councillor Mrs B E Allen (Presiding) and Councillors E Bell, S P Colborn, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton, Mrs L Kennedy, D McKenna, T Shepherd, B Taylor, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillors Mrs K Brace, D Cummings, Mrs V Cummings, G N Hepworth,

*Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.*

### **1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

### **2. OPEN SESSION**

In accordance with established policy the Council provided the opportunity at the beginning of the meeting for a 15 minute session.

A member of the public stated that he has an issue with certain streets in the Westlea area of Seaham and he would like to meet with Councillors and the Housing Group to discuss the issues. The member of the public stated that he has telephoned the Housing Group on many occasions but feels that they are not listening to his complaints. One complaint was regarding an elderly lady who lives in the bungalows and people are taking drugs next to her property which is very distressing for this lady. The member of the public has informed the Police of this matter.

The member of the public stated he also still has issues with speeding in the area. The Mayor stated that the Town Council are liaising with Mr Ron Hogg Police Crime Commissioner who is looking into speeding across all areas of Seaham. The Town Council can't tell people what they can and can't do, this has to be done in a proper manner through the proper channels and the Town Council will keep the member of the public informed.

A member of the public representing Seaham Coast stated that he had been in contact with the Council Offices regarding goal posts which the Council agreed to put up but unfortunately the goals are no good as they have been made by Council staff. If anything happens to any of the children the insurance will be invalid. The member of the public stated that he had pictures of the posts and would pass these on to the Council. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this was his department and

he would look into this further. The member of the public had been informed that the Council stated they would make the goal posts but obviously they are not happy with these. The member of the public stated it wasn't a case of not being happy with the posts but more of a case that the posts are illegal. It would cost £580 for new goal posts but they need to be made by a manufacturer which is in the FA's guidelines.

The member of the public also raised the issue around fencing which the Deputy Town Clerk had previously stated the Town Council were looking into grants for this. One of the teams also owns the porta cabins on the site and the children are climbing all over them. It was noted that the porta cabins are going to be removed due to the anti-social behaviour.

A member of the public requested clarification that the Town Council are not going to get involved in Allotment Association decisions as this was ratified at the last Full Council meeting. Members agreed that this was the fact. The member of the public stated the reason why he was asking was due to a Councillor stating to an allotment holder that the Town Council are taking the allotments back. The Councillor informed the meeting that this was untrue and was just another rumour.

A member of the public questioned about what procedures were in place to place complaints about allotments. How would the Council pass on any complaints from members of the public to allotment associations as there is data protection in place. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that everyone is having to deal with the changes due to new GDPR Legislation and the Council are currently receiving forms from people including Councillors and Allotment Associations asking people how we can use their data. If a complaint is received from a member of the public the Council would have to ask their permission to pass on any information before doing so. A Member suggested that the best way would be to write out to the Associations informing them of the new legislation to ensure that the Associations have their regulations in order so they are aware of what they can and can't do. The Council has a duty of care to ensure that the Associations are fully informed of the new legislation and these discussions can also take place at the Allotment Sub-Committee meetings.

RESOLVED

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk will add the goalposts to the next Parks and Events Committee agenda.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk to write to all Associations informing them of the new GDPR Legislation.

**3. TO CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2018**

RESOLVED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved, and they be signed as a correct record by the Mayor.

**4. REPORTS OF SERVICE COMMITTEES**

RESOLVED that the reports of the following Committees, copies of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved:

- a) Report of the Arts and Information Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.
- b) Report of the Parks and Events Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.
- c) Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, subject to page 9630 item 5 a Member saying there was a notice placed on Tommy saying the money donated would go to the Royal British Legion. A Member stated they went to have a look at the notice and it doesn't say all future monies are going to the RBL it was a thank you for monies donated already. A Member stated there was no permission from this Council to place a notice on Tommy and the Council has a duty of care for Tommy. A Member stated it was just for clarification of the minutes that the RBL are not saying future monies will go to them.
- d) Report of Planning and Environmental Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, subject to page 9632 item 5 a Member stated that when this item was discussed he was informed that there is nothing the County Council can do with regards to the dangerous properties. Following this discussion there was a similar article in the Sunderland Echo pertaining to a run-down building in Southwick and Sunderland City Council had taken the owners to court for letting the building remain in a state and questioned whether Durham County Council could do something similar. A Member requested that this be raised at a future Planning and Environmental Committee Meeting.

Also subject to page 9633 item 7 a Member wanted to clarify that the Field of Remembrance had not received a letter of intent from Durham County Council at the time of the meeting.

- e) Report of the Twinning Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.

**5. RAMSIDE CHRISTMAS PARTY NIGHTS**

RESOLVED that a special meeting of the Town Hall Working Party be arranged to discuss this matter further.

**6. APPLICATION FOR GRANT**

**Seaham Field of Remembrance**

A Member stated that this item should be properly considered at a Finance and General Purposes meeting to consider this application. It was suggested that a special meeting should be arranged as there will be queries raised by Members such as how many grant applications have been made to different organisations

and for how much money. It was noted that the Town Council have already spent £2500 of the grant budget and if this was to be approved which it was felt that the Town Council should support this in some way then the budget would be overspent for this financial year. It was noted that Full Council was not the medium for discussing this application and a special meeting of the Finance and General Purposes meeting should be arranged to take place as soon as possible.

A Member stated that a Councillor is the Treasurer of Seaham Field of Remembrance and questioned whether this should have been declared as an interest. The Councillor stated that they had declared an interest previously but it was noted that the interest should be declared at each meeting where this item is discussed. The Councillor stated that they were confused by this as they don't receive anything personal from being the Treasurer of this organisation. Other Councillors who are also involved in the Field of Remembrance were also informed that they should declare an interest.

A Member stated that the issue of declaring an interest is very much a personal issue and to a large extent common sense and if Members are in an official position within an organisation then the perception is that this will be declared so this is transparent to the public especially if it involves money. Complaints can be made to the Monitoring Officer or elsewhere so it is always best to be prudent about it. Members cannot be told to state a declaration of interest but can only be invited to do so. A Member stated that the declaration wasn't raised as it was not going to be discussed at this meeting.

RESOLVED that a special meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee takes place as soon as possible.

## **7. BIG SCREEN – TERRACE GREEN**

The Chair informed the meeting that the big screen will be on the Terrace Green for the World Cup semi-final game at 6.15pm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July.

A Member questioned whether there was a written report for this event as this was an item of major expenditure and this has been mentioned many times that it is the policy of this Council that from the 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 where there is expenditure involved there must be a written report to Members in order to protect the Council and its corporate responsibility. It was requested that a written report be taken to the special Finance and General Purposes meeting including all of the expenditure incurred such as the security, toilets and first aid as well as the cost of the screen so this can be formally recorded and ratified.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that everything had only been put in place and confirmed the day before this meeting and he had not had chance to write a report, however he will provide a full report for the special Finance meeting.

A Member stated that he had reservations about the event even though his passion is for football and sports and agreed to the event only on the basis that there would be a clear written report which would be presented to this meeting. The Deputy Town Clerk was unaware of this request and agreed to provide a full written report to the special Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting retrospectively.

A Member also requested that the Council's policy from November, 2014 be recorded that as elected Members under the Code of Conduct Members are not allowed to make decisions on large amounts of money without a written report.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he has been working with the Police, toilet suppliers and security over the last few days and this needs to be taken into consideration. A Member stated that he understood that but there was no suggestion from the Officers that a report was even going to be prepared for Members as this has been presented to Members verbally and it was the decision of the Council in 2014 that information such as this would not be presented to Members verbally but in a written format so that Members and the Council were protected from criticism.

A Member questioned the final costs of the event. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this was just under £6k. A Member also questioned how this was going to be financed and suggested that this should be included in the written report.

A Member stated that the Town Council were very lucky to get a big screen at such short notice and it was noted that a lot of Seaham residents had requested this event to take place.

RESOLVED that a full written report of the expenditures incurred will be presented to the special Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.