

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER, 2014

Present: Councillors B Burn (Presiding) and Councillors, R Arthur, Mrs M Baird, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, B Burn Jnr, S Cudlip, R Meir, Miss S Morrison, N R Page, I Paul

Apologies: B Allen, Mrs B E Allen, Mrs S Forster

Observers: Ms W Berry, D Consitt, G Garrett, B Taylor

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 a fifteen minute opportunity for any members of the public to raise questions.

Members of the public were in attendance to convey their views on the situation with regard to the proposed dog walking restriction for areas of the beach currently under consideration by Durham County Council and dog fouling problems throughout the town predominantly in the Dawdon, Parkside, Deneside and Westlea areas. The group felt that measures needed to be considered for the whole Town such as increased signage and on the spot fines to solve this issue but that they did not support the proposed ban on the beaches which might result in adverse social effects. There were also concerns with regard to the effect a ban would have for those with mobility issues such as the elderly or infirm and that a ban may force irresponsible dog owners to further exacerbate the problems throughout the town.

A County Council Member highlighted that the Town Council had strived for the past eight/nine years to enable Seaham to become a leisure destination. Over that time the Council had continually lobbied for a dog ban on a specific part of the beach during part of the year, i.e. the area between the Hall steps to the slope beach. It was reiterated that the Town Council echoed the concerns about dog mess throughout the town and that it had employed two environmental wardens to help keep the seafront areas clean in the summer months but that they can be deployed elsewhere throughout the town.

In discussion a County Council Member acknowledged that the issue of dog fouling had been a problem in the town for the best part of 30 years and that perhaps a new approach was required.

In discussion, Members highlighted that the issue was particularly a problem in the Princess Road area and that often the activity occurs very early in the morning or late at night. Requests had been made for increased signage and patrols as education to improve behaviour was seen as key to solving this issue and the Town Council is keen to work with all interested parties in order to achieve this.

RESOLVED the Council note the information now reported.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST AND SPECIAL MEETINGS OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 16TH JULY, 2014 AND 16TH SEPTEMBER 2014

RESOLVED the Minutes of these meetings, copies 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 Special Planning and Environmental Committee held on 14th August, 2014 subject to Councillor S Cudlip declaring an interest with regard to item 2;
- b) Report of Arts and Information Committee held on 2nd September, 2014;
- c) Report of Parks and Events Committee held on 2nd September, 2014 subject to that it be noted further information is to be provided by the Deputy Town Clerk;
- d) Report of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9th September, 2014,
- f) Report of the Clerk's Advisory Sub-Committee held on 9th September, 2014;

5. SEAHAM CENTRAL WARD VACANCY OF TOWN COUNCILLOR

The Electoral Officer at Durham County Council had previously advised the Town Council that following the publication of notices there had been no request for an election for the Seaham Central Ward vacancy. The vacancy was, therefore, to be filled by means of co-option and one person had expressed an interest, this being Mr Barry Taylor, of 23, Cheviot Gardens, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 0BY

RESOLVED:

- (i) Mr Barry Taylor, of 23, Cheviot Gardens, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 0BY be co-opted with immediate effect as a Councillor to fill the existing vacancy on the Seaham Central Ward of Seaham Town Council;
- (ii) that Barry Taylor be an authorised signatory for Bank mandate purposes following his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and that he be added as a Member of all Committees, Sub-Committees and outside bodies where Councillor G A Shepherd had had a seat and that these be classed as approved duties for payment of appropriate allowances.