

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4th MAY, 2021

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

Apologies: R Arthur, G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy, K Shaw.

Officers: P Fletcher (Town Clerk)
Mrs J Knight (Finance Officer)
Miss A Rountree (Minute Taker)

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.

FC27/21 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. Such interests must be submitted to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

FC28/21 OPEN SESSION

In accordance with established policy the Council provided a fifteen minute opportunity for any members of the public to raise questions. There were no issues raised from members of the public.

FC29/21 TO CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 23rd MARCH, 2021

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.

FC30/21 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 Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 27th April, 2021 subject to a Member raising a question regarding an issue that was dealt with in the Clerks Advisory Sub-Committee and Members agreed to raise this issue under the minutes of the Clerks Advisory Sub-Committee.

- b) Report of the Planning & Environmental Committee held on 27th April, 2021.
- c) Report of the Clerks Advisory Sub-Committee held on the 27th April, 2021 subject to a Member stating that minutes are ratified at this meeting and they are not Council Policy until they are passed at this meeting. The Member raised an issue regarding a recommendation on the minutes which went to a vote and was agreed that any new Chairs of Committees must have training before they can become a Chair. The Member felt that it was undemocratic for this Council to make a policy decision for the incoming Council on the 6th May 2021. The Member felt that this was not a recommendation made by the Independent Investigator and suggested that the Council do not proceed with this recommendation. A further Member stated that any future Council can review and decide to agree something entirely different. The Councils Standing Orders state that the Full Council can only agree the accuracy of the minutes and the minutes are accurate and a democratic vote took place with a reasonable majority. The issue may not have been raised by the Independent Investigator but it was discussed within the Establishment Sub-Committee meeting and the recommendation was made there and included in the Chairs report. It was noted that the minutes are accurate unless any Members wish to oppose the accuracy of the minutes.

Members discussed the need for Chairmanship training prior to appointments being made. The Acting Town Clerk stated that training was being arranged to take place soon after the elections. Members then agreed that the recommendation should be passed.

- d) Reports of the Special Establishment Sub-Committee meetings held between 27th October 2020 – 14th April 2021 subject to Councillors E Bell and Miss L Willis declaring an interest at each meeting to be added to the minutes.

FC31/21

MAYORS SPEECH

The Mayor noted that for some Members today will be their last meeting at Seaham Town Council as they have chosen to stand down at the next election. The Mayor noted that the Councillors are E Bell, S Colborn, Ms R Gratton and T Shepherd and thanked them as well as the Councillors who have left the Council prior to this meeting for their contribution and dedication to Seaham.

The Mayor wished to give a special mention to Councillor E Bell who has served on Seaham Town Council for the past 19 years and also served on Durham County Council since 2008 and prior to this on the District Council. The Mayor stated that he felt everyone could agree that Councillor E Bell has been a good servant and has promoted the town at every opportunity to ensure that the regeneration of the town keeps on moving forward for all residents.

The Mayor then presented Councillor E Bell with a long service award in honour of his dedication to Seaham and wished him well in his retirement.

Councillor Bell thanked his fellow colleagues of the Council who he noted all want to do well for Seaham and the people of Seaham and that has always been the Councils mantra. All Councillors want to improve the environment and facilities for Seaham so residents can enjoy their daily lives. Councillor Bell stated that he has been involved for a long time with Seaham and the top of his agenda in all this time was to see a new leisure facility and swimming pool and he is overjoyed to see this come to fruition in the year he is leaving the Council. Councillor Bell stated that moving forward it will be harder for Councillors as money is getting tighter and Councils will have to be very imaginative on how they deal with their budgets.

Councillor Bell wished everyone good luck for the future.

Councillor Colborn stated that he is not standing at the next election but wished everyone well and good luck in the elections and hoped that the next four years are the best four years that Seaham has ever had.

FC32/21 **MAY 2021 PAYMENTS**

The Finance Officer requested approval for a payment run to take place in May and to be retrospectively approved at the June meeting.

RECOMMENDED that approval be given for the Finance Officer to carry out a payment run in May and for this to be retrospectively approved at the June meeting.

The Meeting was then closed by the Chair.