

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE HELD ON 12th JANUARY, 2021**

Present: Councillors S Cudlip (Chair) and R Arthur, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs K Brace, Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton, G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy, D McKenna, T Shepherd, B Taylor, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: S P Colborn, K Shaw.

Observer: Mrs G Bleasdale.

Officers: P Fletcher (Deputy 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.*

**PL01/21 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.

**PL02/21 ACCEPTANCE OF AMENDMENT**

RECOMMENDED that Members accept the amendment to the standing orders to incorporate the new regulations from the Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, to conduct virtual Council meetings.

**PL03/21 PLANNING ISSUES**

**a) Monthly List**

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

**PL04/21 PROPOSED STATIC CARAVAN SITE, PETROL FILLING STATION, DRIVE THROUGH CAFÉ AND RETAIL UNITS**

Members noted that the proposed caravan site is in very close proximity to the Garden Village which has full planning approval.

A County Councillor stated that he has written to the Planners at Durham County Council and has requested a full traffic impact on the whole of Seaham as currently especially at weekends there is a lot of traffic from visitors and residents coming into Seaham.

A further County Councillor stated that they have requested that the application goes to a DCC Committee meeting so Councillors can find out more information regarding the proposal.

Members noted that they had concerns regarding the proposed caravan site and requested that the County Councillors feedback any information when it is available, and also in the meantime requested that the Deputy Town Clerk writes to the Planners at DCC raising an objection to the site on behalf of Seaham Town Council and also enquires as to whether Dawdon Cricket Club and Seaham Golf Club have corresponded with the Planners with their views.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk writes to DCC placing an objection on behalf of Seaham Town Council and also enquires if Dawdon Cricket Club and Seaham Golf Club have expressed any views on the application.

**PL05/21      SEAHAM PLAN**

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that the initial idea for the Seaham Plan was to get Councillors together to discuss their aspirations for Seaham in the future with ideas such as toilet blocks, Sports facilities etc for the next 10 – 20 years ahead which could be shared with Durham County Council. This would be done more in a friendly manner rather than going down a legal route.

A Member agreed that this could be done informally just to look at aspirations.

RECOMMENDED that a Special Planning meeting is arranged when appropriate to do so.

**PL06/21      SOCIAL DISTANCING ISSUES**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the Town Council had received quite a few complaints from local residents regarding the footfall at the seafront.

A Member noted that Noses Point was also crowded especially at weekends with visitors from out of the area and noted that there was a small van selling tea/coffee at the car park. Members suggested the Deputy Town Clerk contacts DCC to enquire if the coffee seller has a license to operate at Noses Point.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would contact the Police to ask if they could have more of a presence at the seafront as people are weaving in and

out of traffic as people are queuing at some of the shops and people are struggling to pass in a socially distanced manner and are stepping onto the road to be able to pass safely.

Members offered suggestions to assist with the overcrowding such as closing the Terrace Green car park and Noses Point car park until the lockdown period is over, however it was noted that this may just cause further congestion in other areas for car parking. Members also suggested putting the barriers around Terrace Green to discourage visitors coming into Seaham.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk liaises with the Police regarding the overcrowding at the seafront.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk clarifies with Durham County Council regarding the coffee seller at Noses Point to ensure they have a license to sell.
- (iii) Barriers to be placed around the Terrace Green.

**PL07/21      PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

RECOMMENDED that there were no press opportunities from this meeting.

The meeting was then closed by the Chair.