

# THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SEATON WITH SLINGLEY PARISH

COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 MAY 2021

Present: Councillors G Fuller, S McAuliffe,  
H Middlemiss, A Slater, A Taylor, A Vila, S Williams

## 1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor A Slater be elected Chair of Seaton with Slingley Parish Council for the ensuing year.

COUNCILLOR A SLATER TOOK THE CHAIR

## 2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor D Temple be appointed Vice-Chair of Seaton with Slingley Parish Council for the ensuing year.

## 3 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED that Mr G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor to Seaton with Slingley Parish Council for the ensuing year.

## 4 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the following Members be appointed to serve as representatives of the Parish Council on the external bodies listed for the forthcoming year:-

Area Action Partnership  
Councillors A Slater and S Williams

Council for Protection of Rural England (Co Durham)  
As required

County Durham Association of Local Councils  
Councillor D Temple

County Durham Foundation Trust (South Sharpley Community Fund)  
Mr A Teasdale - Resident

East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils  
Councillors G Fuller and D Temple

Seaton Community Association Management Committee  
Councillors H Middlemiss and A Slater

## 5 DATE AND TIME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF SEATON WITH SLINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED that meetings of Seaton with Slingley Parish Council be held on the third Wednesday of each month commencing at 6.45pm, except for August where no council meeting would be held due to recess.

Meeting dates were subject to change with the consent of the Chair of the Parish Council.

## Seaton with Slingley Parish Council – 19 May 2021

### 6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Blacklock, D Temple and J Theobald.

### 7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 8 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 21 April 2021, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

### 9 POLICE

There was no Police report.

### 10 CORRESPONDENCE

#### (1) Training

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence for the County Durham Association of Local Councils which gave details of Councillor training, details of which were outline to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

#### (2) National Grid – Scotland to England Green Link

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence which gave details of the National Grid's proposed consultation for a Scotland to England Green Link 1 (SEGL1), a green electricity 'superhighway' running from East Lothian to Hawthorn Pit, County Durham.

The proposed cable would run under the sea for most of its length, between East Lothian and Hawthorn Pit. It would come ashore just north of Seaham and run underground for approx. 10km to a new converter station and substation near the existing Hawthorn Pit substation.

As part of the consultation process the National Grid were hosting a digital public consultation via a dedicated website – [www.nationalgrid.com/seg1](http://www.nationalgrid.com/seg1) between 24 May and 18 June 2021.

Members reported that a residential leaflet drop, giving details of the project, had been undertaken in the parish area.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### 11 PLANNING

#### Applications

DM/21/01425/RM – Proposed new dwelling on Plot 5 former Seaton Garden Centre, Seaton Lane, Seaton

DM/21/01522/FPA – New roof with dormer windows to front and rear and loft conversion at 27 Middleton Close, Seaham

DM/21/01594/TPO – Removal of T1, T3, T5, and T7 crown thinning of T2, T4, and T6 to rear of plot 20, 21 Poppyfield Court, former Garden Centre, Seaton Lane, Seaton

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RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### 12 CLERK'S REPORT

#### (1) Internal Audit Report for the Year ending 31 March 2021

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2020/2021 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

Members were advised that every smaller authority in England where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, could certify themselves 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 AGAR part 2 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 gave 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 the year ending 31 March 2021 be accepted.

#### (2) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2021

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.

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

Members were advised that smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or expenditure was £25,000 or less and they met the qualifying criteria could 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.

FURTHER RESOLVED that sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2021, be approved and signed by the Chair.

#### (3) Hillrise Crescent

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members considered a request for the track that crossed the Village Green to the rear of Hillrise Crescent to be repaired.

The track crossing the Village Green was the responsibility of the Parish Council and Durham County Council had been asked to provide a quotation for repairs.

Durham County Council had asked if the track was to be repaired to a serviceable standard or an adoptable standard.

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**RESOLVED** that Durham County Council be requested to provide a quotation for the track to be repaired to a serviceable standard.

### **(4) 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 and where necessary minor amendments were made.

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

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

### **(5) Annual Insurance Premium 2021/22**

The Clerk reported that the annual insurance for the Parish Council was due for renewal on 1 June 2021. Zurich Municipal had advised that the annual premium for 2021/22 was £257.60 the same amount as last year.

**RESOLVED** that the quotation be accepted.

### **(6) Housing Development – Former Garden Centre**

At the last meeting the Clerk reported that the Planning Officer had made regular visits to the former garden centre development. The carriageway at the entrance to the site was found to be in good order, with no mud or debris on the main road and the Officer was happy that the site was controlling this issue

As there had been no further reports of Sunday working the file would be closed. The area would continue to be monitored.

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

### **(7) Estate of the late Ms J Pescod**

Members had previously been advised that the late Ms Pescod had bequeathed £10,000 to the Parish Council in her will.

The Chair suggested that the Parish Council could consider planting trees with some of the money and erect a plaque in recognition of the generous gift to the community from Ms Pescod.

The Clerk had made some initial enquiries with Durham County Council who had suggested a selection of trees which would be suitable for planting in the village, details of which were

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outlined to Members.

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

### 13 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
100619	HMRC	PAYE - May 2021	120.00		120.00
100620	Payroll	Wages - May 2021	479.56		479.56
100621	JACS Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - May 2021	8.80	1.76	10.56
100622	Mr G Fletcher	Internal Audit	100.00		100.00
100623	County Durham Association of Local Councils	Annual Subscription	198.86		198.86
100624	A Slater	Reimbursements - Bedding Plants	7.50	1.50	9.00
100625	J Thompson	Reimbursements	19.38	0.71	20.09
100626	Zurich Municipal	Annual Insurance	257.60		257.60
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,191.70</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>1,195.67</b>

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and the payments be approved.

### 14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### (1) Speed Signs

Reference was made to the continuing problem of speeding on the B1404 through the village.

It was suggested that if a vehicle activated speed sign was installed it would prompt drivers to correct and lower their speed.

The Chair suggested that “30 MPH” or “Slow Down” stickers could be purchased by the Parish Council and supplied to properties on Seaton Lane with a request that they be stuck to their rubbish bins. When residents put their bins out for collection motorists would see the signs on the bins and be reminded to slow down whilst driving through the village.

**RESOLVED** that Durham County Council be requested to install a vehicle activated speed sign on the B1404 at Seaton and the Clerk investigate the price of “slow Down” stickers for residential rubbish bins.

#### (2) Grass Verge – Haverley Drive

At the last meeting Members considered a request for the grassed area at the entrance to Haverley Drive to be resown with meadow turf and wildflowers.

Durham County Council were consulted as they owned and managed the area and had advised that they would not plant wildflowers as they had a short flowering life which led to complaints that they looked like weeds.

Councillor Blacklock had consulted residents on the estate and the consensus was that they did not want wildflowers at this location.

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

**(3) Section 137 Donation – Seaton Community Association**

The Chair reported that Seaton Community Association had received financial support via government grants during the Covid-19 restrictions. The Association was in a healthy financial position and as such would not require any financial support from the Parish for the foreseeable future.

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

**(4) Overgrown Trees – Seaton Lane**

Reference was made to overgrown trees on Seaton Lane which had previously been reported to Durham County Council. The trees were encroaching onto the overhead electricity cables and needed to be pruned back.

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had inspected the trees and advised that they were maintained in accordance with their Corporate Tree Policy.

The trees to the frontage of Cairnside were reported to Northern Powergrid, because of their proximity to the power cables. Durham County Council would not carry out pruning close to the cables for safety reasons, and if any work was needed it would be carried out by Northern Powergrid.

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

**(5) Public Footpath No 1 – Seaton Crescent**

Members reported that Public Footpath No 1, to the rear of Seaton Crescent was overgrown and needed to be cut back.

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

**(6) Nesting Lapwings**

Members referred to nesting lapwings that had recently been disturbed when a farmer's field had been ploughed.

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

**15 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting be held on 16 June 2021 at 6.45pm.

..... Signed

..... Dated