

# Seaton Valley Council

A Community Council

## Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 30 November 2016 at 7.00 p.m. at Seaton Delaval Council Offices.

The meeting started at 7.00 p.m.

### PRESENT:

Councillors: K Collier (Vice Chair) D Mullen (Chair) B Nixon S Stanners (Vice Chair)  
B. Swinhoe A Stanners S Dungworth L Bowman and S Hartland

### IN ATTENDANCE:

S Potts – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer  
D Freeman – Engagement and Development Officer  
Cllr B Pidcock – Northumberland County Council  
6 Members of the public

#### CO848/16 1. Apologies for absence

All members were present and consequently there were no apologies for absence.

#### CO849/16 2. Disclosure of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

#### CO850/16 3. Chair's Welcome and Civic Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and prior to introducing public question time he specifically welcomed Cllr Simon Hartland to his first Council Meeting after being elected as a Ward Councillor for the Seghill with Seaton Delaval Ward on 20 October 2016.

The Chair also referred to the recent Christmas Events and Light Switch Ons that had taken place throughout the Valley and thanked staff for their work in organising and delivering the events. He reminded everyone that the final event was to take place on Saturday 3 December at New Hartley.

#### CO851/16 4. Public Question Time

Residents raised the following queries:

One resident raised a concern about inappropriate parking on Astley Road at the junction with Western Avenue. The Chair said that he sympathised with the residents concern but wasn't sure anything could be done to alleviate the problem as it didn't appear as though a road traffic offence was being committed. That being said he asked officers to investigate the matter to see if any solution could be found. Cllr Bowman referred to current proposals to mark out specific off street parking spaces on Astley Road and said that, if implemented, such proposals may help to address the matter.

Another resident began by complimenting the Council on its Christmas Light's Events and then went onto raise concerns about issues with blocked drains and gutters in the Holywell area. The Chair said that he would make arrangements to have the fallen leaves in the area removed and that he would ask Council officers to contact their NCC Highways colleagues to see if a gully cleansing visit could be scheduled.

On a similar theme County Cllr Pidcock said that he asked both North Tyneside and County Council colleagues to get together to see if anything can be done to address flooding issues on the main road between Holywell and Earsdon and in the surrounding area. This issue appears to be linked to the Briardene water course.

There being no further question public question time closed at 7.20pm

## **CO852/16 5. County Councillor Update**

Cllr Pidcock addressed the meeting and said that he wanted to address two issues at tonight's meeting.

Firstly he referred to the potential re-opening of the Ashington/Blyth/Tyne railway line and said that if the line does get the go ahead, due to financial constraints it appeared that only one station would be able to be built in Seaton Valley and that the current preferred option was for Seaton Delaval to host this station. Cllr Pidcock acknowledged that residents from New Hartley and Seghill would be disappointed to hear this news. Cllr Dungworth stressed that a final decision on the location of a Seaton Valley station had not yet been made and that the main issue at present was to agree a financial package to fund the re-opening of the line as a whole.

Cllr Pidcock then went on to talk about the re location of County Hall to Ashington and referred to a 'motion to stop work' that will be debated at next week's County Council meeting. He said that the original proposal to relocate County Hall had been raised by officers who were concerned at the escalating maintenance costs associated with the current building – this in turn led to an options appraisal which determined that from a financial perspective relocating County Hall would lead to considerable savings over the longer term. Subsequent to this an independent review of the County Council's own option appraisal had been carried out by Ernst and Young confirming the Council's own findings.

## **CO853/16 6. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Prior to seeking agreement of the minutes of the Council's last meeting the Chair said that he had updates on three of the matters addressed at that meeting:

In respect of minute no. CO840/16 – Exclusion of Dogs from a Section of Seaton Sluice Beach – he said that Northumberland County Council will monitor the condition and use of the beach during the summer months of 2017 and that this exercise will inform any decision to close a section of the beach to dogs in subsequent years.

In respect of minute no.CO842/16 he said that a meeting had been held with New Hartley residents about their concerns relating to the planning process surrounding the recent Barrett's planning application to build 285 houses in New Hartley. The Chair said that he and ward councillors had decided that it wasn't appropriate for the Council to support the residents in their pursuit of more detailed answers from the County Council, however the Council has agreed to call an early meeting of the New Hartley Neighbourhood Planning Group. This will both recommence the Neighbourhood Planning process and identify any action that can be taken, as

part of this process, to build up an evidence base to help defend any subsequent appeal that may be made by the developer against NCC's decision to refuse the application. And in respect of minute no. CO843/16 he said that the Council had received additional information from Seaton Valley Community Partnership/Blyth CVA to support its request for funding and that its request would be considered as part of the 2017/18 budget process.

The minutes of Seaton Valley Council's Meeting held on 28 September 2016 were then agreed as being a correct record and were duly signed and dated by the Chair.

## **CO854/16 7. Minutes of Other Committee Meetings**

The minutes of the Planning Committees held on 6 October, 27 October and the 23 October 2016 were presented and received for information.

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 2 November 2016 were presented and received for information.

## **CO855/16 8. Services and Partnership Update**

The Clerk presented the Services Officer's report for information and referred in particular to a number of items:

- Works are progressing to sub divide the Seaton Terrace allotment site into three separate sites although officers are struggling to source a gate of the correct size to close one of the gaps identified,
- The Partnership Team is progressing well with completing its Winter Programme.
- The initiative to trial using our own officers to carry out Dog Fouling Patrols is well under way and is already receiving positive feedback,
- Work is due to commence this week to renew the play park at Mitford Road, Seaton Delaval,
- A review of Bus Shelters has identified that our new shelters have a much longer life span than originally estimated. Budget provision for this service will be reviewed as part of the 2017/18 Budget Process,
- The Council's one remaining Christmas Event is due to take place at New Hartley on Saturday 3 December and on the following Saturday an organised litter pick is scheduled to take place, also at New Hartley.

## **CO856/16 9. Review of Play Areas**

The Clerk introduced the Services Officer's report and initially informed the committee about how the review had been carried out by the Services Officer with the assistance of the Council's preferred supplier Kompan Plc. The outcome of the review is very positive with funds already having been identified to address those parks identified as being in urgent need of upgrading.

The schedule attached to the report uses a traffic light system to rank parks in order of condition/suitability of equipment and can be used to inform future decisions on renewing and upgrading the Council's play parks.

After considering the report Council **RESOLVED TO agree to use Appendix 7A as a basis for moving forward with future play park refurbishments.**

## CO857/16 10. Village Plans

The Clerk presented the Engagement and Development Officer's report which updated members on the progress made by Council towards achieving the recommended actions emanating from last year's Village Planning exercise.

The Clerk said that progress had been very good, particularly where the Council was able to act in isolation to address the agreed actions, however, he did acknowledge that there were still one or two areas that needed to be addressed and said that work on these outstanding actions would be scheduled in the coming year.

Cllr Nixon raised a query about Action 9 on the Hollywood Village Plan 'Consider Restricting Parking Near Holywell First School' and asked if any further enforcement action could be taken to address this matter. After a short debate it was agreed that officers would look into the possibility of single yellow lines being installed at the school entrances and a possible visit(s) from the parking enforcement school patrol van.

In receiving the report the Chair acknowledged the usefulness of the Village Planning exercise and suggested that more major reviews would need to be carried out every five years or so. In the meantime he asked for a similar progress report to be presented to Council on at least an annual basis.

## CO858/16 11. Art Stop Update

The Clerk apologised to Council for the late distribution of this report, but said that he was looking forward to seeing the completion of the project. Much of the preparatory and design work has now been done and the project is on schedule to be completed by the end of February 2017.

Full details of the outstanding programme was included in the Youth Services Officer's report, however, the Clerk reminded Council that 'audio memories/story gathering workshops are taking place at various venues over the next three days i.e. Thursday 1 to Saturday 3 December 2016.

## CO859/16 12. Standing Committees – Terms of Reference

The Clerk spoke of his own report which sought to agree Terms of Reference for the Council's two standing committees. Both sets of Terms of Reference have been agreed by the individual committees and were attached as Appendices 10A and 10B for formal approval by Council.

Prior to seeking agreement from Council the Clerk suggested the addition of another 'term' within the Finance and General Purposes Committee Terms of Reference to give that Committee delegated authority to approve items of urgent expenditure.

After considering the report and the Clerk's suggested additional 'term' Council **RESOLVED TO:**

- **approve the Terms of Reference attached at appendices 10A and 10B for the Finance and General Purposes (and Staffing) Committee and the Planning Committee respectively, with the addition of the following term to be included in the former committee's Terms of Reference,**
- **In situations where an urgent decision is required; budget provision is in place, and it would not be practical to wait until the next meeting of the Full Council, the Committee shall have delegated authority to approve new expenditure of up to £10,000, and**
- **In the same circumstances and where budget provision does not exist, the Committee shall have delegated authority to approve new expenditure of up to**

£5,000.

**CO860/16 13. Bank Reconciliation as at 31 October 2016**

Council agreed to receive the report, and noted that the Council's bank accounts had been successfully reconciled to its financial records.

**CO861/16 14. Budgetary Control Report**

The Clerk's report provided a summary of income and expenditure against budget for the year to date and highlighted any major variances. The Clerk was happy to report that at this stage in the year he was not aware of any major potential problem areas within the current years' budgets. He went on to say that he had carried out a desk top exercise to project income and expenditure forward to the end of the year and anticipated a small overall underspend of circa. £20,000.

After due consideration of the Clerk's report Council **RESOLVED TO receive the report and note that the Council's budgets are expected to show a small net underspend of circa. £20,000 at the end of the financial year.**

**CO862/16 15. Budget Update 2017/18**

The Clerk presented his report which outlined the process that has taken place to build up the Council's re priced base budget for 2017/18. He confirmed that the Budget Working Group felt that it had completed the work it was asked to do and that the group wouldn't be meeting again this year.

The Clerk said that he would be updating the figures shown at Appendix 13A to present to the Finance and General Purposes Committee on Wednesday 14 December and said that all members of the Council were invited to attend that meeting.

The Clerk went on to highlight a number of issues that had arisen at the Budget Review working Group meetings (Newsletters, Bus Shelters and Christmas Events) and asked political group(s) to refer to these when developing any budget proposals they may like to make.

After considering the Clerks report which included estimates of the likely underspend in the current year and projected levels of unallocated reserves, Council **RESOLVED TO note the report and in particular the requirement for political groups/individual members to submit any 2017/18 budget proposals they may have to the Clerk, by Friday 13 January 2017.**

**CO863/16 16. Schedule of Meeting Dates 2017**

Council reviewed the proposed schedule of meeting dates attached at Appendix 14A to the Clerks report and accepted all of the dates with the exception of the meeting of Full Council proposed to take place on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017. This meeting will now take place on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017.

**CO864/16 17. Dates of Future Meetings**

Wednesday 14 December 2016 6pm - F&GP (inc Staffing) Committee – SVC Offices  
Thursday 22 December 2016 6pm – Planning Sub-Committee **CANCELLED**  
Thursday 12 January 2017 6pm – Planning Sub-Committee – SVC Offices  
Wednesday 25 January 2017 7pm – Full Council – New Hartley Memorial Hall

**CO865/16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of item 18 on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in section 40 and 43 of the (personal information and commercial matters) Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**CO866/16 18. Play Area CCTV**

The Chair introduced this item and said that he felt it was difficult to justify spending £1,300 per park to introduce CCTV monitoring when the Council hasn't got any specific evidence of excessive damage to equipment or specific evidence any other particular problems to address.

He asked officers to liaise with their Police colleagues to see if it is possible to arrange to install any of their mobile temporary cameras at The Crescent in particular, if specific problems are subsequently reported at this park.

Additionally, he raised one of the outstanding Seghill Village Plan actions - Developing an Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan for Seghill, and asked officers to work with the Police and Emma Rudd, the County Council's Area Youth Worker to try to establish a working party to begin some work on addressing this matter.

The meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

Signed by the Chair: .....

Dated: .....