

# Seaton Valley Council

A Community Council

## Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 26 July 2017 at 7.00 p.m. at Seghill Institute and Community Centre.

The meeting started at 7.02 p.m.

### PRESENT:

Councillors: S Stanners (Chair), B. Swinhoe (V. Chair), A Stanners, S Dungworth, L Bowman, E Coulson, and D. Nesbitt

### IN ATTENDANCE:

S Potts – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Members of the public - 13

#### CO055/17 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Collier and Hartland.

#### CO056/17 2. Disclosure of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

#### CO057/17 3. Chair's Welcome and Civic Announcements

Whilst there were no official announcements the Chair said that items 14 and 11 on tonight's agenda would be moved forward to immediately after the conclusion of Public Question Time.

#### CO058/17 4. Public Question Time

One member of the public from Holywell commented on the high standard of floral bedding in the Valley, but questioned the quality of the recent re surfacing work at Denham Drive, Seaton Delaval. The Clerk said he would report this matter to the County Council's Highways Team.

Another member of the public from Seghill raised the standard of bus services through Seghill. The Chair responded by saying that an item relating to this matter appeared later on tonight's agenda and that he would allow members of the public to comment during the debate of that item.

Another Seghill resident asked about the area to be covered in Saturday's forthcoming community litter pick at Seghill – the Clerk said that the 'pick' would concentrate on the Deneside Estate area. He went on to ask if a litter bin close to Libby's Park could be replaced – the Clerk said that some new bins had been purchased but he wasn't sure if that particular bin was scheduled to be replaced. The Clerk said that he would check with the Services Officer and get back to the resident asap.

And finally another Holywell resident complimented the Council and the Holywell in Bloom Group on the beautiful wild flower display that has been created opposite St Mary's Church

There being no further questions; public question time closed at 7.15pm

**CO059/17 5. Outstanding Achievements in Community Life**

The Chair introduced this item and started by saying that the Council had recently agreed to consider nominations for awards for Outstanding Achievement in Community Life and that he was delighted to be able to bring the first nomination forward for such a deserving individual. Councillors unanimously agreed to approve the award.

He gave a bit of background as to why Sharron Herron, landlady at The Keel Row Public House had been nominated and then asked her to come forward to accept her award. In short Sharon has raised a significant amount of funding for various charities over the last 5 years and arranges activities for different groups in the community.

Sharon was photographed receiving her award from the Chair and received a round of applause from all present.

**CO060/17 6. Active Northumberland Update**

Sam Moore was in attendance and gave a short presentation on the work of his organisation in Seaton Valley. He made reference to the support provided by Seaton Valley Council and said that the activities provided would be much reduced without that support. In referring to Active Northumberland's Summer Holiday Programme for 2017 he said that every effort was made to spread activities across the Valley although most activities are outdoor based and are therefore very dependent on suitable venues. He also asked Councillor's to note that virtually all activities are free of charge in Seaton Valley, whereas elsewhere in the County, charges are levied.

Following his presentation Mr Moore took questions from Councillors and members of the public. Cllr Coulson asked if more emphasis could be given to providing activities in Holywell and went on to say that she had evidence to suggest that additional activities would be well supported. Mr Moore acknowledged that Active Northumberland had difficulty in finding suitable venues in Holywell, but asked Cllr Coulson to pass on the evidence base she has, so that he could look into the matter further.

Two members of the public raised concerns that not enough activities were being provided in Seghill and stated that the Community Centre is available to host Active Northumberland activities. Mr Moore explained that as activities are generally outdoor based in the summer months, it wasn't really appropriate to use the Community Centre during this period. However, Mr Moore agreed to look into the possibility of providing additional activities at the Community Centre outside of the summer months.

The Chair thanked Mr Moore for his presentation and said that he looked forward to another successful year of the partnership between the Council and Active Northumberland.

**CO061/17 7. County Councillor Update**

In the absence of Cllr Pidcock, Cllr Dungworth provided an update on County Council matters. She referred to three issues:

- First of all she said that the new structure of Local Area Council's had only recently been introduced and is still bedding in. Seaton Valley has been grouped with Cramlington and Bedlington. Cllr Dungworth said that the new Area Council's had delegated powers to deal with local planning applications (not major applications though) which could result in a large workload. She voiced concerns about the possibility of quite major policy decisions being made at Local Area Council level when really they should be made at County level.
- Secondly she referred to a recent review of the Community Chest guidelines and in particular to the withdrawal of the funding pot specifically targeted at South East

Northumberland Community Centres. She also referred to the way funding had been allocated to each of the Local Council Areas (per head of population) and questioned whether such an allocation method was fair and equitable, bearing in mind that the South East of Northumberland is, generally speaking, the most deprived area of the county.

- And lastly, Cllr Dungworth referred to the recently 'agreed' funding to provide replacement schools/major refurbishment works at Seaton Delaval (Astley High and Whytrig Middle) and Holywell (First School) and said that such funding must now be considered under threat. In this respect it was agreed that the Clerk should write to NCC's new Portfolio Holder responsible for schools to remind him/her that the new funding had been announced to parents, teachers and residents at a Public Meeting, and to ask him/her to make every effort to honour the commitment made by the previous administration.

#### **CO062/17 8. Minutes of the Council's Annual Meeting held on 17 May 2017**

The minutes of Seaton Valley Council's Annual Meeting held on 17 May 2017 were agreed as being a correct record and were duly signed and dated by the Chair.

#### **CO063/17 9. Minutes of Other Committee Meetings**

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 15 June and 6 July 2017 were presented and received for information.

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 June 2017 were also presented and received for information and in relation to minute reference FGP011/17 of those minutes the Council formally adopted the Finance and General Purposes Committee's resolution on this matter and **RESOLVED TO:**

- **Note that the names of a former Councillor and a former employee have been removed from the Council's agreed list of authorised signatories, and**
- **Agree to approve the following individuals as both cheque signatories and authorised users of the Council's electronic banking system: Cllr Stephen John Stanners and David Mark Freeman (Engagement and Development Officer).**

#### **CO064/17 10. Services and Partnership Update**

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

- Notice to quit letters have been sent to those allotment plotters that have more than five months' rent arrears,
- The new self-closing gates at Seaton Terrace allotments are anticipated to go operational on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July,
- Weeds appear not to have been such a major issue this year although work is still ongoing in some areas,
- The upgrading works at Fountain Head Bank roundabout are now substantially complete despite the delays in planting. NCC has apologised for the delay, but hopes that the new look roundabout will prove to be a major success and enhance the appearance of the area,
- The Council is supporting NCC's Green Dog walkers Project where responsible dog owners are encouraged to pass good practice onto other dog owners,
- A successful Participation Day event was held throughout Seaton Valley on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July which saw pupils from Bede Academy help out with various environmental projects. The Services Officer was asked to write to the Academy to thank the organisers for their pupil's efforts, and
- Future dates for Community Litter Picks were announced and are reproduced below for information:
  - Seghill 29 July 2017
  - New Hartley 09 September 2017
  - Holywell 21 October 2017, and

- o Seaton Sluice 03 March 2018.

#### **CO065/17 11. Extension of Support for the 57A Bus Route**

The Clerk presented his report which asked Council to consider providing an additional £1,800 from its Community Fund Budget to help maintain evening services on the number 57A bus route for a further period of six months. The Clerk explained that the request had only come forward because NCC had changed its stance and agreed to make its own further contribution for the period September 2017 to March 2018. The Clerk concluded the summary of his report by saying that continued funding of evening services beyond March 2018 must be in serious doubt and consequently, the Council would do what it could to encourage more residents to use the service to move it closer to being more self-financing.

A member of the public raised concerns about the regularity of bus services between North Tyneside and Cramlington through Seghill and asked if more pressure could be put on Arriva to re-route the number 57 Service back through Seghill. The Clerk said that this matter was raised at all discussions with Arriva and would continue to be raised, however the Clerk said that he was not hopeful of success as the alternative route via Cramlington Hospital and the top end of Seaton Delaval was proving to be very popular from Arriva's perspective.

After a short discussion Council **RESOLVED TO: agree to extend the current subsidy arrangements to March 2018 and to fund the cost of its share of the arrangement (£1,800) from its Community Fund Budget.**

#### **CO066/17 12. Local Transport Programme 2018/19**

The Clerk's report asked the Council to identify its top three priorities for potential inclusion in the County Council's Local Transport Programme (LTP) 2018/19. The Clerk reported that discussions had been held with NCC who advised that it would be appropriate to continue to raise 'speeding concerns on The Avenue where the New Hartley road meets The Avenue' as a priority but asked for two new priorities to be identified to make up Seaton Valley's recommendations.

The Clerk had listed a number of regularly reported transport related concerns in his report and following a short debate the Council

**RESOLVED TO: identify the following three issues as the Council's top three priorities to be submitted to the County Council for potential inclusion in its 2018-19 LTP:**

- **Concerns over speed of traffic on The Avenue, especially near New Hartley junction. Suggestion is to move the beginning of the 40mph speeding restriction towards Seaton Delaval so that it includes both the New Hartley junction and the cycle crossing point ,**
- **Completion of Road Safety Audit of the Main A192 as it passes through Holywell between Holywell Dene Care Home and Holywell Bridge, and**
- **The need for marked out parking bays on the wide pavement area on the west side of Astley Road between the Avenue Head roundabout and the junction of Astley Road with Western Avenue. Such works are required to better utilise the space for increased and improved parking.**

#### **CO067/17 13. Vehicle Activated Speeding Signs**

The Clerk introduced the Engagement and Development Officer's report which asked Council to consider acquiring a movable Vehicle Activated Speed Sign for use throughout the Valley. The Clerk reminded Councillors that residents had identified road safety and speeding issues as one of their top priorities in the Village Planning process and as such the acquisition of such a sign

would be a good way to respond to residents' concerns. The report discussed the pros and cons of two different types of signs and recommended the equipment manufactured by Morelock Signs.

The Clerk said that he had written to Seaton Valley's County Councillors to ask them if they would like to use some of their NCC's Members Funds to acquire additional moveable signs to be used in the Valley. Cllr Dungworth had indicated that she would be providing funding to acquire two signs and Cllr Pidcock has indicated that he would support the acquisition of a further sign. Cllr Richards has already committed her funds to other road safety projects in Seghill this year but has said that she will consider providing funding to purchase another Vehicle Activated Speed Sign in 2018/19.

After a short discussion in which all Councillors expressed their support for the proposal it was **RESOLVED TO: acquire one GR33 Vehicle Activated Sign from Morelock Signs at a cost of £2,410 to be funded from the Council's Community Fund.**

#### **CO068/17 14. Retail Support**

The Clerk again introduced the Engagement and Development Officer's report which sought additional funding to extend the recently completed Retail Improvement Scheme on Seaton Delaval High Street.

The Clerk said that he felt that the improvements to the appearance of five retail premises over the last six months or so had made a good impression with residents and other retailers. He said he felt that if similar improvements could be made to another three premises, then further benefits could be realised in terms of the overall appearance of the high street.

After a short discussion in which all members supported the extension of the scheme Council **RESOLVED TO: agree to provide £5,000 of additional funding to extend the Retail Support Scheme to a further three properties on Seaton Delaval High Street; such funding to be met from General Reserves.**

#### **CO069/17 15. Tour of Britain Cycle Race**

The Clerk spoke to a report that gave details of the forthcoming Tour of Britain Cycle Race which will pass through Seaton Valley on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September at about 3.00pm. The final part of the stage route will take the cyclists out of Blyth along the Links Road towards Fountain Head Bank roundabout. The race will turn right up the bank, past Seaton Delaval Hall and up The Avenue. Riders will then turn right onto Astley Road and head up the A192 out of Seaton Delaval towards Laverick Hall Road and then back to Blyth for the finish.

When the race took place two years ago the area around Avenue Head roundabout was a very popular viewing area and as a consequence the report proposed holding a similar event this time around i.e. a band to play some music supported by microphone commentary on the approaching race.

Additionally however, the report went on to propose holding a further event on Seaton Sluice Links between the Astley Arms and Fountain Head Bank Car Park – A Tour of Britain Picnic, where residents would be invited to bring a picnic to The Links and watch the race. The event would be supported by children's activities, music and a bouncy castle.

After a short discussion members agreed to support both events and Council **RESOLVED TO: Approve expenditure of up to £1,000 to cover both events; such funding to be met from General Reserves**

**CO070/17 16. Requests for Funding – Community Fund**

The Clerk introduced his report which had already been agreed by Finance and General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 21 June 2017. Whilst supporting the recommendations of the Committee, Cllr Dungworth queried whether small contributions to local organisations was the correct use of the Community Fund which had been set up to address more strategic issues. Whilst noting Cllr Dungworth’s comments for future calls on the Community Fund, Council **RESOLVED TO: agree to make contributions to the following organisations from its Community Fund:**

- **Tyneside Gymnastic Club - £1,000**
- **Blyth Valley Gang Show, - £500, and**
- **Harbour Fencing, Seaton Sluice - £1,000**

**CO071/17 17. Bank Reconciliation as at 30 June 2017**

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

**CO072/17 18. Budgetary Control Report**

The Clerk presented his report which provided detailed and summary information on the Council’s income and expenditure compared to budget as 30 June 2017. In summary, the Clerk said that at this early stage in the financial year the Council’s income and expenditure is more or less in line with budgets when known variations are taken into account. The report highlighted one or two of these variances and provided explanations where required. In agreeing the report Council **RESOLVED TO:**

- **Receive and note the content of the report, and**
- **Agree to approve a Credit Supplementary Estimate of £2,500 being the amount of income received following a successful insurance claim to cover the cost of recent drainage works at the Council’s Offices.**

**CO073/17 19. Dates of Future Meetings**

<b>2017</b>	<b>Committee/Council</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Thursday 3 August	Planning	6 pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Thursday 31 August	Planning	6 pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Wednesday 27 Sept	Full Council	7 pm	Seaton Sluice Community Ass.
Thursday 5 October	Planning	6 pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Thursday 26 October	Planning	6 pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices

There being no other business on the Agenda, the meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed by the Chair: .....

Dated: .....

