

# Seaton Valley Council

A Community Council

**Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 29 November 2017 at 7.00 pm. at the Council's Offices, Seaton Delaval.**

The meeting started at 7.02 p.m.

## **PRESENT:**

Councillors: S Stanners (Chair), S Dungworth, L Bowman, E Coulson, K. Collier, D. Nesbitt and S. Hartland.  
Cllr. A. Stanners joined the meeting at 7.35pm.

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

S Potts – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Members of the public - 2

### **CO095/17 1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr B Burt (formerly Swinhoe) and County Cllr B Pidcock had submitted their apologies as they were unable to attend the meeting.

### **CO096/17 2. Disclosure of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **CO097/17 3. Chair's Welcome and Civic Announcements**

After welcoming everyone to the Council's last full meeting of the year the Chair reminded Councillors and members of the public that the Council would agree its 2018/19 budget at its next meeting on 24 January 2017.

He also commented upon the three successful Christmas Lights Switch On's that had taken place last week and reminded everyone that the Holywell Switch On would take place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December, followed by the Seaton Sluice Switch On, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

He finished by saying that he would be bringing item 10 on the Agenda (Seaton Delaval Hall) forward to immediately following Public Question Time.

### **CO098/17 4. Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the two members of public present at the meeting.

### **CO099/17 5. Seaton Delaval Hall**

The Chair welcomed Emma Thomas to the meeting. Emma is employed by the National Trust and is the General Manager at Seaton Delaval Hall and was at tonight's meeting to give Councillors an update upon the Trust's exciting plans for the future development of Seaton Delaval Hall.

Emma explained that the Trust is submitting an £8.3M bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund and took Councillors through her proposals which included work to the structure of the main buildings, the mausoleum, the gardens, improving catering and creating a children's play area. If the bid is successful the works would take place over three phases. She went on to expand on how she hoped the community would become more involved with the operation of the hall through increased participation by local schools and local groups.

At the end of her presentation Emma answered a number of questions and asked the Council

to support the Trust's bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Chair thanked Emma for her excellent and informative presentation and asked if the Council could provide a link on its website to the detailed proposals of the Trust's bid. Emma said that she would be pleased to provide such a link.

In closing this item the Chair said that he was sure that the Council would be pleased to provide a letter of support to the Trust in support of its bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Emma Thomas left the meeting at 7.45pm

#### **CO100/17 6. County Councillor Update**

In Cllr Pidcock's absence Cllr Dungworth provided an update on NCC matters to Council.

Firstly Cllr Dungworth referred to the recent budget announcement by the Government and in particular to the relatively minor level of additional support to be provided for Education. She also drew attention to there being very little mention of Social Care.

She reported that NCC's Planning Department is at risk of external intervention following its failure to reach agreed milestones on delivering a new Core Strategy/Local Plan.

A North of Tyne Combined Authority deal has been announced although this still has to be ratified. Once the deal is signed a Mayoral Election will be held for the area, probably in 2019. It is hoped that some of the additional funding that comes with the deal will be used to progress delivery of the reintroduction of the Ashington/Blyth/Tyne railway line.

On the issue of Local Area Council Meetings, Cllr Dungworth urged Seaton Valley residents and Councillors to try to attend. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 17th of January and will be held at Seaton Delaval Community Centre.

And finally, Cllr Dungworth provided an update on the possibility of new funding being made available by NCC to build a replacement High and Middle School on the Astley/ Whytrig site and to build a replacement school for Holywell First School. In respect of Holywell First School Cllr Pidcock is to meet with NCC Education representatives in late December, and Cllr Dungworth and the Executive Head of the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools are meeting with the same NCC Education representatives in mid-December.

#### **CO101/17 7. Minutes of the Council's Meeting held on 04 October 2017**

The minutes of Seaton Valley Council's Meeting held on 04 October 2017 were agreed as being a correct record and were duly signed and dated by the Chair. With regard to item 13, page 28 of those minutes, the Chair reported that discussions with SENRUG had not been successful and as a result the Council had not taken up Corporate Membership with the group.

#### **CO102/17 8. Minutes of Other Committee Meetings**

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5 and 26 October were presented and received for information as were the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 1 November 2017.

#### **CO103/17 9. Services and Partnership Update**

Councillors referred to a number of matters within the Services Officer's report and in particular to the items below:

- Officers are continuing to raise anti-social behaviour issues in Astley Park with their local Police partners.

- Drainage works at Seaton Terrace allotments are nearing completion.
- Both roundabouts in Seaton Sluice have been planted with crocuses.
- The Chair congratulated those groups that had recently received In Your Neighbourhood Awards from Northumbria Bloom i.e. Aged Miners Cottages, New Hartley – Outstanding, Seaton Sluice Community Garden – Thriving and Holywell Dene – Outstanding.
- Dog fouling signs will be renewed during the winter period.
- Eleven fixed penalty notices have been issued in Seaton Valley during 2017 for Dog Fouling offences.
- The first three Christmas Light Switch On events have been a resounding success.
- Partnership works are up to date and the winter programme is being delivered as planned.

**CO104/17** **10. Neighbourhood Environment Group**  
This item was deferred to a future meeting.

**CO105/17** **11. Bank Reconciliation as at 31 October 2017**  
Council agreed to receive the report, and noted that the Council's bank accounts had been successfully reconciled to its financial records

**CO106/17** **12. Budgetary Control Update**  
The Clerk presented his report which provided detailed and summary information on the Council's income and expenditure compared to budget as at 30 November 2017. In summary, the Clerk said that 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. The Clerk reported that the Council's share of the costs of administering the Local Government Election costs in May 2017 was approximately £6,500; however NCC has yet to raise an invoice for these costs. Year-end projections suggest that the Council's budget is likely to be underspent by circa. £25,000 in 2017/18.

**CO107/17** **13. 2018/19 Budget Update**  
The Clerk presented his report which in essence showed the starting point for political group(s) to begin preparing any budget proposals they may have for the 2018/19 financial year.  
The Budget Review Working Group has met three times and has reviewed the outputs generated from the Councils major cost centres and have fed their observations into the budget process.  
After applying inflationary increases and taking into account all known changes the Clerk's projections showed a starting position of minus £2,000, meaning that any new initiatives will either need to be funded from reserves or from savings elsewhere in the budget.  
The Clerk reported that he expects the amount of the Council's unallocated reserves to be in the region of £40,000 at the end of the current financial year.

**CO108/17** **14. Dates of Future Meetings**

<b>2017 &amp; 2018</b>	<b>Committee/Council</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Tuesday 12 December	Finance & General Purposes	6pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Thursday 21 December	Planning	<b>Cancelled</b>	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Thursday 11 January	Planning	6.30pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Wednesday 24 January	Full Council	7pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices
Wednesday 7 February	Planning	6.30pm	Seaton Valley Council Offices

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

Signed by the Chair: .....

Dated: .....