

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY MONTHLY
MEETING** of the **Council** held at

7 p.m. in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday
8th July 2019**

Present

Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)

Cllr. Gloria Wills (Vice-Chairman) and

Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Vanessa Carmichael, Ann Carr, Alda Hummelinck, Chris Lines, Leo McCormack, Julie Towler, Alfred Walton, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllr Fiona Warrand.

The Clerk reported that due to attending a Mayoral event, Cllr Leo McCormack, will be late in arriving for this meeting.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports:

a. Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held Monday 10th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (DB / M Cant)

b. Minutes of the P&R Committee held Monday 10th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (GW / M Cant)

c. Minutes of the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting held Monday 10th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (AB / CL)

d. Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held Monday 10th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (SW / M Cant)

e. Minutes of the Finance Working Group meeting held Thursday 20th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (GW / AB)

f. Minutes of the Policy & Resources Management Working Group meeting held Monday 24th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (AB / GW)

g. Minutes of the Personnel Committee held Monday 24th June 2019:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (AW / MW)

RESOLVED: To accept all of the minutes as above and recommendations contained therein.

4. Matters of Information:

4.1 EDRC AAP Board Meeting Key Notes:

Cllr Mel Carr is to feed comments made by Cllr Gloria Wills back to the EDRC AAP's next Board Meeting. Cllr Mel Carr to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

Cllr Mel Carr reported that he had noted both local County Cllrs had recently allocated £5000 of their funding for flower displays at Fishburn with Fishburn Parish Council contributing a further £122.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.2 Public Participation – The Cornerhouse:

The Clerk reported that since the production of Committee packs the two Planning Inspectorate appeal document relating to The Cornerhouse have been published on DCC's website. Both appeals have been refused.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.3 Planning Application DM/18/00536/FPA – land to the West of junction of A689 and Stockton Road:

The Clerk has written to Mr Henry Jones of DCC in accordance with the Town Council's wishes. On 12th June 2019 Mr Jones reported that he had no further update regarding this application but was hopeful of drawing a conclusion to the work soon so that it could go before Members for determination. No specific Planning Committee date is yet known. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.4 S106 Monies:

The Town Council awaits further information regarding this matter. Cllrs to continue to monitor this situation.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.5 Impeccable Pig / Sedgefield Squash Club:

The Clerk has informed Mr Steve Welton of Sedgefield Squash Club that Sedgefield Town Council will not accept liability or responsibility for maintenance of any trees planted as part of the Club's extension project. Mr Welton has acknowledged receipt and understanding of this correspondence.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.6 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk has forwarded to DCC Planning Officers the Town Council's comments on planning applications 1-4.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

5. Dates of Meetings:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of all meetings in July 2019 as well as Town Council and civic events until March 2020.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, welcomed members of the public to the meeting and informed them that 15 minutes were allowed for this part of the meeting's agenda with a maximum of 3 minutes per speaker. Cllr Mel Carr said that if any member of the public wanted to have their name appear in the minutes they needed to state their name before speaking. Cllr Mel Carr reminded Cllrs that there is to be no discussion of matters while the meeting is close for the public to speak. Cllr Mel Carr then closed the meeting whilst the public gave their views and comments.

Mr Chris Stockhill said that he wished to speak about a letter received recently by his parents in relation to memorial items on his sister's grave at Butterwick Road Cemetery. Mr Stockhill said this was an emotive subject and was aware that letters had been sent to other families. Mr Stockhill said he had spoken to several Cllrs from Fishburn, Sedgefield and Great Aycliffe. In relation to Great Aycliffe, Mr Stockhill said that they have rules which state what memorial items are and are not permitted in their cemeteries, however, they do not enforce their rules due to the emotive nature of this matter. Mr Stockhill said the (Sedgefield) Town Council's decision has caused uproar in the Town and he felt that only the part of the cemetery that people use and visit had been targeted. Mr Stockhill said the Council's letter had referenced health and safety concerns as being one of the factors regarding this approach and he questioned what assessments have been undertaken. Mr Stockhill said the rules relating to Butterwick Road Cemetery were in his opinion unclear and not precise in relation to the specific acceptable location of items such as pots/flower vases. Mr Stockhill said that Great Aycliffe Town Council permitted people with burial rights in their cemeteries to maintain their own graves. He also highlighted the approach adopted by Durham Road Cemetery at Stockton where many different types of memorials are permitted on graves. He said there were lots of unhappy people in the Sedgefield regarding this matter, and whilst he did not know whether the decision to issue recent letters had been a collective decision or made by one individual, this was against the wishes of local people and what they wanted to see at the cemetery. Mr Stockhill asked that people be allowed to maintain their own graves and said that his parents used to take their own grass cutter into the cemetery until asked by the Town Council to stop. Mr Stockhill noted that many headstones in the cemetery are being laid down and others staked which makes the cemetery look derelict when in contrast lots of people make a great effort to maintain their loved ones graves as it is the only thing which they can do in memorial to their loved one. Mr Stockhill urged the Town Council to rethink its policy and think about the impact upon people. He said that he had spread the word regarding this matter locally through social media and the media instead of going wider at this stage. Mr Stockhill said that he would be willing to be part of a discussion with the Town Council to consider this matter further. Other members of the public expressed their thanks to Mr Stockhill.

One lady said she reiterated Mr Stockhill's words and urged the Town Council to think from its hearts. Graves are the only place that families have left and the Town Council's approach was cruel and not right. She believed that memorial items currently on graves did not affect grass cutting. She felt like those who visited the cemetery most regularly were the ones being targeted.

One lady said that visiting the cemetery was a part of the grieving process and that graves

are kept nicely. She said that the real health and safety hazard at the cemetery were the tripping hazards caused by headstones being laid flat. She also felt that the grass cutters were disrespectful when undertaking their work. This lady said the people who kept their graves the nicest were the ones who were grieving the most. The letters issued were insensitive to parents who have lost children and people should be allowed to rest in peace. She felt that it was hurtful to hear of people talking about moving their loved ones from the cemetery.

One man felt the Town Council had taken a backwards approach to health and safety. Memorials on graves were not the issue but instead headstones which had been laid flat and the drug taking and vandalism at the cemetery by young people congregating around the "bus" shelter. He felt the wrong people were being victimized.

Mr Mark Cain said he had received a letter which was factually incorrect as it stated that items which had not been his were on the grave and had never been there. Mr Cain confirmed that he had subsequently received a letter resolving this matter but had not received an apology. He felt the matter had been handled insensitively.

Mr John Adcock said that he had family graves at the cemetery which had been there for 50-60 years and there had never been a problem in that time. He said that flowers should go on a grave and not at the side of a headstone. He would not be moving his items.

One lady said she felt like people were being bullied. The cemetery rules had changed in 2019. This lady said that she would not wish her own tragic circumstances upon anyone but that she would not be removing any items from her grave or permit anyone else to move items as this was her only way to leave a memorial to her loved one.

One lady said she was disgusted at this situation and felt the request for items to be removed from graves was despicable.

One lady said she had witnessed her best friend's world crumble due to loss and was now potentially having to grieve the loss of her special place for grieving. She felt the trip hazard posed by laid down headstones was far greater than that posed by memorials. She felt the grass cutters work was despicable. She said that it was heartless to ask people to remove memorial items and that people over the years have had all sorts of memorial items and never faced challenge. This lady accused the Town Council of issuing a generic letter.

One lady asked if the change in the cemetery rules had come about because of health and

safety concerns or because of complaints? This lady also said that if money could be found for flower pots around the Town then more money could be spent at the cemetery.

Mr Alan Nicholson said that he has spoken about his on-going grievance regarding the abysmal state of the cemetery for many years. He said that Cllrs needed to understand that the cemetery was actually maintained, i.e. by those looking after the graves of their family/next of kin.

One man said that he had a family grave close to a child's grave which was kept in an immaculate condition. He felt the Town Council's approach was insensitive and asked everyone to move on from this matter by leaving things as they are. He understood that if a grave became neglected that action may be necessary but there was no need to interfere when this was not the case. When action is necessary individuals should be spoken to directly. He thanked people for attending and encouraging a dialogue.

One man said he felt this was all about money and getting the cheapest contractor in to cut the grass.

One lady said that the grass cutting machines used at the cemetery were too heavy for the land.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked the public for their comments. He said that Sedgefield Town Council understands the difficulties regarding this matter and needs to have consideration for all. The issues raised by grave owners who have contacted the Town Council directly will be dealt with on an individual basis due to the personal nature of this matter.

Cllr Mel Carr re-opened the meeting.

7. Internal Reports:

7.1 Chairman's Report:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Chairman's Report in which Cllr Mel Carr detailed the activities he had undertaken since the last Monthly Meeting. Since the production of this report Cllr Mel Carr reported he had attended DCC's Highways Committee meeting on 5th July 2019 at which DCC had approved the buildouts near to Sedgefield Primary School and Crispin Court. Cllr Mel Carr reported that County Cllr John Robinson had agreed to the build out near to the school entrance as being an effective safety measure, however, he had left the decision regarding Crispin Court to be determined by Committee members without making any

comment himself. Cllr David Brown commented that in his personal capacity as a County Cllr he had been attending another meeting in County Hall on that particular day/time. Cllr Mel Carr proposed the Town Council write to DCC's Conservation Officer and ask if he was consulted about this major alteration within the Town's Conservation Area. In addition, Cllr Mel Carr proposed that further correspondence be sent to the Conservation Officer requesting that the soon to be installed yellow lines be narrower and paler in colour as per the requirements of the Conservation Area guidance. Cllrs agreed with both proposals. Cllr Alf Walton expressed his concerns regarding the blind spot which will be created by cars parking in the near bays at the Crispin Court junction. Cllr Ann Carr asked if there was any means to appeal DCC's decision but Cllr Mel Carr said there was no such opportunity. Cllr Gloria Wills reminded all that the Town's Conservation Area is a part of the County Durham Local Plan, something which was not included in the previous Plan and it was therefore important to ensure the Area was correctly enforced.

RESOLVED:

i) To receive this information.

ii) The Clerk to write to DCC's Conservation Officer in accordance with Cllrs wishes.

(Cllr Leo McCormack joined the meeting)

7.2 Mayor's Report:

The Clerk circulated to all a Mayor's Report which detailed Cllr Leo McCormack's activities as Mayor since the previous Monthly Meeting. Cllr McCormack said that he had particularly enjoyed attending the Town's tub planting event which had been very well organized and he hoped that the involvement of local young people provided a legacy for the future

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.3 Skerne Medical Group Update Report by Cllr Leo McCormack:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Skerne Medical Group Update Report produced by Cllr Leo McCormack following his attendance, on behalf of the Town Council, at a meeting with representatives from the Skerne Medical Group at which the current situation facing the Group was explained along with potential options for the future. Cllr McCormack's report was accompanied by a series of slides which

will be used during forthcoming public consultation events. Cllr McCormack explained that 5 scenarios have been identified for the Group's future but many are not financially viable. Whilst the Group's existing practice model has served the Town well and it was the wish of everyone to retain it this may not be possible due to the reduction in number of practice partners and other circumstances.

Cllr Alf Walton questioned how it was possible to have 2.8 partners. Cllr McCormack replied that one partner worked part-time hence the .8.

Cllr David Brown expressed his view that if all the County Cllrs in the Skerne area got together and apportioned Section 106 monies effectively and not for running tracks and other sporting facilities then there could be a "solid" medical group for the entire area.

Cllr Gloria Wills commented that GPs are business people who rent their premises from the NHS. Several years ago she raised the idea of the Group operating from vacant accommodation at the Community Hospital in the Town, however, she understood that this PFI site had cost a lot of money and generated significant debt in its lifetime. Cllr Wills felt that people would be in a better position to comment if they could see the actual figures underpinning all matters. Cllr Mel Carr said that he had repeatedly asked representatives from North Tees health about other services using the Community Hospital following the departure of the mental health services located there, however, he has been told by several sources that the rent is far too high. Cllr McCormack confirmed that members of the Skerne Medical Group have said they could not afford the rent at the Community Hospital. Cllr Wills questioned how the Commissioning Group could then afford to be located at that site and again said it would be easier to make a more informed decision regarding options if more detailed financial figures were provided. Cllr Wills said that she understood that it cost the NHS £2.5 million per year to run the Skerne Medical Group. Cllr Alda Hummelinck replied that whilst this sounded like a lot of money a considerable number of services were provided in return. Cllr Chris Lines reported that several public consultation events regarding this matter will commence on 9th July 2019 and he urged members of the public and Cllrs to attend. Cllr Mel Carr expressed his concern that one of the potential scenarios was for the Sedgefield practice to relocate to a new site at Trimdon and also urged the public and Cllrs to participate in the imminent public consultation exercises. Cllr Mavis Wayman asked what would happen to the Group's building in Sedgefield if the practice was relocated. Cllr Mel Carr replied that the site could be sold. Cllr Hummelinck said that there were lots of options for the public to consider and any

decision made would not be done easily but she believed that the Group had invested lots of time in identifying and exploring options which are now to be consulted upon.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.4 Speeding in Sedgefield Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Speeding In Sedgefield Update Report which provided updates from Temporary Inspector Alex Clarke regarding findings from community speedwatch work on traffic flow along the Sedgefield to Fishburn Road and DCC's rotational programme of flashing speed signs. The Clerk confirmed that she has emailed Mr Danny Harland from DCC to ask that Sedgefield be considered at a future time on the flashing speed sign rota. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter. Cllr Alf Walton said that he did not believe community speedwatch work gave a true reflection of speeding.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8. External Reports:

None.

9. Correspondence:

9.1. Community Led Housing Opportunities (email and attachment from Ms Lauren Broderick, DCC dated 26th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachment from Ms Lauren Broderick of DCC dated 26th June 2019 providing an introductory overview of community led housing opportunities.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9.2 Sedgefield – Footpath Access Between Taylor Wimpey and Story Developments (email from Mr Owen Shaw, DCC dated 24th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Owen Shaw of DCC dated 24th June 2019 in relation to the footpath access between the Taylor Wimpey and Story Developments in Sedgefield.

Cllr Gloria Wills said that this email was confusing and asked for the background. The Clerk replied that at the previous P&R Committee meeting in June 2019 Cllr David Brown in his County Cllr role had been asked to liaise directly with DCC Officers to address the Town Council's concern that it appeared that Officers in Public Rights of Way had a different view on this matter and Footpath 16 to those of Officer in Highways. It was as a result of Cllr Brown's investigations that Mr Shaw had sent his email dated 24th June 2019 to the Town Council.

Cllr Stephen Winter confirmed that he is also in discussions as a a private resident with Mr Shaw regarding this matter. Cllr Winter said that he has been told that the footpath between the Taylor Wimpey development and adjoining Story Development will be opened by the end of the school summer holidays at the latest but hopefully before then. Cllr Winter has asked Mr Shaw for clarification as to how this ties in with the Closure Order at the end of July as it has been reported that this will be for a further 12 months but would like assurances regarding this matter. Cllr Winter reminded all that he had previously been told the footpath could not open whilst work was going on at plots 32 and 33, however, as these are both fenced off and the 'active' site was behind each respective fence he did not understand the logic of keeping the footpath closed.

Cllr Allan Blakemore said that his biggest concern was the confusion that was being created in relation to this matter and the real possibility that as a result of this the footpath is lost.

Cllr Gloria Wills said there were two issues relating to this matter. The first was the closure of the footpath whilst building was taking place and the second was the long-term diversion of this footpath to ensure that it was routed in a way that suited people.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write to Mr Owen Shaw of DCC to inform him of the Town Council's understanding of the matters relating to Footpath 16 and to request clarification as to whether this interpretation was correct and also to seek confirmation of dates regarding the opening of the footpath between both developments.

9.3 PRE90/19/01756 Removal of Telephone Box, The Square, Sedgefield (email from Ms Hilary Sperring, DCC dated 28th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Hilary Sperring of DCC dated 28th June 2019 in which she wanted the Town Council's views on BT's

proposal to remove the telephone box at The Square, Sedgefield. Ms Sperring also made the Town Council aware that there is the opportunity to purchase this facility should the Town Council wish to do so. Cllr David Brown said that telephone boxes were diminishing in number and felt that it should be preserved and adopted. Other Cllrs disagreed as this was not a old style red phone box but a modern version which did not add anything to the Town.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Ms Sperring that the Town Council does not have any objections to the telephone box at The Square, Sedgefield being removed.

9.4 County Durham Plan Submission For Independent Examination (email from Mr Stuart Timmiss, DCC dated 28th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Stuart Timmiss of DCC dated 28th June 2019 in which he detailed the County Durham Plan has been submitted for independent examination. The Clerk reminded all that she had also circulated this information electronically so that everyone could access directly all relevant documentation via hyperlinks provided by DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9.5 Planning Application DM/19/01970/FPA 9 The Orchard, Sedgefield (letter from Mr and Mrs Spalding):

The Clerk circulated to all a copy of letter from Mr and Mrs Spalding sent to Mr Mark Sandford, DCC Planning Officer, in relation to planning application DM/19/01970/FPA pertaining to 9 The Orchard. Mr and Mrs Spalding wished to make the Town Council aware of their objections to this application and asked if the Town Council could support their letter to Mr Sandford.

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to take the time to consider Mr and Mrs Spalding's letter and to delegate discussion of this matter to the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 15th July 2019.

10. The Sedgefield Plan:

10.1 The Sedgefield Plan Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Plan Update Report.

Since the production of this report the Clerk confirmed that Mr Stuart Carter had confirmed that he had met with Mr Stuart Timmiss and both local County Cllrs and all were happy to accept the Independent Examiners Report and proceed towards a Community Referendum on 12th September 2019. Cllrs confirmed that they were happy with the array of options presented for raising awareness for a vote yes campaign in relation to the neighbourhood plan and for the Clerk to commence work on this over the summer with the help of volunteer Cllrs.

Cllr Gloria Wills said The Sedgefield Plan had been adopted by the Town Council on 10th September 2018 but questioned why the version of the Plan on the website was different and sought reassurance that the Independent Examiner had considered the correct version of the Plan. Cllr Chris Lines confirmed that the neighbourhood plan on the website was the correct, latest version and the one which had been considered by the Independent Examiner. Cllr Lines explained that the Plan submitted to DCC was that adopted by the Town Council on 10th September 2018. At that point the plan became DCC's and underwent Regulation 16 and minor changes were made in accordance with formatting, consideration of comments and incorporation of Basic Conditions Statement. The process now is to amend in accordance with the wishes of the Independent Examiner, amendments which do not alter the intentions of the neighbourhood plan but instead ensure that correct/appropriate terminology and language is used in accordance with NPPF and planning legislation/requirements. Cllr Allan Blakemore confirmed this and said that it was now essential the plan proceeded as quickly as possible towards a Community Referendum. Cllr Wills stated that she did not wish to delay the plan but to ensure that process had been correct. Cllrs Vanessa Carmichael, Ann Carr and Mavis Wayman sought reassurance that there were not two copies of The Sedgefield Plan. Cllrs Lines and Blakemore provided this reassurance. Cllr David Brown said that in his capacity as a County Cllr he had attended a meeting at County Hall the previous week and it had been confirmed that the neighbourhood plan had been correctly considered by the Independent Examiner and now with the inclusion of the amendments he has requested can proceed to a Community Referendum.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Sedgefield Plan to be amended to incorporate the requested changes by the Independent Examiner and uploaded to the plan's dedicated website.**
- ii) The Clerk to email Cllrs to seek volunteers to participate in preparing materials for the promotion of a vote yes campaign in relation to The Sedgefield Plan's referendum.**

11. Current Planning Applications:

A schedule of the current planning applications had been circulated prior to the meeting. Each application was then considered and the following comments were made (Note: number refers to the number on the circulated list):

11.1 DM/19/01219/FPA – conversion of the existing storage building into 2 dwellings, Station House, Station Cottages, Wynyard:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.2 DM/19/01818/FPA – single storey rear extension, 22 Front Street, Fishburn:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.3 DM/19/01862/FPA – installation of pitched roof over garage, hall and lounge flat roof, 43 The Meadows, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.4 DM/19/01866/FPA – alteration, partial demolition and rebuild of farm buildings, change of use to provide 3 no holiday homes, Murton East Farm Composting Site, Wingate:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.5 DM/19/01867/LB – alteration, partial demolition and rebuild of farm buildings, change of use to provide 3 no holiday homes – Listed Building Consent, Murton East Farm Composting Site, Wingate:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.6 DM/19/01873/FPA – replacement of existing side/rear extension and attached garage with two storey side extension and detached garage, and single storey rear extension, 1 Rowan Oval, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.7 DM/19/01914/TPO – T1 (sycamore) 15% approx 1.5 m – 2m suppressive crown reductions on east and south sides, cuts no more than 75mm (approx) at point of attachment. T2 (English Elm) end weight reduction of approx 20% 2m – 2.5m on two limbs on east side. T6 (Sycamore) T7 (Norway Maple) crown lift to approx 3m. Clearance pruning of 2 -2.5m approx from no 4, both trees, 4, 7 and 8 Turnpike Walk, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

11.8 DM/19/01970/FPA – two storey rear extension and first floor north gable window, 9 The Orchard, Sedgefield:

To delegate consideration of this to the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 15th July 2019.

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1-7 above to be submitted to DCC Planners and to delegate consideration of application 8 to the Environment Committee meeting

on Monday 15th July 2019.

ADDITIONAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The Clerk circulated to all details of the following two planning applications which had been published earlier that day by DCC:

DM/19/01959/FPA – internal remodeling, alterations, demolition of existing outhouses and new single storey extension, new window and door openings and erection of 1.8m boundary wall, Greenhill Farm, Beacon Lane, Sedgefield

DM/19/01960/LB – internal remodeling, alterations, demolition of existing outhouses and new single storey extension, new window and door openings and erection of 1.8m boundary wall, Greenhill Farm, Beacon Lane, Sedgefield

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to take the time to consider the above planning applications and to delegate discussion of these to the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 15th July 2019.

PENDING PLANNING APPLICATION:

Cllr Mark Cant reported that he had recently had discussions with Mr Stephen Reed, DCC's Development Manager in relation to Sedgefield Racecourse's regular use of a marquee for outdoor events and had questioned how this regular use of this structure could be considered temporary. Mr Reed has subsequently reported that the Racecourse will imminently be submitting a retrospective planning application regarding this matter and Cllr Cant wanted fellow Cllrs to be aware of this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to consider any future planning application when received.

AUGUST 2019 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that there is no scheduled Monthly or Committee meetings in August. Planning applications lists will continue to be circulated to all Cllrs when received from DCC and Cllrs are asked to forward their comments to the Clerk within the week of receipt. If it becomes apparent that there are concerns/issues relating to a particular application(s) then a Special Town Council meeting will be called in August 2019.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.24pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY POLICY & RESOURCES** of the Council held following the Monthly meeting in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 8th July 2019**

Present **Cllr. Gloria Wills (Chairman)**
 Cllr. Mel Carr (Vice-Chairman) and
 Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Chris Lines, Leo McCormack, Julie Towler, Alfred Walton, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael and Fiona Warrand.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Sedgefield Town Council Corporate Plan:

This matter has been discussed at a recent Finance Working Group at which the Council's Internal Auditor was in attendance. It is recognised that whilst this Plan is important to have it must also be put into context of the Council's other on-going work priorities. A proposed structure was presented to the Finance Working Group meeting held in September 2018 and time is now required for the Clerk to prepare a brainstorming session with all Cllrs to identify what they believe to be the Council's priorities as part of an exercise to agree collectively such activities. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Legal Issues (Ceddesfeld Hall and Grounds):

The Clerk has informed Mr Anthony Walters that the Town Council instruct him to oversee the formal registration of Ceddesfeld Hall and grounds with the Land Registry once information has been obtained by the Clerk from the Church of England archives. Information has now been received from the archives and forwarded to the Solicitor for consideration and additional information has now been requested which the Clerk needs to consider. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Meeting with District Church Council Members:

Findings from recent research days was presented to members of the Estates Working Group at their meeting on 20th May 2019. Cllrs are now working their way through this documentation and this at their most recent meeting on 4th July 2019 so a recommendation can be brought to a future P&R Committee meeting regarding the ownership / maintenance of St Edmund's Churchyard. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.4 Town Council Trailer:

The Town Council's original trailer has now been refurbished and is back in use. The Clerk conveyed the Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent's thanks for this.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.5 Purchase of Land From DCC:

The Town Council's solicitor has confirmed that all necessary paperwork to purchase land from DCC around Butteriwick Road Cemetery has now been correctly signed and submitted to DCC for final processing. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.6 Parish Hall Sound System:

Clockwork AV have fully installed the new sound system. LR Electrics have been to view the electrical work and this took place in June 2019. Work is now underway to find a contractor to dismantle the cupboard. Information is awaited from Swanflight the makers of the custom-made, secure, ventilated rack cabinet to house the necessary amps. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.7 Proposed 2019 Treeworks – Grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall:

The Clerk has informed AW Treecare of their successful quotation, issued a Purchase Order number and requested their advice regarding any permissions required. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.8 North End Garage Lease:

This matter was discussed at the Estates Working Group meeting held on 4th July 2019. A recommendation report will be considered under agenda item 8.6.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.9 Local Council's Charter:

The Clerk has forwarded to Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC the Town Council's comments on the latest version of the Charter. CDALC to keep the Town Council updated on the Charter's progress.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.10 Village Green Issues:

The Estates Working Group are currently drafting a Village Green Policy and will then oversee the production of a letter to businesses/resident whose properties border village green informing them that the Town Council is reviewing its Village Green Policy. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.11 Durham Records Office:

The Clerk is in discussions with Durham Records Officer to seek exact costings in order that a recommendation report can be brought to a future P&R Committee meeting. In addition, the Clerk is also in discussions with DCC's Head of Estates regarding potential relocation of Town Council regalia. From this the remaining data will then to be considered as part of the Policy & Records Management Working Group's on-going task to oversee compliance with GDPR. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.12 Medium Term Financial Plan:

The Finance Working Group, in conjunction with the Council's Internal Auditor, will begin reviewing the Medium Term Financial Plan from its July 2019 meeting onwards. Note: This work is reflected in the internal auditor's work programme for 2019/20. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.13 Payment by BACS:

The Clerk is now liaising with Barclays in order to obtain guidance regarding the necessary changes required to the Council's bank mandate in order to permit BACS payment whilst still ensuring robust financial controls are in place. The Finance Working Group will oversee this work which will be subject to future internal audit review. In the interim payments will continue via cheque. The Finance Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.14 Station Road Playing Field:

The Clerk has written to Mr John Reed of DCC acknowledging receipt of his latest

correspondence and informed him that Town Cllrs are now considering the current terms of the lease and will be in touch again soon. This matter was placed on the agenda of the most recent Estates Working Group meeting and Cllrs are now considering the lease shared. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.15 Delegation Scheme:

Initial work to review the Council's current Delegation Scheme will commence at the July 2019 Policy & Records Management Working group. This work will involve the Council's Internal Auditor who has factored this work into his 2019/20 work plan. If deemed necessary, a further recommendation report will be brought to a future P&R Committee meeting for consideration in the latter part of 2019/20. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.16 Emptying Recycling Bays – Butterwick Road Cemetery:

This work has successfully been completed. The matter of monitoring future usage of the Recycling Bays will be put onto the Estates Working Group agenda.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.17 Youth Shelter:

Work continues to find a contractor who would be able to reinstate the bin near to the Youth Shelter. A potential owner of the shops has been found which includes suspected ownership of the hedge between the doctors' surgery and the shops. A request has been sent asking for the hedge to be cut back and self-seeded trees removed. The Estates Working Group are to consider the installation of CCTV at the exterior of the Town Council Offices and the Parish Hall for security purposes and if necessary bring a recommendation report to a future P&R Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.18 Hardwick Hall Hotel Licensing Matters:

Mr Martin Haigh of DCC to keep the Clerk updated regarding the review of Hardwick Hall Hotel's Premises Licence. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.19 CDALC – President and Vice President Positions:

The Clerk has informed CDALC of the Town Council's wish to re-nominate Cllr Allan Blakemore for Vice President and Honorary Treasurer positions of CDALC.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Gloria Wills, closed the meeting for the public to give views and comments. Members of the public present did not have views or comments to make. The meeting was then re-opened.

5. Reports:

5.1 Terms of Reference For Finance Working Group 2019/20 Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Terms of Reference For Finance Working Group 2019/20 Report.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Terms of Reference For Policy & Records Management Working Group 2019/20 Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Terms of Reference For Policy & Records Management Working Group 2019/20 Report.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Staff Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy

Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Staff Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee which was accompanied by a copy of the Policy being proposed for adoption.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the Staff Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy with immediate effect.

5.4 Staff Working Time Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Staff Working Time Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee which was accompanied by a copy of the Policy being proposed for adoption. The Clerk reported that in relation to page 37 a four week timesheet template had been obtained from Ferryhill Town Council and this will be adapted and trialled with some staff in August 2019.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the Staff Working Time Policy with immediate effect.

5.5 Leave of Absence Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Leave of Absence Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee which was accompanied by a copy of the Policy being proposed for adoption.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the Leave of Absence Policy with immediate effect.

5.6 Adverse Weather Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Adverse Weather Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee which was accompanied by a copy of the Policy being proposed for adoption.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the Adverse Weather Policy with immediate effect.

5.7 Expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery Recommendation Report produced by the Finance Group which contained recommendations that could now be considered as the purchase of land from DCC appears to be coming to a successful conclusion.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Town Council to submit a Section 106 funding application to DCC in relation to the Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Project.**
- ii) The Town Council to submit to DCC a planning application in relation to the Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Project.**

Note: Reports related to information exempt from the public are considered under agenda item 8.

6. Financial Matters:

6.1 Invoices for payment by cheques for approval after 10th June 2019:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a list of cheques for approval which detailed cheques numbered 109523 to 109538. The Clerk circulated to all an updated list which featured cheques numbered 109539 to 109546.

In relation to cheque number 109538 to Lloyds Ltd, Cllr Alf Walton said that this work should have been undertaken free of charge in accordance with the tractor's warranty, however, Lloyds would not accept this and refused to waiver the charges. The Clerk reminded all that at the previous month's P&R Committee meeting it had been resolved not the use the services of Lloyds Ltd in the future.

In relation to cheque number 109541, thanks were expressed to Cllr Gloria Wills for overseeing the refurbishment of the Town Council's original trailer. It was agreed that materials had been purchased at a very reasonable price.

The Clerk highlighted cheque number 109544 to Barrington Law and explained that this amount reflected all costs in relation to the purchase of land from DCC including the actual amount to be paid to DCC as well as search fees, DCC legal fees and the Town Council's legal fees. Cllr Gloria Wills commented that the Town Council's solicitor's fees were very reasonable when compared to those charged by DCC's counterparts. Cllrs agreed.

In relation to cheque number 109529, Cllr Stephen Winter questioned the duration of this invoice. The Clerk reported that this invoice relates to the quarterly cost for photocopying and printing on one printer and one printer/photocopier. The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that the Town Council does provide a photocopying service to the public and several community groups.

In relation to cheque number 109531, Cllr Alf Walton questioned this item which was described as pest control. The Clerk confirmed that this is the cost of the Town Council's annual agreement with DCC's Pest Control Services. Cllr Walton requested information regarding what is covered by this agreement, i.e. number of visits per year and location of visits.

The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that there is no scheduled P&R Committee meeting in August. As per previous years, invoices for payment will be considered and scrutinized by the Chair of the Council, Chair of P&R plus Town Clerk and then retrospectively reported in September 2019.

RESOLVED:

- i) All cheques and invoices were approved for payment.**
- ii) Cllrs Mel Carr and Gloria Wills plus the Town Clerk to duly sign the cheques.**
- iii) The Clerk to forward to Cllr Alf Walton the information he has requested regarding the annual agreement with DCC's Pest Control Services.**
- iv) The Chair of the Council, Chair of P&R plus Town Clerk to consider and scrutinize invoices for payment on Monday 12th August 2019 and retrospectively report this matter to the September 2019 P&R Committee meeting.**

6.2 Financial Budget Comparison as at 28th June 2019:

Cllr Gloria Wills reported that she had forwarded earlier that day some queries to the Clerk relating to the information displayed in the last year's actual figures for the Parish Hall income. The Clerk confirmed this is currently being investigated and will be resolved for the next Finance Working Group meeting.

Cllr Mel Carr reported earlier that day he had sought clarification regarding items relating to open spaces expenditure and had received full answers to his questions. In addition, he had requested clarification as to when an invoice is issued for Ceddesfeld Hall rent. The Clerk confirmed this is invoiced in December/January.

Cllr Alf Walton questioned why in relation to budget heading 225 for allotments income such a high figure was shown. It was pointed out that Cllr Walton was reading the total Environment figure which included village greens/grounds rent, open spaces, dog bags, cemetery, sponsorship and allotments.

RESOLVED:

To receive the Financial Budget Comparison as at 28th June 2019.

6.3 Debtors List as at 28th June 2019:

The Clerk informed Cllrs that in relation to two outstanding invoices letters have been issued in accordance with the Council's Debt Policy. It is hoped that as these relate to a long-established regular user that this can be resolved soon.

RESOLVED:

To receive the Debtors List as at 28th June 2019.

6.4 Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 30th June 2019:

RESOLVED:

To receive Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 30th June 2019.

6.5 June 2019 Bank Reconciliations and May 2019 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation Report by Town Clerk:

RESOLVED:

To receive the 1st – 30th June 2019 Bank Reconciliations and the 1st – 31st May 2019 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation.

6.6 Future Section 106 Agreements Recommendation by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Future Section 106 Agreements Recommendation by the Finance Working Group.

RESOLVED:

When any planning application is being considered within the Electoral Division that could generate Section 106 monies, regardless of whether or not the Town Council approves/objects to the application, the Town Council requests that some allocation is made towards Sedgefield Town Council to ensure that it can continue to effectively provide services required as the area

increases in size.

6.7 Mayor's Account / Mayor's Charity Recommendation by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Mayor's Account / Mayor's Charity Recommendation by the Finance Working Group.

RESOLVED:

The Town Council to continue with its current arrangements in relation to the operation of a Mayor's Account which is fully audited by both the internal and external auditors as part of the year end procedures and agreed annual programme of internal audit and not to undertake any further work into the creation of a Mayor's Charity via the Charity Commission.

7. Correspondence:

7.1 Sedgefield Youth Club AGM (minutes of meeting held 10th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of Sedgefield Youth Club's Management Committee's AGM held on 10th June 2019.

In relation to item 6 of these minutes, Cllr Gloria Wills questioned how petty cash money was held by the Youth Club. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that some considerable time ago she had requested clarification on a number of areas relating to money held by the Youth Club. The answers to these questions were outstanding and she asked the Cllrs Julie Towler and Chris Lines discuss these with the Youth Club and provide an update as soon as possible. In the interim the Clerk confirmed that how the Youth Workers are recording petty cash transactions is correct and had been viewed by the Council's internal auditor during the recent year end process. With regards to remaining County Cllr funding and donation from the previous Mayor this money is currently being held by the Town Council on behalf of the Youth Club and the Clerk said she would prepare a report for the next Finance Working Group meeting so this could be considered in more detail. Finally, it was noted that the next Sedgefield Youth Club Management Committee meeting would take place on Monday 9th September 2019 and Cllr Towler would bring a report following that meeting to the next Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting so as to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Proposed Conversion to Academy Status / Incorporation Into The Laidlaw Schools Trust (email and attachments from Ms Penny Walmsley, Sedgefield Community College dated 18th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated all an email and consultation attachments from Ms Penny Walmsley of Sedgefield Community College dated 18th June 2019 detailing proposals for the College to convert to Academy Status / incorporation into the Laidlaw Schools Trust.

Cllr Gloria Wills asked why the College would want to consider becoming an Academy? Cllr Stephen Winter replied that he had noted there were 5 or 6 schools within the Laidlaw Trust located in inner city areas at Newcastle and Sunderland. Whilst he had not delved into the performance of each of those he was aware that Sedgefield Community College is rated by Ofsted as Outstanding in all areas and was concerned there could be a risk to the Community College by joining such a Trust that its attainment level might be reduced to fit with others rather than be sustained or improved further. Cllrs agreed this was a very good point and should form the basis of the Town Council's response to this matter.

Cllr Mel Carr pointed out that ultimately the decision would be made by the Governors at the Community College.

Cllr Gloria Wills requested that clarification be sought as to how much land DCC would be retaining and loosing if the Community College did become an Academy. The Clerk suggested that Cllr David Brown in his County Cllr role may be best placed to find this information out. Cllr Brown agreed to investigate this matter.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to reply to Ms Penny Walmsley in accordance with the Council's wishes.**
- iii) Cllr David Brown to investigate the implications upon DCC retained/lost land and report back to the Town Council.**

7.3 Sedgefield Bowling Club (letter from Mrs Sheila Sutherland dated 11th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter from Mrs Sheila Sutherland of Sedgefield Bowling Club dated 11th June 2019 in which she informed the Town

Clerk that the Club would no longer be pursuing their project for having an outdoor bowling green in the Town. The Clerk reminded all of the Terrace Hill money held by the Town Council on behalf of the Bowling Club's project. The Clerk said that she would go back through the documentation relating to the Terrace Hill money to determine the situation with any unclaimed money and take a report to a future Finance Working Group meeting.

Cllr Gloria Wills said that it was such a shame that the Bowling Club had worked so hard over many years and achieved their planning application approval for the project not to proceed. Cllr Wills suggested that another group/body in the Town might be able to continue this work and take it to fruition, e.g Sedgefield Development Trust, Ceddesfeld Hall etc. Cllr Allan Blakemore said that when the Terrace Hill money was initially received it was his understanding that this money could be allocated as to how the Town Council wanted but felt it would be useful to get confirmation of this by going through the records. Cllr Leo McCormack believed that it would be useful to find out if there were any other community groups wanting to take this matter forward as the old Neighbourhood Watch group had been near to collapsing but through promotional work with the wider community it had recently been rejuvenated. Cllr David Brown asked for clarification as to how the Town Council would reply to Mrs Sutherland.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to liaise with Mrs Sutherland to determine whether the Bowling Club have already approached any other community groups/bodies in the Town to seek assistance or take over the outdoor bowling green project. The Clerk to investigate the Terrace Hill funding documentation and then all matters to be considered by the Finance Working Group so that a future report can be brought back to P&R Committee.

Cllr Gloria Wills explained that due to the confidential nature of the following items these would need to be discussed under Exempt Information and requested the member of the public present, and indeed had any member of the press been present they would have also been requested, to leave the meeting at this point (Section 1 Sub-Section (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960).

8. Consideration of Reports Exempt from Public:

8.1. Sedgefield Youth Club Summer Sessions Report by Cllr Julie Towler:

Cllrs considered Sedgefield Youth Club's proposal to hold a series of summer

sessions.

8.2 Evolve Data Centre Recommendation Report by Policy & Records Management Working Group:

Cllrs considered the Policy & Records Management Working Group's recommendation to move to a Data Centre.

8.3 Butterwick Road Cemetery Update Report by Estates Working Group:

Cllrs considered a Butterwick Road Cemetery Update Report presented by the Estates Working Group along with consideration of comments made during the public participation element of the Monthly Meeting in order to determine the Council's way to progress these matters to a resolution.

(Cllrs Julie Towler and Ann Carr left the meeting at this point).

8.4 The Pickled Parson / Village Green Update Report by Town Clerk:

Cllrs considered this matter which related to an area of village green.

8.5 Pizza Castle / Village Green Update Report by Town Clerk:

Cllrs considered this matter which related to an area of village green.

8.6 North End Garage Lease Recommendation Report by Estates Working Group:

Cllrs considered a proposal by the Estates Working Group in relation to North End Garage's request for a new lease with the Town Council.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.10pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the Council held
At 7 pm in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 15th July 2019**

Present **Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, Alda Hummelinck, Julie Towler, Alfred Walton, Gloria Wills and Stephen Winter

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Chris Lines, Leo McCormack, Fiona Warrand and Mavis Wayman.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Sedgefield and Hammingeln Twinning Association:

Cllr Chris Lines has liaised with Burgermeister Romanski and started to consider ways in which future discussions can take place. Cllrs Lines and Alda Hummelinck to keep the Town Council updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Public Participation:

Cllr Mel Carr reminded all that he had been asked to investigate what assurances were given by various parties in relation to S106 monies pertaining to the large-scale development of Eden Drive by looking back through planning conditions assigned. Cllr Mel Carr reported that in a letter from Mr Stephen Reed of DCC dated March 2017

assurances had been given that from the S106 monies pertaining to Eden Drive that £573,000 would be allocated to education, £300,000 would be allocated to sport and £250,000 to community facilities. Cllrs thanked Cllr Mel Carr for this information and said that monitoring such monies was an on-going issue for the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.3 Sedgefield Youth Club Management Committee:

The minutes of the Sedgefield Youth Club's AGM held in June 2019 will be considered at the July 2019 P&R Committee meeting along with a recommendation for some additional youth activities during the school summer holiday period. As these have financial implication for the Town Council they will be considered at the P&R Committee. Sedgefield Youth Club have agreed to provide quarterly reports to the Community Development & Engagement Committee regarding the Club's activities and plans.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.4 The Manor House – Sedgefield Heritage Trail:

The Clerk has written to Mr Ean Parsons with the wording provided by Cllr Mark Cant.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Allan Blakemore closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments.

Mrs Julia Bowles said that she was disappointed about the lack of [DCC] consultation regarding S106 money and parking proposals in the Town. Mrs Bowles acknowledged that the local AAP had recently given an update regarding the sport element of S106 money from Eden Drive she felt this had been farcical and created misunderstanding rather than explanation. Mrs Bowles said she had spoken to several AAP staff members following that event, several of whom had confirmed that it was not a true public consultation exercise. Mrs Bowles concluded by noting that on Facebook there was a view from residents in Fishburn that all such monies always comes to Sedgefield and they receive nothing when

this was far from her personal understanding of the situation.

Cllr Blakemore thanked the public for their comments and re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 Potential Lighting/Signage Work Meeting Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Potential Lighting/Signage Work Meeting Update Report. This report reminded all of the initial approach received from Mr Tony Guest of the SCA and then detailed the discussions at the recent site meeting with Mr Bryan Harris, DCC's Conservation Officer. The Clerk reported that Mr Ian Sutherland of the SCA had also been in attendance at the on-site meeting held on Monday 17th June 2019. Within the report were a number suggestions relating to road signage (which is to be progressed by Mr Harris in conjunction with his Highways colleagues), Ceddesfeld Hall, the Turning Circle and the Parish Hall. Cllrs agreed with all the proposals being suggested with the exception to the suggested ground lighting at the front of the Parish Hall.

RECOMMENDED:

The Clerk and Mr Tony Guest to prepare costings for all proposals (with the exception of the suggested ground lighting at the front of the Parish Hall) and when collated prepare a further report for consideration.

5.2 STC Summer Coach Trip Update Report by Projects & Media Co-ordinator:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an STC Summer Coach Trip Update Report by the Projects & Media Co-ordinator which confirmed the recent trip to Keswick had been enjoyed by all and was as popular as ever with residents. Arrangements are now in hand for the November 2019 trip to York. The Clerk expressed her thanks to Cllrs Mavis Wayman and Ann Carr for attending the Keswick trip on behalf of the Council.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Tub Planting Update Report by Projects & Media Co-ordinator:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Tub Planting Update Report by the Projects & Media Co-ordinator. The Clerk thanked all who had supported this very successful and enjoyable event. It had been wonderful to see so many young people involved in this event.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.4 VE Day 2019 Recommendation Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a VE Day 2019 Recommendation Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore. Cllr Blakemore explained that NALC and CDALC were collectively asking Councils what they were doing UK wide to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE day in May 2020. Following this request Cllr Blakemore had produced his proposal now being considered and reiterated that the idea was not for the Town Council to organize actual events but to bring community groups together to ensure that any planned events were co-ordinated in such a way that they did not duplicate or overlap but try instead to achieve an array of events over the entire bank holiday weekend at the start of May 2020 commencing on Friday 8th May 2020, potentially featuring some form of ecumenical church service on the Sunday. Cllr Blakemore said that such an approach would mirror the approach taken by the Sedgefield 700+ Group when initial Sedgefield Days had been held. If this approach was taken Cllr Blakemore proposed the remaining Sedgefield 700+ money held by the Town Council could be used to fund all/some of this event and potentially permit other funding to be identified from elsewhere. Within his report Cllr Blakemore had detailed some groups which he thought would be interested in such an event but requested that if other Cllrs would identify additional groups they let the Clerk know as quickly as possible. Cllr Blakemore said that with assistance from the Projects & Media Co-ordinator an initial meeting would be organized to find the views of those community groups and a further report would be brought back to the Community Development & Engagement Committee. All Town Cllrs would also receive an invitation to this initial brainstorming meeting. Cllrs David Brown and Stephen Winter endorsed Cllr Blakeman's proposal.

Cllr Gloria Wills suggested that potential sources of other funding could include seeking donations from both local County Cllrs as this would be a way of their funding benefitting multiple local groups as well as providing something for the Town's residents. Cllr David Brown said that any such approach would be considered but he did point out that it was likely events would also be planned across the entire Electoral Ward so could not make a definite commitment at that time. Cllr Alf Walton reminded all that there were two local County Cllrs. Cllr Blakemore said that if it was decided to seek external funding that it was possible such a bid would be prepared by a community group rather than the Town Council.

Cllr Alda Hummelinck asked if the fee for Parish Hall hire could be waived for this event if the building was to be used. Cllr Blakemore said it was important to first identify what the community wanted but if the building was to be used this was something which could then be considered. Cllr Wills agreed and said that this approach had been taken several times in the past. Cllr Blakemore said that due to the bank holiday weekend there would not be any cleaning or caretaking service in the Parish Hall therefore it would be expected that any group using the building would have to leave it in a clean state when they left.

RECOMMENDED:

Cllr Allan Blakemore the invite local groups and Town Cllrs to an initial brainstorming meeting building further upon his proposal so that a more detailed report can be considered at a future Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting.

5.5 November 2019 Fireworks Display Update Report by Town Clerk:

The Clerk circulated to all a November 2019 Fireworks Display Update Report which had been produced following the Fireworks Working Group's first meeting held on Thursday 11th July 2019.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information contained in the report and to, as in previous years, give the Fireworks Working Group delegated powers to deliver the 2019 Annual Fireworks Display.

6. Correspondence:

None.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.20pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY ENVIRONMENT** of the
Council held following the Community Development and
Engagement meeting in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 15th July 2019

Present

Cllr. Alf Walton (Chairman)

Cllr. Stephen Winter (Vice-Chairman) and

Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Mel Carr,
Alda Hummelinck, Julie Towler and Gloria Wills

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Alda Hummelinck (will be leaving early), Chris Lines, Leo McCormack, Fiona Warrand and Mavis Wayman.

2. Declaration of interest:

Cllr Allan Blakemore declared a non-pecuniary interest in the planning applications to be considered under additional items at the end of the meeting. No other Cllrs made an declaration of interest.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Sedgefield In Bloom Minutes / Considerate Parking on Village Green:

No further updates.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.2 Footpath Condition (Stockton Road):

The Clerk has written to Mr John Reed of DCC plus both local County Cllrs requesting that consideration of Stockton Road footpath be included in the DCC annual maintenance programme to maintain the condition of adopted roads and footpaths. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Street Lighting from The Garth to the Medical Centre:

County Cllr David Brown is investigating this matter with DCC Officers. Mr Paul Vasey of DCC has reiterated that it is not DCC policy to light unadopted footpaths.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.4 Speed Watch:

County Cllr David Brown is following up the Town Council's request for a review of the traffic calming measures along Durham Road with Mr Dave Wafer of DCC.

The Clerk has written to Mr Brian Buckley of DCC thanking him for the update which he sent to the Town Council relating to the school crossing patrol on Durham Road and reminded him about the Town Council's concerns regarding the effectiveness of the traffic calming measures at this location in general and provided him with a copy of the correspondence originally sent to Mr Dave Wafer. A response is now awaited.

County Cllr David Brown and the Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.5 Butterwick Road Cemetery:

Investigations regarding this matter are underway via the Estates Working Group in order that a response can be sent to Ms Kitching. This matter had been discussed at the most recent Estates Working Group meeting on 4th July 2019 and further investigations are now underway. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.6 Public Participation – S106 Monies:

Mrs Julia Bowles has written to Mr Stephen Reed and Mr Gordon Elliott of DCC

requesting a meeting with them regarding the current situation in relation to S106 monies available in Sedgefield. Mrs Bowles will extend an invitation to the Town Council (via the Clerk) on a meeting has been scheduled. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.7 Speeding Along The Fishburn Road:

An update regarding this matter will be presented to the July 2019 P&R Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.8 A177 Junction Widening:

The Clerk has forwarded to Mr Brian Buckley of DCC the suggestion made by Cllr McCormack in relation to the A177 junction on the outskirts of Sedgefield. This matter has now been added to the workload of Mr David Battensby of DCC and a response is now awaited from him. County Cllr David Brown is investigating this matter. County Cllr David Brown to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.9 Bench on Front Street:

DCC have confirmed that this seat belongs to the Town Council. Cllr Alf Walton had suggested that the concrete bench remains in situ and that the existing woods are replaced. The Bloom Group have now undertaken this work. Cllrs expressed their thanks.

The state of the wooden bench near to Sedgefield Methodist Church have been reported to DCC. DCC have confirmed that this is not their bench. Cllr Alf Walton has investigated and the Town Council's gardening staff have been asked to remove this bench as it is unrepairable. The Clerk confirmed that when any future request is received for a memorial bench that this location be offered. At this time there is no waiting list for memorial benches. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.10 Skip – 5 Church View:

The skip was removed from outside the property within the timescale stipulated by the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.11 Public Participation – Clarification Regarding Highways Committee Procedure:

The Clerk has liaised with Mr Peter Broxton of DCC in relation to Cllr Wills enquiry as to whether DCC's Highways Committee meetings are similar to those of Planning Committees in that if someone had commented on a proposal/application and requested to speak at a Committee meeting they could participate. Mr Broxton has confirmed that this is the case. He has also confirmed that everyone who has objected to parking proposals within Sedgefield, including proposed build outs, have been invited to attend DCC's Highways Committee meeting on Friday 5th July 2019. All who have been invited have been given the opportunity to speak should they wish.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.12 Sedgefield Racecourse:

The Clerk has liaised with Ms Megan Shutt who has confirmed that appropriate noise monitoring arrangements will be in place for the Racecourse's event on Saturday 7th September 2019.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Alf Walton, closed the meeting for the public to give views and comments.

Mr Howard Smith wished to update the Town Council on matters relating to the parking and junction issues at Rectory Row/Stockton Road. Mr Smith has written to DCC's Environment

Department to express his concerns regarding these matters and the handling of such. Mr Smith said that since the Highways Committee's decision to permit the introduction of parking proposals and build-outs he had subsequently spoken to County Cllr John Robinson who had said that the matter of the build-out at the Rectory Row/Stockton Road junction could yet be deferred. Mr Smith said that it was his opinion that DCC's Highways had treat the Town Council with contempt as the Town Council represent the views and wishes of residents and therefore their comments should hold considerable weight when matters are being determined. With regards to the Sedgefield In Bloom Group, Mr Smith said that the Town looks fantastic as a result of Town Council gardening staff and group members working hard. The Bloom Group have painted the railings on the steps leading to St Edmund's church. Northumbria In Bloom judging will take place on Wednesday 17th July 2019 commencing at 10.30am in Ceddesfeld Hall. An invitation has already been extended to all Town Cllrs plus Council gardening staff. Mr Smith reminded everyone that Britain In Bloom judging will take place on 6th August 2019 commencing at 9am. Mr Smith informed Cllrs that the Bloom Group have been working with DCC to get two conifers removed from the end bed at West End which is land owned by DCC. DCC staff had arrived earlier that day and removed one conifer being stopped from removing the other by a resident who was abusive and requested the work stop. Mr Smith said DCC had stopped working and the area now looked a mess. Mr Smith is in discussions with County Cllr John Robinson and DCC in order to get this resolved and whilst not a Town Council matter wanted to make people aware. Cllr Alf Walton thanked the Bloom Group for their own on the bench on Front Street and for Mr Smith's update regarding the Rectory Row/Stockton Road junction which in his opinion was not a traffic improvement measure.

Mrs Julia Bowles said that she noted the Aubergine café had recently been painted a bright purple and asked whether Aubergine's owners had been given permission to do this as the property falls within the Town's Conservation Area. Mrs Bowles was aware that the recent external painting of The Cornerhouse had been challenged and said it was important to treat all properties the same. The Clerk was asked to investigate this matter. Mrs Bowles commented that she had also noted the Town Council had recently objected to the planning application for Cherry Blossom Cottage changing from a residential property to a shop but that the Town's Civic Trust had supported this particular application. Mrs Bowles understood the Civic Trust were supposed to represent the views of local residents but understood there were only 3-4 members on the Trust. Mrs Bowles asked whether the Civic Trust ever liaise with the Town Council. It was confirmed that no such liaison takes place, however, in the past the Town Council have tried to work jointly.

Mrs Janet Spalding wished to express thanks on behalf of herself and her husband for the

Town Council taking the time to consider their concerns in relation to a planning application at The Orchard in Sedgefield.

Cllr Walton thanked the public for their comments and re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 Tree Survey Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Tree Survey Recommendation Report by the Finance Working Group. Cllr Mark Cant questioned whether all Town Council owned trees could be identified in some way, e.g. with clear signage on each. Cllr Alf Walton said that all such trees were marked on a map and Cllr Gloria Wills confirmed that for any tree in the Town protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) these would have a marker disk on them.

RECOMMENDED:

The Town Council to request DCC's Tree Officer to undertake a survey of trees on Town Council owned land and produce a recommendation report from which quotations can be sought and considered at a future P&R Committee meeting with linkage to future Town Council budgets.

5.2 RoSPA Inspection of Eden Drive Play Area Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a RoSPA Inspection of Eden Drive Play Area Report which was accompanied by a copy of the actual inspection report.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Pizza Castle Planning Report by Cllr Stephen Winter:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Pizza Castle Planning Report by Cllr Stephen Winter. Cllr Winter said that in his opinion the state of this building is the biggest eyesore in the Town and appreciated that this matter is being pursued by the Town Council and that a meeting has recently taken place with the leaseholder. Cllr Mel Carr reported that a productive meeting had recently taken place with the leaseholder and as a result of this several matters were to be investigated by the Clerk so that a report could be brought back to the September 2019 P&R Committee meeting. In addition, the leaseholder said he would forward to the Clerk details of the property's owner so that issues relating to the general appearance of the entire building, including the flue could hopefully be progressed. Cllr Ann Carr expressed

sympathy with the leaseholder who she believed was trying to improve the area as the cover recently placed over the fan at the side of the building had considerably reduced the noise. Cllr Ann Carr said that staff regularly wash the outside area upon which the bins are placed.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information and this matter to be considered under future P&R Committee meeting agendas.

5.4 Hardwick Arms Car Park Tarmac Condition Report by Cllr Stephen Winter:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Hardwick Arms Car Park Tarmac Condition Report by Cllr Stephen Winter. Cllr Winter said that he wanted to thank Cllr Mel Carr for giving him the background to this particular situation but wanted to bring this matter to Cllrs attention as he was concerned that in a couple of years this area will need to repatched/resurfaced again and it was important that the Town Council make appropriate financial provision for that or adopt a different approach. Cllr Alf Walton said that he shared Cllr Winter's concerns regarding the condition of this area and had also voiced these previously. Cllr Walton said he had no concerns regarding the resurfacing that had been undertaken on the area outside The Pickled Parson as this was more like a road surface.

Cllr Mel Carr said that he wished to commend the Town Council for the swift action it took to deal with several surface areas which were of significant concern. Cllr Mel Carr acknowledged there are other areas in the Town, indeed right across the County, that would benefit for patching, however, funds for such are tightly limited. The state of the tarmac area outside The Hardwick Arms is not being helped by heavy vehicles and power steering. Cllr Mel Carr confirmed that he had visited the area on 3rd and 15th July 2019 and found the site to be reasonable. DCC have been asked to undertake roadsweeping across the Town in preparation of the Northumbria In Bloom judging and this area would be included in that work. Cllr Mel Carr said that it had previously been agreed that he would contact the contractor who undertook the resurfacing work once all works had been completed at The Hardwick Arms, however, these works are not yet finished.

RECOMMENDED:

The Estates Working Group to monitor this area.

6. Correspondence:

6.1 **Parking Restrictions in Sedgefield (email from Mr Peter Broxton, DCC dated 11th June 2019):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Peter Broxton of DCC dated 11th June 2019 in which he provided the Town Council with an update on parking restrictions in the Town. The Clerk then circulated to all a further email from Mr Broxton dated 15th July 2019 which informed the Town Council that the Traffic Regulations Order for Sedgefield had been passed by DCC's Highways Committee meeting on 5th July 2019 including pedestrian buildouts near Burton Mews, Rectory Row and at the junction of Rectory Row/Stockton Road. Mr Broxton reported that engineering drawings are now being prepared but thought is required as to how to deter vehicles from parking on the Rectory Row/Stockton Road build-out and would like to look at options other than just the use of bollards. Mr Broxton asked if the Town Council had any funds or would be able to provide planters/benches to act as a natural barrier while also visually pleasing to the eye. Cllr Gloria Wills said that the Town Council could not accept liability for any such items and that this was a highways responsibility. Cllr Allan Blakemore agreed and said the Town Council could not spent precept money on what was a highways issue as this would set a very dangerous precedent. All Cllrs agreed.

Mr Broxton also forwarded to the Town Council a series of images taken by a resident who had concerns regarding the parked vehicles on West End (outside Durham House) and the impact upon visibility. Mr Broxton asked if the Town Council were aware of these issues and had any comments to make. Cllr Mel Carr said the Town Council were aware of this matter but felt that the vehicles in this area help to slow the speed at which vehicles are driven along the road. Cllr Alda Hummelinck objected and said that in her opinion this was a very dangerous bend and there should be some slow down signage or road markings. Cllr Stephen Winter agreed and said he also thought it was dangerous and felt that if money was no object then something could be done at this location. Cllr Gloria Wills asked where was the evidence to show this area was dangerous? She accepted that it was congested but also felt that this meant traffic slowed down to move through this area of the Town. Cllr Mel Carr reminded all that concerns had been expressed about the perceived dangers near Winterton Cottages yet when the Police had investigated this matter they had no found any evidence supporting that concern. Cllr Allan Blakemore confirmed that in relation to highways there are clear rules and parameters as to what constitutes a danger. Cllr David Brown said that the bollards outside Durham

House had been installed some time ago to stop people from parking entirely on the pavement. Cllr Brown felt the problems experienced around Durham House were only occasional and no change should be made as a consistent approach was required around the Town.

(Cllr Alda Hummelinck left the meeting at this point)

RECOMMENDED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to inform Mr Broxton that the Town Council do not have any funds and will not be providing any planters or benches for the build out at Stockton Road/Rectory Row.**
- iii) The Clerk to inform Mr Broxton that the Town Council does not have any comment to make regarding parking around Durham House.**

6.2 County Durham Environment Awards 2019 (email from CDALC dated 26th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated to all an email from CDALC dated 26th June 2019 in which nominations were being sought for the County Durham Environment Awards 2019. Cllrs Gloria Wills and Stephen Winter proposed the Town Council nominate the Woodland Wildlife Project at NETPark. Cllr Alf Walton proposed that he himself be nominated for all his wildlife conservation work. Cllr Allan Blakemore proposed the Sedgefield In Bloom Group be nominated for their work around the Town. All nominations were agreed.

RECOMMENDED:

The Clerk to submit nominations in accordance with the Town Council's wishes.

6.3 Malton Terrace Footpath (email from Ms Julie Dows dated 26th June 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Julie Dows dated 26th June 2019 in which she expressed concerns regarding certain areas of the footpath at Malton Terrace, an area of designated village green. Cllr Alf Walton confirmed that he has investigated this area and showed fellow Cllrs a photograph he had taken on a cracked concrete area which he proposed be repaired by the Town Council's gardening staff.

RECOMMENDED:

Town Council gardening staff to repair the concreted area under the supervision of Cllr Alf Walton.

6.4 Request for Consideration of the Environment Committee (email from Ms Marie Throstle dated 1st July 2019):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Marie Throstle dated 1st July 2019 in which she asked the Environment Committee to consider two matters – the potential for equipment to be installed for a slightly older age group and the installation of a bench/picnic table for parents/grandparents/carers to use when children are playing at Station Road Playing field. The Clerk reminded all that the play equipment at this locality is owned by DCC and it was agreed that any request for additional items must be referred to DCC and determination made by them. With regards to the matter of seating, whilst it was appreciated that there is currently no such amenity there was also concern regarding the liability issue of any such items being placed at a location which is isolated and potential for attracting anti-social behavior. Cllrs felt that it would be more appropriate for the Town Council to undertake a review of how the entire field is currently used and could be used. It was agreed this matter should be considered by the Estates Working Group with recommendations being brought back to the appropriate Council Committee for further consideration.

RECOMMENDED:

- i) The Clerk to liaise with Ms Throstle to find out what age group she is referring to/suggestions of types of play equipment and then forward these to Mr Barrie Alderson of DCC for investigation/follow-up/determination.**
- ii) The Estates Working Group to consider the current usage and potential future usage of Station Road Playing Field and when ready bring recommendations back to the Council.**

(Cllr Allan Blakemore left the meeting at this point)

ADDITIONAL ITEM:

The Clerk reminded all that several planning applications had been delegated from the previous week's Monthly Meeting for consideration.

DM/19/01959/FPA – internal remodelling, alterations, demolition of existing outhouses and new single storey extension, new window and door openings and erection of 1.8m boundary wall,

Greenhill Farm, Beacon Lane, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

DM/19/01960/LB – internal remodelling, alterations, demolition of existing outhouses and new single storey extension, new window and door openings and erection of 1.8m boundary wall, Greenhill Farm, Beacon Lane, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

DM/19/01970/FPA – two storey rear extension and first floor north and south gable windows, 9 The Orchard, Sedgefield:

This is a very detailed application with part of the property's boundary falling within the Town's Conservation Area and includes within the footprint previous building extension work covered under Building Regulations. The extension being proposed will be significant in size, almost one third of the mass of the house. Cllrs objected to this application as it was out of character for the area, would result in virtually the entire land plot being built upon which was not acceptable (i.e. over development) would negatively impact upon neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy and loss of daylight. Whilst this planning application could be called before Planning Committee, Cllrs agreed that they would prefer to raise their objections with DCC Planners and request these concerns be investigated and discussed with neighbouring property owners as well as the applicant so that an alternative design could be agreed potentially with the design being stepped back further within the property's own boundary and not so near to neighbouring properties.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to forward to DCC Planners comment in relation to the above planning applications.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.28pm.