

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **NOVEMBER
MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. via Microsoft Teams, on
Monday 9th November 2020

Present **Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Chris Lines, Julie
Towler, Mavis Wayman, Alf Walton and Stephen Winter

Officers Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)
Ms Natalie Chowns-Traynor (Meeting Moderator)

The Clerk welcomed Cllrs and public to the meeting and reminded everyone that meeting participation would be in accordance with the Council's Virtual Meeting Protocol.

1. **Apologies:**
Cllrs Vanessa Carmichael, Leo McCormack and Gloria Wills.

2. **Declaration of interest:**
None.

3. **STC Minutes / Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Minutes of Monthly meeting held Monday 12th October 2020:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (AC / MW)
 - b. **Minutes of P&R committee meeting held Monday 12th October 2020:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (M Cant / M Carr)
 - c. **Minutes of virtual Estates Working Group meeting held Monday 19th October 2020:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (M Carr / AB)
 - d. **Minutes of the virtual Festive Celebration Working Group meeting held Wednesday 21st October 2020:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (M Carr / CL)
 - e. **Minutes of virtual Finance Working Group meeting held Thursday 22nd October 2020:**

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

f. Minutes of Personnel Committee meeting held Monday 26th October 2020:

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

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

4. Matters of Information:

4.1 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.

4.2 S106 Monies:

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

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.3 Aubergine Café:

No further information has been received regarding the investigation by DCC of recent painting to the front of this property. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.4 Building Back Communities:

County Cllr David Brown to keep the Town Council updated regarding the Town Centre Safety Fund and associated programme so that the Town Council can play

an integral part in this work with DCC to support local businesses and economy. No further information has yet been received. County Cllr Brown to keep the Town Council updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.5 Councillor Resignation:

The current Town Councillor vacancy has been advertised since 16th September 2020 via the Town Council's website and notices (and will feature in the October edition of the Sedgefield Extra). The deadline for submission of applications is 15th November 2020. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.6 External Reports:

The Clerk had contacted County Cllr John Robinson to ask if it was possible to share with members of the public his County Cllr Report. County Cllr Robinson had requested clarification regarding which specific matters within the report the members of the public had been interested. County Cllr David Brown to take this matter forward with County Cllr John Robinson.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.7 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk has forwarded to DCC Planning Officers the Town Council's comments on planning applications 1-5.

No Cllrs made any comments regarding planning applications DM/20/02735/FPA and DM/20/02863/FPA.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

5. Dates of Meetings:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of all meetings in November 2020 and community events until November 2021. The Clerk reported that a Festive Celebrations Working Group meeting had now been scheduled for 9.30am on Thursday 12th November 2020. Thanks were also expressed to everyone who had taken part in what had been very different Remembrance Sunday commemorations during which the Town Council had struck a balance between paying respects to the fallen and ensuring public safety during the current COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Particular thanks were given to Cllrs Mel Carr, David Brown and Chris Lines for their work in both pre-recording and livestreaming the commemorations.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr closed the meeting whilst the public gave their views and comments.

Mrs Julia Bowles reminded everyone of the comments which she had made at the previous month's Monthly Meeting regarding Section 106 monies, a matter which she and other members of the Sedgefield Action Group had been chasing via County Cllr John Robinson for some time. County Cllr Robinson had recently shared with Mrs Bowles a list which had been produced by DCC detailing all currently available Section 106 monies across the County. Mrs Bowles said this latest information raised even greater concerns in her opinion as it suggested that the County Council were not collecting Section 106 monies. Mrs Bowles noted that the Section 106 monies relating to the Story Homes and Taylor Wimpey developments did not reflect the figures previously agreed and that no such monies were available from Taylor Wimpey. Mrs Bowles confirmed that she had written again to County Cllr Robinson asking for more information and she said she would share a copy of these questions with the Clerk for the Town Council's information. Ultimately Mrs Bowles said that she wanted to know where Sedgefield's Section 106 monies were as the community was entitled to that money and had been given assurance by the Planning Inspector that the community would have a say in how the money was then spent. Mrs Bowles said she understood the Town Council were monitoring this situation and requested that they now take some further action to find out the current status of this matter. Mrs Bowles concluded by saying that this matter should also be raised with the Communities Secretary at central government and the Ombudsman. The Clerk confirmed that the previous week she had also

received the latest County wide Section 106 monies information and this had been shared with the Finance Working Group for further investigate at their next meeting. Cllr Mel Carr confirmed that he had looked at that information and said that the matter of Section 106 monies, from collection by DCC to subsequent allocation, was extremely complex and found consultation with DCC regarding this matter to be extremely difficult. Cllr Mel Carr also said that discussions had been requested long before the current covid situation so the pandemic could not be used as a delaying factor.

The Chairman thanked the public for their comments and 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 which detailed the actions he had undertaken since the last Monthly Meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Mayor's Report:

No Mayor's Report was received.

8. External Reports:

None.

9. Correspondence:

9.1 Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath No 16 Sedgefield Parish (email from Ms Filomena Solan, DCC dated 21st October 2020):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath No 16 Sedgefield Parish email from Ms Filomena Solan, DCC Rights of Way Officer dated 21st October 2020. Ms Solan reported that Taylor Wimpey and DCC's Traffic Assets Senior Engineer have both considered the Town Council's request for the proposed footpath diversion to have some form of gate or staggered entrance/exit or barrier in the form of vertical rails or similar to those used in woodland parks at the corner point of the path to stop anyone running directly onto the main road. The site's designer has pointed out that all of the existing low perimeter fencing was to be removed and that once removed there would not be anything to stop anyone stepping out onto Thurlow Road at any point along the road. DCC's Traffic Assets Senior Engineer stated

that as there are no barriers at the existing connection to the highway at Eden Drive/Thurlow Road junction then it would not be necessary to provide a barrier on the new link. All have confirmed that there are no previous issues or requests for a barrier there. In conclusion, no safety feature will be incorporated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

10. 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):

10.1 DM/20/02735/FPA – agricultural storage building, South Hallgate, Aycliffe Lane, Mordon:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.2 DM/20/02863/FPA – agricultural building and hardstanding (retrospective), Bridge House, Butterwick Road, Fishburn:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.3 DM/20/02959/AD – hand painted signage to front elevation and hanging sign, The Corner House, 1 High Street, Sedgefield:

10.4 DM/20/02966/LB – external repainting, hand painted signage to front elevation and hanging sign, The Corner House, 1 High Street, Sedgefield:

Applications 10.3 and 10.4 were considered together. Cllrs agreed to request from DCC Planning Officers that the views of DCC's Conservation Officer would be sought in relation to this application.

10.5 DM/20/03062/AD – internally illuminated signage to front of building, Univeristy of Durham Research, Joseph Swan Road, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.6 DM/20/03147/FPA – conversion of garage to habitable space and widening of driveway, 5 Hutton Close, Fishburn:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1-6 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.27pm.

APPROVED

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **NOVEMBER POLICY & RESOURCES** of the Council held following the Monthly meeting, via Microsoft Teams on **Monday 9th November 2020**

Present

Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) and

Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, Chris Lines, Julie Towler, Mavis Wayman, Alf Walton and Stephen Winter

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

Ms Natalie Chowns-Traynor (Meeting Moderator)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs Vanessa Carmichael, Leo McCormack and Gloria Wills

2. Declaration of interest:

Cllr Chris Lines declared an interest in agenda items 7.2 and 8.4. No other Cllrs made any declaration of interest.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Sedgefield Town Council Corporate Plan:

This matter has also been discussed at a recent Finance Working Group at which the Council's Internal Auditor was in attendance. It is recognized 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. Note: This had been previously delayed due to the want to have a full complement of Cllrs. One Cllr is now away from their duties until 1st December 2020 and another has recently resigned. 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 registration of Ceddesfeld Hall and grounds 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 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/residents 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.

3.4 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.

3.5 Expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery:

A draft Section 106 application form has been finalized and work is now underway to schedule a meeting with Mr Stephen Reed of DCC and both local County Cllrs to discuss. This draft application form will also be considered at the Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group meeting on 16th November 2020. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.6 Butterwick Road Cemetery – Amended Rules and Regulations:

Letters were not issued due to the lockdown situation. The Regulations are to be reviewed by the Policy & Records Management Working Group with recommendation brought to a subsequent P&R Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.7 Terrace Hill Funding:

No further update has yet been received from Sedgefield Bowling Club. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.8 Pedestrian Safety Review:

The Clerk has written to both local County Cllrs requesting they give their support to lobbying DCC for Sedgefield to be included as one of the venues for mobile flashing speed signs. An email was received from County Cllr John Robinson dated 18th February 2020 stating that he had asked how much 3 cameras would cost for all entrances with a view to applying for Section 106 funding towards them or paying via Neighbourhood Budget. Cllr Robinson said he would keep the Town Council updated. No further information has been received. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.9 Speed Watch Findings:

The Clerk has asked PCSO Jorgeson if a full traffic survey could be undertaken in Sedgfield. Due to the coronavirus lockdown period the Clerk has sent a follow-up request. A response has now been received confirming that for such a survey to take place would be determined by traffic management at highways at Cleveland and Durham Specialist Operations Unit. The Clerk has now issued a request to this section. No response has been received as yet. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.10 Re-covering Town Council Polytunnel:

The materials to re-cover the polytunnel have now arrived. Work is now underway looking at potential options for moving the tunnel in order to accommodate recycling bays in the existing bays in the cemetery will need to be removed as part of the cemetery expansion project. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.11 Proposed Treeworks – Butterwick Road Cemetery:

All treework has been successfully undertaken with the exception of two trees near to the highway and a section of beech hedging in the existing area of the cemetery. These will be rescheduled when it is possible to have an on-site meeting. Quotations for yew hedging are awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.12 Proposed Groundworks Opposite Pizza Castle:

The concrete and wooden slat bench on the village green opposite the pizza shop

have now been removed from the site and ground works have been completed to allow a memorial bench to be installed. The lady wishing to install a memorial bench has confirmed that she wishes to accept this offer, payment has been made and a bench ordered. The Town Council will take delivery of the memorial bench and arrange for it to be installed. Please note: a plaque will be installed once the bench is in-situ. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.13 Ash Tree Within Grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall:

Cllrs Gloria Wills and Mel Carr to discuss this matter as agreed with Sedgfield Squash Club's Management Committee and report back to the Town Council.

Cllrs Gloria Wills and Mel Carr to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.14 Matters of Information from Environment Committee and Community Development & Engagement Committee:

See agenda item 5.1.

Following discussions between the Clerk and Chairs of the Environment Committee and Community Development & Engagement Committee it was agreed that for November 2020 any items for those Committees would feature on the P&R Committee's agenda.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.15 Stockton Road Footpath:

County Cllr David Brown had agreed to take forward the Town Council's suggestion that the proposed improvement works to Stockton Road footpath be extended to include a further piece of land leading to Saddler Drive which was in as equally as bad a condition. County Cllr Brown to keep the Town Council updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.16 Children's Play Area and Dogs:

The matter of whether or not dogs are permitted at Station Road Playing field was considered at the last Estates Working Group meeting. The Clerk has been asked to check the wording contained in the Field's lease (to see if there are any stipulations that dogs must not be permitted) and report back to the Estates Working Group. This cannot be done until paper files can be accessed in the Town Council Offices.

The Estates Working Group as part of their on-going review of how Station Road Playing Field is used to bring a subsequent report back to a future P&R Committee.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.



3.17 Request For Donation – Citizens Advice County Durham:

No further information has been received as yet from Mr Watmough. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.



3.18 Cycle Trail at NETPark:

No further progress has been reported regarding this matter. Cllr Chris Lines to keep Cllrs updated as and when progress is made.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.19 Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion:

The DCC Planning Officer overseeing the Town Council's planning application relating to the expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery has forwarded comments to the Clerk. The Clerk to schedule a Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group

meeting. The Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.20 Health Centre Car Park:

The Clerk has forwarded to Mr Paul Anderson of DCC the Town Council's suggestions regarding the removal of the island in the health centre car park which would generate additional parking bays. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.21 Outdoor Performance by Sedgefield Lyrics:

The Clerk has informed Mrs Avril Hannon that the Town Council agrees in principle to the Lyrics proposed event on the proviso that Sedgefield Lyrics are fully compliant with all central government restrictions in place at that time and that the Lyrics provide to the Clerk a copy of their comprehensive risk assessment allowing the Town Council time to consider and comment. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.22 Request For Trees Trimmed on Station Road:

The Town Council's treeworks contractor has been out to look at both trees in question and provided his recommendations. These were considered by the Estates Working Group at their most recent meeting. The views of DCC's Tree Officer have been sought and he has agreed that he is happy with the suggested approach of the individual being allowed to undertake the work suggested providing that it is done by the Town Council's approved treeworks contractor and paid for by the resident. Letters have been issued accordingly to residents.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.23 Town Council Offices Refurbishment

The plumbing contractor has indicated that work on refurbishing the toilets in the Town Council Offices will commence on 3rd November 2020. The order for the glass screen has been submitted and it is hoped that this will be supplied and installed soon. New internal doors in the reception area have now been fitted. Discussions continue with the decorators, joiner and flooring contractors. The Estates Working Group continue to oversee the delivery of this project within the budget allocated by the Town Council. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.



3.24 Gypsy/Traveller Unauthorised Encampments:

Cllr Gloria Wills to organize a meeting between volunteer Cllrs and concerned residents in order to seek their views and concerns which can then be discussed at a meeting with DCC Officers. Cllr Gloria Wills to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.



3.25 Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year 2019 and 2020:

The Rotary Club of Sedgefield and Sedgefield Development Trust both approved the Town Council's proposals for the 2019 and 2020 Awards. The nomination process has re-opened until 16th November 2020. A Virtual Judging Panel meeting has been scheduled for 30th November 2020 and announcement of the 2019 and 2020 Awards announced on 16th December 2020. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.26 Virtual Halloween Howler Competition:

The Town Council's virtual Halloween Howler competition was launched. The Projects & Media Co-ordinator and Chair of the Council have overseen the judging

of this competition. The standard of entry was very high and the winners and runners-up have been announced on Twitter and will feature in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra. Thanks are given to the Rotary Club of Sedgefield for volunteering to give prizes to runners-up.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.27 Hardwick Hall Hotel New Premises Licence:

No further information has yet been received regarding the rescheduling of a new DCC Licensing Committee Hearing to consider the Hardwick Hall Hotel's new premises licence.

The Town Clerk has forwarded to DCC's Yvonne Raine the concerns expressed at the last P&R Committee meeting regarding the Hardwick Hall's Fireworks Extravaganza programme and a response was subsequently received and shared with all Cllrs.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.28 Parish Hall

The Parish Hall remains closed due to the coronavirus restrictions. The Clerk and Estates Working Group are continuously monitoring this matter. Communications are continuing with regular Parish Hall users to keep them updated on the latest situation. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.29 Review of Community Chest Terms of Reference

The new Terms of Reference are displayed on the Council's website. The Mayor's Allowance for 2020/21 has been transferred to the Community Chest. The Community Chest will be promoted in the December 2020 Sedgefield Extra with community groups being informed that no Mayoral donations would be made at the

start of 2021/22 so making them aware of the additional funds available to the Community Chest and to encourage applications for consideration as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.30 Poppies

The Clerk has informed Mrs Jean Easson that the Town Council gives permission for the SCA Craft Group to display their poppies on the fencing around the war memorial from the week prior to the week after Remembrance Sunday.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.31 7 Church View – Path

The Clerk has informed Ms Dexter-Edmenson that the path in question belongs to the Town Council and that if she wishes the Town Council will give permission for it to be replaced at her expense like for like as it would be an understandable benefit to her business.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.32 Hardwick Arms Hotel- car park, weed killing and skip:

The Clerk has written to Mr Popple stating that the Town Council do not wish to have an on-site meeting regarding the car park area as they are of the opinion that it does not require any further work. The Clerk has informed Mr Popple that the area at the front of the Hotel will be added to the Town Council's gardening staffs weed killing programme of work thereby ensuring an appropriate substance is used and that this will be undertaken when other village green areas are dealt with. The Council's Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent has added this work to their schedule of work. The Clerk has informed Mr Popple that prior permission had been sought from the owners of 7 Church View for the placing of a skip for their refurbishment work and that a maximum timescale has been agreed for the siting of that skip.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.33 Cowley House Community Benefit Offer:

The Clerk has written to Mr Turner accepting the Cowley House Community Benefit Office and request that he now prepares and submits to the Town Council, when possible, a formal Community Benefit Deed of Offer and associated documents for counter signing. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.34 Winter Wonderland:

The Clerk received an email from Ms Elizabeth Flanagan of the Sedgefield Players on 6th November 2020 informing the Town Council that due to the latest national lockdown and the uncertainties surrounding what follows that the Players have made the decision to cancel their plans for a Winter Wonderland event in the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall in December 2020.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.35 Clubbercise, grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall:

The Clerk has informed Ms Sharon Gooch that providing she fully complies with all covid regulations/restrictions in place at the time of each of her classes that she can continue to hold her outdoor exercise classes in the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall making pre-bookings for each class. Ms Gooch has expressed her thanks to the Town Council.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.36 National Pay Award 2020/21:

The national pay award has now been fully implemented for all Town Council staff on NJC terms and conditions.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.37 Community Ball:

The Mayor's Secretary/Admin Assistant has informed the Hardwick Hall Hotel that the Town Council would like to postpone its Mayor's Civic Ball scheduled for Friday 5th March 2021 to Friday 4th March 2022. The Hardwick Hall Hotel have confirmed this request and at this stage made no request for contract fees to be paid.

Letters to community groups via the Sedgefield 700+ group regarding a potential community day in July 2021 will be issued in late November 2020 with active planning work and promotion commencing in Spring 2021. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.38 Remembrance Sunday:

The Town Council undertook all actions agreed at the October P&R Committee meeting in order to commemorate this event within the current Covid restrictions.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, closed the meeting for the public to give views and comments.

Mrs Helen Clifford-Brown requested clarification regarding the archeological dig taking place near to Hardwick Park. The Clerk reported that this was a DCC project but would investigate and forward information to her.

The Chair thanked the member of the public for their comments and then re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 Matters Of Information Update From Environment Committee and Community Development & Engagement Committee Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Matters of Information Update From Environment Committee and Community Development & Engagement Committee Report.

It was agreed that Cllr Alf Walton should liaise with the Council's Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent regarding the work required to repair a concrete path at Malton Terrace.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Sedgefield's Festive Celebration Update Report by Festive Celebration Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Festive Celebration Update Report by Festive Celebration Working Group. The Clerk confirmed that work towards the delivery of this event was progressing well and the Working Group were continuing to respond to any Covid-related matters/restrictions which were changing on a regular basis. The next meeting of the Working Group has been scheduled for 12th November 2020 following which publicity materials would be circulated through social media and to local primary schools.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Change Management Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Change Management Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee as well as circulating electronically the preceeding week a copy of the actual Policy for Cllrs consideration.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the electronically issued “Change Management Policy” with immediate effect.

5.4 Working Time Policy Update Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Working Time Policy Update Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. Within this report was an explanation of an employment law change which needs to be reflected within the Town Council's policy relating to bereavement leave for parents upon the death of a child aged under 18 years on or after 6th April 2020.

RESOLVED:

The Town Council's Working Time Policy to be amended with immediate effect in accordance with the recommendation made by the Personnel Committee.

5.5 Sedgefield Extra Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Extra Report requesting that Cllrs review, in light of the on-going covid situation, the decision made earlier in the year to revert back to the traditional Sedgefield Extra from 1st January 2021.

Cllr Chris Lines pointed out that the Town Council is not a publisher and whilst he believed the correct approach was taken in 2020 regarding monthly, concise Sedgefield Extras being produced he proposed that for 2021 the Extra should revert back to its traditional four page format issued four times per year. Cllr Lines said that should the situation worsen regarding covid the Council could always review the role of the Extra. Cllr Lines reminded the production of the Extra by the Council was not the only additional work but explained the impact upon the Sedgefield News and its volunteers in distributing. Cllr Allan Blakemore seconded this proposal and all Cllrs agreed unanimously.

The Clerk proposed that a letter of thanks be sent to the Sedgefield News and its volunteers all of whom had made the Sedgefield Extra a priority insert during 2020. Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) From 1st January 2021 the Sedgefield Extra to revert to its traditional four page format issued four times per year on the understanding that should the covid situation change dramatically for the worse then Town Council could review this decision if it was felt that more timely information was needed to be disseminated to the public.**
- ii) The Clerk to write a letter of thanks to the Sedgefield News and its volunteers for allowing the Sedgefield Extra to be produced and distributed on a monthly basis during 2020.**

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 12th October 2020:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of cheques for approval after 12th October numbered 109836 to 109860. Cllrs confirmed their support for the authorization of all cheques.

RESOLVED:

- i) All cheques and invoices were approved for payment.**
- ii) Cllrs Mel Carr and Allan Blakemore plus the Town Clerk to duly sign the cheques.**

6.2 Financial Budget Comparison as at 29th October 2020:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Financial Budget Comparison as at 29th October 2020.

6.3 Debtors List as at 29th October 2020:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Debtors List as at 29th October 2020.

6.4 Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st October 2020:

The Clerk circulated to all a Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st October 2020.

RESOLVED:

To receive Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 30th September 2020.

6.5 October 2020 Bank Reconciliations Plus September 2020 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation Report by Town Clerk:

The Clerk circulated to all October 2020 Bank Reconciliations Plus September 2020 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation Report.

RESOLVED:

To receive the October 2020 Bank Reconciliations and September 2020 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation.

6.6 Town Council's VAT Reclaim 1st April 2020 – 30th September 2020 Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a VAT Reclaim 1st April 2020 – 30th September 2020 Update Report informing Cllrs that the Town Council's VAT reclaim for the first six months of the 2020/21 financial year had been submitted and reimbursement received in full from HMRC.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.7 2020/21 Internal Audit Update Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2020/21 Internal Audit Update Report by the Finance Working Group in which it was explained that the first internal audit inspections of this financial year would focus upon reviewing the capital project of the Town Council's offices refurbishment, a review of creditor (accounts payable) systems and a review of payroll systems. The Clerk confirmed these inspections would commence on 12th November 2020. The Finance Working Group will keep the P&R Committee updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.8 Support for Sedgefield In Bloom EDRC APP Funding Bid Report by Estates Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Support For Sedgefield In Bloom EDRC AAP Funding Bid Report by the Estates Working Group. Cllrs agreed with the action taken by the Estates Working Group to support the Bloom's funding bid.

Cllr Alf Walton queried the cost of the portable structure the Bloom Group were seeking funding for. The details of this were unknown, however, Cllr David Brown said that in his County Cllr role it was his understanding that a portable container was being sought. Cllr Walton asked how this would be permitted within the Town's Conservation Area and expressed concerns regarding how this would impact aesthetically on Ceddesfeld Hall. Cllrs Mark Cant and Mavis Wayman agreed. Cllr Brown said that this would be a matter for the Bloom Group to deal with and that before any money would be released from the AAP that there were checklists detailing specific pieces of evidence that needed to be submitted to ensure formal approval for projects and that some of this would relate to evidence of planning permission and/or Conservation Officer approval.

Not related to this particular funding application, Cllr Chris Lines expressed his concerns about the way in which some organisations/community groups were being successful in obtaining numerous funding awards/grants and being identified as Co-op good causes as a result of their skills in PR whilst other groups equally as worthy were struggling and missing out. While acknowledging that Sedgefield Town Council does not dictate how many such funds are allocated, Cllr Lines also questioned whether some of those organisations/community groups were actually benefitting Sedgefield and its residents directly. He hoped that funders had appropriate checks and balances in place to follow up monies awarded to ensure that promised outcomes were achieved and within the localities stated as transparency for such was essential. Cllr Lines said that often the term "Sedgefield" is used but suspected that in some instances this meant the Town, sometimes the Parish and in some cases the Electoral Ward all of which were very different. Cllr Allan Blakemore explained how the AAPs consider applications and allocate money, however, Cllr Lines said his concerns were not directed at the local AAP but at organisations/community groups which operated with very good PR and

sometimes give a misleading impression about what work they are doing and to whom they are providing help. While this assistance has great merit that he often supported in word and action, his main priority in this context is community groups in the parish area. Cllr Lines emphasised again that his comments did not relate to Sedgfield in Bloom, which clearly does an excellent job in the Town.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.9 2019/20 Year End Update Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2019/20 Year End Update Report by the Finance Working Group which presented the externally audited 2019/20 AGAR, External Auditors Report and Conclusion of Audit Notice.

RESOLVED:

i) To receive the information contained in this report.

ii) The Clerk to place the Conclusion of Audit Notice, externally audited AGAR and External Auditors report onto the Town Council's website from Tuesday 10th November 2020.

7. Correspondence:

7.1 St Edmund's Church Path Lighting (letter from Mr Brian Mutch, Emeritus Church Warden dated 20th October 2020):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter from Mr Brian Mutch, Emeritus Church Warden for St Edmund's Church dated 20th October 2020 in which he accepted the Town Council's one-off gesture of goodwill to rectify the lighting from lamp posts only in the grounds of St Edmund's churchyard. The Clerk reported that quotations for this work would be considered under agenda item 8.7.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Village Green (emails from Ms Lesley Dexter-Edmenson dated 21st October 2020):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all emails received from Ms Lesley Dexter-Edmenson dated 21st October 2020 in relation to 7 Church View and the

request to install gas to the property. The Clerk reminded all that this matter had been discussed with the Town Council's solicitor and a report was to be considered under agenda item 8.4.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

The Chair, Cllr Mel Carr, explained that due to the confidential nature of the following items these would be discussed under Exempt Information and had any members of the public and/or press been present they would have been asked 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 Village Green / The Pickled Parson Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Green / The Pickled Parson Update Report which Cllrs duly considered and discussed.

8.2 Village Green / Dun Cow Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Green / Dun Cow Update Report which Cllrs duly considered and discussed.

8.3 Village Green / 33 Front Street Recommendation Report by Cllrs Mel Carr and Gloria Wills:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Green / 33 Front Street Recommendation Report by Cllrs Mel Carr and Gloria Wills.

8.4 Village Green / 7 Church View Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Green / 7 Church View Report which related to matters touched upon under agenda item 7.2. This matter was duly discussed and considered.

8.5 Village Green / 26 Front Street Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Green / 26 Front Street Report which detailed the background and current situation in relation to this property. This matter was duly discussed and considered.

8.6 Projects & Media Co-ordinator – Maternity Cover Update Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Projects & Media Co-ordinator – Maternity Cover Update Report by the Personnel Committee detailing the approach the Committee intended to follow to seek cover for this position.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.7 Lighting Quotes For St Edmund’s Churchyard Report by Cllr Mel Carr and Town Clerk:

Further to agenda item 7.1, prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Lighting Quotes For St Edmund’s Churchyard Report by Cllr Mel Carr and the Clerk. This matter was considered and discussed.

8.8 Christmas Tree Lights Temporary Upgrade Verbal Report by Cllr Mel Carr and Town Clerk:

The Clerk reported that on 6th November 2020 she had forwarded electronically to all Cllrs an email from Mr Paul Gleadow, DCC’s Street Lighting and Operational Support Manager. This matter was duly discussed and considered.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.20p.m.