

SEDFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **FEBRUARY**
MONTHLY MEETING of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. via Microsoft Teams, on
Monday 8th February 2021

Present	Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) Cllr. Gloria Wills (Vice-Chairman) and Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Vanessa Carmichael, Ann Carr, Paul Heasman, Chris Lines, Julie Towler, Alfred Walton, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter
Officers	Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk) Ms Natalie Chowns-Traynor (Meeting Moderator)

The Chair, Cllr Mel Carr, welcomed Cllr Paul Heasman to his first meeting as a Cllr.

1. Apologies:

Cllrs. Leo McCormack and Fiona Warrand.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports:

a. Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 11th January 2021:

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

b. Minutes of the P&R committee held Monday 11th January 2021:

Cllr Alf Walton requested the following amendment be made to item 5.1, final paragraph with the insertion of the following sentence before the final sentence "Cllr Walton asked for the owner's name but this could not be given due to data protection". With the inclusion of this amendment these were confirmed as a correct record. (M Cant / MW)

c. Minutes of the Estates Working Group meeting held Monday 18th January 2021:

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

d. Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held Monday 18th January 2021:

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

e. Minutes of the Finance Working Group meeting held Thursday 21st January

2021:

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

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 reported that earlier that day she had received notification from Ms Sally McDyer of DCC that this planning application had been withdrawn in November 2020.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.2 S106 Monies:

See agenda item 6.7 on the P&R Committee meeting agenda.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.3 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.

4.4 Councillor Resignation:

Cllr Paul Heasman has now been co-opted to join the Town Council.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.5 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk has forwarded to DCC Planning Officers the Town Council's comments on planning applications 1-3.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.6 Current Planning Application:

No Cllrs submitted to the Clerk any comments regarding planning application DM/21/00006/FPA published on 14th January 2021.

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 February 2021 plus civic events until March 2022. The Clerk reported that since the production of the circulated dates sheet a Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group meeting had been scheduled for 9.30am on Wednesday 24th February 2021 via Microsoft Teams.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

6. Public Participation:

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

Mrs Julia Bowles said that she was looking forward to hearing in the next meeting the Town Council's findings regarding Section 106 monies as she was continuing to seek such information from County Cllr John Robinson but not received anything to date. Mrs Bowles said that this was information which the community was entitled to have and she was frustrated that none was forthcoming from DCC. Mrs Bowles said that in 2010 DCC had been taken to the Ombudsman by the local community due to lack of information and was disappointed that today answers were still not being provided. Mrs Bowles suspected that a significant amount of Section 106 monies were available to the local community but no such information was publicly available at a time when lots of community groups required funding. Mrs Bowles said that she was aware that a local resident had been informed by DCC that the planning application relating to the horsefield had been withdrawn late last year but was disappointed that this information had not been shared publicly. Mrs Bowles concluded by saying that she hoped the Town Council would strongly object to the current planning application proposing a further hot food takeaway in the Town at 7 Church View as she felt there were already too many such businesses in the Town and the property now being proposed was not suitable for such. Cllr Mel Carr confirmed that the matter of Section 106 monies was on the subsequent P&R Committee meeting's agenda. He confirmed that 7 Church View would be considered under this meeting's agenda item 10. Cllr Mel Carr

concluded that the Clerk had been informed by DCC earlier that day of the withdrawal of the planning application in relation to the horse field as a result of her enquiry regarding another matter.

The Chairman thanked the member of 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.

RESOLVED

To receive this information.

8. External Reports:

None.

9. Correspondence:

9.1 Wind Turbine (email from Mr Andrew Thompson dated 19th January 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Andrew Thompson dated 19th January 2021 in which he sought the Town Council's views on his proposal to erect a wind turbine at Murton Hall Farm, Hurworth Burn, Wingate (within the Parish of Embleton). Cllrs gave their support to this matter in principle as it supported a move towards a greener, sustainable environment but acknowledged that detailed consideration would be given when a planning application was duly submitted by Mr Thompson. Cllr Paul Heasman asked if the Town Council could request that such a facility be correctly maintained in the future. Cllr Chris Lines said that such a request would likely be a condition when the matter progressed to an actual planning application

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Mr Thompson that the Town Council were happy in principle with this proposal and would consider the subsequent planning application when

published by DCC.

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/20/03634/FPA – change of use of land to side from open space to residential and erection of single storey side extension with first floor balcony above, 12 Turnpike Walk, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.2 DM/20/03800/FPA – proposed grain store with integral biomass plant, ORC electrical generator, associated drier, tank and hardstand, East Close Farm, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.3 DM/21/00089/FPA – 4 no security cameras (retrospective) and replacement guttering, The Old Smithy, Cross Street, Sedgefield:

Cllrs would like assurance that the security cameras are positioned and record in compliance with current regulations for such and that the views of the Conservation Officer are taken into account.

10.4 DM/21/00102/FPA – single storey rear extension, 3 Pasture Field, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.5 DM/21/00136/FPA – change of use from E(a) retail to Sui Generis hot food takeaway with associated shop sign and external sign light, 7 Church View, Sedgefield:

Cllrs objected to this application. The recently granted change of use relating to 7 Church View was to change it from domestic to shop with the conditions that it be operational during the day and not be open after 5.30pm. The planning application now presented is for a very different type of retail with the business proposing to open at 5.30pm for late night trading seven nights per week. 7 Church View is attached to a domestic property on one side and on the other an existing restaurant and takeaway. The planning application will cause late night disturbance (in terms of noise and potentially anti-social behaviour) to residents as the Town's centre is a mix of business and residential properties. This planning application goes against DCC's policy introduced in 2020 as it would see a fast food takeaway being within 300 yards of a school entrance (DCC policy stipulates no such facility should be within 500 yards of a school entrance). In addition, DCC's policy states that no more than 5% of existing shop units should be taken up with fast food outlets. The number of fast food outlets in Sedgefield already exceeds DCC's policy of 5%. It is imperative that to protect the health of the Town's residents and visitors that this policy is not breached further. The location of this property is in an area of the Town with a significant parking problem

and any further traffic will exacerbate this further. The location of this property is near to a large junction leading into narrower roads where significant concerns have been expressed by local residents regarding road safety. The property does not have any dedicated parking facilities and the land at the front of the property is registered village green. The business now being proposed will generate waste and there will require careful management as there are no facilities for storing or disposing of waste at the front of the property (for use by the business as well as its customers). No permission has been given by the Town Council for waste materials to be stored on the village green. Cllrs agreed to request this planning application be called in for consideration by Full Planning Committee and not by delegated Officer. It was also agreed that if this planning application was to be granted by DCC that conditions should be sought to protect the local area and residents.

10.6 DM/21/00137/AD – replacement fascia with external light on front elevation, 7 Church View, Sedgfield:

Cllrs objected to this planning application which is predominantly a copy of planning application DM/21/00136/FPA. The signage and lighting aspects of this planning application must fully meet the requirements stipulated by the Conservation Officer to ensure that the character of the Town is upheld and respected. Cllrs agreed to request this planning application be called in for consideration by Full Planning Committee and not by delegated Officer as it needed to be fully considered along with planning application DM/21/00136/FPA.

10.7 DM/21/00150/FPA – single storey side extension, 19 East Parade, Sedgfield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.8 DM/21/00209/FPA – reconstruction of shop front and new roller shutters to no 62, alterations to existing shop door and window at no 60 to match no 62 (amendment to DM/20/01868/FPA), 60-62 Front Street, Sedgfield:

Cllrs welcomed this application and its intention to improve the frontage of 60-62 Front Street following criminal damage, however, it was unclear from the drawings and Heritage Statement in relation to this application whether the proposed roller shutters would be on the exterior or interior of the building. Cllrs would support this application if the roller shutters were placed on the interior of the building inside the glass window (similar to those installed at the Co-op which is also in the Town's Conservation Area).

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1- 8 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.

ADDITIONAL ITEM:

The Clerk reported that earlier that day Durham County Council had published their latest list of planning applications which included the following within Sedgfield:

DM/21/00212/FPA - erection of an agricultural straw storage building, Holdforth Farm,

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **FEBRUARY POLICY & RESOURCES** of the Council held following the Monthly meeting via Microsoft Teams on **Monday 8th February 2021.**

Holdforth, Ferryhill

DM/21/00230/LB – replacement 4 no timber Yorkshire sliding sash windows to the front elevation (in the cellars), Manor House, West End, Sedgefield

DM/21/00257/FPA – proposed single storey front extension and partial conversion of garage, 32 Mitford Court, Sedgefield

DM/21/00263/FPA – single storey extensions to the front, Airfield Cottage, Bishop Middleham

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider the above planning applications and to forward to the Clerk by no later than Monday 15th February 2021 any comments.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.53pm.

Present

Cllr. Gloria Wills (Chairman)

Cllr. Mel Carr (Vice-Chairman) and

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

Officers

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

Ms Natalie Chowns-Traynor (Meeting Moderator)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Leo McCormack and Fiona Warrand.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

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 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. 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/resident whose properties border village green informing them that the Town Council is reviewing its Village Green Policy. This Policy will include the essence of the licences/letters currently being prepared by the Town Council's solicitor in relation to several village green related issues. 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 Section 106 application form is to be discussed at a meeting between Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group members, Mr Stephen Reed, Ms Sue Lewis and both local Cllrs on 18th January 2021 – see agenda item 6.8.

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 at their February 2021 meeting 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 Sedgfield 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 Sedgfield 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 has issued a reminder to County Cllr Brown. 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 Sedgefield. 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 Polyunnel:

The materials to re-cover the polyunnel have now arrived. Work is now underway looking at potential options for moving the tunnel in order to accommodate recycling bays as 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 Ash Tree Within Grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall:

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

(Note: The Clerk has requested AW Treecare to provide a recommendation and quote for work required to this tree – see item 3.31). Cllrs Gloria Wills and Mel Carr to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.12 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 February 2021 any items for those Committees would feature on the P&R Committee's agenda.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.13 Childrens 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 ongoing 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.

3.14 Request For Donation – Citizens Advice County Durham:

No further information has been received as yet from Mr Watmough. To consider this matter again should further information be received from Mr Watmough.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.15 Cycle Trail at NETPark:

No further progress has been reported regarding this matter.

Cllr Alf Walton reported that he had viewed the area at Hardwick Country Park identified by Cllr Julie Towler at last month's meeting as appearing to be used as an unofficial cycle trail. Cllr Walton noted the area was strewn with litter, bottles and glass and confirmed that these matters had been reported to DCC. Cllr Chris Lines commented that this had been a further unofficial trail and not one which had been built by or endorsed by DCC. Cllr Lines said that DCC's work on this matter was ongoing and he would keep Cllrs updated as and when progress is made.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.16 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.

3.17 Town Council Offices Refurbishment:

The Estates Working Group continue to oversee this project. Work on the toilets refurbishment has now been completed and some areas of tiling are now required. Internal doors are being ordered. Electrical work will be finalized the week commencing 15th February 2021. 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.

3.18 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.

Cllr Stephen Winter commented that he had received verbal complaints from residents regarding apparent activity on the horse field and asked if the Town Council were aware of this. The Clerk confirmed that similar reports had been made to her which she had passed to DCC's Planning Section in order to find out if this activity was in any way related to the planning application relating to that site. DCC Officers confirmed at that point that the planning application had been withdrawn in November 2020 and they did not know why any work was taking place on the field but would investigate and keep the Town Council updated. No further response has been received as yet. Cllr David Brown confirmed that two months ago he had been approached by concerned residents and that as a result, in his role as County Cllr, had reported this matter to DCC for investigation. Cllr Alf Walton noted that 8-12 caravans were now on the site and expressed his concerns that this could turn into an

unauthorized encampment. Cllr Ann Carr expressed her annoyance that DCC did not seem to be doing anything regarding this matter as well as ongoing problems on Old Stockton Road.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.19 Hardwick Hall Hotel New Premises Licence:

An email was received from Ms Yvonne Raine of DCC on 24th November 2020 informing the Town Council that the Licensing Authority had agreed that it was in the public interest to further extend the time limit for the hearing regarding Hardwick Hall Hotel's new premises licence until no later than 28th February 2021. The Clerk has contacted Ms Raine to request an update on this matter. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter as a response is received.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.20 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.

3.21 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.

3.22 Village Green / The Pickled Parson:

The Town Clerk issued the Town Council's solicitor with instruction on 10th November 2020 as agreed by the November 2020 P&R Committee meeting. An update is now awaited from the Town Council's solicitor. The Clerk has issued a reminder to the

Town Council's solicitor regarding the importance of this matter. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.23 Village Green / 33 Front Street:

The Town Clerk issued the Town Council's solicitor with instruction on 10th November 2020 as agreed by the November 2020 P&R Committee meeting. An update is now awaited from the Town Council's solicitor. The Clerk has issued a reminder to the Town Council's solicitor regarding the importance of this matter. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.24 Village Green / 26 Front Street:

The Town Clerk issued the Town Council's solicitor with instruction on 10th November 2020 as agreed by the November 2020 P&R Committee meeting. An update is now awaited from the Town Council's solicitor. The Clerk has issued a reminder to the Town Council's solicitor regarding the importance of this matter. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.25 St Edmund's Church Path Lighting:

Additional information provided by Mr Brian Mutch was considered at the Estates Working Group on 18th January 2021, however, this does not provide the necessary evidence to progress this matter. The Clerk has written to Mr Mutch reiterating the evidence with the Town Council requires. The Estates Working Group to keep the P&R Committee updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.26 Village Green / Dun Cow:

The Clerk has requested from Mr Geoff Rayner a to scale detailed site plan for the village green area at the front of the Dun Cow. Following receipt of that the Clerk to request the Town Council's solicitor to prepare a draft licence based upon the terms proposed by Cllrs at the December 2020 P&R Committee meeting and seek advice

regarding the matter of white line marking. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.27 Proposed Treeworks In Grounds Of Ceddesfeld Hall:

As instructed, the Clerk has requested an updated quotation from AW Treecare to include any necessary work on the ash tree (earlier considered under item 3.11). AW Treecare had confirmed that this work would be undertaken within the quote already supplied and that there would be no change to the cost quoted. Cllrs agreed this work should now be scheduled. The Clerk to liaise with AW Treecare and keep the P&R Committee updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.28 Yew Hedging – Butterwick Road Cemetery:

The Clerk reported that she had a verbal update on this matter which would be considered under agenda item 8.3.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.29 2021/22 Precept Request / Income & Expenditure Budget:

The Clerk has submitted to DCC the necessary completed 2021/22 precept request paperwork as signed by herself and Cllr Mel Carr. The explanatory article for the public has been included in the February 2021 edition of the Sedgfield Extra. Work is now underway to produce the 2021/22 detailed income and expenditure budget based upon the headline allocations agreed at the January 2021 P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.30 Review of 2021/22 Fees and Charges:

All staff have been notified of 2021/22 fees and charges. Letters have been issued to regular Parish Hall users. Letters have been issued to allotment holders. The Town Council's website has been updated accordingly.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.31 Reviewed External Grant Funding Policy & Procedures document:

The Finance Working Group at its meeting on 21st January 2021 agreed an approach to incorporating into this document a reference to Section 106 monies. The Clerk to share electronically with all Cllrs the finalized External Grant Funding Policy & Procedures document.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.32 Double Taxation:

The Clerk has completed CDALC's on-line survey to show the Town Council's support for Great Aycliffe Town Council's recent motion regarding double taxation. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter as further information is shared via CDALC regarding this matter in the future.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.33 Commemorative plaques in County Durham:

The Clerk has forwarded to Ms Jane Hedges of DCC the suggestions made by Cllrs and also shared Ms Hedges request with members of the Local History Society and Sedgfield News.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.34 PCVC Precept Consultation:

The Clerk has submitted to the PCVC the Town Council's comments regarding the proposed 2021/22 precept increase. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.35 Expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery:

Following the resolutions made at the January 2021 P&R Committee meeting, the Clerk has duly informed CDS of their awarded work. The Clerk reported that to date

the CDS have completed the topographical survey of the cemetery and undertaken work required for the T2. Findings are now being written up by CDS. The Clerk has scheduled the next Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group meeting for Tuesday 24th February 2021. The Clerk said that she had a further matter relating to this project to be discussed under agenda item 8.2.

The Clerk has also updated Ms Hilary Sperring, the DCC Planning Officer overseeing the Town Council's planning application, and agreed that an extension until 31st March 2021 be put in place by DCC before determining this application so as to allow the Town Council time to produce the additional documentation required.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.36 Internal Auditor 2021/22 – 2023/24:

The Town Clerk has informed the Internal Auditor of the renewal of his contract with the Town Council for 2021/22 – 2023/24.

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.

Mrs Julia Bowles expressed her concerns regarding the caravans at the horse field site and reminded everyone of the significant amount of time and challenge that was required to stop illegal encampments many years ago at Old Beacon Lane. Mrs Bowles said that she believed DCC did not want to take such matters on and she urged the Town Council to continue to challenge this issue.

The Chairman thanked the public for their views and 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. The Clerk highlighted that the footpath at Malton Terrace was to be considered under agenda items 7.3 and 7.4 and that the matter of trees on Sedgfield Town Council owned land was to be considered at the next Estates

Working Group meeting on 15th February 2021.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Festive Celebrations Review and Recommendations Report by Town Clerk and Projects & Media Co-ordinator:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Festive Celebrations Review and Recommendations Report by Town Clerk and Projects & Media Co-ordinator. Cllr Paul Heasman noted the low participation figures in some of the activities which had been arranged and hoped that these could be kept for future years and more participation encouraged. The Clerk explained how the Town Council has actively engaged with local schools and young people in previous years, practices which unfortunately could not take place in 2020 due to the COVID restrictions. The recommendations in the report proposed, circumstances at the time permitting, a hybrid approach of successful elements of the traditional Snow Party as well as welcomed activities from 2020. It was recognized that at the time of writing this report, the ongoing impact of the COVID pandemic was still very real and there is no clear indication of when all restrictions limiting social gatherings and activities will be lifted. It is possible that some form of restrictions could still be in place or be re-introduced for the festive period 2021 and winter 2021/22. It is important that the Town Council continues to monitor what can and cannot be permitted in terms of all community events and the Clerk will advise upon this.

RESOLVED:

i) The Town Council to ensure that some form of festive celebration takes place in late November/early December 2021. A recommendation report containing more specific proposals regarding actual festive celebration/Snow Party be presented to the P&R Committee or Community Development & Engagement Committee in September 2021.

ii) The festive lights switch on in Sedgefield takes place on Saturday 27th November 2021.

iii) Regardless of what is and is not permitted to take place due to the COVID pandemic, this year's festive celebrations incorporate the successful virtual elements of the 2020 event. Specific details will be presented in the report mentioned earlier in September 2021.

iv) The 'live' tree near to the Ball Game statue now become the Town's Christmas tree. This would be more environmentally friendly, and the Town Council could seek support in some other way from the Rotary Club of Sedgefield.

v) If recommendation iv is approved, this be promoted to residents as an

environmental success along with the introduction of LED lights to the St Edmund's footpath and the lighting to the trees on the village green.

5.3 Flexible Retirement Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Flexible Retirement Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the electronically issued "Flexible Retirement Policy" with immediate effect.

5.4 Working Without The Default Retirement Age Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Working Without The Default Retirement Age Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the electronically issued "Working Without The Default Retirement Age Policy" with immediate effect.

5.5 Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the electronically issued "Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Policy" with immediate effect.

5.6 Dismissal Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Dismissal Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the electronically issued "Dismissal Policy" with immediate effect.

5.7 Welfare Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Welfare Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

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

5.8 Exit Policy Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated an Exit Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

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

5.9 Community Event Recommendation Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Community Event Recommendation Report. All Cllrs agreed with the content of this report. Cllr Allan Blakemore noted that it was likely this year’s Armed Forces Day events would not go ahead as a result of the on-going COVID restrictions. Cllr Blakemore said that even if a community event could not go ahead in 2021 he felt it would be good to link in any future event in 2022 with the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations. All Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

i) As soon as an announcement is made by central government that COVID restrictions are going to be eased to an extent that a large community gathering would be permitted then the Town Clerk and Cllr Allan Blakemore, as Chair of the Sedgefield 700+, contact local community groups to see if they would be interested in working together to host such an event for the Town.

ii) A holding note to be send by the Town Clerk and Cllr Blakemore to local community groups to flag that the Town Council is thinking ahead and will be ready to take a lead in co-ordinating activity when the time is right.

5.10 Six Month Lift Inspection Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Six-Month Lift Inspection Report confirming that the lift in the Parish Hall had passed its most recent inspection.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.11 King Chef Takeaway – Overflowing Bins Report by Cllr Stephen Winter

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a report by Cllr Stephen Winter regarding the overflowing bins at the King Chef takeaway. In support of his report Cllr Winter expressed his concerns that this situation if allowed to continue would attract rats as well as being a significant eyesore in the Town in front of a Grade I listed building in the centre of the Conservation Area. Cllr Winter reported that he had also been

contacted by two residents who expressed their concerns regarding this area and several other buildings in the Town. Cllr Winter had forwarded this correspondence to the Clerk. The Clerk confirmed this correspondence, and another which she had received, were on the forthcoming Estates Working Group's agenda for consideration. Cllr Winter welcomed the views of fellow Cllrs regarding the bins identified in his report as he felt the situation was unacceptable.

Cllr Alf Walton said that he was disgusted by the state of the bins highlighted by Cllr Winter. He had been taking regular photos as evidence that this was not a one-off situation. Cllr Walton said that inaction on this matter was setting a dangerous precedent and reminded all of the action taken in relation to The Pickled Parson when they had built a bin store to hide their bins away and this had to be dismantled. As a result of that the Pickled Parson now take their rubbish to the Corner House. Cllr Walton said that the Pizza Castle had been allowed to put bins out on the village green and now the King Chef were copying. He urged the Town Council have a consistent approach.

Cllr Mel Carr said that the issue with the bin store at The Pickled Parson was that it had been attached to a listed building and the Conservation/Planning Officers had requested this be removed. Cllr Mel Carr reminded all Cllrs that the Town Council had written to the leaseholder of the Pizza Castle and requested the remove their bins from the village green and as a result of the subsequent response received the Town Council had held an on-site meeting with the Conservation Officer to look at options, then a meeting with the leaseholder and discussions and actions were underway with the Town Council's solicitor and DCC's solicitor regarding village green covenants so that proposals could be sent to the owner of 26 Front Street. Cllr Mel Carr proposed that a letter be sent to the leaseholder of the King Chef asking them to remove the bins from the village green.

Cllr Mark Cant expressed concerns regarding the lifting of restrictive covenants. Cllr Gloria Wills said that this matter was the reason for discussions between the Town Council's solicitor and DCC's solicitor and, if the owner of 26 Front Street was agreeable to such and pay all associated costs, then licences could be considered with conditions stipulated by the Town Council. Cllr Wills said that it was not the Town Council's intention to close businesses down but the issue of the restrictive covenant needed to be resolved. Cllr Cant thanked Cllr Winter for his report and asked if DCC could be asked to investigate this matter. Cllr Wills pointed out that the land in question was village green owned by the Town Council.

Cllr Ann Carr supported sending a letter to the leaseholder of the King Chef. She also requested clarification regarding the extent to which the restrictive covenant applied

on this section of village green, i.e. around the entire building or just one side. Cllr Ann Carr said it was important to have a consistent approach across the whole Town regarding village green matters.

Cllr Winter proposed that a letter be sent to the leaseholder of the King Chef asking for the bins to be removed from the village green and a copy of this letter copied to the owner of 26 Front Street for openness and transparency. Cllr Winter also proposed that letters also be sent to DCC's Conservation Officer and Environmental Health requesting they investigate this matter. Cllr Chris Lines said that the area around 26 Front Street was village green and he felt that Cllr Winter's recommendation was in-line with how the Town Council had tackled other businesses and felt this was the best way forward in order to start a dialogue with the King Chef.

Cllr Walton said it was not a matter for the Town Council as to how a business disposed of its rubbish and did not feel that the Town Council should be changing covenants. Cllr Walton asked for clarification as to whether the covenant applied to both sides of 26 Front Street as some people believed it just relevant to the Pizza Castle side. Cllr Walton said that controlling waste was not about putting a business out of business and said that business owners should be taking their rubbish home with them. Cllr Julie Towler said that she had to store her bins at the rear of her property in the yard and not at the front of the property. Cllr Allan Blakemore said that there was legislation which DCC should enforce regarding putting bins out but Cllr Wills questioned if they had any enforcement powers when the land in question was village green? Cllr Blakemore replied that ownership of land was not relevant for such legislation as there was the potential for anti-social behaviour problems as a result of bins being left out all the time. Cllr David Brown questioned what conditions, if any, had been assigned by DCC in the planning permissions granted for 26 Front Street and felt that this question should be asked of DCC.

Cllr Mavis Wayman said there was no doubt that the area was an eyesore as a result of the bins. She felt that the owner of 26 Front Street was not taking responsibility for their property as private residents would not be allowed to leave bins out in such a way. Cllr Wayman said the Town Council was being blamed by some residents for not doing anything but the fact was the Town Council has been discussing and trying to progress/resolve this matter for some considerable time. Cllr Mel Carr agreed and said that ultimately the Town Council wants the owner of 26 Front Street to take some responsibility and work with their leaseholders to resolve this issue. Cllr Mel Carr said the actions now being agreed would bring the King Chef element of the building into line with discussions regarding Pizza Castle, the business in the other element of the building.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to get clarification regarding the remit (in terms of area) of the restrictive covenant on the village green.**
- ii) The Clerk to write to the leaseholders of the King Chef, with a copy to the property's owner, asking for the bins to be removed from the village green.**
- iii) The Clerk to request an update regarding 26 Front Street/Pizza Castle and the restrictive covenants from the Town Council's solicitor for the March P&R Committee meeting.**
- i) The Clerk to make DCC's Conservation Officer and Environment Health Officers aware of the situation with the bins at both businesses operating from 26 Front Street and ask them to investigate.**

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 11th January 2021:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of cheques for approval after 11th January 2021 numbered 109890 to 109904 Cllrs confirmed their support for the authorization of all cheques.

Cllr Alf Walton queried the duration of the invoice for electricity at the portacabin relating to cheque number 109894. The Clerk will forward this answer to Cllr Walton as she did not have that information to hand. The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that if they had questions relating to invoices for payment they should submit them prior to the meeting to enable the Clerk to answer at the meeting. Cllr Mel Carr confirmed that this matter had been discussed at the last Finance Working Group meeting and that, in accordance with the Energy Management SLA with DCC, that work was underway to start to transfer to new utility providers when possible.

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.**
- iii) The Clerk to forward to Cllr Walton the answer to his question relating to cheque number 109894.**

6.2 Financial Budget Comparison as at 29th January 2021:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Financial Budget Comparison as at 29th January 2021.

6.3 Debtors List as at 29th January 2021:

RESOLVED:

To receive the information that the Town Council did not have any debtors as at 29th January 2021.

6.4 Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st January 2021:

The Clerk circulated to all a Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st January 2021.

RESOLVED:

To receive Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st January 2021.

6.5 January 2021 Bank Reconciliations Plus December 2020 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation Report by Town Clerk:

The Clerk circulated to all January 2021 Bank Reconciliations Plus December 2020 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation Report.

RESOLVED:

To receive the January 2021 Bank Reconciliations and December 2020 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliation.

6.6 Local Restrictions Support Grant For Businesses Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Local Restrictions Support Grant for Businesses Update Report.

Cllr David Brown reported that central government are making money available nationally to ensure that all polling stations can be covid secure for the forthcoming May 2021 elections. Cllr Brown proposed that the Clerk be given authority to apply on behalf of the Town Council for any such funding should it be necessary for Sedgefield Parish Hall to be a polling station. All Cllrs agreed. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to monitor the availability of covid secure polling station funding and make any applications necessary on behalf of the Town Council.**

6.7 Section 106 Monies Update Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Section 106 Monies Update Report by

the Finance Working Group. This report was accompanied by a copy of the DCC spreadsheet issued in December 2020 relating to Section 106 monies available in our electoral ward, a copy of the Town Council's letter to Mr Stephen Reed of DCC dated 7th December 2020 seeking clarification on a number of matters and Mr Reed's associated response dated 5th January 2021. The Clerk confirmed that the report now presented by the Finance Working Group was as a result of them considering Mr Reed's January 2021 response.

Cllr Gloria Wills asked the Clerk to liaise with Mr Reed to see if he would be happy with the content of his correspondence being shared with Mrs Julia Bowles as a result of her earlier comments during public participation as this would resolve her difficulties in obtaining information regarding Section 106 monies.

Cllr Chris Lines said that it was good to note, and have in writing, Mr Reed's assurance that the Town Council would be consulted should any Section 106 funding applications be received in accordance with DCC's Section 106 protocols. Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to liaise with Mr Stephen Reed and, if permitted, share information with Mrs Bowles.**

6.8 Section 106 Funding Application Relating To Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Report by Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Section 106 Funding Application Relating To Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Report by the Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group. Accompanying this report was a proposed Section 106 funding application which Cllrs agreed should now be submitted to Mr Stephen Reed and Ms Su Lewis of DCC with copies to both local County Cllrs in order that it can be discussed at the forthcoming joint meeting on 18th February 2021.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to submit the Town Council's Section 106 funding application relating to the expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery.**

6.9 Internal Audit 3 Year Work Plan Report by Mr Gordon Fletcher, Internal Auditor:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated an Internal Audit 3 Year Work Plan

Report by Mr Gordon Fletcher, Internal Auditor.

RESOLVED:

To approve Mr Fletcher's Internal Audit 3 Year Work Plan and note the content of proposed internal audit work for 2021/22.

7. Correspondence:

7.1 Northumbria In Bloom 2021 Spring Judging Process (email and attachments from Ms Joanna Wood dated 12th January 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated the Northumbria In Bloom 2021 Spring Judging Process (email and attachments from Ms Joanna Wood dated 12th January 2021). The Clerk reported that Mr Ian Sutherland, Acting Sedgefield In Bloom Group Chair, had confirmed the Bloom Group would be happy to support the Town Council should they wish to enter the Northumbria In Bloom 2021 competition. Cllrs agreed to accept the invitation to enter the 2021 Northumbria In Bloom competition.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to notify Ms Wood and Mr Sutherland of the Town Council's acceptance to enter the 2021 Northumbria In Bloom competition.

7.2 RHS Britain In Bloom (email and attachments from Ms Joanna Wood dated 12th January 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated the RHS Britain in Bloom email and attachments from Ms Joanna Wood dated 12th January 2021 in which she invited the Town Council to represent the region in an alternative Britain In Bloom competition for 2021. The Clerk reported that Mr Ian Sutherland, the Acting Chair of Sedgefield In Bloom, had confirmed the Group would be happy to support any Town Council entry to this competition. Cllrs agreed to accept the invitation to enter the 2021 Britain In Bloom competition.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to notify Ms Wood and Mr Sutherland of the Town Council's acceptance to enter the 2021 Britain In Bloom competition.

7.3 Footpath Concern and Condition – Malton Terrace (email and attachments from Mr Matthew Jacobs dated 26th January 2021)

7.4 Malton Terrace Footpath (email from Ms Julie Dows dated 26th January 2021)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Matthew Jacobs dated 26th January 2021 and email from Ms Julie Dows dated 26th January 2021 both relating to their concerns regarding the condition of the footpath at Malton Terrace.

As both items related to each other these were considered together.

Cllr Alf Walton reported that he and the Town Council's Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent had visited Malton Terrace ten days ago and had not found the footpath at Malton Terrace to be in a dangerous or unsafe condition. Cllr Walton suggested that there may be other paths in the Town in a worse condition which should be dealt with first. Cllr Heasman pointed out that this was not about whether other areas were in a better or worse condition but the fact that this locality at Malton Terrace had been highlighted. Cllr Mel Carr reiterated Cllr Walton's comment that two people had looked at the area and did not consider it dangerous. Cllr Mel Carr said that any dangerous areas in the past have been speedily dealt with. Cllr Allan Blakemore requested clarification that the footpath in question was the Town Council's and Cllr Wills confirmed this was so.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to liaise with DCC to determine if they have a specification for a safe footpath which can then be used as a marker for assessing Town Council owned footpaths.**
- ii) Members of the Estates Working Group, as individuals or abiding by social distancing measures, to conduct a walk around of the Town Council's owned footpaths, including Malton Terrace, and to discuss their findings at the March 2021 Estates Working Group meeting in order to agree what quotes are required for repair works and bring a subsequent recommendation report back to P&R Committee.**
- iii) The Clerk to provide an update to Mr Jacobs and Ms Dows.**

The Chair, Cllr Gloria Wills, 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 Annual Increment Award To Town Clerk Report by Personnel Committee:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated an Annual Increment Award to Town Clerk Report by the Personnel Committee which was duly considered.

8.2 Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Update Verbal Report by Town Clerk:

The Clerk reminded all of the decisions made regarding work allocations at the January 2021 P&R Committee meeting to assist with progressing the Council's planning application to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery and gave a verbal update on the considerable progress which had been made in the interim.

8.3 Butterwick Road Cemetery Yew Hedging Update Verbal Report by Town Clerk:

The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that it had been resolved at the December 2020 P&R Committee meeting to purchase yew hedging for the new area of Butterwick Road Cemetery and gave an update on this matter.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9:34pm.

DRAFT