

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **APRIL MONTHLY
MEETING** of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. via Microsoft Teams, on
Monday 19th April 2021

| | |
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| Present | Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) and Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Vanessa Carmichael, Ann Carr, Paul Heasman, Chris Lines, Leo McCormack, Julie Towler, Alfred Walton, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter |
| Officers | Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk and Meeting Moderator) |

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, welcomed everyone to the meeting and a one minute silence was held to commemorate the Duke of Edinburgh who had recently passed away.

1. **Apologies:**
Cllr Gloria Wills.
2. **Declaration of interest:**
Cllr Chris Lines declared an interest in the first two planning applications to be considered under agenda item 10 as these related to a friend and family member. No other Cllrs made any declaration of interest.
3. **STC Minutes / Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 8th March 2021:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (DB / MW)
 - b. **Minutes of the P&R committee held Monday 8th March 2021:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (DB / SW)
 - c. **Minutes of the Finance Working Group meeting held Thursday 11th March 2021:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (AB / M Carr)
 - d. **Minutes of the Estates Working Group meeting held Monday 15th March 2021:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (AB / M Carr)
 - e. **Minutes of the Special Town Council Meeting held Monday 22nd March 2021:**

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

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

The Clerk reported that following the Special Town Council meeting held on 22nd March 2021 a Special Motion had been received on 30th March 2021 signed by eight Town Councillors requesting the resolution at this meeting be revoked. The Clerk confirmed that she had sought advice as to whether or not this motion could be considered during the current period of purdah and been told this was possible. For this reason an Extraordinary Town Council meeting will take place at 7pm on Tuesday 27th April 2021 via Microsoft Teams to consider this motion. An agenda and accompanying papers will be issued to Cllrs the following day.

RESOLVED: Cllrs to attend the Town Council's Extraordinary Meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 27th April 2021.

4. Matters of Information:

4.1 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.

4.2 Revised 2021/22 Town Council Meetings:

The Clerk has updated the Town Council's 2021/22 Meetings Calendar to reflect the new date for the AGM and Annual Town Meeting in light of the forthcoming Town Council elections. These new dates have been promoted.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.3 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.

4.4 Current Planning Application:

No Cllrs submitted to the Clerk any comments regarding planning applications DM/21/00548/FPA and DM/21/00753/TPO published on 8th March 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 April 2021 plus civic events until March 2022. In addition to these dates the Clerk reported that a Special Town Council meeting would be held at 6.30pm on Monday 26th April 2021 to approve the Town Council's 2020/21 year end accounts and an Extraordinary Meeting at 7.00pm on Tuesday 27th April 2021 to consider a motion submitted by 8 Cllrs seeking to revoke a resolution made at the Council's Special Meeting held on 22nd March 2021.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

6. Public Participation:

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

Mr Tim Dredge asked if members of the public would be able to attend the Town Council's forthcoming Extraordinary Meeting. The Clerk confirmed the public would be able to attend this meeting and that Public Participation would be an agenda item. Mr Dredge thanked the Clerk for this confirmation.

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 electronically to all Cllrs a copy of the

Chairman's report which detailed the actions he had undertaken since the Council's last Monthly Meeting.

RESOLVED

To receive this information.

7.2 Mayor's Report:

The Mayor, Cllr Leo McCormack, reported that no Mayoral activities had taken place since the last meeting. Cllr McCormack confirmed that he had submitted a Mayor's report for the Town Council's 2020/21 Annual Report.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.3 Local Councils Election Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Local Councils Election Update Report which explained that Sedgfield Town Council would have an uncontested election following the Local Councils elections on 6th May 2021. Accompanying this report were details of those who would be Town Councillors post-6th May 2021. The Clerk confirmed that she would be contacting those who would be new to the Council and then issuing to all Cllrs updated Welcome Packs. The Clerk requested those Cllrs who had yet to return their previously issued Welcome Packs do so as a matter of urgency.

Cllr Alf Walton expressed his disappointment that Cllr Gloria Wills had decided not to stand again for the Town Council. Cllr Allan Blakemore asked for thanks to be recorded to all those current Cllrs who would not be returning to the Town Council. Cllr Mel Carr echoed the comments of Cllrs Walton and Blakemore.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8. External Reports:

None.

9. Correspondence:

None.

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/21/00601/FPA - single storey extension to side and rear. Replacement of flat roof to existing rear two storey offshoot with new hipped roof, 45 Station Road, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.2 DM/21/00752/FPA – erection of 1.85m fence to side, 40 Winterton Avenue, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.3 DM/21/00760/FPA – front porch entrance and garage conversion, 35 Matfen Court, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.4 DM/21/00851/VOC – variation of Condition 1 (Approved Plans) of DM/17/04122/RM to allow housetype substitutions to Plots 47-63 and layout alterations to Plots 71 & 72, land at the former hospital site, Salters Lane, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.5 DM/21/00971/FPA – replacing existing buried package sewage treatment plant with a new buried package sewage treatment plant, land to the West of A1(M), Gipsy Lane, Bradbury:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.6 DM/21/01086/FPA – single storey side extension to existing dwelling, 13 Melgrove Way, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.7 DM/21/01111/FPA – erection of front porch and rendering of front elevation, Lindum, West Park Lane, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1- 7 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 Sedgefield:

DM/21/00639/FPA - kitchen extension, 19 White House Drive, Sedgefield

DM/21/01310/FPA – first floor side/rear extension and garage conversion to habitable space,
24 the Meadows, Sedgefield:

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider the above planning applications and to forward any comments to the Clerk by no later than Monday 26th April 2021.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.19pm.

APPROVED

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **APRIL POLICY & RESOURCES** of the Council held following the Monthly meeting via Microsoft Teams on **Monday 19th April 2021.**

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

Officers Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk and Meeting Moderator)

1. Apologies:

Cllr Gloria Wills.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Sedgefield Town Council Corporate Plan:

This matter has also been discussed by the Finance Working Group and Internal Auditor. 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. The Clerk to bring a proposal to the next P&R Committee meeting following successful co-option of final Town Councillor vacancy.

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. Note: The Estates Working Group have agreed that their priority work areas for 2021/22 will be village green matters and the re-opening of the Parish Hall. 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 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.

3.6 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 has issued a reminder to County Cllr Brown. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.7 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.

3.8 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. Cllr Mel Carr to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

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

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.10 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 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.

3.11 Cycle Trail at NETPark:

No further progress has been reported regarding this matter. Cllr Chris Lines, who will not be returning to the Town Council after May's election, will provide the Town Clerk with contact details of DCC Officers dealing with this matter so that communications can in future come to the Town Council direct. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated as and when progress is made.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.12 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 issue one further request for a response and if none is forthcoming then this matter be closed.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.13 Town Council Offices Refurbishment:

The Estates Working Group continue to oversee this project.

Internal doors have now all been fitted. Electrical work has been completed. All rubbish generated from this refurbishment work has now been removed from site. Internal decoration is scheduled to commence on 15th April 2021. New blinds are in the process of being ordered. Tiling work is being commissioned. Flooring has been ordered and discussions are underway to schedule a date for fitting. 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.

3.14 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. Cllrs considered this matter in light of Cllr Wills not returning to the Town Council after May's election.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to request an update from DCC's Gypsy Roma Traveller Section regarding the horse field location and if there are no on-going investigations regarding this site then to close this matter with Cllrs monitoring and raising any concerns in the future should they arise.

3.15 Hardwick Hall Hotel New Premises Licence:

An email was received from Ms Yvonne Raine of DCC of 11th February 2021 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 31st July 2021. The Clerk had shared this information electronically with all Cllrs. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.16 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.

3.17 Village Green / The Pickled Parson:

The Town Council's solicitor has issued to The Pickled Parson the Town Council's proposed licence for use of the village green. The Clerk has requested an update. The Clerk to schedule an Estates Working Group to consider the latest position with all village green matters so that a report can be brought back to the May 2021 P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.18 Village Green / 26 Front Street:

Following the latest Estates Working Group meeting, the Clerk has submitted to the Town Council's solicitor a further set of questions regarding this matter. The Clerk to schedule an Estates Working Group to consider the latest position with all village green matters so that a report can be brought back to the May 2021 P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.19 Village Green / Dun Cow:

Mr Geoff Rayner has supplied the additional information required by the Town Council regarding the village green area at the front of the Dun Cow. The Clerk is now liaising with 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.

3.20 Treeworks In Grounds Of Ceddesfeld Hall:

AW Treecare will inform the Clerk when they are able to schedule the agreed treeworks in the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. The Clerk to keep the P&R Committee updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.21 Festive Celebrations:

A recommendation report for 2021 festive celebrations to be brought to the September 2021 P&R Committee meeting regarding actual or virtual events depending upon restrictions at the time.

A letter has been sent to the Rotary Club of Sedgefield asking if they would be willing to support this event in some way rather than providing the Town with a Christmas tree. A response is awaited.

The live Christmas tree and introduction of LED lights to the St Edmund's footpath and village green be promoted in the next edition of the Extra.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.22 Community Event:

The Clerk and Cllr Blakemore to keep monitoring the COVID restrictions/situation so that when appropriate contact be made with local community groups to see if they would be interested in working together to host a community event.

A holding note has been sent 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. Several groups have said they would welcome the opportunity to be involved in such an event.

The Clerk and Cllr Blakemore to keep the Council updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.23 King Chef Takeaway:

This matter was discussed at length at the last Estates Working Group meeting. The Clerk has submitted to the Town Council's solicitor a further set of questions regarding this matter. The Clerk to schedule an Estates Working Group to consider the latest position with all village green matters so that a report can be brought back to the May 2021 P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.24 Footpath – Malton Terrace:

The Clerk has requested from DCC the specification which they use for determining safe footpaths which can then be used as a marker for assessing Town Council owned footpaths. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

Members of the Estates Working Group are now reviewing the state of all footpaths on village greens so that this matter can be collectively discussed at their March meeting to progress to seeking quotations. This matter was to have been considered at the last Estates Working Group meeting, however, time did not permit and it was agreed to defer until after the forthcoming elections. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

The Clerk has updated Mr Jacobs and Ms Dows regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.25 Council Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy:

The revised Policy has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.26 Code of Conduct:

The revised Code of Conduct has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.27 Mayor's Handbook:

The revised Mayor's Handbook has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.28 Publication Scheme:

The revised Publication Scheme has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.29 Social Media Policy:

The revised Policy has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.30 Councillor and Staff Working Protocol:

The revised Protocol has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.31 Corporate Risk Management Schedule:

The revised Schedule has now been uploaded to the Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.32 Butterwick Road Cemetery – Rules and Regulations:

The revised Butterwick Road Cemetery – Rules and Regulations have now been uploaded to the Council's website. The Clerk has now issued letters to two families requesting that they seek retrospective permission for non-approved items on their respective graves.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.33 Butterwick and Winterton Allotments – Rules and Regulations:

The revised Butterwick and Winterton Allotments – Rules and Regulations have now been uploaded to the Council's website.

See agenda item 5.3. for allotments update.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.34 Rural/Market Town Group:

The Clerk has informed the Rural Services Network that the Town Council accepts their offer of a free trial membership. Cllr Allan Blakemore has been registered as the Town Council's representative on this Group and has participated in his first session. Cllr Blakemore to provide feedback to the P&R Committee nearer to the expiry of the Council's free trial membership period.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.35 Hardwick Arms Hotel:

The Clerk updated Mr Andy Popple in accordance with the Town Council's wishes and referred him to Mr Steven Galloway of DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.36 The Impeccable Pig:

The Clerk informed Mr John Adamson that the Town Council gave permission for a skip to be placed outside the Impeccable Pig for 8 weeks from 22nd February 2021. Mr Adamson has thanked the Town Council. The skip has now been removed.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.37 Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion:

Pre-planning advice/feedback is now awaited from the Environment Agency. The Clerk is keeping Ms Hilary Sperring of DCC updated on this matter and upon receipt of feedback the required information will be submitted to DCC in order that the Council's planning application can be determined.

The recycling bays in the new area of the cemetery have been emptied and work to remove them will begin soon.

The Clerk has requested from Mr Stephen Reed of DCC a date by which he will give the Town Council feedback on its Section 106 funding application submitted in relation to this expansion project. No feedback has yet been received. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.38 Insurance:

The Town Council's insurance, on a 5-year long-term agreement with Zurich Municipal, has been renewed.

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.

Mr Howard Smith reported that the Sedgefield In Bloom Group had been given permission by DCC to replace the bench at the turnpike area. This would mean that the existing bench from that area, which is still in good condition, could be used to replace the very poor bench near the bus shelter next to the Methodist Church if the Town Council were happy with that offer. Mr Smith expressed his concern at the number of holes on the church bank below the takeaway. Mr Smith concluded by reporting several incidents on anti-social behaviour which has taken place in the Town recently over Friday and Saturday nights and his concerns that groups were gathering without any consideration for social distancing. Mr Smith asked if the Town Council could report this to DCC.

Mrs Julia Bowles expressed her concerns at anti-social behaviour in the Town whereby groups of 50+ young people were gathering at the show field drinking and littering. Mrs Bowles had reported this matter to the Police but then found out the local Police had been unaware of her report. Mrs Bowles believed that many of the young people were travelling into the Town from outside the area and hoped that this could be stopped. With regards to the Town Council's Special Meeting on 22nd March 2021 Mrs Bowles asked if the Town Council had agreed to the Harriers Section 106 funding application meaning that all such monies would be going to the athletics track proposal? Mrs Bowles said the Planning Inspector had given the local community assurance that they would be allowed to have their say in how such monies were spent and she hoped there would be community engagement. Cllr Mel Carr informed Mrs Bowles that a copy of the minutes from the Town Council's meeting could be found on the Council's website and that this matter would be further considered at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council on 27th April 2021 at 7pm. The Clerk confirmed that a copy of the agenda for that Extraordinary Meeting would be uploaded to the Council's website the following day.

Mr Tim Dredge expressed his thanks for all the hard work undertaken by Town Cllrs over the last four years.

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for their comments and re-opened the meeting.

With regards to the comments regarding anti-social behaviour, Cllr Ann Carr said it was her understanding that Cllr David Brown had also reported this matter to the Police in the past in order to get their assistance to get a resolution. Cllr Brown confirmed this was the case and that as a result things had been quieter in the Town but the problems had obviously transferred to the show field. Cllr Brown said that he would monitor the situation and, in his capacity as a member of the Show Committee, also report this matter to the Police. Cllr Mel

Carr requested the Clerk also contact local Police representatives to make them aware of this matter. Cllr Vanessa Carmichael reported that she was aware a police vehicle had recently been driven over the village green from the Church Turning Circle to Rectory Row and asked why this had been necessary. Cllr Carmichael said she was not only concerned that such activity may not be legal but more importantly it could have been dangerous for anyone walking in that area. Cllr Lines reminded all of a multi-agency response that was set up several years ago when prolonged anti-social behaviour was experienced in the Town with this work being led by the Police and DCC. Cllr Lines suggested this could perhaps be rolled out again if necessary. Cllr Alf Walton said he understood that young people needed somewhere to go but that did not excuse the behaviour of a minority which had resulted in excessing littering and damage such as that experienced at the Temple at Hardwick Park. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the Police and keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

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. In response to Mr Smith's comment during public participation, the Clerk confirmed that Cllr Alf Walton continues to monitor this site. Cllr Winter confirmed that the holes in this area were bad and showed signs of activity.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Parish Hall Re-opening Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Parish Hall Re-opening Report which detailed the work that is underway with regular users in order to re-open the Parish Hall from mid-May 2021 in accordance with central government instruction. The Clerk confirmed that at this time no individual/private bookings are being considered for the Parish Hall. The Clerk also pointed out to Cllrs that should the Council return to face to face meetings from 7th May 2021 onwards then such would need to take place in the Parish Hall to allow appropriate social distancing which would impact upon the Hall's availability for hire. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Allotments Update Report by Projects & Media Co-ordinator:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated an Allotments Update Report by the Projects & Media Co-ordinator. Cllr Alf Walton reported he had been contacted by Mr Tim Grimwood, Secretary of the Sowers & Growers, with concerns that one plot at Butterwick allotments had not been worked on for some considerable time. Cllr Walton will investigate this matter and liaise with the Clerk accordingly.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.4 Future Town Council Meetings Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Future Town Council Meetings Report. The Clerk will update Cllrs when the outcome of the current legal challenge is known and then publish information to Cllrs and residents regarding the future format of Council meetings post-7th May 2021, i.e. a return to face to face meetings taking place in accordance with social distancing in the Parish Hall or continuation of virtual meetings.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Financial Matters:

6.1 Invoices for payment by cheques for approval after 8th March 2021:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of cheques for approval after 8th March 2021 numbered 109924 to 109942. 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 12th April 2021:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Financial Budget Comparison as at 12th April 2021.

6.3 Debtors List as at 12th April 2021 Report by Town Clerk:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Debtors List as at 12th April 2021.

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

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

Cllr Alf Walton requested an update on the Town Council's position to paying invoices by BACS. The Clerk reminded all that prior to the first national lockdown the Town Council had updated its bank mandate to allow payment by such a means but such payments could only be processed by an on-line dual authentication process which was not possible whilst staff were working remotely. The Clerk confirmed that once staff were back in the office payment, where possible via BACS, would commence.

RESOLVED:

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

6.5 March 2021 Bank Reconciliations Plus February 2021 and March 2021 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations Report by Town Clerk:

The Clerk circulated to all March 2021 Bank Reconciliations Plus February 2021 and March 2021 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations Report.

Cllr Alf Walton recalled that at a Town Council meeting some discussion had taken place regarding the future of the Public Sector Deposit Fund and its predicted future growth. The Clerk confirmed that this matter had been discussed at a recent Finance Working Group meeting and as a result Mr Mark Davies of the CCLA has been invited to attend the Group's meeting on 29th April 2021 to consider this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the March 2021 Bank Reconciliations and February 2021 and March 2021 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations.

6.6 Year End 2020/21 Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Year End 2020/21 Update Report. The Clerk confirmed the Council's 2020/21 year end accounts have been produced and will be presented to a Special Town Council meeting on Monday 26th

April 2021 via Microsoft Teams

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.7 2021/22 Income and Expenditure Budget Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2021/22 Income and Expenditure Budget Recommendation Report from the Finance Working Group. All Cllrs agreed to this recommendation.

Cllr Mel Carr expressed this thanks to the hard work of the Finance Working Group who had continued to meet remotely to undertake their invaluable work with the Council's budget scrutiny work. Cllr Mel Carr paid particular thanks to Cllr Glorai Wills for her work.

RESOLVED:

To reduce the 2021/22 overall Town Council income and expenditure budget by £7000 (from VAT reclaims income and open spaced expenditure) from £375,316.79 to £368,316.79.

7. Correspondence:

7.1 Proposed Diversion of Public Bridleway No 57 Sedgefield Parish (email from Ms Filomena Solan, DCC dated 23rd March 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Filomena Solan, DCC dated 23rd March 2021 regarding a proposed diversion of public bridleway No 57 Sedgefield Parish.

Cllrs Alf Walton and David Brown explained that the public bridleways in the area were historic communication routes between farms, however, due to health and safety reasons as well as opportunity to reduce potential unauthorized access for criminal activity many of such had been re-routed away from going through farm yards. Cllrs Walton and Brown proposed that this proposed diversion be supported. All Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Ms Solan that Sedgefield Town Council support the proposed diversion of public bridleway No 57 in Sedgefield Parish.

7.2 Street Lighting Problem, Sedgefield (email and attachments from Dr Alice Stanton and Dr Steven Donath dated 5th April 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachments from Dr Alice Stanton and Dr Steven Donath dated 5th April 2021 regarding lack of street lights near to their property at the Taylor Wimpey new build estate and asking if the Town Council can assist in any way.

Cllr Alf Walton asked if it was Taylor Wimpey's intention to install lighting at a later date? Cllr Mel Carr pointed out that within the correspondence received following face to face conversation and formal email that Taylor Wimpey had stated they would not be installing any street lighting. Cllr Mel Carr proposed the Town Council support Drs Stanton and Donath by raising this matter with DCC as it did not seem acceptable for such properties to be in darkness. Cllr Ann Carr agreed. Cllr Mavis Wayman asked if it was not a legal responsibility for the developers to provide street lighting and expressed her concerns at that the lack of such lighting would have upon the safety of residents and walkers in that area. Cllr Paul Heasman noted that in several areas of the new build estate alternative forms of lighting to traditional street lights were in place but that these do not work as they should. Cllr David Brown said that a new build estate should have within its plans appropriate lighting and the situation now outlined appeared to suggest a breakdown in communications between developers, planners and builders. Cllr Brown said that this was not a matter for the Town Council as we have no powers in this area but instead should direct this matter to DCC's planners and street lighting departments for progression. Cllr Allan Blakemore agreed and said that when this matter is referred to DCC reference should be made to the need for developments to be secured by design, i.e. without good lighting the area is being left vulnerable to potential safety issues and crime disorder. Cllr Mark Cant agreed that the residents should be supported by this matter being escalated to DCC as street lighting across Sedgefield was important. Cllr Leo McCormack agreed and said that he understood further housing was to be built at that estate and therefore it was important to raise this issue now to hopefully avoid future residents having similar experiences. Cllr Vanessa Carmichael questioned if ground rent and certain areas of land not being adopted by DCC could also be factors in this situation meaning that planning had permitted this to happen? Cllr Stephen Winter detailed an area of land on the new build estate which he knew was not adopted by DCC but instead classified as being a private road therefore not requiring street light provision. He questioned if this might be the same situation with the road identified by residents? Cllr Winter supported this matter being escalated to DCC for investigation.

Cllr Winter pointed out that when buying properties on the new build estate potential buyers were given advance plans showing the location of street lights.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to write to DCC in accordance with the Town Council's wishes.**
- ii) The Clerk to update Drs Stanton and Donath.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.06pm.

APPROVED

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **APRIL SPECIAL Meeting** of the Council held at **6.30 p.m. Via Microsoft Teams** on **Monday 26th April 2021.**

Present Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) and
Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Chris Lines, Leo McCormack, Julie Towler and Mavis Wayman

Officers Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk and Meeting Moderator)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs Paul Heasman, Alf Walton and Stephen Winter.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. To approve the financial accounts for 2020/21 including: -

a. Statement of Internal Control (2020/21 Statement of Internal Control and Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control Report by Finance Working Group):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2020/21 Statement of Internal Control and Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control Report by the Finance Working Group which detailed the Council's scope of responsibility under the Account and Audit Regulations 2015, the purpose of the Council's system of internal control, an explanation of the Council's internal control environment and a statement of the actual internal controls in operation.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Statement of Internal Control and Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control.

(Cllr Mark Cant joined the meeting)

b. Annual Governance Statement (2020/21 Annual Governance Statement Report by Finance Working Group):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2020/21 Annual Governance

Statement Report by the Finance Working Group. The Clerk explained to all the purpose of this report, the consultation which had taken place in its production and the background to an Annual Governance Statement before referring Cllrs to Appendix A which detailed the Town Council's response and evidence to show how it has fully complied with each of the 8 statements made in an Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Annual Governance Statement contained in Appendix A and Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

c. Year End Accounts for 2020/21:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all the Council's Income and Expenditure Account for 2020/21, the Consolidated Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021 and the Council's Fixed Assets Schedule for 2020/21. With regard to the Fixed Assets Schedule the Clerk pointed out that the total fixed assets schedule amount is calculated by adding the total purchase costs with the total insurance renewal costs.

RESOLVED:

i) Cllrs approved the 2020/21 year end accounts.

ii) The Clerk to ensure the 2020/21 income and expenditure account plus balance sheet feature in the Town Council's Annual Report for 2020/21 which will be published via the Council's website and through the residents database.

d. Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2020/21:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a completed copy of Section 2 of the Town Council's Accounting Statement for 2020/21 along with an explanation of differences between Boxes 7 and 8 on the AGAR and explanation of significant variances.

The Clerk then explained to Cllrs how boxes 1 to 11 of this Statement had been completed using the year end accounts considered under item 3c) as follows:

- Box 1 stated the Council's carried forward balance from 31st March 2020
- Box 2 stated the Council's precept for 2020/21
- Box 3 stated all Council income less the precept
- Box 4 stated staff costs i.e. salaries, PAYE, NI, pension contributions and employment expenses only. The Clerk highlighted that the amount stated in the AGAR was less than that stated on the income and expenditure account as the "Personnel" heading also included PPE, travel costs and training costs.

The Clerk explained the difference between the Town Council's personnel budget heading and the information required for the AGAR. The Clerk confirmed that the other personnel costs had been included in Box 6.

- Box 5 stated loan interest/capital repayments.
- Box 6 stated all other payments, i.e. total expenditure less staff costs stated in Box 4.
- Box 7 states the total balances and reserves at the end of the financial year (this is confirmed by adding boxes 1, 2 and 3 then subtracting boxes 4,5 and 6. The final figure matches the figure stated on the Council's balance sheet as at 31st March 2021).
- Box 8 Total value of cash and short-term investments (refer to financial summary – cashbook closing figure)
- Box 9 stated the Council's total fixed assets figure
- Box 10 stated the amount of Public Works Loans Board balance remaining as outstanding (refer to earlier issued Loan Repayment Schedule).
- Box 11 is not applicable as the Town Council does not hold any Trust Fund(s).

The Clerk pointed out that there were differences in the figures stated in boxes 7 and 8 for 2020/21 and this difference is because the accounts are calculated on an income and expenditure basis rather than on a receipts and payments basis, i.e. box 8 is cash whereas box 7 includes the closing debtors, creditors, payments in advance and receipts in advance. Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a report explaining these differences.

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that when there is a +/- 15% variation between a box figure quoted in the last two financial years that an explanation for such was required by the External Auditor. The Clerk reported that when comparing 2020/21 with 2019/20 there were significant variances for the areas of Total Other Receipts and Total Other Payments. Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an explanation for these variances. Cllrs accepted the explanation given and the Clerk confirmed that should would be submitted to the External Auditor along with AGAR.

The Clerk reported that as the Town Council has either an income or expenditure of over £200,000 it is required to submit to the external auditor additional evidence as part of their intermediate audit work. The Clerk confirmed that each year the external auditor requests different evidence and for 2020/21 such related to financial management, action on audit reports and prudence regarding litigation, liabilities and commitments.

With regards to the Town Council's current remaining PWLM, Cllr David Brown said that he was pleased to note the Council only have a couple more years of payments remaining before this borrowing was fully paid back.

RESOLVED:

- i) To approve the Accounting Statements 2020/21 for Sedgefield Town Council.**
- ii) The Chair of the Council and Clerk to sign the AGAR on behalf of the Town Council.**
- iii) The Clerk to submit the AGAR and all necessary intermediate audit evidence to the External Auditors.**

4. VAT Reclaim Update For Period 1st October 2020 – 31st March 2021 Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a report to all detailing that a VAT reclaim for the period of 1st October 2020 – 31st March 2021 for £5312.82 had been submitted to HMRC via their on-line submission system on 8th April 2021.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5. Internal Audit Update Report by Finance Working Group:

5.1 Internal Audit Report Sedgefield Town Council End of Year Accounts (2020/21) by Mr Gordon Fletcher:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of Mr Fletcher's Internal Audit Report Sedgefield Town Council End of Year Accounts (2020/21) which provided the Council with a Full Assurance level.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21 Sedgefield Town Council by Mr Gordon Fletcher:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of Mr Fletcher's Internal Audit Annual Report for 2020/21 which provided the Council with a Full Assurance level.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Proposed Exercise of Public Rights Dates Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk has circulated a Proposed Exercise of Public Rights Dates report by the Finance Working Group proposing the Town Council's to set its exercise of public rights dates as Thursday 1st July 2021 to Wednesday 11th August 2021.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Council's exercise of Public Rights dates commencing Thursday 1st July 2021 and to cease on Wednesday 11th August 2021.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank Council staff and the Finance Working Group for their sterling work over the last year despite the difficult circumstances due to the pandemic and its impact upon working arrangements. The Chair also wished to thank Cllr Gloria Wills for all her hard work with the Finance Working Group over many years. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.01pm.

APPROVED



SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **APRIL**
EXTRAORDINARY Meeting of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. Via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday 27th April 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, Leo McCormack, Julie Towler, Alfred
Walton, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter
- Officers** Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk and Meeting Moderator)

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the purpose of this Extraordinary Meeting was to discuss a motion submitted by 8 Town Councillors. The Clerk confirmed the motion had been submitted (in order of signature) by Cllrs Gloria Wills, Vanessa Carmichael, Leo McCormack, Mark Cant, Mavis Wayman, Alf Walton, Ann Carr and Mel Carr. The Chairman reported that agenda item 4 would be deferred for consideration at the Council's P&R Committee meeting on 17th May 2021. The Chairman concluded by reminding members of the public of the rules of Public Participation.

1. Apologies:

Cllr Chris Lines.

2. Declaration of interest:

Cllr Paul Heasman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5 as his daughter is a member of Sedgefield Harriers. No other Cllrs made any declaration of interest.

3. Public Participation:

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

Mr Alan Patterson said that he would have preferred the opportunity to speak after the Council had held their discussions.

(Cllr Mark Cant joined the meeting at this point).

Mrs Julia Bowles said she would also have preferred to speak after the Council's discussions.

Ms Bethany Raine introduced herself as Sedgefield Harriers Club Secretary but said that her attendance at the meeting was in her capacity as a member of the Harriers and a resident of the Town who had seen the motion to be considered by the Town Council. Ms Raine said she had attended the Town Council's Special Meeting on 22nd March 2021 at which the Section 106 funding application of Sedgefield Harriers had been considered and the decision made to support it. Ms Raine noted that the motion to be considered referred to no community consultation. Ms Raine said numerous consultations had taken place regarding the project including the latest at the beginning of 2021 in the Sedgefield News. Prior to that between 2017-2019 Ms Raine said there had been multiple consultations with Sedgefield sports groups across the area and she therefore felt the motion and its implied accusations were erroneous. Ms Raine believed the concerns behind the motion now to be considered were borne out of the way in which DCC was allocating Section 106 funds and that was distinct and separate issue to what the Town Council was being asked to do, i.e. it was being asked to comment upon whether or not it supported the application presented by the Sedgefield Harriers. Ms Raine said there were two distinct issues and that if the Town Council had concerns regarding how DCC dealt with Section 106 monies and their allocations that should be dealt with by a judicial review to make such a challenge and that any frustrations at DCC should not be taken out on the Harriers. Ms Raine highlighted that many other sporting groups in the Town had been given the opportunity to apply for Section 106 monies and none had submitted applications at this time. To consider whether the allocation of such monies is legal or not is an entirely different matter and should be taken forward with DCC as a separate issue. Ms Raine said for the Town Council to now not support the Harriers would be disingenuous to the local community and Harriers.

Ms Jan Welch said this was the first Council meeting she had attended. She did not feel like consultation had been made with the public due to the location change of the athletics track project. Ms Welch expressed her concern that any public consultation undertaken via the Sedgefield News did not extend to outside the scope of the Town. Ms Welch said that she would be willing to engage with further meetings so that other groups could have a voice.

Mr David McNee said that he echoed comments made by Ms Welch regarding concerns about public consultation. Mr McNee said he was concerned that a large proportion of the Section 106 monies were going towards one group. He said that whilst he had no personal problem supporting the development of sport he did feel there was an imbalance against other groups

and wanted to ensure there was support to both existing and new sporting initiatives in the Town. Mr McNee said he felt that lack of consultation and engagement was the reason for the problem.

Mr Ryan Davey introduced himself as Chairman of Sedgefield FC and said he was supportive of all track and field sports in the Town. Mr Davey said he had tried to approach members of the Harriers to attempt a joined up approach for sport but had been turned down. Mr Davey said he would like such an approach to be considered in the future along with the inclusion of other sports organisations in the Town.

Mr Tim Dredge said he was a fan of all sport in Sedgefield. Mr Dredge said that he had a timeline of all the Harriers Track Steering Group's work which included a summary of all the community engagement and consultation over the last 10 years. Mr Dredge said that he was disappointed to learn that item 4 on the agenda had been deferred. Mr Dredge said the Harriers had taken the lead on behalf of lots of sports groups in the Town in speaking to DCC about a sports hub in the Town bringing together several such groups. Work had been undertaken but many groups had preferred to go their separate ways. Information regarding those discussions had been shared with both DCC and the Town Council. Mr Dredge said it was wrong to say that no consultation had taken place with sports clubs. Consultations in 2017 and then via an AAP organized event in 2019 (the latter just being about Section 106 sporting contributions) resulted in the AAP issuing offer letters to 7 sports groups in Sedgefield with each letter stating a monetary amount being offered. Mr Dredge said he accepted Section 106 community contributions had not to his knowledge been consulted about. However, Mr Dredge said that from the Harriers receiving their offer letter the group had followed DCC's process in order to get to the point of submitting an application for consideration. Mr Dredge said he agreed with comments made earlier by Ms Raine in that the issues of how DCC dealt with such monies is not for this meeting. Mr Dredge said the Harriers were only claiming the amount of money they had been offered in their offer letter from the AAP and do not intend to claim any more. Mr Dredge said that his children were ex-Harriers and had been involved in numerous sports clubs across the Town. He said there were no track or field facilities in the Town while other sporting groups do have existing facilities for their chosen sport. Mr Dredge asked the Town Council to remove the motion to be considered under agenda item 5 and said that he was dismayed to learn that such had been tabled and believed that those involved were not fully aware of the history to the application submitted.

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for their comments and re-opened the meeting.

4. East Durham Community Athletics Track (letter from Mr Ean Parsons, Chair of EDCAT Steering Group dated 19th April 2021):

As reported at the start of the meeting by the Chairman, this item of correspondence was deferred to the Town Council's Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 17th May 2021 for consideration.

5. Consideration of following motion submitted in written notice to the Clerk by 8 Town Councillors:

“We, the signatories of this MOTION request that the RESOLUTION made at the Special Meeting, to support the S106 Application from Friends of Sedgefield Harriers – East Durham Community Athletics Track (EDCAT) be REVOKED, as we believe that the decision does not represent the best interests of the Council's area and its residents.

It has become clear that no consultation has been carried out with other Sports Groups and Community Groups in Sedgefield and it is incumbent upon this Council and its elected members to represent the views of the community we serve and act in their best interest.

We believe this cannot be done without further community consultation to establish that the amount of money applied for as set out in the application by the Friends of Sedgefield Harriers – East Durham Community Athletics Track (EDCAT) will not disadvantage other groups and/or prevent them from making an application for Section 106 funds held by Durham County Council, should they wish to do so, both now and in the future”.

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, requested comments from each Cllr in accordance with the Council's Virtual Meeting Protocol.

Cllr Allan Blakemore said that he had not changed his mind and wanted the Town Council to agree with the resolution which is reached on 22nd March 2021.

Cllr David Brown re-iterated he had not been one of the Cllrs who had signed the motion now being considered. Cllr Brown noted that several members of the public had said they wished Public Participation had been later on the meeting agenda. Cllr Brown reminded all that many years ago Public Participation had been at the end of meeting agendas, however, complaints had been received as the public were not allowed to speak before decisions were made and therefore had no opportunity to influence. For this reason Public Participation had been moved to the start of Council meeting agendas. Cllr Brown said that he had not changed his mind and agreed with the resolution the Town Council reached on 22nd March 2021 which included

getting answers to some questions from DCC.

Cllr Mark Cant said the Town Council do support the creation of a track unequivocally but that the decision by DCC to allocate all money to the Harriers needed to be verified as not ratified by the Town Council. Cllr Cant said that DCC have the final say in Section 106 monies and they had made the decision solely regarding how much to offer the Harriers. The matter of whether DCC are correct with that allocation rests solely with DCC and has had nothing to do with the Town Council. Cllr Cant said the Town Council were seeking to do the best for the whole community and its residents. Cllr Cant said the allocation of such monies had to be single handedly approved by DCC as they had not consulted with the Town Council regarding how such monies would be used to benefit the Town.

Cllr Vanessa Carmichael said she supports the motion now being considered and said that no consultation had taken place on a wider scale in the Town. Cllr Carmichael said she supported the Harriers track but felt that for the Harriers to get most of the Section 106 monies with other groups getting a pittance in comparison was awful.

Cllr Ann Carr said she supported the motion now being considered. Cllr Ann Carr said she supported the Harriers and their work but disagreed that the allocation of such a large amount of Section 106 money to the project as it would be at the expense of smaller groups and for them having to wait for their money while DCC give all existing money to the Harriers.

Cllr Paul Heasman expressed his thanks to Mr Tim Dredge and Ms Bethany Raine for their words. Cllr Heasman said he had a number of concerns with the content of the motion now being considered. Firstly, the accusation there had been no consultation in paragraph two of the motion. Cllr Heasman noted that discussions regarding Section 106 monies had been minuted for well over a year to his knowledge and been a topic raised by many members of the public during that time. In addition, other meetings had taken place including the AAP meeting in May 2019 from which DCC had made offers to allocate Section 106 monies to several sporting groups. Cllr Heasman said it was wrong to say there had been no consultation regarding this matter. Secondly, with regards to reference to sports and community groups, Cllr Heasman said it has been made clear that there are distinctly separate contributions for sport and community therefore there will be opportunity for community groups to bid at the appropriate time. Cllr Heasman noted that the addition of Community funding in this section of the motion could be construed as being misleading. Thirdly, the reference in the motion to "now and in the future". Cllr Heasman said that Section 106 monies have been known about in the public domain for many years now and questioned how long the Town Council would want to hold onto the Section 106 monies just in case a currently unknown group asked for funding

in the future. Cllr Heasman further questioned whether this was effectively penalising the Harriers for their efficiency in submitting their bid. Fourthly, the darker side and name calling. Cllr Heasman expressed his disappointment that recently the Harrier's project had been referred to by the public as being "DCC's vanity project" and felt this was disrespectful and wanted the Town Council to hold itself to a higher standard. Cllr Heasman concluded by stating that whilst DCC may have ridden rough-shot over Sedgefield regarding Section 106 monies in the past, the Harriers did not deserve to bear the brunt of that frustration.

Cllr Leo McCormack noted comments made throughout the meeting regarding consultations in relation to Section 106 monies but said that none had been held directly by DCC with the Town Council when making decisions about how such monies were to be offered and then allocated. Cllr McCormack noted in 2019 that 7 sports clubs were offered money but now all was going to the Harriers for their project with funding coming from the community contributions element of Section 106 monies. Cllr McCormack said he did not understand the urgency for releasing this money to the Harriers as plans for the track had not yet been presented or accepted. He asked when money was going to be given to the other sporting groups? He asked if future community contributions could be lost? Cllr McCormack concluded that the current and future predicted Section 106 monies for the Town due to recent large scale developments could be the last that the Town will see for some considerable time. Cllr McCormack said that as his time as Mayor he was all too aware of the difficulties that came with raising funds and the need for support for the 57 voluntary groups currently in existence across Sedgefield. Cllr McCormack said he was not against the Harriers but how DCC conduct themselves in relation to Section 106 monies and the way in which they ride over the Town and its residents hence the need to say something about this matter. Cllr McCormack cited the example of all initial education Section 106 monies going directly to the Community College with nothing going to the Town's two primary schools.

Cllr Julie Towler said this matter had been going on for over 10 years and she had seen and heard consultation relating to it. Cllr Towler questioned what would happen to this money if it was not given to the Harriers and no one else claimed it. Cllr Towler said that she would much rather the Harriers received their allocated Section 106 monies than the money go nowhere.

Cllr Alf Walton said there was no doubt that everyone backed the Harriers original track proposal but now felt what was being proposed was a "mega track" and he believed it was DCC's prestigious project for another Gateshead style facility. Cllr Walton said he did not see the harm in Section 106 monies being left in "a pot". Cllr Walton said he felt the Harriers were being "hoodwinked" by DCC in that ultimately the track would belong to DCC and that was the reason he supported the motion now being considered and felt using all the monies was wrong.

Cllr Mavis Wayman said it was her belief that all were dissatisfied with the action of DCC and that the route of all the current situation was DCC's doing. Cllr Wayman said that work was required to overcome that problem but she was unsure how to do so. She said that prior to being on the Town Council she had been unaware of what Section 106 monies were and was concerned that many smaller groups in the Town would also be unaware and therefore potentially missing out on accessing such. Cllr Wayman said it was clear that the Harriers are a very professional and business like organisation with an array of members who are articulate and succinct as seen during the earlier public participation element of our meeting. However, Cllr Wayman was aware that many other smaller groups might not have that same business acumen and she felt that DCC failed in educating people on Section 106 monies. Cllr Wayman said she was behind the Harriers but that what was done with Section 106 monies needed to be legal and honestly allocated.

Cllr Gloria Wills said that this matter was a complex one. She said that we all support the Harriers, what they do and what they want to achieve and stated that was not the issue here. Cllr Wills believed the Harriers had been wrapped up in the political side of DCC who in her opinion behave like "dictators". Section 106 monies go directly into DCC's coffers but underpinning each receipt of Section 106 monies is a legal agreement which clearly states how such monies have to be used and allocated. In relation to the agreements for the large scale development of Eden Drive, Parcel A and Parcel B housing planning obligation money is given as Section 106 money in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act with reasons and purpose set out as to how it must be spent. For example Parcel A and Parcel B's housing planning obligation money is given as Section 106 money for community contribution and cannot be used for any other purpose. Cllr Wills summarized that legally Section 106 monies given as sporting contribution had to be used for sport, monies given for community contribution had to be used for community and monies given for open spaces had to be used for open spaces in accordance with the legal agreement. Cllr Wills said that to put all monies into one "pot" and say that it was ok to recalculate and issue was illegal and wrong. Cllr Wills said that other groups in the Town were unaware of Section 106 monies hence they had not applied for it. Cllr Wills understood that letters issued by Mr Stephen Howell then of DCC in 2019 did not relate to monies from the community contribution, but to the open spaces and sporting contributions. Cllr Wills said that all Section 106 sporting contributions monies are currently not available and it is not legal to use community contributions in such a way, or to deny the community the opportunity to apply for such monies. Cllr Wills said that in 2019 following an AAP meeting DCC had issued offer letters to various sporting groups in the area with allocations: Sedgefield Squash Club £45,000; Sedgefield Cricket Club £95,000; Sedgefield Harriers £345,000; Sedgefield Bowls Club £40,000; Fishburn Football Club £30,000;

Sedgefield Football Club £10,000; Sedgefield Rugby Club £10,997; totalling £575,997, however, DCC had not received the open spaces money to allocate. Cllr Wills expressed her concern that the community contributions element of the Section 106 monies were being allocated by DCC from community monies and used instead for sporting contributions, however, what was to say that the future anticipated Section 106 sporting contributions would ever be received? In addition, Cllr Wills asked if smaller community groups in the Town were even aware of the existing Section 106 community contributions being held by DCC? She felt that robust consultation was needed and to acknowledge that not everyone reads the Sedgefield News. Cllr Wills concluded by stating it was time for the Town Council and community plus sports groups to get together and ensure there was awareness of Section 106 monies so the community contributions pot was not “robbed” in a way that was against the legal agreement. Cllr Wills said that she supported the Harriers as well as all other sports clubs who wanted their share of such funding.

Cllr Stephen Winter said that he was sad to see the motion which is now being considered. Cllr Winter said that in his opinion there was no new evidence which had been presented since the Town Council made its resolution on 22nd March 2021 to change his mind and he rejected the motion. Cllr Winter said that based upon the evidence he had seen the matter of Section 106 monies had been well publicized, consulted and discussed regularly. He felt that other groups had had their opportunity to register their interest or apply for Section 106 monies. The Harriers have had a clear vision of their project for over a decade and taken the opportunity to further that project to the point of now submitting a funding application with clear supporting evidence. Cllr Winter said he was disappointed that some people of Sedgefield have referred to this as a “DCC vanity project” which is very disrespectful to the Harriers who have worked long and hard to try to bring to Sedgefield and the wider area, what can be a fantastic facility. Cllr Winter hoped that negative attitude would change. Cllr Winter said he fully supported the Harrier’s project and supported the original resolution made at the Council’s 22nd March 2021 meeting which included a caveat that all is done legally and any funds allocated back to their correct “pots”.

Cllr Gloria Wills proposed the motion now presented and Cllr Vanessa Carmichael seconded this proposal. A vote took place in accordance with the Council’s Virtual Meeting protocol where each Councillor in alphabetical order (by surname) was asked to stage if they were in favour of the motion or against the motion.

Councillors Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Paul Heasman, Julie Towler and Stephen Winter voted against the presented motion (5 Cllrs).

Councillors Mark Cant, Vanessa Carmichael, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, Leo McCormack, Alf Walton, Mavis Wayman and Gloria Wills voted in favour of the presented motion (8 Cllrs).

RESOLVED:

To revoke the resolution made at the Special Town Council meeting on 22nd March 2021 to support the Section 106 Application from Friends of Sedgefield Harriers – East Durham Community Athletics Track (EDCAT).

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.57pm.

APPROVED