

SEDFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **OCTOBER
MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at **7pm**

on

Monday 10th October 2022

in

Sedgefield Parish Hall

Present

Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)

Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Vice Chairman) and

Cllrs. Ann Carr, John Finlayson, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler, Mavis Wayman
and Stephen Winter.

Officers

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs David Brown, Mark Cant, Kelly Dickerson, Jenny Haworth and Paul Heasman.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports:

a. Minutes of the Finance Working Group held Thursday 8th September 2022:

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

b. Minutes of the Fireworks Working Group held Tuesday 20th September 2022:

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

c. Minutes of the Estates Working Group held Thursday 22nd September 2022:

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

d. Minutes of the Personnel Committee held Monday 26th September 2022:

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

- e. **Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held Monday 26th September 2022:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (AC / DJ)
 - f. **Minutes of the P&R Committee held Monday 26th September 2022:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (MW / AC)
 - g. **Minutes of the Community Development and Engagement Committee held Monday 26th September 2022:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (JF / AC)
 - h. **Minutes of the Environment Committee held Monday 26th September 2022:**
These were confirmed as a correct record. (JF / DJ)
- RESOLVED: To accept all of the minutes as above and recommendations contained therein.**

4. Matters of Information:

4.1 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk had submitted to DCC Planners comments agreed in relation to planning applications 1 – 6.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4.2 Additional Planning Applications:

No comments had been submitted to the Clerk in relation to planning applications DM/22/02667/FPA or DM/22/02731/FPA.

RECOMMENDED:

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 October 2022 plus civic events until March 2023.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

6. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments. Neither of the members of the public present wished to speak and the Chairman

re-opened the meeting.

7. Internal Reports:

7.1 Chairman's Report:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, reported that as it had only been a very short period of time since the last Monthly Meeting he had in the intervening time only attended the Northumbria In Bloom Judging Awards in Gateshead. Cllr Mel Carr expressed his thanks to the Town Council's gardening staff and members of the Sedgefield In Bloom group for all their hard working ensuring Sedgefield looked stunning and achieving a Gold in the Small Town category of the Bloom competition.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Mayor's Report:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a comprehensive Mayor's Report. The Mayor, Cllr Dave Jasper, reminded all that his fund raising quiz at Ceddesfeld Hall would be taking place on Friday 21st October 2022 and a limited number of tickets remained on sale. Cllr Jasper said he would be grateful if fellow Cllrs could support his fund raising events.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.3 Councillor Resignation Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Councillor Resignation Report. The Clerk confirmed that she had been informed by DCC's Electoral Services on 6th October 2022 that the Town Council can now proceed to fill the vacancy left by former Cllr Jim Seymour by co-option. As a result of this the Clerk proposed the draft Notice of Casual Vacancy which she had circulated with her report be adopted. Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Town Council to now proceed to fill the existing Cllr vacancy by co-option.**
- ii) The Clerk to publish the Notice of Casual Vacancy on 11th October 2022 and ensure this also features in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra.**

- iii) **The Clerk to provide an update on this matter following 31st January 2023, i.e. the closing date for applications.**

8. External Reports:

8.1 Report From Durham County Councilor Chris Lines, Sedgefield Division:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a report from Durham County Cllr Chris Lines who represents the Sedgefield Division. Cllr Mel Carr thanked County Cllr Lines for a very good report. There were no questions or comments from Cllrs.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

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/22/02776/FPA – single storey rear extension and garage conversion, 2 Milbourne Court, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.2 DM/22/02830/FPA – installation of solvent storage building within existing enclosure to rear, William Armstrong Way, NETPark, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1 – 2 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.

ADDITIONAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The Clerk reported that no planning list had been received from Durham County Council this week. Upon receipt this would be issued electronically to all with instruction as to how Cllrs were to make their comments.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.07pm.

APPROVED

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **OCTOBER**
POLICY & RESOURCES of the Council
held following the **Monthly meeting**
on
Monday 10th October 2022
in
Sedgefield Parish Hall.

Present **Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. Ann Carr, Mel Carr, John Finlayson, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler, Mavis
Wayman and Stephen Winter.

Officers Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs David Brown, Mark Cant, Kelly Dickerson, Jenny Haworth and Paul Heasman.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Section 106 Funding:

No further information has been received from Durham County Council regarding the general matter of Section 106 funding. County Cllrs have reported information is due imminently about the process relating to community contributions from the large-scale development at Eden Drive. A Special Town Council meeting is to take place on 31st October 2022 to consider funding options for the expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on any developments relating to Section 106 monies.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Parish Hall CCTV:

The Estates Working Group will bring a recommended Parish Hall CCTV Policy to a future P&R Committee. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Eden Drive Play Area:

As reported at the October 2021 meeting, the work to replace wetpour shrinkage areas at the play area has now been expedited with a request that this be carried out as soon as possible. No confirmation date has been received as yet. The latest RoSPA inspection was undertaken in June 2022 and findings have now been shared with DCC for comment. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.4 Adaptations To Town Council Tractor and Winter Gritting Equipment:

This work is now underway. There has been a problem with one particular part, however, it is hoped this will be delivered soon and this work completed. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.5 Programme of Treeworks:

The successful contractor has been informed of their awarded work. Copies of DCC permission have been shared. The contractor is aware the Town Council would like this work to be undertaken as soon as possible and will liaise with the Clerk when they know when they will be able to perform this work. The Clerk has, on several occasions, requested an update from the contractor. A response is still awaited. An article explaining this work featured in the latest edition of the Sedgefield Extra as well as being shared through Twitter and the residents database.

Longer-term when this work has been completed then the Town Council will consider how trees mapped on all Town Council owned land (i.e. location and species) could

be displayed on the Town Council's website and potentially form part of a nature trail in the Town with potential involvement from members of Sedgefield Youth Club.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Section 106 Funding Application – Play Provision in Sedgefield:

The Clerk has fed back to County Cllr Chris Lines and Mr James Young the comments made regarding Eden Drive Play area. Further information is now awaited from both in order to progress to a public consultation about play provision in Sedgefield which will hopefully lead to a joint Section 106 funding application being submitted. Mr Young has confirmed that his work is progressing and he hopes to be able to share designs with the Town Council soon prior to a public consultation exercise. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.7 Sedgefield Extra Future Printing Options:

The Clerk had circulated to all copies of the last edition of the Sedgefield Extra printed in black and white along with a comparable copy in colour. The September edition of the Sedgefield Extra is now out in colour. All remaining editions of the Extra in 2022/23 will be printed in colour. The future printing of the Sedgefield Extra to be determined in March 2023.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.8 Active Travel Plan for Sedgefield & Fishburn Towns and Villages Project Proposal – Bike Racks:

Quotations are now awaited for the refurbishment of village green area and installation of bike racks. Upon receipt of quotations a funding application will be submitted to the EDRC AAP's Towns and Villages Fund. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.9 Active Travel Project:

Pilot questionnaires completed by Town Cllrs have been forwarded to County Cllr Lines and Ms Emma McLoughlin (EDRC AAP) for analysis. Findings of these and pilots undertaken by BATS Group will be considered at the next Active Travel Group meeting on 17th October 2022. That meeting will also agree the timings of the public consultation exercise across Sedgefield and Fishburn. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.10 Future Parish Hall Electrical Inspections:

Reminders have been set in the Parish Hall booking diary to ensure an annual Electrical Installation Report is requested.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.11 Expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery:

A Special Town Council meeting to discuss this project and its funding is to be held at 7pm on Monday 31st October 2022 in the Parish Hall. Clerk to issue nearer time an appropriate pack for Cllrs.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.12 Conclusion of 2021/22 Year End Accounts:

Conclusion of Audit Notice for 2021/22 year end accounts have been published and displayed.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.13 Sedgefield Bowling Club Terrace Hill Money:

The Clerk has issued a further request to Mr Chris Vincent to determine whether or not Sedgefield Bowling Club have a constitution document. A response is awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.14 Vacancy on CDALC Executive:

The Clerk has forwarded Cllr John Finlayson's details as volunteering for the existing vacancy. Confirmation has now been received that Cllr Finlayson has been appointed to this vacancy.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.15 New Premises Licence Application – 6 North End:

The Clerk has informed DCC's Licensing Department that the Town Council does not have any objections to this New Premises Licence application.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.16 Staffing Establishment:

This matter is now being overseen by the Personnel Committee and updates will be brought in due course to the P&R Committee.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.17 Councillor Dispensation:

Cllr Catherine Hart has been informed of her approved dispensation for a period of 6 months due to personal circumstances, with the option of returning earlier should she wish. Cllr Hart asked for her thanks to be conveyed to all for their understanding.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.18 Festive Lighting:

The Town Council's appointed electrician to oversee the festive lights has been informed of the new illumination timings, i.e. 4pm to 10.30pm from 26th November until early January 2023. An explanatory article will feature in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.19 Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion – Conditions:

The Clerk has notified CDS of the Town Council's instruction to undertake conditions 3, 4 and 5 relating to Written Scheme of Investigation, Trial Trench Evaluation and Tree Protection Plan respectively. The Clerk reported that in relation to conditions 3 and 4, Durham Archaeology will be attending the cemetery on the morning of Wednesday 13th October 2022 to perform a walkover survey. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Allan Blakemore, closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments. Neither of the members of the public present wished to speak and the Chairman re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 Future Timings of Council Meetings Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Future Timings of Council Meetings Report. Cllrs agreed the trial system of all Committee meetings taking place the same evening each month had work well and been an extremely effective use of time with Special Town Council meetings called as necessary. It was agreed this trial should now become permanent.

RESOLVED:

i) With immediate effect Monthly, P&R Committee, Environment Committee and Community Development & Engagement Committee meetings will permanently be held on the same evening, i.e. the second Monday of each month, with Special

Town Council meetings being called if required.

ii) An update article to feature in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra regarding this.

iii) The Town Council's calendar of meetings be updated and reissued.

5.2 Six Monthly Lift Inspection Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Six Monthly Lift Inspection Update Report confirming the Parish Hall lift's recent successful inspection ensuring full legal compliance.

RESOLVED:

To receive the report.

5.3 Pathway Lights Leading To Sedgefield Squash Club Recommendation Report by Estates Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Pathway Lights Leading to Sedgefield Squash Club Recommendation Report by the Estates Working Group which had been produced as a result of their consideration of an email from Ms Sheila Peden, Sedgefield Squash Club's Secretary dated 6th September 2022, a copy of which accompanied the Recommendation Report now to be discussed. Cllrs were in agreement the pathway lights are for the benefit of Squash Club members only and members of the public do not need to walk through the Hall's grounds but can instead walk along the fully illuminated path from Eden Drive bungalows past the primary school courtesy of DCC's street lighting.

RESOLVED:

i) Sedgefield Town Council will not pay for the cost of lighting the lamps leading from Ceddesfeld Hall car park leading down to Sedgefield Squash Club as the direct beneficiaries of this lighting are Squash Club users.

ii) The Clerk to inform Mrs Sheila Peden of the Town Council's decision.

6. Financial Matters:

6.1 Invoices for payment by cheques for approval after 26th September 2022:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of cheques for approval after 26th September 2022 numbered 110349 to 110357. The Clerk circulated to all an updated list which includes cheques numbered 110358 to 110369. 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 3rd October 2022:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Financial Budget Comparison as at 3rd October 2022.

RESOLVED:

To receive the financial budget comparison as at 3rd October 2022.

6.3 Debtors List as at 3rd October 2022:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Debtors List as at 3rd October 2022.

6.4 Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 30th September 2022:

RESOLVED:

To receive Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 30th September 2022.

6.5 September 2022 Bank Reconciliations Plus September 2022 Imprest Account Reconciliations and August 2022 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a September 2022 Bank Reconciliations plus September 2022 Imprest Account Reconciliations and August 2022 Public Sector Deposit Fund Update Report. The Clerk then circulated the necessary bank reconciliations to support this report.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7. Correspondence:

None.

The remain part of this meeting's agenda was to consider items under Exempt Information. Rather than exclude members of the public, and press had they been in attendance, the Clerk proposed the P&R Committee meeting be closed at this point to allow other Committee meetings to take place and then the P&R Committee meeting re-opened for exempt information to be considered. All Cllrs agreed. The Chair, Cllr Allan Blakemore closed the meeting at 7.15pm to allow the Environment Committee and Community Development & Engagement Committee meetings to take place with members of the public in attendance.

The Chair, Cllr Allan Blakemore, re-opened the P&R Committee meeting at 7.28pm and explained that due to the confidential nature of the following items these would be discussed under Exempt Information and duly asked members of the public, and would have asked members of the press if in attendance, 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 the Public:

8.1 Village Greens Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Greens Update Report which was duly considered and a way forward agreed.

8.2 Potential Recognition Award Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Potential Recognition Award Update Report which was duly considered and a way forward agreed.

8.3 Hedge Cutting Recommendation Report by Town Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Hedge Cutting Recommendation Report which was accompanied by a quotation for this work which was considered and a way forward agreed.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.37pm

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **OCTOBER ENVIRONMENT** of the
Council held following the **P&R** in the **Parish Hall**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 10th October 2022.

- Present** **Cllr. Stephen Winter (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, John Finlayson, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler
and Mavis Wayman.
- Officer** Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs David Brown, Mark Cant, Kelly Dickerson, Jenny Haworth and Paul Heasman.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Request for consideration of Environment Committee:

The Estates Working Group are considering the current usage and potential future usage of Station Road Playing field and when ready will bring a recommendation back to Council. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Garden of Remembrance:

The Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent have investigated this area of the cemetery and confirm that a footpath could be permitted without encroaching upon burial land (such a path would connect the existing main burial area to the Garden of Remembrance). This matter to now be included into the work of the Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group when designing groundworks for the new

area of the cemetery.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Winterton Allotments:

Work has been scheduled to remove all remaining items and dead weeds from the vacant Winterton plots to bring them to a suitable standard to let out.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.4 Weekly Watering:

An invoice is being raised to re-commence recharging watering fees to Sedgefield In Bloom.

The Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent to liaise with Cllr David Brown regarding obtaining supplies of well rotten manure/feed to improve the soil quality in beds around the central village green areas.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.5 Sedgefield Library Car Park:

The Clerk has informed Mr Ewan Brown of DCC of the Town Council's suggestion to only remove one of the bays in the Parish Hall car park rather than the two being proposed. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Stephen Winter, closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments. Neither of the members of the public present wished to speak and the Chairman re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 Northumbria In Bloom 2022 Awards Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Northumbria in Bloom 2022 Awards Report. During the meeting the Clerk circulated to all copies of the Certificate of Achievement received when Sedgefield won Gold in the Small Town category. This certificate was accompanied by the Judges Marking Document which the Clerk confirmed would be considered at the forthcoming Joint Town Council / Sedgefield In Bloom meeting on 20th October 2022. Cllr Stephen Winter expressed his thanks to all involved in this year's Northumbria In Bloom entry saying the Town's floral displays had looked stunning. These comments were echoed by all.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Queen's Tree Recommendation by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Queen's Tree Recommendation Report.

RECOMMENDED:

- i) Sedgefield Town Council to plant a suitable tree on Town Council owned land to be known as "The Queen's Tree" and will bear an appropriate plaque in memorial on behalf of the residents of the Parish. Compost generated from recycled floral tributes laid for the late Queen will be used during the planting of such a tree.**
- ii) The Clerk to liaise with Teesdale Heritage Trees to identify a suitable location and species.**
- iii) The Estates Working Group to consider information obtained by the Clerk and to bring a recommendation back to a future Environment Committee meeting.**

6. Correspondence:

None.

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

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **OCTOBER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the Council held following the **Environment Committee** in the **Parish Hall**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 10th October 2022.**

Present

Cllr. Ann Carr (Chairman)

Cllr. Mavis Wayman (Vice Chairman) and

Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, Mel Carr, John Finlayson, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler and Stephen Winter.

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs David Brown, Mark Cant, Kelly Dickerson, Jenny Haworth and Paul Heasman.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Remembrance Sunday:

Town Council staff to oversee the installation of the gifted poppy wreath holder next to the war memorial. The Clerk is yet to liaise with the Council's insurance company regarding this gift. A thank you article will feature in a future edition of the Sedgefield News regarding Mr Carmichael's gift to the Town.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Sedgefield Youth Club:

The Clerk has issued a letter of thanks to the Sedgefield Youth Club for their work with term-time sessions and the recent summer school holidays activities

programme. Cllr Julie Towler to bring an update report to the November 2022 CD&E

Committee following the Youth Club's Management Committee's AGM on 10th October 2022.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Guides Bench:

The Clerk has informed Mrs Towler that the Town Council has given permission for the Guides to decorate their bench on the central village green for this year's Remembrance commemorations.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Ann Carr, closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments. Neither of the members of the public present wished to speak and the Chairman re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 York Winter Coach Trip Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Winter Coach Trip Update Report which confirmed this trip has now sold out. Depending upon interest a second coach may be hired but this depends upon staff resource which is currently having to focus upon selling fireworks tickets. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Town Council Fireworks Display Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Town Council Fireworks Display Update Report. Since the production of this report the Clerk confirmed the Fireworks Working Group had met on 4th October 2022 and will do so again on 24th October 2022 to oversee the delivery of this event. Ticket sales are continuing at both the Town Council Offices and Ceddesfeld Hall. The Clerk thanked those Cllrs who had volunteered to help at this event and confirmed all had been given details of their allocated role. A debrief report regarding this event will be brought to a future

Committee meeting for consideration.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Snow Party Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Snow Party Update Report which detailed the format for this year's event on Saturday 26th November 2022 and the work that has taken place to date as well as that which remains outstanding. Further Cllr volunteers to help with this event between 3.30pm and 5.30pm are required and the Clerk asked Cllrs to consider if they could assist at this much loved community event. The Clerk will bring a further update to the next meeting at which is it hoped will be an indication of whether or not there is to be a best dressed business window competition.

RECOMMENDED:

i) To receive this information.

iv) Cllrs to notify the Clerk as a matter of urgency if they are able to help at the Snow Party event between 3.30pm and 5.30pm.

6. Correspondence:

None.

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

SEDFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **OCTOBER SPECIAL Meeting** of the Council held at 7 p.m. in the **Parish Hall**, Sedgfield, on **Monday 31st October 2022** to consider the expansion of **Butterwick Road Cemetery**



MINUTES

Present	Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Vice Chairman) and Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Kelly Dickerson, John Finlayson, Jenny Haworth, Paul Heasman, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter
Officer	Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, welcomed Mr Ben Copeland of The CDS Group to the meeting and explained that he was in attendance to answer any technical questions from Cllrs.

1. Apologies:

None.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments. No members of the public were present. The Chairman re-opened the meeting.

**4. Butterwick Road Cemetery Planning Application – History and Latest Position
Statement Report by Town Clerk:**

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, reminded all that the Town Council had previously resolved in 2017 to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery, a planning application was subsequently prepared and has now been approved by Durham County Council, the Local Planning Authority. The Town Council could start work on this project at any time. The planning application approved contains within it a new road access to the new area of the cemetery which would not only improve the overall visual aspect of the cemetery but would provide dedicated parking space for a hearse and mourning vehicles,

something which is currently not available and would make the cemetery more accessible. Cllr Mel Carr explained that if the Town Council wished to revise the cemetery design this would require an amended plan to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for reconsideration, something which would cost the Town Council money and prolong the timescale by a period of 6 months all at a time of rising inflation and costs for which there is no end in sight. In contrast if the approved design were now to proceed then exact quotations can be obtained based upon detailed specifications and therefore allow the Town Council to determine the actual costs and agree upon how the project is to be funded. Cllr Mel Carr reminded all that many years ago the Town Council took out a Public Works Loan for the refurbishment of the Parish Hall and that as work got underway savings were then made by changing the project's specifications and scaling back on some aspirations all of which has then resulted in either regret or more money being spent further down the line to try to improve those decisions. Cllr Mel Carr urged Town Cllrs to think carefully about the cemetery expansion project now being considered so as not to repeat some of those mistakes relating to the Parish Hall. The Clerk confirmed the Town Council's current Public Works Loan for that refurbishment will be paid off in the current financial year.

(A representative from Bradbury Parish Council joined the meeting as a member of the public to observe at this point).

Cllr Stephen Winter requested clarification as to whether the Local Planning Authority had approved the cemetery expansion site plan both with, and without, the access road. Cllr Mel Carr replied planning permission has been granted for the expansion site plan with the access road. Cllr John Finlayson appreciated the information received in the report for this meeting and said the decision for the Council was now to consider whether it goes ahead with the whole scheme for which planning has been granted or to consider a simplified version. Cllr Finlayson asked what the process and implications would be to the Council of a simplified version when considering we are heading into the winter months meaning on-site work would be unlikely and therefore in terms of time nothing would actually be lost in that way. Mr Ben Copeland explained site plan designs would need to be reworked which would take approximately 4-6 weeks and then resubmitted to the Local Planning Authority for determination which could take another 2-3 months. This made a realistic timescale for determination as end of March 2023. This process would incur costs both with The CDS Group and the Local Planning Authority. It is known that inflation will continue to rise with no end in sight meaning that in the intervening time construction costs and materials are likely rise significantly further. Cllr Kelly Dickerson asked if pre-planning advice could be sought from the Local Planning Authority to determine if a simplified plan would be acceptable. Mr Copeland replied that resubmission would not be an onerous task as it would be easier to remove a feature than to add a feature at this stage, the issue would be the additional time required to get determination. Mr Copeland confirmed that if the road was to be removed this was more than a non-material amendment and hence the need for planning resubmission. Mr Copeland also explained that no work on any approved planning application could start until all pre-commencement conditions had been undertaken. The Clerk reminded all of the pre-commencement conditions which had already

been approved by the Town Council in relation to archaeological works and tree works as these would be required regardless of whether or not the access road formed part of this expansion project. The Clerk reminded all, as detailed in the report accompanying this meeting, that several other pre-commencement conditions are outstanding if the planning permission already obtained is to be progressed. Cllr Mark Cant approximated that the current area of the cemetery has another five years worth of capacity left and therefore felt there was no problem with a delay of 6 months and believed the Town Council did not need to make a decision this evening. Cllr Cant pointed out that the cemetery had operated very effectively without ever having provided space for a hearse and mourning vehicles. Cllr Allan Blakemore reminded all that several years ago the Town Council made the decision to sell Cemetery Lodge at an appropriate time. He said that decision still stood unless such was reversed. He went on to explain that one of the reasons for the new access road was part of this project was to isolate Cemetery Lodge from the cemetery. Cllr Mark Cant replied stating that if the Lodge was to be sold, and he was opposed to that, then covenants should be put in place to enable vehicles to park at the front of the property and pedestrian access to the cemetery to remain. Cllr Ann Carr expressed her concerns that such covenants could be ignored and this would impact detrimentally upon the operation of the cemetery and potentially incur other costs elsewhere such as legal fees. Cllr Paul Heasman shared the concerns of Cllr Ann Carr. Cllr John Finlayson suggested that instead of selling the Lodge, and instead of having a road access, a new footpath could be put in from the existing cemetery area path (by the cemetery noticeboard) out onto Butterwick Road. Cllr Mel Carr and Mr Ben Copeland confirmed such an access would not be possible as the area of Butterwick Road to which this would lead was highway without any footpath. Mr Copeland also pointed out the space was too narrow as there are burials on both sides of this path which constrained such action. Cllr Kelly Dickerson suggested that if Cemetery Lodge was demolished then the Town Council could use that land to build a turning circle for hearse and mourning vehicles. Cllr Mark Cant said the purpose of this meeting was not to entirely redesign the cemetery but to discuss the planning permission now granted and its associated site plan for which the Town Council's Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group have spent consideration time researching and exploring all options in order to get to this point. Cllr Cant said the decision that was needed was does the scheme proceed with or without the road access. Cllrs agreed. Cllr David Brown confirmed the Town Council had previously decided to sell Cemetery Lodge and if that is to be altered then the decision needs to be rescinded. Cllr Brown gave all Cllrs a history to the Town's burial arrangements starting with the churchyard at St Edmund's, to the cemetery at Beacon Lane and then Butterwick Road which was originally operated by the Burial Board before eventually coming into the ownership of the Town Council. Cllr Brown said the Town Council had previously agreed to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery and the Town Council should now proceed with the site plan for which planning permission has already been granted and to deal with funding matters as this progresses noting the Town Council had far more funding options available than the Town would have done in 1900 when the new cemetery was being created. All Cllrs agreed that any issues relating to a cemetery are understandably emotive and that it was essential all Cllrs took their opportunity at this meeting to express their views and comments to ensure due diligence and reach a corporate decision that if not all then the majority were happy to proceed with. Any questions or comments made were not

criticisms of work undertaken to date but instead ensuring open debate. Cllr Stephen Winter expressed his concerns regarding the cost of this project and he felt the plan for which planning approval had been sought provided an ulterior motive for Cemetery Lodge to be isolated and sold when he believed the Lodge could be sold with appropriate covenants put in place to ensure access past it continued. Cllr Winter also said if the new area of the cemetery did not have the turning area for vehicles then additional, and valuable, burial plots would be created. Cllr Winter asked if it was known what the Town Council could get for selling Cemetery Lodge and the cost of creating a pathway that runs from the middle of the existing cemetery area to the new cemetery area. These costs were not known. Cllr Ann Carr said that it was understood the existing cemetery had approximately 5 years of capacity left and felt the Town Council was in danger of going backwards and not forwards on this matter as there was no way anyone wanted to be in a position that no one could be buried in Sedgfield. Cllr Paul Heasman said in his opinion this matter was not about cost but the Town Council doing the right thing. Cllr Heasman said the new area of the cemetery would not be fit for purpose without vehicular access and the extended area now needed to meet the needs of people now, not their needs historically. Cllr Heasman said that if the point was reached when someone could not bury their loved one at Butterwick Road Cemetery then the Town Council had failed. Cllr Stephen Winter reiterated that removing the road access would create more burial space and gave the example of Trimdon Grange cemetery where coffins are pushed some considerable distance to their final resting place. Cllr Mel Carr said he also believed this matter had to be determined on more than just financial costs and the Town Council now had the opportunity to put in place facilities for the future of the cemetery. Cllr Kelly Dickerson said this could not be an emotional decision. Cllr Mel Carr asked if all Cllrs had been to Butterwick Road Cemetery and all agreed that they had visited the site and fully understood the current and proposed layout for the new area. Cllr Mavis Wayman requested clarification on the approximate costs for the expansion of the cemetery with, and without, the access road. This explanation was given by Mr Copeland with the understanding that if the option was made to proceed without the access road there would be a six month delay in determination during which time inflation costs would rise without any certainty of being able to forecast those meaning that there was no way of guaranteeing that a future cost might not come in higher than the costs presented now with a road access. The Clerk reminded all that in the report accompanying this meeting provisional costings had been provided by The CDS Group in the form of external QS costs and then further, more precise, costings had been shared with all on 26th October 2022. Mr Ben Copeland explained why there were variations between the QS costs and those subsequently shared which were based upon real time costs but did not include forecasts for inflation. Mr Copeland also reported that quotes had been requested from three local North East based contractors for more detailed understanding, however, these have not yet been received. Mr Copeland talked through these costs and answered Cllrs questions. Cllr Brown felt that some elements of the costings could be reduced by using local contractors where possible. Mr Copeland agreed this approach would be taken. Mr Copeland explained the RIBA stage 4 work and how detailed specifications would be prepared and analysed. Cllr Mavis Wayman questioned if the Town Council would regret not putting in an access road several years hence and believed the example of work undertaken by the Town Council in relation to the Parish Hall refurbishment via a Public Work

Loan showed this approach was possible and urged the Town Council not to be blinkered. Mr Copeland confirmed an access road can only be part of this project during the initial construction stage as once the burial site starts to be used then no further work can take place. Cllr David Brown said the plan for which planning permission has been granted should go ahead and be funded by a long-term loan with regular 6 monthly/annual payments being made. The Clerk reminded all the Town Council does receive income from burials and when the new burial area comes into operation then the rules of pre-purchasing graves can be relaxed. Cllr Kelly Dickerson asked if it was known how many years it would take for any borrowing to be repaid? The Clerk said such was not possible to determine until a decision was made by the Town Council regarding the actual design for the cemetery and then costings based upon that work. Cllr Jenny Haworth asked how long the new area of the cemetery would serve the Town. Cllr Mel Carr said approximately 50-60 years hence. The Clerk advised that once work is underway in the new area of Butterwick Road Cemetery that the Town Council will need to start considerations and planning for the Town's next cemetery for which there is currently no land and may mean reusing Beacon Lane Cemetery. Cllr Stephen Winter thanked Mr Copeland for his explanation of costings which gave a very different viewpoint and showed that significant costs savings were not achievable by simply not including the road access. Cllr Allan Blakemore said if the Town Council went ahead with the scheme for which it now has permission, then how long would it take until there was completion. The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that currently the Town Council does not have the finances to undertake this work and that now needs to be the priority. Cllr Mavis Wayman asked if the Town Council can apply pressure on DCC for Section 106 community contributions monies. The Clerk confirmed the Town Council does not carry any weighting for such lobbying nor any right. A Section 106 funding application was submitted in early 2021 for £200,000 and as yet no response has been received from Durham County Council or the EDRC AAP. The Clerk reminded all that local County Cllrs recently reported that Durham County Council were expected to very soon announce how organisations could apply for such monies and the criteria for allocation of such, however, nothing has been received as yet. Cllr Kelly Dickerson asked if it was possible that whilst options for funding were being explored the Town Council could make a material amendment to its current planning application in order to also get approval for the scheme without the access road and then based upon the funding secured make a decision at that point whether the Town Council proceed with or without the access road. Mr Copeland explained that if this approach was taken the latest planning application would supercede the original determination notice. Cllr Mark Cant said it was important to let the people of Sedgfield know about this matter. Cllr Mel Carr reminded all that regular updates on this matter have featured in many articles in past, and current, editions of the Sedgfield Extra as well as being reported at Annual Town Meetings. The Clerk also reminded everyone of the public consultation process that would be undertaken by the Local Planning Authority as part of this planning application process and that the current meeting was a meeting open to the public which had been promoted in the same way as all Council Committee meetings. Cllr Jenny Haworth commented that such public consultation could also be used as part of the evidence required in any Public Works Loan application process.

Cllr John Finlayson proposed a vote take place to accept the planning application which had been

approved by Durham County Council, i.e. with road access. Cllr Mel Carr seconded this proposal. A vote took place with 11 Cllrs voting in favour and 2 Cllrs abstaining.

RESOLVED:

- i) Sedgefield Town Council agrees the approved plan with road access for the expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery, subject to consideration and agreement of a budget and financial plan.**
- ii) The CDS Group be instructed to carry out work to comply with pre-commencement conditions 6, 7 and 8 as a matter of urgency.**
- iii) The Clerk, Cllr Jenny Haworth and The CDS Group to prepare a Public Works Loan application and present this to the Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group in the first instance before being recommended to a P&R Committee meeting.**
- iv) The Clerk to request an update from Durham County Council regarding the Section 106 funding application submitted by Sedgefield Town Council in early 2021.**
- v) The CDS Group be instructed to continue to work with the Town Council to oversee the achievement of the expansion of Butterwick Road Cemetery in accordance with the process and costings detailed in the report which will include tender pack development, tender issue, tender analysis, contractor engagements and contracts, project management, costings/Quantity Surveyor service.**
- vi) The Clerk to update the Town Council's Internal Auditor on this matter to ensure correct procedures are followed in relation to the Town Council's Financial Regulations.**
- vii) An update article regarding this project to feature in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.10pm.