

# SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY  
SPECIAL Meeting** of the **Council** held at  
**6.30 p.m.** in the **Council Offices**, Advice &  
Information Centre, Sedgefield, on  
**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**

## MINUTES

**Present** **Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman) and**  
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Lynne Dentith, Tim Jeanes,  
Chris Lines, Maxine Robinson, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton and Dudley Waters

**Officer** Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, John Robinson and Gloria Wills

**2. Declaration of interest**

None.

**3. Ms Sandra Manson, Signet Planning to present amended proposals for Avant Housing Scheme**

Cllr Mel Carr welcomed Ms Sandra Manson of Signet.

Ms Sandra Manson thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to present their revised plans in relation to the Avant Housing Scheme and introduced her colleagues Mr James Johnson (from Avant) and Mr Niall Hammond (Heritage Consultant to deal with heritage and conservation concerns). Ms Manson explained that whilst many will have seen the original plans for this development these have now been reviewed in-light of consultation responses received from a wide range of people. Revised plans have now been submitted to DCC. The purpose of Ms Manson's presentation was to compare the original and revised proposals. Ms Manson reported that to date Signet have had detailed discussions with DCC Planning Officers and are awaiting further consultation feedback. In addition, the Highways

Authority have responded to the amended plans and do not have any objections other than a couple of point for information.

Ms Manson reported that the site identified for this development is considered to be sustainable. She was aware of a number of other planning applications relating to Sedgfield and understood the problems this caused the local community. Ms Manson believed the site being proposed by Avant was both appropriate in terms of the number of dwellings and would only have minimal impact on the Town. Ms Manson felt the proposed development would fit well with lots of issued raised in The Sedgfield Plan including number of dwellings, type of housing, size of dwellings, fitting with an ageing population. The choice of housing being proposed would meet with a range of needs from starter homes right through. The development being proposed is sustainable and the site has scored highly when compared to others being proposed for the area. Concerns regarding landscaping and heritage issues have been listened to. Screening will take effect in the early stages of the development. It is appreciated that the development will result in an immediate short-term impact efforts have been taken to reduce this and to consider the views and requirements of the Conservation Area. This work has been a key strand in the subsequent revision of plans. Mr Niall Hammond then spoke further about this key strand. An indepth study of the site had taken place whereby the heritage interests of this site were identified and incorporated into the revised application. This was done by considering the direct and indirect impacts of the development. This development does fit into how other towns which have formed around a church centre have then developed and evolved by building outwards. The Scheme fits in between two sites and a number of historic land boundaries. The only direct impact of this proposed development is on some pre-historic/late Iron Age artifacts but none of these items require preservation in-situ. A condition of the application would be a further archaeological investigation and then retrieval of those items. The landscape and heritage have also been carefully considered. Time has been spent in the area looking at amongst other things all viewing locations. From this site there are only a few glimpsed views of the Church Tower that would be impacted from this proposed development and such would only be minor impacts. A number of key things have been preserved and enhanced in the revised application as follows:

- The development builds on the theme from Ceddesfeld Hall and Hardwick leading to and from the centre of the Town;
- The main views to the church centre are not lost;
- A sympathetic design;
- The housing will be of a style that looks in keeping with those found in the South Tees/South East Durham lowlands;

- It will provide an enhancement of the Conservation Area;
- It provides an extension to the Town;
- It is sympathetic in style and location reflecting that change is inevitable.

Mr James Johnson said the development would be a high quality product reflecting the ethos of Avant. The development will be of a high specification when compared to competitors. The level of quality will be in keeping with the Town and make a statement. It was acknowledged that the people of Sedgefield wanted high quality. Mr Johnson concluded that landscaping and hard materials would be fundamentally key to the design.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked the speakers and opened the meeting for Cllrs questions.

Cllr Allan Blakemore commented that the land proposed for development had not been identified in any plan (either DCC or others). He questioned the research for then identifying this site and asked what consultation had been undertaken, what responses were obtained and how was this taken into account with the development being presented. Cllr Blakemore gave the example of an ageing population and the impact of that up on the type of housing. He also quoted the Localism Act and the importance of acting upon the views of the public. Ms Manson replied that the County Durham Plan has been withdrawn and the Inspector's Interim Report had made specific reference to the number of houses allocated to Sedgefield needing to be reduced. As the County Durham Plan has been withdrawn it carries no weight and therefore any sites can be identified. The Neighbourhood Plan states Sedgefield needs approximately 300 houses and these should be a mix. Ms Manson said the proposed development responded to those requests for a mix of housing in the form of a sustainable scheme.

(Cllr Maxine Robinson joined the meeting at this point).

Ms Manson continued that other sites in Sedgefield have been identified by DCC, however, DCC have then refused planning applications relating to those sites and therefore alternative sites need to be considered including Brownfield sites. However, where are there any viable Brownfield sites?

Cllr Ian Sutherland asked if there had been any change in the numbers of dwellings being proposed and what proportion of the housing would be in the form of bungalows? Ms Manson replied the development was for 149 dwellings including 15% affordable housing. The development would include bungalow provision, however, no specific numbers were yet

known as the scheme is outline and not detailed.

Cllr Alf Walton said this development was outside of the Town and it was unlikely that people living in this location would walk into the centre which would further exacerbate the current problem of parking in Sedgefield. Ms Manson replied that the proposed development is classified as within walking distance from the Town. A Travel Plan is included within the application that encourages walking and cycling. There is also a proposal to extend footpaths. The sustainability assessment relating to this site has compared it against other sites and when compared the proposed Avant site scores well. Ms Manson believed this development would work well in accessing facilities by walking and public transport. Cllr Alf Walton disagreed with this statement saying that public transport access was unrealistic.

Cllr Maxine Robinson said that whilst the Neighbourhood Plan stipulated 300 new homes the Town is against large developments of any kind but instead wanted infill. The figure of 300 was forced on the Town as the best of the worst case scenarios. The letter between Signet Planning and Mr Henry Jones, DCC Planning Officer dated 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (located on the DCC planning portal) references brown field sites such as the Old Community Hospital and Cllr Robinson said there were other such sites that should be considered and used. Cllr Robinson then said that just because the County Durham Plan had been withdrawn did not mean the community could be ridden over rough shot. The Inspector had challenged the number of dwellings allocated for Sedgefield and felt that some of those should be relocated elsewhere. It is felt that developers are drawn to Sedgefield as they can command more money. From the comments made in the letter to Mr Jones, Cllr Robinson felt they negated the fact that Sedgefield is proud of its history. Cllr Robinson asked if the avenue of trees would be taken down or replaced and reproduced. She asked why the footpath could not be re-sited and the line of trees kept. With regards to the comment made earlier by Ms Manson, Cllr Robinson challenged the statement that this site ranked higher than others in terms of access to facilities. Cllr Robinson felt that people in this area of the Town found it very difficult to access facilities and requested that more thought was given in relation to access. Finally, Cllr Robinson questioned the proposed screening with the development and the need for a proper management plan. Ms Manson replied that the existing avenue of trees would remain and that a Management Plan would be put in place for the external areas. Due to the limited length of time allocated to this meeting and the range of questions being asked Ms Manson said that she would be happy to talk to Cllrs at any time to answer their questions.

Cllr Chris Lines challenged the statement made by Ms Manson that the development would

have very limited impact. He pointed out that from the Site Preference Survey conducted as part of the production of The Sedgefield Plan that this site had been the least favoured option by the community. Cllr Lines expressed his concerns that development in this area would lead potentially to further development along the entire East side of the Town. Ms Manson disagreed with this view stating that she felt there was a natural boundary to this development being proposed as it had a definable edge. Cllr Lines clarified that he was talking about the East side of the Town and that the Town Council needed to consider the long-term impact of such a development in opening this up.

Cllr Tim Jeanes noted the points made regarding the visual impact and church view, however, he felt that a visual of the proposed development would have been useful. Cllr Jeanes reiterated the importance of the views from this area and said the development would have an impact.

Cllr Mel Carr, Chair, thanked Cllrs for their questions and for Ms Manson's presentation and responses. Cllr Carr gave apologies to members of the public that there had not been any available time in which to take any questions they may have wished to raise. Cllr Carr closed the meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 6.59pm.

## SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY  
MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at  
**7 p.m.** in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on  
**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2016.**

**Present**                    **Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)**  
**Cllr. Gloria Wills (Vice-Chairman) and**  
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Lynne Dentith, Tim Jeanes,  
Chris Lines, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton and  
Dudley Waters

County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon

**Officer**                    Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Cllr Vanessa Carmichael

**2. Declaration of interest**

None.

**3. Election of Vice Chair of Environment Committee**

Cllr Alf Walton proposed Cllr Mark Cant. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Gloria Wills and agreed by all others.

**RESOLVED:**

**Cllr Mark Cant be elected to Vice Chair of Environment Committee with immediate effect.**

**4. STC Minutes / Committee Reports**

**a. Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

Cllr Dudley Waters reported that he was happy with the amendments which have been made to these minutes, following his comments at the December 2015 Monthly

Meeting, however, Cllr Gloria Wills stated she was not happy with how the amendments had been made to these minutes and the November 2015 Environment Committee minutes and this then impacted upon the December 2015 Monthly and Environment Committee minutes. It was agreed all these minutes should be deferred until February 2016.

**b. Minutes of the Environment Committee held Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

Deferred until February 2016.

**c. Minutes of Estates Working Group Meeting held Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015**

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

**d. Minutes of Finance Working Group Meeting held Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015**

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

**e. Minutes of Special Town Council Meeting to Consider Amended Proposals For Land At Stockton Road/Eden Drive held Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

Cllr Lynne Dentith requested that item 3 be amended to read "Cllr Lynne Dentith asked if a decision had been made on how the £300,000 contribution to sports facilities would be allocated or by what means such a decision would be made. Mr Westwick replied that he had spoken to individuals from Sedgfield but did not declare who they were. Instead, Mr Westwick replied there are several .....". With the inclusion of this amendment these minutes were confirmed as a correct record. ( AW / LD )

**f. Minutes of Monthly Meeting held Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

Deferred until February 2016.

**g. Minutes of P&R Committee held Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

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

**h. Minutes of Environment Committee held Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

Deferred until February 2016.

**i. Minutes of Community Development & Engagement Committee held Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

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

(Cllr John Robinson joined the meeting at this point)

**RESOLVED: To accept the minutes contained in 4c, 4d, 4e, 4g and 4i as above and recommendations contained therein.**

**RESOLVED: The minutes in 4a, 4b, 4f and 4h to be deferred until February 2016 and be brought back to the Monthly Meeting in the form of a report with the relevant revisions contained rather than entire sets of minutes being reissued.**

**5. Matters of Information**

**5.1 Minutes of November Monthly Meeting:**

**These were represented at the January 2016 Monthly Meeting but require further work.**

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.2 Minutes of November Environment Committee Meeting:**

**These were represented at the January 2016 Monthly Meeting but require further work.**

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.3 Planning Applications:**

The option of developing a Planning Committee is currently being investigated and, as agreed, will be considered at a future P&R Committee. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.4 Spring Lane – Formal Complaint:**

A letter has been sent to County Cllrs John Robinson and Rachel Lumsdon. A response is now awaited. County Cllr John Robinson said he would investigate this matter further and report back. The Clerk has requested an appropriate agenda item be placed on the next CDALC Larger Councils Forum agenda for 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**



**5.5 Police Report:**

The November – December 2015 Police Report has now been electronically circulated to all.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**5.6 Ceddesfeld Hall Lease:**

The Clerk has written to Dr Wendy Gill and Mr Phil Broomhead with the Town Council's proposal for progression through independent mediation and requested this be considered by the SCA Executive. No response has yet been received. The SCA have paid their rent for 2015/16.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to contact Dr Gill and Mr Broomhead at the end of January 2016 if no response received from the SCA.**

**5.7 Election of Vice Chair of Environment Committee:**

This item was included earlier on the January 2016 Monthly Meeting agenda.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**5.8 Signet Planning:**

A Special Town Council meeting was arranged for 6.30pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 for Signet to present to the Town Council their amended Avant Housing Scheme proposals.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**5.9 Planning Inspectorate:**

The Clerk has written to the Planning Inspectorate expressing disappointment at the decision to proceed with the appeal being considered by written representation only.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**5.10 ID Planning:**

The Clerk has requested further information from Mr Jonathan Dunbavin (10<sup>th</sup> December 2015) regarding his proposal to present to the Town Council. No response has yet been received and a follow-up request was issued on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 by the

Clerk. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.11 Current Planning Applications:**

All comments have been submitted to DCC Planning Officers in relation to applications 1-6.

50 Front Street – The Clerk has submitted a letter of objection in relation to this retrospective planning application.

Land East of Sedgefield Community College to the North and South of Butterwick Road, Sedgefield – The Clerk has submitted a letter of objection to these revised plans based upon the Council's earlier objections.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**6. Dates of Meetings**

Dates of the meetings taking place in January 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting along with events scheduled from January – April 2016. The Clerk reported that subsequently the following meetings have also now been scheduled:

- Finance Working Group Meeting at 9am on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
- A meeting with Cllrs Chris Lines and Lynne Dentith at 9am on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to consider the AAP Youth Findings report in order that a recommendation can be presented to the February Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7. Police Report**

Sgt Alex Clarke presented the Police report for the period 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Over this period there have been 16 reported crimes as follows:

Burglary (Other):

- Overnight of 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016, unknown person(s) have entered the works compound

at the Hardwick Park and broken into one of the steel containers. Entry was gained by cutting a hole in the roof. Stolen: 4 x petrol strimmers and 1 x pole pruner.

- Just after 8pm on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016, damage was caused to a side window and door panel at the Hardwick Park Visitors Centre. The alarm was activated and disturbed the thieves. At this time it is unknown whether entry was gained or anything taken.

#### Criminal Damage:

- Overnight of 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016, a quad bike was being ridden in fields near Merton Grange Farm, Stillington. Minor damage was caused to a farm gate.

#### Theft:

- Between 2pm and 4.30pm on Boxing Day, the bumper of a black Peugeot 307 motor vehicle was removed whilst parked unattended in Beech Oval, Sedgefield.
- Between 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015, a parcel was stolen from the rear of an address in Hawthorne Road. The package had been left unattended by the delivery company.

In addition to the above there have been 5 x assaults (4 domestic related), 3 x shopliftings, 2 x possession of drugs (cannabis) and 1 x harassment offence.

Crime in Sedgefield is up by 34% (December 2014 = 122 crimes / December 2015 = 163 crimes) with a 33% detection rate for the year to date. There have been 102 instances of anti-social behavior in December 2015 compared to 101 in December 2014 which equates to a 1% rise. There have been 40 instances of youth anti-social behavior in December 2015 compared to 47 in December 2014 which equates to a decrease of 15%.

The next PACT meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 7pm in the Fletcher Room of the Parish Hall where the priority is parking issues on the access road to Bolams over the Christmas period.

Finally Sgt Clarke reported the following incidents of note:

- The Police are aware of a few on-going issues surrounding the youth shelter and will give the location attention over the next reporting period.
- The issues regarding mud being thrown from the grounds of the church yard appear to have subsided, however, this situation will continue to be monitored.

Cllr Dudley Waters asked Sgt Clarke why a police helicopter had been hovering over the

Town for some considerable period of time during the evening of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Sgt Clarke replied that this had been linked to the incident at Hardwick Visitors Centre as per his earlier report.

Cllr Ian Sutherland commented that in December 2015 a haystack had been set on fire yet this had not been included in the Police Report. Sgt Clarke confirmed that this particular incident had been reported to the Police and recorded as arson. He was unsure why it had not been included in the Police Report, however, he suspected that this was because of the timing of the incident and it falling between two reporting periods.

Cllr Gloria Wills asked if the recent spate of egg throwing in the Town had stopped. Sgt Clarke replied that no further reports had been received and it was suspected that these incidents were linked to those of mud throwing which have also stopped.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked Sgt Clarke for his report and time.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**8. Public Participation**

The Chair closed the meeting whilst the public gave their views and comments.

Mrs Julia Bowles commented that she had noted the issue of the Town Council website was to be discussed on the forthcoming P&R Committee meeting agenda. Mrs Bowles expressed her disappointment that Council minutes are not available to public viewing electronically. The Clerk replied that the existing Town Council website has been updated to include a note to the effect that a new site is under development and also providing a link to access approved Council meetings. The Clerk requested Mrs Bowles reassess the Council website and if still unable to view this information let her know as soon as possible. Mrs Bowles also commented that as the Town Council's statutory consultation exercise in relation to The Sedgefield Plan is now concluded was there any further information as to who Durham County Council will be consulting with when they hold their statutory 6 week period of consultation? Mrs Bowles expressed her view that if consultation was to take place with the same people then this was duplication. Finally, Mrs Bowles stated that timing is of the essence for The Sedgefield Plan's progression.

Mrs Janet Spalding commented that whilst residents get to know about planning applications she asked should residents not get to know about any changes to such applications. Cllr Mel Carr replied that the issue of communication with residents was to be discussed on the forthcoming P&R Committee agenda.

Mr Alan Patterson reported that he had contacted Durham County Council regarding his concerns about the way in which the woodland is overspilling onto Durham Road from the Telephone Exchange to Kerr Crescent. As a result of this report DCC have agreed to have an on-site meeting with Mr Patterson later this week, however, DCC have stated that the woodland belongs to the Town Council. Cllr Mel Carr assured Mr Patterson that the woodland in question does belong to Durham County Council and they have previously given an assurance (in writing) that they would maintain it and keep the footpath within it in good order.

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

County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon asked Mr Patterson for the name of the DCC Officer whom he had been liaising with. Mr Patterson replied Mr Joe Malone.

Cllr Ian Sutherland reiterated that DCC do own the land in relation to Mr Patterson's concern. Cllr Chris Lines suggested that any information held by the Town Council be shared with Mr Patterson to assist with his meeting with DCC. Cllr Gloria Wills reported that she had also spoken to Mr Malone regarding this matter. The problem is that soil is washing down onto the main road and only leaves on the top of this are being gathered up by road sweeper meaning that this has reduced considerably the width of the road. Cllr John Robinson gave the history to this area of land whereby the former Sedgfield Borough Council had authorized work in this area including the planting of bulbs and flowers. The Borough Council had tried to get the Town Council to adopt this land, however, the Town Council had refused and the land now belongs to DCC.

## **9. Internal Reports**

### **9.1 Chairman's Report**

The Chair reported that over the past month he had attended 7 Council meetings, the Mayor's Carol Service on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (at which he had particularly enjoyed the performances by the children), the Sedgfield Village Games Volunteering Celebration event on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and meetings in relation to The Sedgfield Plan and the Sedgfield Extra.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**9.2 Mayor's Report**

The Mayor reported that since the last Monthly Meeting she had:

- Attended the Mayor's Carol Service at St Edmund's Church. This had been a very successful and well supported service. Cllr Wills expressed her thanks to the Church for their subsequent donation of £133 to the Mayor's Charity.
- Attended the North East Championship Cross-Country event at Hardwick Park. Despite the snow this was a fantastic day and put Sedgefield on the map. Cllr Wills expressed her thanks to Sedgefield Harriers.
- Attended the Sedgefield Village Games Volunteering Celebration Event at the Manor House on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015. This had been a very good event and reiterated again that volunteers keep the Town going.
- Attended Great Aycliffe Town Council's Civic Service.
- Organised and attended her own Country Meets Rock and Roll event on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016 in the Parish Hall at Sedgefield. This had been very well attended and raised over £500 for the Mayor's Charity. Cllr Wills expressed her thanks to Ms Angela Bannister for assisting with the organisation of the event plus Cllrs Brown, Jeanes, Walton and Carr for their support. The Silly Snaps element of the event had also been very popular.
- Finally, Cllr Wills reminded Cllrs of her other forthcoming Mayoral Charity events as detailed on the Dates sheet circulated in the Committee pack.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**10. External Reports**

**10.1 DRAFT Minutes of 280<sup>th</sup> Meeting of NALC on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all for information the DRAFT minutes of the 280<sup>th</sup> Meeting of NALC held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Cllr Allan Blakemore pointed out to Cllrs that the North East now has three representatives on the Larger Councils Forum and that now is a good time to use these representatives in order to progress any local issues which need bringing to national attention.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**10.2 Report from DCC Member (RL)**

County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon gave the following report:

- A177 Junction – this matter has been progressed as far as possible in accordance with the professional judgement of experts. Cllr Alf Walton commented that he had witnessed a few near misses due to overtaking but he acknowledged the junction was better than previously. Cllr John Robinson said that according to the website there had been 7 reported incidents at the junction. County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon asked if Cllrs felt that ‘no overtaking signs’ would be beneficial. It was felt that these would be unnecessary.
- Winterton Play Area – new toddler and play equipment will be installed at this site by Easter. The Mums Group will be proactive in arranging events to ensure these new facilities are used and promoted. The new facilities will compliment those already on-site. Cllr Gloria Wills asked who owned this site. County Cllr Lumsdon replied that DCC own the land. She also reported that a further request has been received to install permanent goalposts at this location and this is being explored.
- Teaching Assistants – County Cllr Lumsdon reported that no final decision has yet been made by DCC regarding this issue. It is a very complex issue especially around the area of special educational needs provision. DCC Members have not yet heard the outcome of the recent consultations undertaken.
- DCC Consultations – a DCC consultation regarding Youth Provision will commence at the beginning of February 2016. This will potentially affect Fishburn Youth Club and could have the potential to remove all youth provision there. The Youth Club’s Management Committee have ideas on how to potentially progress work between Fishburn and Sedgfield but funding would be required. County Cllr Lumsdon urged the Town Council to take part in this forthcoming consultation. The proposals would see youth provision being focused upon areas of deprivation and for this locality this would centre around Ferryhill.
- Chancellors Funding Cuts – The Chancellor has now announced his spending cuts which will impact upon DCC and whilst not as deep as first thought there are now going to be many hard decisions to make. County Cllr Lumsdon is

hopeful that DCC have come up with a solution to the issue of the DLI museum, one which will increase access to its items and allow a greater number of items to be available to the public. This is just one example of the same issues being tackled elsewhere and quoted Somerset County Council who have not cut all museum funding.

- Regional Devolution (NECA) – County Cllr Lumsdon circulated a copy of the devolution leaflet which will be going to every household in the County ahead of the vote on devolution.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon for her update. County Cllr John Robinson also requested the opportunity to speak as a DCC Member and gave the following update:

- He thanked everyone who had sent him cards and messages of support during his recent illness.
- The devolution leaflets will be distributed between Wednesday – Friday this week and the postal vote will feature a series of questions in relation to the proposed devolution process, questions which have been devised in conjunction with Durham University.
- County Cllr Robinson will forward to the Town Clerk the minutes from his meeting in September 2015 in relation to Station Road Playing field.
- With regards to funding, County Cllr Robinson reported that he has supported the Squash Club with £10,000, Sedgefield Day with £5,000 and will also be giving funding to the Scouts who are due to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Unfortunately for a number of reasons the Winter Village project to create a gingerbread village didn't happen in 2015, however, it is hoped this can take place in the future.
- Neo-natal Unit at North Tees Hospital – This unit had been due to close, however, due to lobbying it has received a stay of execution and will remain open for a further 12-18 months while proposals are reconsidered.
- A Government Task Force has been set up to look at the implications for the closure of 50% of learning disability beds. Discussions are now on-going in relation to this.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked County Cllr John Robinson for his update.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**



## **11. Correspondence**

### **11.1 Notification Regarding Amended Plans for 7/2011/0293/DM – Land South of Harap Road, Garmondsway, Fishburn (email from DCC dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of an email from DCC dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 with an attached letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss in relation to amended plans for the above planning application. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that they had objected to the original application and the Town Council now needed to consider the amended plans and comment. The Clerk also confirmed that she had received confirmation from Ms Claire Teasdale of DCC that a response from the Town Council after 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 would be acceptable as no date has yet been set for taking the application to Committee. Cllr John Robinson reported that this alteration went into DCC without consultation. He reminded Cllrs that while the Town Council (and others) receive notification about original planning applications they do not always receive notification when amendments/conditions come through. Cllr Gloria Wills supported the words expressed by Cllr Robinson and said this was a very frustrating part of the planning application process.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) Cllrs to consider the amended proposals.**
- ii) This matter to be discussed at the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**

## **12. Sedgefield Plan**

### **12.1 Sedgefield Plan Update Report by Town Clerk**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Plan Update Report which informed Cllrs on progress with the Plan in the period from 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – noon on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the Statutory Consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 did not close until 5pm on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and that she had produced a further report giving Cllrs the latest information. Copies of this report were duly circulated to all and the Clerk explained this was in 4 parts as follows:

- Covering report summarizing the situation since 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to date;

- Part A contained the responses received to the consultation;
- Part B the comments of the The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group when considering these responses;
- Part C an updated Section 3 of The Sedgefield Plan.

The Clerk said that Cllrs now needed time to consider the content of this report and its attachments and recommended that this report be discussed by Cllrs at the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Cllr Gloria Wills asked if any response had been received from Fairhurst in relation to the query regarding the map detailing the Build Up Area Boundary. The Clerk replied that no response had been received.

Cllr Allan Blakemore reminded Cllrs that timescales had been agreed earlier by the Council in order to ensure The Sedgefield Plan maintained momentum until it was submitted to DCC. He requested the Clerk recirculate these dates to all Cllrs for information.

The Clerk and Cllr Allan Blakemore expressed their thanks to Mr Mort Spalding of the Steering Group

Cllr Maxine Robinson said that it was important that adequate time was given to consider and discuss the report circulated to reflect the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Robinson suggested discussing this report either at the start of the Community Development & Engagement meeting agenda or having a separate Special Town Council meeting on another date.

County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon asked if she could have a copy of the report circulated during the meeting. Cllrs agreed to this and the Clerk duly provided a copy.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **Cllrs to consider the information contained in the Reports circulated by the Clerk.**
- ii) **The Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to commence at 6.30pm with the first agenda item being The Sedgefield Plan (and for this information to be displayed**

- on the Town Council noticeboard and through the Residents Database).
- iii) The Clerk to re-circulate to all Cllrs the timescales previously agreed to progress The Sedgefield Plan.

### 13. Current Planning Applications

Cllrs John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Ian Sutherland declared an interest.

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):

1. **DM/15/03375/VOC – variation of condition 3 of planning permission DM/14/03365/VOC to allow for changes to the building including alterations to windows, bay windows and doors, including additional windows, land at the rear of 30 The Lane, Sedgefield:**  
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.
2. **DM/15/03524/FPA – replacement/alteration of existing windows, rooflights and doors with UPVC composite units, including insertion of 2 No. additional rooflights to rear and insertion of new window in north facing gable at first floor, Meadows End, 5 Low Street, Mordon:**  
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.
3. **DM/15/03636/AD – retention of non-illuminated fascia sign, 50 Front Street, Sedgefield:**  
Cllrs had already considered this at their December 2015 Monthly Meeting and the Clerk had submitted a letter of objection based upon size and character of this sign compared to others within the Conservation Area.
4. **DM/15/03765/FPA – proposed installation of 32 no ground mounted photovoltaic panels to generate electricity for Sands Farm, Sedgefield:**  
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.
5. **DM/15/03804/FPA – Demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side/front extension – 4 Boyne Court, Sedgefield:**  
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.
6. **DM/15/03805/VOC – variation of condition 2 of planning approval ref: 7/2012/0208/DM relating to adherence to approved plans, Preston West Farm, Preston Lane, Preston le Skerne:**  
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.
7. **DM/15/03891/FPA – Erection of single storey rear extension, 3 Claremont Grove,**

**Sedgefield:**

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

**RESOLVED:**

**The comments on planning applications 1- 7 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.**

The Clerk informed Cllrs that on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 she had issued to all Cllrs a letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss of Durham County Council dated 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 informing the Council that Avant Homes had submitted additional information in relation to their planning application for land to the South of Beacon Lane, Sedgefield. The Town Council now has a period of time in which to submit its comments.

**RESOLVED:**

**The Clerk to write to DCC Planning Officers informing them that after considering the additional information the Town Council still objects to this application as the revisions do not address the Council's earlier objections and development in this area would potentially open up the entire East of the Town for future development.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.01pm.

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY POLICY & RESOURCES** of the **Council** held following the Monthly meeting in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016**.

**Present**                    **Cllr. Gloria Wills (Chairman)**  
**Cllr. Mel Carr (Vice-Chairman) and**  
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Lynne Dentith, Tim Jeanes,  
Chris Lines, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton and  
Dudley Waters

**Officer**                    Dr. Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Cllr Vanessa Carmichael

**2. Declaration of interest**

Cllr Chris Lines declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5.1. There were no other declarations of interest.

**3. Matters of Information**

**3.1 Woodland, Old Durham Road:**

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email from Ms Susan Porter, Senior Planning Enforcement Officer (DCC South West Area) dated 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016 in which she had answered the questions raised by Mr Ean Parsons in his correspondence of 2015.

**RESOLVED:**

**Cllrs to consider the content of Ms Porter's email and to discuss this matter at the Environment Committee meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January 20156.**

**3.2 Epitaph Training:**

Training for the Clerk and the Gardening Supervisor is to be scheduled for a time

when outdoor work quietens down.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.3 Creating A Mayor's Charity:**

An on-line application form, plus attachments, has been submitted to the Charity Commission. Instruction is now awaited from the Commission. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.4 Breach of Confidentiality:**

Copies of the CDALC Code of Conduct training have been issued to all Cllrs along with a request to see if there is any interest in having an in-house training session. The Clerk reported that there has been no interest from Cllrs for such a session.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.5 Station Road Playing Field:**

The Estates Working Group are to meet with Mr John Reed, DCC Head of Technical Services and his colleague, Mr Brian Featherstone, on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016. An update report will be presented to the February 2016 P&R Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.6 Title Deeds and Documentation at Meikles:**

A proposal has been prepared by Ms Jane Young and will be presented to the Estates Working Group meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.7 Tenders – Estimate to Reinstate Part of the Lane Next to Sedgefield Cemetery:**

This work has now been successfully completed. The Estates Working Group are to view the ground improvement works at the Cemetery following their next meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.8 Outstanding Fairhurst Invoice:**

Discussions between the Town Council and Mr Dominic Waugh of Fairhurst are continuing. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.9 2016 Annual Fireworks Display:**

The Clerk has written to G2 Fireworks, AES and British Red Cross informing them of their appointment for this event. A letter has also been sent to the SCA informing them of the date for this year's event. A meeting is to be arranged with G2 Fireworks soon in order to consider the composition of this year's event. A report from the Fireworks Working Group will follow thereafter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.10 Licensing Act 2003 – New Premises Licence (Manor House):**

The Clerk has informed Mr Steve Ragg that the Town Council has no objections to this application.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.11 Bulletin on NALC National Developments:**

The Clerk has circulated to those Cllrs not present at the last meeting details on how to complete NALC's on-line petition for a community right of appeal. This information was also disseminated through the Residents Database. The Clerk has herself

completed the on-line petition.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.12 Proposed New Gardener Position:**

Advertisements for this position are to be distributed towards the latter part of this week. The Personnel Committee will oversee this process and provide a recommendation report to a future P&R Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**4. Public Participation**

The Chairman, Cllr Gloria Wills, closed the meeting for the public to give views and comments.

Mrs Sarah Guest requested to speak about the Residents Database held by the Town Council. She explained that the role of the Sedgefield Village Action Group is to inform residents about planning applications coming into the Village. Mrs Guest said that without the Action Group many residents would not have been aware of these applications and that the Action Group had done very important work over the last couple of months to raise this awareness. The Action Group have a hard working team who have put together leaflets and then deliver these through doors. In addition information has recently been displayed in the Post Office which has resulted in an extra 100 letters being submitted in response to planning applications in Sedgefield. Mrs Guest asked the Town Council if the Sedgefield Village Action Group could be supported by allowing access to the Residents Database. Cllr Wills thanked Mrs Guest for her comments and said this matter was on the agenda later in the meeting.

The Chair re-opened the meeting.

**5. Reports**

**5.1 Terrace Hill Funding Projects Update Report by Town Clerk**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Terrace Hill Funding Projects update report. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that in March 2015 Cllrs had agreed to give



all those projects who had not yet been able to claim their allocation of Terrace Hill money a further 12 month extension until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. Cllrs at that time had instructed the Clerk to liaise with those projects who had unclaimed funds towards the end of 2015 in order to get a progress report on their latest position.

Cllr Ian Sutherland commented that with the majority of those projects yet to claim their money the stumbling block had been planning related, an issue that had taken up considerable time. Cllr Gloria Wills suggested that a realistic timescale for deadline for funding would be 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Cllr Lynne Dentith stated that a significant amount of money, intended for community use, is currently being tied up and that another 12 month extension should be the maximum before serious thought should be given to using this money in other ways to benefit Sedgefield. Cllr John Robinson commented that when the Terrace Hill money was allocated to projects there were far more other funding sources available and that such funding has been cut significantly in the intervening period. Cllr Robinson felt that all projects have moved forward and therefore there was justification to extend the funding deadline as suggested. Cllr Maxine Robinson said that progress had been made by all projects and the Town Council could not pull the rug from under any group. She also commented that many of the projects supported needed considerable time to achieve their goal and there needed to be due deliberation before any changes were made to terms and conditions. Cllr Maxine Robinson agreed that a further 12 month extension should be given to each project and that if the money is not claimed before the last financial quarter in 2016/17 then those projects be asked to come and give a presentation to the Town Council. Cllr Allan Blakemore supported this recommendation stating that the Town Council would need to consider the impact of any decision it makes upon other funding opportunities the projects were hoping to obtain and by hearing such presentation of any non-claimed projects this would allow the Town Council to be better informed as to whether the projects were realistic. Cllr Lynne Dentith agreed such an approach would allow far more detail of each project, and a realistic assessment of their position, to be obtained.

Cllr Gloria Wills expressed her concerns at the current difficulties the Sedgefield Harriers are having to tackle in relation to title at the Community College. Cllr Wills stated that necessary protection should have been secured from the outset from the PFI contract holders and DCC. Cllr Maxine Robinson replied that a lot of people did try very hard at the time for the inclusion of such protection and she expressed her frustration that a facility was demolished for which the Town Council were left to repay

a loan on. Cllr John Robinson requested that an item entitled “Community Association for Sedgefield Community College” be placed onto the Community Development & Engagement for February 2016 and that he would liaise with Mr David Davis to produce an appropriate report regarding this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to draft letters to the Sedgefield Bowling Club, Sedgefield Harriers and Sedgefield Out Of School Fun Club stating they can have an extension to their funding allocation until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and that if money is unclaimed by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 they schedule a presentation to the P&R Committee to give their latest business plan and final timescale for completion for consideration by the Town Council. These letters to be approved by the Finance Working Group.**
- iii) “Community Association for Sedgefield Community College” Report be placed on the February 2016 Community Development & Engagement Committee agenda.**

**5.2 To Re-open The Public Toilets In Sedgefield on Behalf of the Town Council and the People and Visitors to Sedgefield Report by Cllr Mark Cant**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a report by Cllr Mark Cant proposing the re-opening of the public toilets in Sedgefield. Cllr Cant explained that his proposal was to re-open the disabled toilet in the toilet block outside the Town Council Offices as a unisex toilet at a minimal cost of £3000. His proposal was based upon the community benefit this would bring to local residents and visitors to the Town giving the examples of the Farmers’ Market and Mediaeval Fayre.

Cllr Alf Walton said that he has been supportive of the public toilets being re-opened previously, however, he expressed concerns regarding the cleaning and long-term maintenance of such a facility. He gave examples of other much bigger Towns that no longer/do not have public toilet facilities.

Cllr Tim Jeanes provided fellow Cllrs with a summarized history of the existing Toilet Block which had gone through a sequence of refurbishment, re-opening, vandalism, closure, refurbishment, re-opening and further vandalism. The Town Council had previously advertised for someone to look after the public toilets but no applicants had applied. Cllr Jeanes noted that Cllr Cant’s report suggested that an appropriate

contractor could be identified but wondered if the cost of such would be prohibitive. Cllr Maxine Robinson also confirmed Cllr Jeanes' summary of refurbishment and vandalism and said that Town Council staff had at the time refused to clean the public toilets due to the state in which they were left and could not find anyone else to undertake this role. The Town Council had also tried to seek advice regarding anti-vandal equipment. The Council had also explored the option of a radar key and this included any local business being willing to hold such a key in return for a retainer payment, however, no local business had been willing to do this apart from the Race Course which was too far away in distance to make this feasible. Cllr Ian Sutherland reiterated the comments made by Cllrs Jeanes and Robinson plus also pointed out that there had at one time been a plan to revamp the front part of the Town Council Offices to incorporate the public toilets. He also stated that if Cemetery Lodge was sold the funds raised could be used for such redevelopment work. Cllr Chris Lines said that it is an aspiration of the Town Council to have public toilets in the Town and reminded Cllrs this is already on the work plan of the Estates Working Group when they have the capacity to consider this further. Cllr Lynne Dentith reminded Cllrs that the existing toilet block is already costing the Town Council at the moment and gave the example of the recent roof repair work. Cllr Gloria Wills agreed that the provision of public toilets was a Town Council aspiration but in view of the previous experience the re-opening of a part of the existing toilet block was not practical. Cllr Tim Jeanes suggested the views of the public be sought via the Sedgefield Extra or Sedgefield News. Cllr Wills stated this would perhaps result in raising aspirations which were not realistic when considering that much larger councils are now closing such public facilities due to budgetary pressures. Cllr Wills reminded fellow Cllrs that the public toilet within the Council Offices building is available to the public during office opening times.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The public toilet block outside the Town Council Offices to remain closed.**
- ii) The Town Council to maintain the aspiration for the Town having public toilets provision and this to be considered by the Estates Working Group when funds become available in the future.**

### **5.3 Cemetery Lodge Update Report by Town Clerk**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Cemetery Lodge Update Report informing Cllrs that the current tenants will be staying until 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016. Cllr

Ian Sutherland asked if it was still the tenants intention to leave Cemetery Lodge and the Clerk replied that this was the case and their long-term plans have not changed. Cllr Ian Sutherland reminded Cllrs that it had been previously agreed that at some point in the future Cemetery Lodge would be sold and the funds raised used to develop the Council's estate in other ways. The Clerk confirmed that the work being undertaken to improve gardening staff work facilities in the cemetery is part of the work to 'isolate' Cemetery Lodge and the Estates Working Group would need to give consideration to the latest information received from DCC regarding land nearby to the cemetery which had potentially been considered as a way to create a new entrance to the cemetery in the future. Cllr Ian Sutherland requested that when progress had been made in this area the issue of Cemetery Lodge be put back onto the P&R Committee agenda. This was agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.4 Sedgefield Town Council Website Update Report by Town Clerk (to be circulated at the meeting)**

The Clerk circulated to all a Sedgefield Town Council Website Update report. The Clerk thanked all Cllrs for their feedback on the initial draft of the new website and for Cllr Lines meeting with InnovTech to go through these comments. As a result the proposed website has been revised and a hyperlink to the revised site will be circulated to all Cllrs on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The Clerk requested that Cllrs confirm they are then happy with the structure so that work can move to actual content uploading. A deadline will be stipulated for this feedback.

The Clerk also reported that in the interim until the new site is launched approved minutes from the Council's Monthly, P&R, Environment plus Community Development & Engagement Committee meetings can be accessed via a link from the current website. Cllr Ian Sutherland asked if the new domain name obtained by the Town Council is in use. The Clerk replied that the new domain name will only be used when the new website goes live.

Cllr Chris Lines proposed that he and the Clerk continue to work together to bring the new website to fruition. This was agreed by all Cllrs.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to circulate the hyperlink to the revised website to all Cllrs on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015.**
- iii) Approved minutes to continue to be uploaded to the existing website until such a time that the new website is launched on the new domain name.**
- iv) Cllr Chris Lines and the Clerk to continue to work together to bring the new website to fruition.**

#### **5.5 2016 Folk Festival Report by Finance Working Group:**

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a report by the Finance Working Group regarding the 2016 Folk Festival. This contained a proposal to make a donation to the 2016 Folk Festival event in recognition of the difficulties they experienced in relation to the Parish Hall for their 2015 event and the considerable time and effort given by their volunteers to put right the audio systems in the Hall for not only their benefits but also for other Hall users.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**The Town Council to make a financial donation of £100 to the Folk Festival for their 2016 event.**

### **6. Financial Matters**

- 6.1 Monthly Accounts: Income (as at 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015) / Expenditure (as at 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015 minus unapproved cheques after 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**The monthly accounts as had been circulated were approved.**

- 6.2 Cheques for approval after 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

Details of cheques for approval after 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk circulated copies of cheques for approval from 4<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**All cheques were approved for payment and duly signed by Cllrs Wills, Carr**

**and the Clerk at the close of the meeting.**

**6.3 2016/17 Precept Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2016/17 Precept Recommendation Report by the Finance Working Group. This report recommended a 3% increase in precept for 2016/17 and contained a recommended article for the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra. Cllrs unanimously agreed to the precept increase being proposed. With regards to the proposed article, Cllr Dudley Waters recommended that the 5<sup>th</sup> sentence reads “Over recent years the level of funding from central government distributed via Durham County Council as reduced ...” to ensure readers understand it is central government who had made this reduction and not the principal local authority. In addition, Cllr Waters also recommended the final sentence be revised to reflect the increase per household and clearly stipulate the timescale for such an increase, i.e. per household per annum. Cllrs agreed with the recommendations from Cllr Waters.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Clerk to now complete the necessary paperwork for submission to DCC by 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016 requesting the Town Council’s 2016/17 precept.**
- ii) The Clerk to amend the proposed article and submit to the next edition of the Sedgefield News.**

**6.4 Referendum Principles – Will Not Apply To Parishes For 16-17 (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 attaching the latest reference to referendums for Parish Councils. Cllr Gloria Wills pointed out that whilst no principles are specified for local precepting authorities in 2016/17 it is possible that such may be specified in the future.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.5 Request for Funding (email from Mr Neil Bradbury, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice County Durham dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of an email from Mr Neil

Bradbury of Citizens Advice County Durham dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 in which he was seeking a donation of £1250 from the Town Council to fund the fortnightly outreach in the village as in previous years.

Cllr Allan Blakemore said that he was aware the CAB also received funding from the Sedgefield Charities Howle Hope Charities while the Town Council have given both money and a venue plus facilities. Cllr Lynne Dentith pointed out that whilst CAB provide a fortnightly presence in the Council Offices they provide a volunteer service right across the County available to all throughout the entire year, i.e. it is a bigger service than just the sessions being run within Sedgefield.

Cllr Gloria Wills said that CAB provide a fantastic service but questions if outreach sessions would be more appropriate held in a community facility such as Ceddesfeld Hall. This would allow Ceddesfeld Hall to get the income from the sessions plus release much needed office space within the Town Council offices and reduce problems experienced when reception is busy with clients waiting to see an advisor. The Town Council could continue to support the service through a financial donation, possibly half the amount currently paid. Cllr Wills suggested that if the SCA were willing to take on such a service this would provide them with a valuable asset too. Other Cllrs thought this was a good idea. Cllr John Robinson requested that the Clerk look into the documentation surrounding the purchase of the Town Council Offices as he thought the provision of a CAB service was part of the original conditions when the building was formerly occupied by CAB and WRVS. Cllr Lynne Dentith expressed some caution in that delivering such a service from a community location could mean lone working would affect CAB operating procedures.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Clerk to investigate how much financial donation the Howle Hope Charity will be making to the CAB in 2016/17.**
- ii) The Clerk to investigate the sale document for the Council Offices.**
- iii) The Clerk to progress this matter with the Estates Working Group who will bring a recommendation back to a future P&R Committee meeting.**

**7. Correspondence**

- 7.1 Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (email from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the NALC Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings dated 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015 for their information.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.2 Results of Direct Election to the NALC Larger Councils Committee (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALD dated 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 detailing the results of a recent direct election to the NAL Larger Councils Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.3 New Year 2017 Honours – Request for Nominations (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 detailing how nominations could be made for the 2017 New Years Honours list. The Clerk informed Cllrs that within the Committee pack for this meeting she had included the full documentation relating to this matter, however, in future she asked if Cllrs would be happy to receive copies of the email only and then to make their own way via the hyperlinks to the supplementary documentation. Cllrs agreed that in future the Clerk forward only the covering email in order to save paper and printing costs. Cllr John Robinson suggested that if any Cllr did then have difficulty accessing this information they contact the Clerk directly.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) In future the Clerk will only include within Committee packs the covering emails and Cllrs will then access any supplementary information through hyperlinks detailed within the email.**

**7.4 Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (email**



**from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the NALC Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 for their information.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.5 Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (email from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the NALC Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 for their information.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.6 Royal Garden Party 2016 (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 making Cllrs aware of the annual opportunity to nominate person(s) to attend a Royal Garden Party in 2016. The Clerk reported that subsequently further information has been received. The Garden Party will take place on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016 and CDALC have been allocated 4 places (i.e. two pairs of attendees). Town and Parish Councils can nominate representatives whose details will be put into the draw which will take on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.

**RESOLVED:**

**Details for Cllrs Dudley Waters and Ian Sutherland plus partners to be entered into the CDALC draw.**

**7.7 County Durham Poverty Action Plan (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of

CDALC dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 which had detailed a presentation given at a recent CDALC Executive Committee regarding the County Durham Poverty Action Plan. Accompanying this were copies of a presentation given by Mr Roger Goodes of DCC. A fully completed Plan will be issued in 2016.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.8 NALC Larger Councils Committee (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 making Cllrs aware that since the recent NALC Larger Councils Committee election that Cllr Quinn from Shildon has moved from the reserve list to the full Committee joining other local Cllrs, Cllr Fleming (Bishop Auckland) and Cllr Smith (Horden).

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.9 Letter from Mr G S Roper dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 regarding proposed relocation of Sedgfield Post Office**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of a letter and attachment from Mr Roper dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 in which he detailed his concerns regarding the implications upon parking as a result of the relocation of Sedgfield Post Office. Cllr Chris Lines reported that a resident from White House Drive had also spoken to him with similar concerns as a result of the apex of the road when turning right into White House Drive, a road which is very narrow and if cars are double parked this will exacerbate the issue. Cllr Lines had responded to this resident stating the reasons by the Town Council did not objection to the relocation of the Post Office, i.e. it was better to retain a service in some form than to lose it altogether. Cllr Lines suggested that this situation needs to be monitored and if there is a problem then issues should be resolved with those who are running the service. Cllr Gloria Wills asked if the layby near to the Bells Store is part of the highway and if so would traffic management restrictions apply? She suggested that the layby area might be made time limited and Cllr John Robinson offered to take this matter to

DCC Highways for progress. All Cllrs agreed this was a good idea.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Clerk to write to Mr Roper informing him of the Council's discussions.**
- ii) Cllr John Robinson to take the suggestion from Cllr Wills to DCC Highways that the layby near the Bells Store be made time limited. Cllr Robinson to report back to the Town Council.**
- iii) The Town Council to monitor the parking situation when/if the Post Office relocates.**

**7.10 Emails from Mrs J Bowles and Mrs S Guest dated 9<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 regarding use of Residents Database**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a chain of emails between herself and Mrs Julia Bowles and Mrs Sarah Guest regarding the use of the Residents Database. The Clerk confirmed that this correspondence related to comments made by Mrs Guest earlier in the meeting during Public Participation.

Cllr Gloria Wills explained that the database now held by the Town Council had formerly been part of the Residents Forum and did provide a very good tool from which to update people quickly. For such a tool to be effective, and to reflect the type of communication that will usually be for dissemination, it was important to be able to use such a tool in a time sensitive manner. The Town Council had agreed some time ago to keep lines of communication as open as possible with the residents, however, the Council did have a responsibility in terms of Data Protection and ensuring that the content of any information dissemination was correct and proper. Cllr Wills suggested that the best way to progress this was to give the Town Clerk delegated powers to look at information submitted by residents requesting it to be disseminated on a wider basis, make a judgement on its appropriate content and then disseminate via the Residents Database if appropriate. All Cllrs agreed to this recommendation.

Cllr Allan Blakemore questioned whether whatever information is circulated on behalf of others via the Residents Database should also be put onto the Council's website. Cllr Wills disagreed with this stating the Town Council website would be for the Town Council's information. Cllr Chris Lines said it was very important to carefully consider what is circulated and how. Cllr Lines said it would not have been possible to have

circulated all of the information requested recently by the Sedgefield Village Action Group due to the nature of the content, i.e. the poster detailing there is an application and this is how you can comment would have been acceptable but the accompanying letter which said how people had to respond was not. The Town Council must give serious consideration to the use of Twitter and this would work hand in hand with the website and the Residents Database. Cllrs agreed with this.

Cllr Maxine Robinson suggested that a protocol would be useful stating how the Residents Database (and in the longer-term any other communication methods which come on-line) can and cannot be use, how they can be accessed and any disclaimer quotation to be used by the Town Council. Cllrs agreed with this.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Town Clerk be given delegated powers on behalf of the Town Council to consider information requests to access the Residents Database and, if considered appropriate, to disseminate information.**
- ii) Use of Twitter and website to be considered as part of information dissemination when the new website comes on-line.**
- iii) The Clerk to draft an appropriate protocol and take this to the Policy & Records Management Working Group in the first instance prior to being presented to a future P&R Committee meeting for approval.**

**7.11 Metal Gate To Rectory Row Church Wall (email from Mr Brian Mutch, St Edmund's Church Warden dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachment from Mr Brian Mutch, St Edmund's Church Warden dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 requesting the Town Council pay for the repair and refitting of the side gate to Rectory Row Church Wall.

Cllr David Brown suggested that the Town Council pay for this gate as requested but stop paying any contribution to the church lighting fund. Cllr Brown believed the Council paid an annual contribution to the lighting fund. The Clerk was unaware of this but agreed to investigate this matter.

Cllrs agreed to pay for this gate at a cost of £120 + VAT in recognition of the Council's responsibility for the closed churchyard but that the gate must be ordered by the Town Council and paid via invoice directly to the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Clerk to inform Mr Brian Mutch of the Council's decision.**
- ii) The Clerk to place the order with Foster, Laws and Company Ltd.**
- iii) The Clerk to investigate the Town Council's previous contributions to the Church lighting fund.**

**7.12 Queen Birthday Beacons (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 regarding Beacons for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations. It was agreed that the Town Council did not have a suitable venue/event for a Beacon. Cllr John Robinson said he would take this information and matter to the SCA and suggested the Town Clerk forward this information to the Scouts. Cllr Dudley Waters believed the Town Council did have a beacon which had been used previously.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Cllr John Robinson to take this matter to the next SCA meeting.**
- iii) The Town Clerk to forward this information to Mr Geoff Tonks of the Scouts.**

**8. Training**

**8.1 Your Region, Your Community, Your Event – Managing Events, County Association Training Event, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016, Shotton Hall, Peterlee (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of a "Your Region, Your Community, Your Event – Managing Events" training day on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 which has been organized jointly by the Cleveland, County Durham and Northumberland Associations. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the first such joint training event had taken place in March 2015 and had been very successful.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Clerk plus Cllrs Maxine Robinson, Allan Blakemore and Mel Carr to attend this event.**

- ii) **The Clerk to book places for the above Cllrs.**
- iii) **Any other Cllrs wishing to attend to inform the Clerk as soon as possible.**

**8.2. RTPI North East Rural Planning Event, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016, Newcastle Upon Tyne:**

The Clerk informed Cllrs that Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC had forwarded details of a RTPI North East Rural Planning Event to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 in the Assembly Rooms at Newcastle Upon Tyne. The Clerk circulated a copy of the programme for this event which is priced at £115 plus VAT per delegate. Cllrs Maxine Robinson and Gloria Wills expressed their interest in attending this event which was considered to be relevant to the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **Cllrs Maxine Robinson and Gloria Wills to attend this event on behalf of the Town Council.**
- ii) **The Clerk to book places for Cllrs Robinson and Wills.**

Cllrs Wills explained that due to the confidential nature of the following item this would be discussed under Exempt Information and as such had any members of the press or public been in attendance at the meeting they would have been requested to leave the meeting (Section 1 Sub Section (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960).

**9. Tenders:**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.16pm.

# SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the **Council** held at **6.30 p.m.** in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman)</b> <b>Cllr. Lynne Dentith (Vice-Chairman) and</b> Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Mel Carr, Tim Jeanes, Chris Lines, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton
<b>Officer</b>	Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

- 1. Apologies:**  
Cllrs Vanessa Carmichael, Dudley Waters and Gloria Wills
- 2. Declaration of Interests:**  
None.

### **ADDITIONAL ITEM 1. The Sedgefield Plan**

Cllr Allan Blakemore reminded Cllrs that at the Monthly Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 a report had been issued by the Clerk providing the latest information on the recent additional statutory consultation in relation to The Sedgefield Plan. Cllr Blakemore reminded Cllrs that, as agreed previously, it is not the entire Plan which is being brought back to Council for approval but only Part 3 as the rest of the Plan remains unchanged. Cllr Blakemore also pointed out that DCC's statutory consultation process cannot commence until the Town Council has agreed the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Blakemore asked Cllrs for their comments.

Cllr Chris Lines said the built up area map contained in The Sedgefield Plan must have the correct border. Cllr Lines then commended the fast work of the Steering Group in responding

to the consultation feedback received. Being as objective as possible he felt some consultees did make valid points regarding the proposed built up area boundary and we should say where we accept development and adjust the boundary in order to reflect the bigger picture of development in the Town. However, the most important thing now is to submit the Plan to DCC so that it progresses and if any issues are identified through this next and subsequent stages then the Town Council will respond accordingly. Cllr Lynne Dentith agreed with this recommendation and said that time was of the essence and that if extra work was identified later in the process in relation to the Plan then this could be addressed then. Cllr Dentith asked about the procedure now going forward. Cllr Blakemore reported that a meeting is now required with Mr Stuart Carter of DCC to go through the feedback received and identify any last pieces of additional presentation work in order for the Plan to then be formally submitted and for DCC to progress forward. Cllr Chris Lines commented that the responses received from consultees to the most recent consultation process are consistent in tone with comments made during the original consultation process. Cllr Lines again commended the Steering Group for their work.

(Cllr Ian Sutherland joined the meeting at this point).

Cllr Mel Carr remarked that several comments had been received in the latest consultation feedback relating to the issue of brownfield sites. Cllr Allan Blakemore commented that there remain minor discrepancies between the views of the Town and DCC. The Town want to push DCC towards brownfield sites and argue there are sufficient of these in the area for greenfield sites and the green wedge not to be used. This will remain an issue of difference of opinion but is not a reason why the plan cannot progress and a determination be made by an Inspector.

Cllr Tim Jeanes said that when looking at the comments received from the latest consultation these are covering the same ground as the previous consultation findings. Cllr Jeanes said it was only in the interests of the developers for the Plan's progress to be delayed. Cllr Allan Blakemore said there had been plenty of opportunity for developers to get involved previously had they wanted to but now the Council has the definitive evidence to ensure there is no challenge, criticism or new points. Cllr Chris Lines clarified the additional consultation had been as a result of process issues.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To adopt the revised Part 3 of The Sedgefield Plan.**
- ii) The Clerk, Cllr Allan Blakemore, Cllr Mel Carr and Mr Mort Spalding to meet**



**with Mr Stuart Carter of DCC to clarify final presentation requirements.**

**iii) The Sedgefield Plan to be formally re-submitted to DCC as quickly as possible.**

### **3. Matters of Information**

#### **3.1 Presentation by Investing In Children:**

Ms Ellie Seed has now forwarded the EDRC AAP Youth Forum's Findings Report to the Clerk and this has been shared with Cllrs Chris Lines and Lynne Dentith in the first instance. The Clerk and Cllrs will meet on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to consider the report and bring a recommendation back to a future Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

#### **3.2 Draft Grant Funding Policy:**

Cllr Allan Blakemore and the Community Development Officer are arranging to meet as soon as possible to progress this matter. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

#### **3.3 Apple Orchard:**

The Estates Working Group have been tasked to consider and draft a Town Council Tree Policy to be brought back to a future Environment Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed of progress.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

#### **3.4 Grant Funding Update Report:**

The Community Development Officer has been tasked to explore the feasibility of Lafarge being approached to fund footpath refurbishment work in the Town. Cllr Mel Carr is also assisting with this task. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.5 Eden Drive Adult Gym Proposal:**

The Community Development Officer has been asked to update her report and re-submit to a future Community Development & Engagement Committee. Cllr Allan Blakemore reported that he is working on conjunction with the Community Development Officer on this task in order to bring back a report that details a possible cocktail of funding which can be used to install such a facility. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.6 Grant Funding Update Report:**

The Clerk has written to Dr Lorraine O'Donnell of DCC accepting the Delivering Differently Grant Funding. The Clerk to keep Cllrs update on the date of the Cost/Benefits Workshop.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.7 Celebration of Volunteering Event:**

The Clerk had notified Mr Ean Parsons that the Town Council would be represented by Cllrs Ian Sutherland and Gloria Wills at this event. Cllr Sutherland said this had been a very good event.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**4. Public Participation**

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

Mrs Julia Bowles said that Durham County Council cannot delay The Sedgefield Plan and she referred to previous advice which she had received from DCLG to this effect in which it

was also clearly stated it is only the Inspector who can comment. Mrs Bowles said she was suspicious of DCC's delaying actions. She also commented regarding DCC's request to have a consultation related appendix in the Plan as when the Plan underwent a health check the QC had advised appendices be removed from the body of the document and instead put into an evidence disk. Mrs Bowles also recommended the Town Council check with Mr Mort Spalding regarding the correct version of the built up area boundary map. Mrs Bowles asked if the Town Council would be getting a list of those people with whom DCC would be consulting when they proceed to their statutory consultation as she felt this would be useful. Finally, Mrs Bowles referred back to comments made at the last Monthly Town Council meeting at which a member of the public had asked for clarification as to the ownership of woodland. Mrs Bowles reminded Cllrs that the former Residents Forum had been involved for a long time in discussions regarding the state of land and the £46,000 of Section 106 money which had been spent on it. Mrs Bowles confirmed that DCC do own this woodland. Cllr Allan Blakemore informed Mrs Bowles that DCC will be using the same list of statutory consultees as that used by the Town Council. He said that it is up to DCC how they conduct their statutory consultation, however, at the end of the 6 week period of consultation it must pass to an Inspector and representatives of DCC have agreed to this. Cllr Alf Walton said he did not believe that £46,000 was spent on the woodland area.

Mrs Sarah Guest reported on behalf of Mr Alan Patterson who was unable to attend. Mr Patterson had been told that the woodland area is the responsibility of the developers to maintain. Mrs Guest suggested that in future clear clarification should be sought as to who will maintain areas of land in the future post-development.

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

## **5. Reports**

### **5.1 Grants Funding Update Report by Community Development Officer**

Prior to the meeting a Grants Funding Update Report by the Community Development Officer had been circulated to all for information.

Cllr Ian Sutherland questioned why, in Part 2, the Energy Efficient British Gas application had been refused. The Clerk explained this fund is now closed. The Community Development Officer has been informed that there is a possibility a new fund may come on-line and if this is the case then those who were unsuccessful in the last fund (such as Sedgfield Town Council) would be given the opportunity to be

involved this second time. Cllr Sutherland asked if a problem had been the delay in the Council making a decision on this matter. The Clerk confirmed that this will have been a contributing factor, however, the Estates Working Group should now be in a better position to know where money would be best spent in the Parish Hall as a result of the work done over recent months.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.2 Snow Party Update Report by Community Development Officer**

Prior to the meeting a Snow Party Update Report by the Community Development Officer had been circulated to all for information. All Cllrs agreed this had been a very good event and endorsed this event being repeated in 2016 as a valuable function for the Town. Cllr Mark Cant commented that this had been a more successful event than the November 2015 Fireworks Display.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Snow Party to be repeated in 2016.**

**5.3 Orchard Progress 2016 Report by Community Development Officer**

Prior to the meeting a report by the Community Development Officer had been circulated detailing progress with the Community Orchard. The Clerk reported that the replacement trees are due to be delivered on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 and will be dug into and stored at the polytunnel at the Cemetery until the weather conditions are appropriate for them to be relocated to the Orchard. Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that rabbits continue to be an issue at Winterton Cemetery and requested that appropriate guards are installed to protect these new trees when planted in their final location. Cllr Alf Walton replied that 1.2metre guards will be used when these are replanted.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**

**5.4 Amateur Photography Competition Proposal Report by Cllr Chris Lines and Town Clerk**

Prior to the meeting a report by Cllr Chris Lines and the Town Clerk recommending

the Council runs an Amateur Photography Competition as a way of seeking images for the new Town Council website as well as for future publicity material was circulated to all. Cllrs agreed this was a good idea. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that images could be used to produce a Sedgefield calendar. Cllr Lines felt this was a good idea for future years but would need careful consideration to ensure there were no issues with copyright.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Cllr Chris Lines and the Town Clerk to prepare a more detailed proposal for the February 2016 Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting.**

**5.5 Citizen of the Year 2015 Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a report detailing the timetable for the selection of the Citizen of the Year 2015. The Clerk confirmed that since the production of this report a date and time had now been agreed for the Selection Panel as 9am on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Cllr Allan Blakemore suggested the Town Council makes more of this Award at the conclusion of the Town Council's Annual Meeting in May 2016 and agreed to forward his ideas to the Clerk.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Cllr Allan Blakemore to forward to the Clerk his ideas for the presentation of this Award.**

(Cllr David Brown joined the meeting at this point)

**6. Correspondence**

**6.1 Sedgefield 700+ (minutes of meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the minutes of the Sedgefield 700+ meeting which had taken place on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Cllr Allan Blakemore reported the next Sedgefield Day will be held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and arrangements for this event are now progressing well. Additional volunteers are being sought to help on the day so if any Cllr was able to help this would be much

appreciated.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Any Cllr willing to volunteer and participate in the 2016 Sedgefield Day to contact the Community Development Officer as quickly as possible.**

**6.2 Sedgefield 700+ (minutes of meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the minutes of the Sedgefield 700+ meeting which had taken place on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**

**6.3 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016:**

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter from Ms Gillian West, Senior Electoral Officer for DCC informing the Town Council that Sedgefield Parish Hall would be used as a Polling Station on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016 for the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioner Elections.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.4 Sedgefield Post Office – Decision to move to new premises and branch modernization (letter from Post Office dated 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016):**

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter received from Ms Suzanne Richardson, Regional Network Manager of the Post Office dated 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Within this letter Ms Richardson confirmed that the Post Office's proposal to move Sedgefield Post Office is now confirmed. The current branch at 5a Front Street, Sedgefield will close on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 at 17:30 and the new branch will open at The Corner Shop, 1 White House Drive, Sedgefield at 13:00 on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.5 Sedgefield 700+ (minutes of meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016)**

The Clerk circulated to all copies of the Sedgefield 700+ minutes relating to the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.6 Lambs Hill Inaugural Liaison Committee Meeting (letter from Banks Renewables dated 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016):**

The Clerk reported that a letter had been received from Mr Lewis Stokes, Community Relations Manager of Banks Renewables extending an invitation for the Town Council to participate at the Lambs Hill Inaugural Liaison Committee meeting on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 6pm at Stillington Youth and Community Centre. The purpose of the Committee would be to establish a forum through which information can be transferred to communities in the local area.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) Cllr Mark Cant, as Vice Chair of Environment Committee, to attend this meeting and represent the Town Council.**
- ii) The Clerk to inform Mr Stokes and this decision.**
- iii) The Clerk to forward to Cllr Cant copies of all relevant correspondence.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.05pm.

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY ENVIRONMENT** of the  
**Council** held following the Community Development and  
Engagement committee in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on  
**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**

- Present**                    **Cllr. Alf Walton (Chairman)**  
**Cllr. Mark Cant (Vice-Chairman) and**  
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mel Carr, Lynne Dentith, Tim Jeanes, Chris  
Lines, Ian Sutherland
- Officer**                    Dr. Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Dudley Waters and Gloria Wills.

**2. Declaration of interest**

None.

**3. Matters of Information**

**3.1 North End Grass Verge:**

Cllr Alf Walton is continuing to monitor this area. No further rat activity has been witnessed. Cllr Alf Walton to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.2 Sedgefield Cemetery:**

The Estates Working Group at their meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016 agreed to seek additional information from Ms Deborah Jobling of DCC to confirm whether the costs stipulated in her recent correspondence also included the areas of the Butterwick allotments and the triangular piece of land at the front of the lane and allotments.

The Estates Working Group will consider the information when received and bring a



further paper back to a future Environment Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.3 Public Participation:**

Ms Jane Young has investigated the ownership of lanes/paths opposite the Dunn Cow and reported to the recent Estates Working Group meeting that these areas are unregistered and not owned by anyone. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that in time it would be useful for the Town Council to have a map of the entire Town clearly showing which areas belonged to whom. It was agreed such a map would be useful. The Clerk suggested this be put into the remit of the Estates Working Group and when all information had been gathered a quote could be obtained from DCC GIS Mapping Services for the possible production of such a map. This was agreed as a good idea.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.4 Rat Boxes:**

Cllr Alf Walton is continuing to monitor this situation in the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. At the moment there has been no evidence of rat movement. Cllr Walton will continue to monitor and keep Cllrs updated.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.5 Grass Cutting Map:**

The grass cutting map has now been produced and printed by DCC. The Clerk has collected copies and these will be used in the future grass cutting tendering process.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.6 Tree Works At Butterwick Allotments and North End:**

Cllr Alf Walton reported that contractors have carried out this work on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and this included the free chipping of the trees in the recycling bays at

Sedgefield Cemetery. Cllr Walton also reported that when undertaking this chipping work the contractors had found wreaths placed in amongst the branches and these contained wires which then had to be removed prior to chipping in order not to damage equipment.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information and to close this matter.**
- ii) The Clerk to request Mr Roy Cairns monitors the recycling bays to ensure the correct materials are put into each.**

**3.7 Roundabouts:**

The Clerk has written to Mr Oliver Sherratt of DCC with regards to the state of the two larger roundabouts on the outskirts of the Town. A reply is yet to be received. Cllr Walton expressed his frustration at the length of time being taken for DCC to reply.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to chase this matter prior to the next Environment Committee meeting.**

**3.8 Dog Fouling On The Village Green:**

The Clerk has written to Mr Roger Clubley explaining DCC's findings.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**3.9 Budget for Ceddesfeld Grounds:**

The Community Development Officer has been unable to locate a copy of the agreement entered into the Town Council when grant funding was awarded for the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. The Clerk has contacted the SCA who have confirmed that they also do not have any such paperwork. The Clerk suggested the Finance Working Group to consider this matter and recommend a suitable budget for Ceddesfeld grounds and to take a proposal to a future P&R Committee meeting. Cllr Ian Sutherland suggested that the Town Council's accounts for post-5 years be looked at in order to determine the allocation previously given.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.10 Tractor Maintenance Report:**

Upon return to work the Gardening Supervisor will commence preparing a maintenance schedule for all other gardening equipment. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.11 A177 Junction:**

This situation continues to be monitored. Cllr Alf Walton reported that instances of near misses had been reported to both himself and County Cllr John Robinson as a result of vehicles overtaking in this area. It was agreed that Cllrs would continue to monitor this situation.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**4. Public Participation**

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

**5. Reports**

**5.1 Annual Headstone Safety Testing Report by Town Clerk and Gardening Supervisor:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Annual Headstone Safety Testing Report by the Town Clerk and Gardening Supervisor which detailed the findings from the 2015/16 inspections. The Clerk talked through the report and explained the findings. The Clerk also reported that all Category 1 headstones are now marked with red/white warning tape and appropriate signs are displayed in the noticeboard at Sedgefield Cemetery regarding both Category 1 and 2 headstones. Cllrs thanked the Gardening Supervisor and Clerk for such a comprehensive report.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive the information contained in this report.**
- ii) The Town Council to issue letters to next of kins the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**
- iii) The Town Council to ensure an appropriate article appears in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra.**

**5.2 Parish Hall Noise Complaints Verbal Update by Cllr Allan Blakemore**

Cllr Allan Blakemore reported that since the last Environment Committee meeting individual meetings have been held with representatives of the Blues Club and the New Generation Church in order to progress the recent complaints made in relation to amplified music (Blues Club) and drums noise (New Generation Church). Cllrs Blakemore and Wills had met with Mr Garry and Mrs Viv Jacobs of the Blues Club in order to make them aware of the nature of the complaints received and find out what the Group's needs are as well as the needs of the Town Council. The purpose of this work is to seek a resolution agreeable to all. The Blues Group have confirmed they do not want to use the Town Council's existing sound limiter as it is inadequate and there are improvements which can be made to this. Cllr Blakemore concluded that a new sound limiter is required which has the whole of the ring main going through it in order to be fit for purpose. A report will be brought back in due course from the work being done on this by the Estates Working Group.

Cllr Blakemore also reported that he had been unable to attend the meeting with the New Generation Church, however, the Clerk confirmed this had been a successful meeting and a separate electronic update would be issued to Cllrs with further details. During this meeting it had been confirmed that no sound absorbing mats are used underneath the drums.

Cllr Blakemore concluded that noise issues are being progressed along with several other Parish Hall related matters through the Estates Working Group. Cllr Lynne Dentith asked if the Council was keeping in touch with the complainant. Cllr Blakemore and the Clerk confirmed that this is the case.

Cllr Mark Cant asked if there was a case for those Parish Hall users who use specialist facilities to be charged at a different rental rate for the Hall. The Clerk confirmed that this matter has already been discussed within the Estates Working

Group and that a proposal for new rental charges, including a different rate for access to specialist facilities, was being presented at the next Finance Working Group meeting with the aim of bringing a proposed fees and charges report to the February 2016 P&R Committee meeting for approval.

Cllr Tim Jeanes reminded Cllrs that he had been involved in the Parish Hall was refurbished several years ago albeit not in the installation of the sound and lighting system. A company called FloorScan had provided a specification for the installation of a sound proofing system which focused primarily on the wall between the Hall and the adjoining property, however, the full specification had not been fully implemented as the owners of the adjoining property had not wished for this work to be undertaken. Cllr Ian Sutherland asked if the Council has evidence of this being the case? The Clerk confirmed this would require investigation. Cllr Jeanes also said Mr Garry Jacobs has indicated that the Blues Group would be willing to supply sound mats for underneath the drums and to financially contribute towards a new sound limiter. Cllr Blakemore confirmed this offer had been made during their recent meeting. Cllr Blakemore also commented that stiffening the stage would alleviate this issue as it is currently hollow, however, the issue is what is within the Town Council's budget as being achievable and not achievable and some work will have to be identified as immediate, medium-term and long-term. Cllr Alf Walton suggested that if quotations were received for a new fit for purpose sound limiter and matting then it could be that no further work is required. The Clerk confirmed that a specialist sound expert has been identified who would be willing to attend the Parish Hall and give an independent assessment of the current system and what is needed for the Hall based upon how it is used. Cllr Chris Lines said what is important is to have something that is not open to abuse.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Estates Working Group continue to progress this matter as part of its priority work in relation to the Parish Hall.**

### **5.3 Eden Drive Playground Safety Reports: Report by Town Clerk**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a covering report relating to Eden Drive Playground which was accompanied by the safety report produced by DCC for the period 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 – 24<sup>th</sup> December 2015. Cllrs Alf Walton and Mel Carr

queried the Fixed Post that had required attention during this period (the Clerk pointed out that this had now been repaired) and asked if a permanent solution could be put in place to stop the future need for repair, e.g. a self-tapper on the deep water sign. The Clerk agreed to liaise with Barry Anderson of DCC regarding this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to liaise with Mr Barry Alderson of DCC and keep Cllrs updated on this matter.**

**6. Correspondence**

**6.1 Sedgefield In Bloom Group (minutes of meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the Sedgefield In Bloom Group minutes of their meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.2 Letters of support for Sedgefield Blues Club (various letters (17 in total) collated as a pack)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all Cllrs 17 letters received at the Town Council Offices supporting the Sedgefield Blues Club. Cllr Chris Lines commented that from the tone of the letters there appeared to have been a misunderstanding of an intention to close the Blues Club down when this has never been the case. Indeed, Cllr Lines was aware of a post which had been put on Facebook prior to Christmas stating "they are trying to close us down", a post which he now understood had been taken down by the page's organizer. Cllr Lines recommended the Town Council issues a reply to all these letters clearly stating the Town Council is not trying to close the Blues Club down but to instead explain that work which is being undertaken in relation to the Parish Hall and why. Cllrs Lynne Dentith and Ian Sutherland agreed with this recommendation and also suggested a copy of such a letter is sent to Mr Garry Jacobs of the Blues Club as well as Mr and Mrs Cook.

Cllr Tim Jeanes asked if decibel readings have been formally taken. Cllr Allan Blakemore replied that no such readings have been taken from the complaint,

however, the Town Council must pay cognisance to the fact that our equipment is not being used. It is vital the Town Council does all it can to be sure that our sound equipment is used and we need to take action to do this and make the Hall fit for purpose.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to ensure appropriate letters are issued.**
- iii) The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.**

**6.3 Memorial Benches (email from Mr A Thompson dated 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Thompson dated 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015 in which he accepted the Town Council's offer of having the opportunity to refurbish a memorial bench when one became available in the Town. The Clerk reported that the Gardening Supervisor has now identified where all memorial benches are located in the Town and mapped these along with a reference to their current status. The Clerk recommended that upon the Gardening Supervisors return to work the requests for memorial benches for Mr Quinn and now Mr Thompson be considered and actioned.

Cllr Tim Jeanes reminded Cllrs that one of the memorial benches within the Town was donated from the Mayor of Hamminkeln to commemorate the visit of Princess Anne of the Town. Cllr Jeanes has now twice repainted this bench. He is aware that a number of other benches across the Town are in a state of neglect and he asked who has responsibility for these. Cllrs responded that such benches then become the responsibility of the Town Council and for this reason no new benches are allowed, only the opportunity for existing benches to be refurbished. Cllr David Brown expressed his concerns regarding the on-going maintenance implications and also agreed that several are in need of maintenance. Cllr Brown suggested that in such instances anyone wishing to now have a memorial bench be required to not only refurbish the bench but to reinstate the original memorial plaque next to their own new memorial plaque. Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that previously the Council's Handyman had painted several of these benches with wood preservative but as the Council no longer has such a person the Council needs to consider how it maintains its street furniture. The Clerk recommended this matter be considered by the Estates Working Group. Cllr Alf Walton supported this recommendation and recommended that in

future it would be preferable to have benches taken to the poly tunnel to dry out and be refurbished by the garden staff.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk and Gardening Supervisor to consider the requests for memorial benches from Mr Quinn and Mr Thompson by reviewing the current mapping information.**
- iii) The Estates Working Group to consider the on-going maintenance issues of memorial benches.**

**6.4 Grass Cutting Along 28-36 North End, Sedgefield (email from Ms S Wright dated 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Sandra Wright who had made a complaint regarding the state of the village green along 28-36 North End, Sedgefield as a result of vehicles driving onto the grass. Ms Wright had provided photographs of the damage made and these were circulated amongst Cllrs for information along with further photographs sent from Ms Wright on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that approximately 5/6 years ago he had spoken directly to the offender in that area had been responsible for causing damage and request that they stop driving over the green. In addition, Cllr Sutherland confirmed the Town Council had issued letters to nearby residents reiterating this request. Cllr David Brown commented that this was not the only piece of Village Green which was being driven over and it was important the Town Council treat all areas equally. The Clerk suggested that in the first instance a courtesy article appear in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra reminding all not to drive over, or park on, any area of Village Green. Cllrs agreed this would be a good starting point and that this matter should continue to be monitor and Ms Wright should be thanked for bringing this matter to the Council's attention.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to ensure that an appropriate article is placed in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra courteously requesting that no vehicles are driven on, or parked on, the Village Greens.**
- iii) The Town Council to monitor this situation.**
- iv) The Clerk to write to Mrs Wright thanking her for bringing this matter to**



**the Council's attention and making her aware of the actions being taken as a result.**

**6.5 Footpath Outside The Hope Inn (letter from Ms E Smith received 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015)**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter received from Ms E Smith on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 making the Town Council aware of her recent fall on the footpath outside The Hope Inn. Cllr Alf Walton felt that the uneven surface of this particular footpath was due to vehicular traffic travelling over it and that the best way to resolve this matter would be to tarmac this area with a financial contribution being sought from those who also used it as a right of way. Cllr Ian Sutherland commented that this would perhaps be problematic as this area falls within the Town's Conservation Area. Cllr Mel Carr pointed out that from Ms Smith's letter the exact location of her fall is not clearly stated in the letter. Cllr David Brown pointed out that planning permission to refurbish The Hope Inn has now been granted and urged the Town Council find out what Mr Adamson's plans are for starting this work so as to ensure that no repair work is undertaken which then needs to be redone. The Clerk informed Cllrs that prior to Mr Stuart Best's retirement from DCC he had suggested contact be made with Mr Alan Ramsey, Highway Design Senior Engineer for DCC in order to arrange a site meeting to determine the type and scope of work possible. In the event of work requiring any design input then a design fee would be required but if the works were relatively simple then Mr Ramsey may be able to provide an estimate only which would not require a fee. Cllr Mel Carr reminded Cllrs that he is currently working with the Community Development Officer to progress a possible funding application to Lafarge for refurbishment of a range of footpaths in the Town and it is possible to include this area Cllr Carr will speed up this work and keeps Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to write to Mr John Adamson to ask if he has a timetable for the refurbishment of The Hope Inn.**
- iii) The Clerk to arrange an on-site meeting with Mr Alan Ramsey of DCC.**
- iv) Cllr Mel Carr and the Community Development Officer to progress as a matter of urgency their application to Lafarge.**
- v) The Clerk to write to Ms Smith.**

## **7. Tenders**

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that at the Monthly Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 Cllrs had agreed to two additional items being considered at the close of the Environment Committee meeting agenda.

**ADDITIONAL ITEM 1: Amended Planning Application 7/2011/0293/DM – installation of two 500kw wind turbines, with ancillary development including access tracks and crane pads, land South of Harap Road, Garmondsway, Fishburn:**

**RESOLVED:**

**Cllrs did not have any further comments to make on this application.**

**ADDITIONAL ITEM 2: Land on old Durham Road, Sedgefield:**

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that at the Monthly Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 she had circulated to all copies of an email from Ms Susan Porter of DCC in relation to land on old Durham Road, Sedgefield. The questions being posed had originally been sent to the Town Council by Mr Ean Parsons. Cllrs agreed that Ms Porter's response covered the questions asked by Mr Parsons.

Cllr David Brown said that over recent meetings when matters have been discussed in relation to planning applications comments have been made as to the importance of the views in Sedgefield particularly those in relation to the Church. Cllr Brown suggested that now (i.e. when there are no leaves on the trees) is an opportune time to take photographs and build up a portfolio. Cllrs agreed this is something which may perhaps be captured in the forthcoming amateur photography competition.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to write to Mr Parsons enclosing a copy of Ms Porter's email.**

**ADDITIONAL ITEM 3 – Draft New Town Council Website:**

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the deadline for comments on the new draft Town Council website is the close of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016. She thanked those Cllrs who had already commented and said that if comments were not received this project would move forward on the basis that Cllrs were happy with

the suggestion being presented. Cllr Allan Blakemore confirmed he was happy with the site.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.13pm.