

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at **7 p.m.** in the **Council Offices**, Advice & Information Centre, Sedgefield, on **Monday 13th July, 2015.**



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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllr Chris Lines; Sgt Alex Clarke.

2. Declaration of interest

None.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports

a. Minutes of the Estates Working Group held Thursday 28th May 2015

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

b. Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 8th June 2015

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

c. Minutes of the P&R committee held Monday 8th June 2015

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

d. Minutes of the Community Development & Engagement committee meeting held Monday 15th June 2015

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

e. Minutes of the Environment committee meeting held Monday 15th June 2015

These were confirmed as a correct record. (AW / IS)

f. Minutes of the Joint Town Council and Sedgefield in Bloom Meeting held Monday 29th June 2015

These were confirmed as a correct record. (IS / AW)

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

(Cllr John Robinson joined the meeting at this point)

4. Matters of Information

4.1 Spring Lane Formal Complaint:

This will be covered under agenda item 9.1.

The Clerk has written to DCC requesting enforcement action be undertaken and the caravan removed from the site (copies of this letter were sent to County Cllrs John Robinson and Rachel Lumsdon).

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter..

4.2 Sedgefield Plan Update:

This will be covered under agenda item 10.

The meeting with Mr Stuart Timmiss, Mr Stuart Carter and Mr Gavin Scott took place at 9am on Thursday 2nd July 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.3 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. As requested at the last Monthly Meeting a new Planning Applications template has been developed and as from the July Committee packs will include a cover sheet clearly detailing the day by which the Town Council must have comments back to DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.4 Public Participation:

The briefing note by Mrs Julia Bowles had been circulated to all Cllrs for their information. Mrs Bowles had asked if the Town Council knew of the location of the proposed two day electronic concert. The Clerk has contacted the Police who have confirmed the organizer of the event (at that time) did not want the location to be disclosed. The Police have given their comments on this event and DCC's Safety Advisory Group have been informed.

The problems with the Parish Hall lighting and sound equipment highlighted by Mrs Norma Neal have been temporarily fixed so that the Players and Lyrics Groups could go ahead with their productions. The Estates Working Group had met with Mr Chris Blakeborough on 1st July 2015 to consider longer-term recommendations. A further Estates Group meeting is due to be held on 15th July 2015. A report will be brought back to a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.5 Hartlepool Rural Neighbourhood Plan Consultation:

The Clerk has written to Mr Walker expressing the Council's support for this plan.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.6 Sedgfield Plan:

Cllr Allan Blakemore had circulated to all Cllrs leaflets for the Sedgfield Plan public meetings held on 29th and 30th June 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.7 Current Planning Applications:

All comments have been submitted to DCC Planners.

The Clerk had informed Ms Hilary Sperring of concerns regarding the windows at the front of 50 Front Street as well as the sign and advertising boards within. Ms Sperring has confirmed that these issues will be considered separately to the current planning application (which relates to the proposed rear extensions). She has been in contact with the occupiers of the building raising these issues and awaits further information and detail. Ms Sperring will update the Town Council in due course.

The Clerk had also informed Ms Sperring of concerns regarding 11 East End, Sedgefield whereby garage doors have been removed and replaced with windows. Ms Sperring has confirmed this matter is under investigation and will provide the Town Council with an update in due course.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5. Dates of Meetings

Dates for meetings taking place in July 2015 had been circulated prior to the meeting along with events scheduled for June – October 2015. The Clerk reported that since the Committee packs had been distributed the following additional meetings had also been scheduled:

- Wednesday 15th July 2015 commencing at 8.30am an Estates Working Group meeting to solely develop a work plan for progressing Parish Hall issues in 2015/16;
- Thursday 16th July 2015 commencing at 11.00am a Personnel Committee meeting to consider reports presented by the Clerk on Monday 6th July 2015;
- Monday 27th July 2015 commencing at 9.00am an Estates Working Group meeting to solely consider the precise from the Station Road Evidence File and agree a way forward.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Police Report

In the absence of Sgt Clarke, the Town Clerk read out a Police Report for the period 8th June 2015 – 9th July 2015 during which time sixteen crimes had been recorded as follows:

Burglary (other):

- Between 22:00 on 24th June 2015 and 07.30am on 25th June 2015 unknown

person(s) have approached secured and unattended stand-alone garage and instrumented an attempt to force open the lock on the garage door. They failed to gain entry so instead entered the garden and approached a side wooden door of the same garage and again attempted to access. They failed to gain entry.

- At 01.55 on 7th July 2015 unknown person(s) have entered a rear garden and forced locks from two sheds and removed a petrol lawnmower, strimmer and two pedal cycles. A CCTV camera had been moved prior to this offence taking place.

Criminal Damage:

- Three incidents of criminal damage have been reported:
- One incident occurred at the Black Lion Public House on 6th June 2015 when a male damaged a digital duke box screen. The male has fully admitted the offence and been dealt with by a restorative approach.
- The second incident involved damage to a fence and gate near to Bradbury Village on 22nd June 2015.
- The third incident occurred on 26th June 2015 where damage was caused to a gate by unknown means.

Violent Crime:

- On 6th June 2015 one drunk male stopped by the Neighbourhood Team was found in a possession of a bladed article and was duly arrested and charged.
- On 14th June 2015 an attempted robbery Bradbury Services took place where two persons with a firearm approached the cashier and demanded money. They were disturbed by a lorry pulling up and the robbers made off empty handed. Two males have been arrested in relation to this offence and are currently on bail.
- On 19th June 2015 a report of harassment/stalking was made by a female. The suspect was an ex-partner who has been arrested and is currently on conditional bail.

Theft:

- Between 23:00 on 12th June 2015 and 01:00 on 13th June 2015 a handbag was left in the rear of a taxi and then taken by the next passenger.
- Between 08:00 on 18th June 2015 and 15:33 on 18th June 2015 an unknown person approached a field and lifted the unlocked lid of a 3ft underground chamber and removed a signal generator from within.
- Between 08:00 on 12th June 2015 and 09:00 on 29th June 2015 two ex-offenders legitimately collecting charity bags have without authority collected Marie Curie charity bags and loaded them into a vehicle with the intention of making a monetary

gain. A contractor who was working for Marie Curie had witnessed this and recovered the stolen bags from inside the offenders van. The offenders drove off from the scene and enquiries are on-going.

- Between 00:30 on 5th July 2015 and 12:30 on 5th July 2015 an unknown person has removed a plant pot from the front of a restaurant (Note: the report did not give the location for this incident).

Crime in Sedgefield is down 11% on the same time as last year with a 41% detection rate for the year to date.

Instances of anti-social behavior in Sedgefield are down 17% based on the same period last year.

The next PACT meeting is due to take place on 13th October 2015. There are currently no PACT priorities set.

This ended the Police Report.

Cllr Alf Walton commented that each month it appears that crime figures are falling when considering these in % terms.

Cllr Gloria Wills commented that the detection rate seemed low in comparison and it was agreed that the Clerk should ask Sgt Clarke how the detection rate is calculated.

Cllr Maxine Robinson felt that when comparing the types of crime there appears to be a trend of more calculated thefts rather than opportunistic thefts and gave the example of the generator from the underground chamber. Cllrs David Brown and Mel Carr agreed with this comment and stated that very recently there had been reports from Spring Lane that machinery/equipment appeared to have been 'lined up' as if ready for being stolen, however, these activities had been disturbed and nothing taken on this occasion.

Cllr Ian Sutherland expressed his concern that violent crime appeared to be increasing.

RESOLVED:

- To receive this information.**
- The Clerk to ask Sgt Clarke how Durham Constabulary calculate their detection rate.**

7. Public Participation

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

Mrs Julia Bowles thanked the Council for its recent letter regarding correspondence arrangements with Town Councillors. Mrs Bowles informed Council that the location of the electronic concert is now known to be on a farm in Fishburn where tickets are said to be limited to 500. Mrs Bowles informed the Town Council that a Sedgefield Action Group has been formed with the purpose of alerting the community to planning application within the Town and rallying people to put in objections where appropriate. The Group will be sending out a generic letter asking for any planning applications to be considered in-light of the emerging Sedgefield Plan. Mrs Bowles stated DCC's Planning Committee will meet on 21st July 2015 in order to consider the two large scale developments for the Eden Drive area of the Town. She had noted from the DCC planning website the deadline date for neighbor consultations on these two applications was not until 27th July 2015, i.e. 6 days after the date of the Planning Committee meeting. Mrs Bowles had contacted DCC Planning Officer Mr Henry Jones to make him aware of her concerns regarding this matter. Finally, Mrs Bowles suggested that as there are no Neighbourhood Watch or PACT meetings until October 2015 the Town Council, if it becomes aware of any issues over the Summer, could suggest some PACT priorities for the next meeting.

Mrs Janet Spalding asked if the Town Council would be represented at the forthcoming DCC Planning Committee meeting on 21st July 2015. Cllr Mel Carr informed Mrs Spalding that this matter will be discussed under correspondence as information had been received from DCC regarding this matter.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked the public for their comments. The meeting was then re-opened.

8. Internal Reports

8.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, reported that over the past month he had undertaken the following:

June 2015:

- Met with the Town Clerk on Thursday 18th June 2015 to discuss general matters;
- Attended the Sedgefield Plan Public Meetings held on Monday 29th June 2015

and Tuesday 30th June 2015 in the Parish Hall.

July 2015:

- Chaired the Estates Working Group meeting on Wednesday 1st July 2015;
- Chaired the joint Town Council and DCC meeting to consider the Sedgefield Plan held on Thursday 2nd July 2015;
- Following a report from Cllr Waters, had attended the Parish Hall at 8.30am on Saturday 4th July 2015 to make safe and assist clearing up water damage at the Parish Hall's emergency exit to Front Street;
- Met with the Town Clerk on Wednesday 8th July 2015 to discuss general matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.2 Mayor's Report

Details were circulated of the following events recently attended by the Mayor:

June 2015:

11 th	Tub Planting on the Village Green, Sedgefield which was very well attended by children from both schools, Brownies, Guides and the local nursery.
20 th	Sedgefield Day and presented prizes of book tokens which were sponsored by the Sedgefield Rotary Club
27 th	Sedgefield Community Hospital Garden Party

July 2015:

9 th	Great Aycliffe Town Council's Mayor "At Home" event.
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RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9. Correspondence

9.1 Spring Lane, Sedgefield (letter from Ms Mary Kinver dated 17th June 2015 and email from Mrs Karen Knowles dated 19th May 2015)

Prior to the meeting copies of an email from Mrs Karen Knowles dated 19th May 2015 and a letter from Ms Mary Kinver of DCC dated 17th June 2015 had been circulated to

all. This correspondence firstly acknowledged the Town Council's request to progress its formal complaint in relation to Spring Lane from a Stage 1 to a Stage 2 and then in the letter of 17th June 2015 to acknowledge the investigation into the Stage 2 complaint was taking longer than anticipated. The Clerk informed Cllrs that on 10th July 2015 a letter dated 7th July 2015 had subsequently been received from Ms Mary Kinver of DCC informing the Town Council that she has considered the complaint regarding Spring Lane and discussed the situation with the South West Planning Team Leader. She stated it was apparent that this is an on-going enforcement case that has still to be resolved. Ms Susan Porter is continuing to keep the Town Council updated as far as possible with regard to developments on the site. Ms Kinver stated that given these circumstances and as negotiations are still on-going with the owners of the site to resolve the identified issues, DCC Corporate Complaints feel that they are unable to undertake a meaningful investigation at this time. Once the case has concluded, and should the Town Council wish to pursue the complaint, then they will assess the matter again.

Cllr Alf Walton expressed his annoyance as to why DCC are even negotiating this matter when enforcement action should instead be taken. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that as well as requesting the handling of this particular case be elevated to a Stage 2 Formal Complaint that a separate letter had been sent to Ms Susan Porter requesting that immediate enforcement action is undertaken at Spring Lane. As yet no response has been received.

Cllr Maxine Robinson suggested that County Cllrs Robinson and Lumsdon be made aware of this situation and asked to get involved. The Clerk confirmed that the letter sent to Ms Porter had been cc'd to both County Cllrs for their information. Cllrs felt any additional support or progression in this matter which could be done by the County Councillors would be much appreciated.

Cllr David Brown expressed his frustration that this matter pertaining to Spring Lane had been on-going for several years now. There are very clear planning laws which apply across the whole country to which everyone should adhere and which should be applied consistently to all. He felt this was a prime example of an individual being allowed to disregard the system by a local authority is trying to impose how the Town Council should write its own Neighbourhood Plan. He felt such disregard for the planning law sent out the wrong message to other residents. Cllr Alf Walton expressed his support to Cllr Brown's comments.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to provide County Councillors Robinson and Lumsdon with the history and current position in relation to this matter for them to then discuss with DCC.**

9.2 Sedgefield Action Group (letter from Mr Tony Guest received 13th July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter received on 13th July 2015 from Mr Tony Guest on behalf of the newly formed Sedgefield Action Group. In this letter Mr Guest requests funding assistance from the Town Council. Cllr Gloria Wills expressed the view that any Action Group must be entirely separate from the Sedgefield Plan Steering Group to ensure there is no conflict of interest or compromise to any subsequent inspection and examination process. Cllr Maxine Robinson also stated that it is essential the Town Council ensures that it complies with the legislative framework. Cllr Dudley Waters proposed that the Environment Committee be given delegated powers to make a decision regarding Mr Guest's request at its meeting on 20th July 2015. This was seconded by Cllr Ian Sutherland and agreed by all Cllrs.

RESOLVED:

- i) All Cllrs to consider Mr Guest's letter and for this matter to be discussed at the Council's Environment Committee meeting on 20th July 2015.**
- ii) The Clerk to seek advice from CDALC and DCC regarding any potential conflict between supporting this request and jeopardizing the progression of the Sedgefield Plan.**

9.3. Land to the North of the A689 and A177 Roundabout and West of Stockton Road, Sedgefield (letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss received 13th July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter received from Mr Stuart Timmiss on 13th July 2015 informing the Council that the proposed outline planning application for 230 dwellings on the above land would be considered by DCC's County Planning Committee on 21st July 2015 at 1pm in the Council Chamber of County Hall, Durham. The Clerk explained that she had, just prior to the meeting, emailed to all Cllrs a copy of this letter and accompanying instructions on how to access the meeting's agenda and related planning report which can be accessed via the hyperlinks in the email. There

is an opportunity to address the Planning Committee and if the Town Council wishes to do so then this request must be registered by no later than 12 noon on Monday 20th July 2015.

9.4. Land to the South of Eden Drive, Sedgefield (letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss received 13th July 2015):

In the same vein as 9.3 the Clerk also circulated to all copies of a letter received from Mr Stuart Timmiss on 13th July 2015 informing the Council that the planning application for 85 dwellings on the above land would also be considered at the same County Planning Committee on 21st July 2015. Again, the Clerk had circulated this information electronically and the Council had the opportunity to be represented.

Cllrs then considered agenda items 9.3 and 9.4 collectively.

Cllr Mark Cant suggested that due to the conflict of dates, as raised by Mrs Bowles in public participation, between the date of the Planning Committee meeting and the end of the neighbours consultation that a request be made for the Planning Committee to be deferred. Cllr Gloria Wills commented that planning applications have to follow due process and there are statutory time limits for formal consultations and it is possible that the date of 27th July 2015 is perhaps not a statutory date.

Cllr Maxine Robinson reported that Cllr John Robinson will be attending and speaking at the Planning Committee in his role as County Cllr and will be liaising with County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon accordingly.

Cllr Mel Carr volunteered to represent the Council at the County Planning Committee and to re-iterate the Council's earlier submitted views. Cllrs thanked Cllr Carr for this and agreed that he should represent the Council. It was agreed that one of the key points to be expressed during this representation was that the proposed main road through the development would result in heavy traffic coming through the centre of the Town which defeated the purpose of the bypass and the financial investment made in it.

Cllr Gloria Wills expressed annoyance that DCC have recently submitted to its Cabinet a paper which suggests that if a sustainable site is put before Planning Committee it should automatically be approved which is extremely worrying. This is especially

worrying when neither of the two planning applications for consideration should be regarded as being developments capable of standing alone.

Cllr Maxine Robinson gave an example of a planning application in the North of Durham which had been turned down by DCC based on the Inspector's Interim Findings view that too many houses were being proposed.

Cllr Ian Sutherland felt that DCC have already made their decision regarding these applications. He suggested that the Town Council make a representation to Mr Harold Stephens or the Secretary of State making them aware that DCC are trying to make decisions ahead of the Sedgefield Plan and to impose their views on us rather than listening to the will of the people.

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

Cllr John Robinson stated that the DCC Planning Committee members will be having a site visit on Monday 20th July 2015 prior to a decision being made on 21st July 2015. Cllr John Robinson elaborated on the point made earlier by Cllr Maxine Robinson that a Planning Committee had turned down a large planning application in Lanchester because of the Inspector's Interim Findings comments and Cllr Robinson will be using a similar argument when he speaks at the Planning Committee on 21st July 2015. Cllr John Robinson said that he would liaise with DCC Planning Officers regarding the dates issue highlighted by Mrs Julia Bowles.

Cllr Tim Jeanes expressed his view that DCC Officers appear to be focused on getting their Local Plan through and suggested that the Town Council may wish to make a legal challenge. Cllr Gloria Wills stated that the only way to get such a Committee meeting stopped would be via an injunction, however, there is only one week to go and it would be extremely difficult to obtain access to the necessary people in such a short time frame, i.e. Secretary of State, Planning Inspectorate etc. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that Mr James Wharton MP for Stockton with ministerial responsibility for Local Growth could be a potential contact. Cllrs expressed their concerns that this MP may wish for even more growth in our area. Cllr Dudley Waters expressed the view that seeking an injunction at this stage was unrealistic both in terms of time and money. Instead it was agreed that the Town Council should write to Mr James Wharton MP and Mr Gregg Clarke MP with a copy to Mr Phil Wilson MP stating the Town Council's concerns regarding the current situation relating to planning

determination within Sedgefield. Cllr Alf Walton said the current situation entirely contradicts the Localism Act in his opinion.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Cllr Mel Carr to represent the Town Council on both of these applications at the County Planning Committee meeting on 21st July 2015.**
- iii) The Clerk to register Cllr Carr's attendance and wish to speak at the Committee meeting.**
- iv) The Clerk to write, in conjunction with the Chair, to MPs Wharton, Gregg and Wilson.**

10. Sedgefield Plan

10.1 Sedgefield Plan Progress Report by Steering Group

Prior to the meeting copies of a Sedgefield Plan Progress Report produced by the Steering Group dated 3rd July 2015 had been circulated to all for information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

10.2 Sedgefield Plan Meeting with Durham County Council – Thursday 2nd July 2015

The Clerk circulated to all copies of notes which had been produced from the recent meeting held between Sedgefield Town Council, members of the Steering Group and Officers from DCC to consider how to progress the Sedgefield Plan. The Clerk reported that as a result of this meeting a further meeting had been scheduled between DCC Officers, members of the Steering Group and Cllr Allan Blakemore to take place at 12.30pm on Tuesday 14th July 2015 at Green Lane, Spennymoor. The purpose of this meeting is to determine the way forward for the Plan and to show DCC the evidence which underpins the Plan.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to share copies of these notes with Mr David Bowles, Mr Mort Spalding, Mr Stuart Timmiss, Mr Stuart Carter and Mr Gavin Scott.**

11. **Current Planning Applications**

A schedule of the current planning applications had been circulated prior to the meeting. Each application was then considered and the following comments were made (Note: number refers to the number on the circulated list):

1. **DM/15/01718/FPA – Erection of single storey extension, 4 Conifer Avenue, Sedgefield:**
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

2. **DM/15/01774/RM – Reserved matters approval for the erection of 1 no detached dwelling as approved under outline ref: DM/15/00372/OUT, Land at Low Farm, Bradbury:**
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application which is outside the Town Council's area.

3. **DM/15/01782/AD – Display of 1 no temporary hoarding, Land to the South East of Thomas Wright Way, Sedgefield:**
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

4. **DM/15/01958/HPN – Prior notification for the erection of a single storey rear extension measuring 4 metres in length and 2.8 metres in height (including central roof lantern overall height 3.5 metres), 5 Conifer Avenue, Sedgefield:**
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

5. **DM/15/02037/FPA – Erection of replacement conservatory, 5 West End, Sedgefield:**
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application providing the requirements of the Conservation Area are met. In addition, Cllrs request that as the conservatory is at the rear of this property that all associated works are also undertaken from the rear in order to protect the village greens at the front of the property.

RESOLVED:

- i) **The comments on planning applications 1-5 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.**
- ii) **The Clerk to circulate to all Cllrs in early August the planning applications received from now until early August so that Cllrs can consider and if necessary call a Special Town Council meeting.**

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

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY POLICY & RESOURCES** of the **Council** held following the Monthly meeting in the **Council Offices**, Advice & Information Centre, Sedgefield, on **Monday 13th July 2015**.

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Chris Lines.

2. Declaration of interest

None.

3. Matters of Information

3.1 Recycling Policy:

No further action has been undertaken with regard to this Policy. This will be progressed by Cllr Allan Blakemore and the Clerk when time allows.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.2 Registered STC Land:

Work is on-going in this area to draft a report for consideration by the Estates Working Group.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 PRS:

This matter will be considered as part of the Estates Working Group's Parish Hall project for 2015/16 and a report will be brought back to a future P&R Committee with an appropriate recommendation.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.4 Potential Land For STC To Register:

Work is on-going in this area to draft a report for consideration by the Estates Working Group.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 Public Participation:

Mr and Mrs Scott have now supplied their comprehensive evidence file on behalf of the Station Road/Ivy Row Residents Alliance. This file and its contents are currently being considered by the Estates Working Group with copies of the file's precise having been circulated to all members for consideration at a special Estates Working Group meeting on 27th July 2015. The Estates Working group to consider and prepare a report for a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6. Station Road Playing Field:

A response is yet to be received from DCC following STC's letter informing them of the Town Council's wishes to hand the lease for Station Road Playing Field back to DCC. The Clerk to keep Cllrs update.

RESOVLED:

To receive this information.

3.7. Woodland, Old Durham Road:

A response is still awaited from DCC in response to the Clerk forwarding Mr Ean Parson's concerns in relation to this area. Investigations are on-going to locate a

copy of the 5 year Management Plan for this locality. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.8. Final Phase of St Edmund's Church Wall Refurbishment Report:

Mr Kearton is to undertake this work at the end of August/beginning of September 2015. The Bloom Group have been informed. The Clerk to update Cllrs when this work has been completed.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.9. Community Right To Bid:

The Clerk is putting the finishing touches to the necessary paperwork to begin the registration of the Methodist Church building. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.10. Ceddesfeld Hall Lease:

The Clerk and Cllrs Carr and Wills are due to meet again with Dr Wendy Gill and Mr Phil Broomhead of the SCA on 14th July 2015 to consider issues in the lease requiring resolution. Sedgefield Arts Recreation and Community Association have now become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Registered Charity Number 1161621. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.11. Recording Meetings:

Audio recording of meetings commenced with effect from the start of the Monthly Meeting held earlier on 13th July 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.12. Epitaph Training:

Training for the Clerk and the Gardening Supervisor is to be scheduled for a time when outdoor work quietens down. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.13. Letter From Mrs Julia Bowles:

The Town Clerk and Cllr Mel Carr have now written to Mrs Julia Bowles on behalf of the Town Council explaining the Council's procedures with regards to correspondence.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.14. Lighting and Sound Concerns – Parish Hall:

The Estates Working Group met with Mr Chris Blakeborough on 1st July 2015 to consider these matters. The Estates Working Group will be including this matter, and others, in its Parish Hall Work Plan for 2015/16 which will be presented to a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.15. Parish Hall Heating and Plumbing System:

Similar to 3.14 above, this matter will also be included on the Estates Working Group's Parish Hall Work Plan 2015/16 which will be presented to a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4. Appointment of Vice Chair of Personnel Committee

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that as a result of the Chair of the Council also being the Vice Chair of the P&R Committee he could not also take on the (potentially) conflicting role of Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee. It was now necessary to appoint a Vice Chair as well as seek to appoint another Cllr to join the Personnel Committee. Cllr Allan Blakemore was proposed by Cllr Ian Sutherland and seconded by Cllr Gloria Wills. In addition, Cllrs Alf Walton and Maxine Robinson volunteered to join the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

- i) Cllr Allan Blakemore to be Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee with immediate effect.**
- ii) Cllrs Alf Walton and Maxine Robinson to join the Personnel Committee.**

5. Public Participation

The Chairman, Cllr Gloria Wills, closed the meeting for the public to give views and comments. There were no members of the public. The meeting was then re-opened.

6. Reports

6.1 Internal Auditors Report 2014/15 and Way Forward by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting copies of an Internal Auditors Report 2014/15 and Way Forward Report by the Town Clerk had been circulated to all for consideration. Attached to this report had been a copy of the full report produced by the Council's Internal Auditor Mr Gordon Fletcher for information. The Clerk explained that the Finance Working Group are due to meet with Mr Fletcher on Thursday 16th July 2015 in order to progress this Report and to determine a Work Plan for the Group for the remainder of 2015/16. Cllr Gloria Wills praised the quality of Mr Fletcher's Internal Auditors Report and all Cllrs agreed it was a very valuable document in helping to determine work for the coming months.

Cllr John Robinson requested that during this work consideration be given to reviewing the number of accounts held by the Town Council. The Clerk confirmed that this matter has already been identified along with the need to consider the rate of return the Council is receiving currently on each account. This will be work progressed through the Finance Working Group with reports coming back to future P&R Committee meetings.

Cllrs Tim Jeanes proposed thanks to the Clerk and Mrs Julia Rowsby for all their work in the build up to, during and after the internal audit. All Cllrs echoed these comments.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.2 Creation of Mayor's Charity Account Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting copies of a "Creation of Mayor's Charity Account" Report by the Town Clerk had been circulated to all. During initial discussions with the Council's recently appointed Internal Auditor, Mr Gordon Fletcher, it was confirmed that any money raised or spent by the Mayor should be held in a Charity Account with its own Registered Charity Number.

Cllr David Brown asked if this meant that Trustees would need to be identified and annual returns made to the Charity Commission. Cllr Gloria Wills confirmed that this would be the case.

RESOLVED:

The Finance Working Group to be tasked to ensure a Mayor's Charity is set up correctly and to bring progress reports back to subsequent P&R Committee meetings for information.

6.3 Membership of Personnel Committee – Amendment to Council's Delegation Scheme Report by Town Clerk

As previously discussed in item 4, the Clerk had prior to the meeting circulated to all a report entitled "Membership of Personnel Committee – Amendment to Council's Delegation Scheme". This report contained proposed amended wording to Section 3.2 of the Council's Delegation Scheme to ensure there is a protocol in place for any future instances whereby the Chair of the Council is also the Chair or Vice Chair of P&R and the arrangements for then filling the role of Chair or Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

To amend Section 3.2 of the Delegation Scheme in accordance with the contents of this report.

6.4 Cemetery Lodge Immediate Future: Proposal by Estates Working Group

Prior to the meeting the Estates Working Group had circulated to all a "Cemetery Lodge Immediate Future: Proposal" which suggested that in light of the time being taken to obtain all the necessary information in order to progress the matter of selling Cemetery Lodge in the longer-term that it would be best to request Dowens to re-let the property for a further 6 months when the current tenants vacate on 23rd October 2015. Cllr Lynne Dentith questioned if the Council had made the decision to sell Cemetery Lodge and the Clerk confirmed that this decision had been made. Cllr John Robinson asked what information is required in order to progress this matter and Clerk explained that information has been requested from Mr Gerard Darby of DCC regarding the ownership/asset transfer/gifting of the strip of land between the Cemetery and the allotments as this could provide an alternative access point. Cllr John Robinson suggested that Ms Caroline O'Neill, Head of Education for DCC, also be approached as she may be able to provide this information. Cllr Dudley Waters suggested that the Town Clerk be given authority to let Cemetery Lodge for longer than 6 months if the opportunity arose. Cllrs agreed to this on the basis that it did not impact upon their long-term plan to sell the property.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Dowens that a further 6 month let be sought for Cemetery Lodge following the departure of the current tenants.

Note: Reports related to information exempt from the public are considered under agenda item 9.

7. Financial Matters

7.1 Monthly Accounts: Income (as at 6th July 2015) / Expenditure (as at 6th July 2015 minus unapproved cheques after 8th June 2015)

Cllr John Robinson reported that recently several Freedom of Information requests have been received by DCC, and subsequently processed, by members of the public wanting to know if he was in any way related to Robinson's Caterers in Sedgefield. Cllr Robinson asked for it to be put on record that neither he nor Cllr Maxine Robinson are related in any way to Robinson's Caterers.

RESOLVED:

The monthly accounts as had been circulated were approved.

7.2 Cheques for approval after 8th June 2015

Details of cheques for approval after 8th June 2015 – 1st July 2015 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk circulated details of cheques for approval from 6th – 13th July 2015.

Cllr Maxine Robinson questioned the payment to Thirsk Community Care for payroll and asked if this was a monthly amount and if the Council was getting an acceptable service when considering in the past the previous Clerk had performed the payroll service in-house. The Clerk replied the amount paid to Thirsk Community Care is paid on a quarterly basis and the Town Council's payroll service is now provided much more effectively than previously with staff now having a guaranteed pay date and no problems being experienced with overpayments or underpayments. Through the Personnel Committee a thorough review had been undertaken of numerous options for payroll delivery before selection Thirsk Community Care. The costs of going with this specialist provider was far more effective than paying for training costs to continue the previous package used by the Town Council. Cllr Robinson thanked the Clerk for this explanation.

Cllr Lynne Dentith questioned cheque number 108424 for £875.00 relating to National Gardens Scheme Open Gardens ticket sales and questioned why this was not income. It was explained that this was money which was raised for the Scheme hence a cheque was paid.

RESOLVED: All cheques were approved for payment and duly signed by Cllrs Wills, Carr and the Clerk at the close of the meeting.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Fly A Flag For The Commonwealth – 14th March 2015 (email from Cllr Ken Browse, NALC dated 19th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting the above email had been circulated to all for information. Cllrs agreed that this initiative was very worthy, however, the flag being offered (90' x 54') was far too big for any Council building or flagpole.

**RESOLVED:
The Clerk to inform NALC of the above and to ask for the Council to be notified**

when/if any smaller sized flag is introduced.

8.2 DCC Taxi Licensing Policy Review (email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 9th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting the above email had been circulated to all for information. The email detailed a current DCC consultation exercise in relation to a Taxi Licensing Policy Review. The consultation is open until Wednesday 26th August 2015.

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider this consultation exercise and inform the Clerk if they have any comments.

8.3 DCC Consultation Draft Of The Rights Of Way Improvement Plan 2015-2018 (email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 11th June 2015) – copies previously circulated to all Cllrs. Note: DCC have extended the deadline for STC to 17th July 2015.

Prior to the meeting copies had been circulated to all Cllrs detailing DCC's current consultation exercise regarding its Draft Rights Of Way Improvement Plan for 2015-18. This draft Plan was discussed. Whilst it was noted that 11 new public rights of way are being proposed (none of which fell within the Sedgefield area) Cllrs did express their concerns as to how DCC would be able to maintain the current rights of way as well as additional ones when considering declining resources and funding. Cllrs did not want to see new public rights of way being introduced and maintained at the expense and possible decline of those already in place across the County.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform DCC of the Town Council's concerns.

8.4 Nominations for County Association (email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 5th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting the above email had been circulated to all for consideration.

RESOLVED:

- i) Cllr John Robinson be nominated for the position of Vice President and Cllr Dudley Waters be nominated for the position of Honorary Treasurer.**
- ii) The Clerk to notify Mr Steve Ragg at CDALC.**

8.5 Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill (email from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 26th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting the above email had been circulated to all for consideration.

This email provided an update as follows:

- Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill
- Lobby Day
- NALC Committees and Meetings
- Local Government Association

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.6 North East Combined Authority (NECA) Devolution Feedback (email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 17th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting the above email from Mr Ragg had been circulated to all for consideration. This email included an update as follows:

- The Regional Stakeholders event on 9th March 2015;
- NECA consultation events feedback in broad terms;
- Meeting of North East MPs and Lords;
- Summary of NECA overview and scrutiny committee meeting held on 24th March 2015;

Copies of letters, summaries and powerpoint slides referred to in the above documents were also circulated for information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.7 Licensing Variation – Sedgefield Racecourse (email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 7th July 2015)

The Clerk circulated to all copies of the above email which detailed a variation application seeking to substitute a condition of the Racecourse's existing licence.

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider this requested variation and the matter to be discussed at the Environment Committee meeting on 20th July 2015.

8.8 Durham County Council – Contaminated Land Inspection Consultation Strategy (email from Mr Steve Ragg 6th July 2015)

The Clerk circulated to all copies of the above email which detailed a current DCC

consultation exercise into its updated Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy for County Durham. This consultation exercise is live until Monday 31st August 2015.

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider this matter at the Environment Committee meeting on 20th July 2015.

9. Training

9.1 “Employee Relations Training – 11th June 2015” Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated copies to all of a report entitled “Employee Relations” which summarized the DCC training delivered on behalf of CDALC on 11th June 2015. The Clerk informed Cllrs that this session was one of a series of training sessions and the information gathered would be used to review and revise the Town Council’s Staff Handbook for presentation in the first instance to the Personnel Committee. The Clerk stated that this training organized by CDALC had been first class.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9.2 “Council Tax Base and Localisation of Council Tax Support Grant – 24th June 2015” Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a report which summarized the Council Tax Base and Localisation of Council Tax Support Grant training which she and Cllr Wills had attended on 24th June 2015. This training had been arranged by CDALC and delivered by Mr Paul Darby of DCC. Again, this was an excellent and very informative session. Copies of the presentation slides have been obtained and been circulated to all Cllrs electronically for their information. Sedgefield Town Council, along with other Town/Parish Councils, should be receiving a letter from Mr Darby in late July/early August 2015 giving an indication of our Council Tax Base and LCTSG figures for 2016/17. This information will enable the Council to start working on budget calculations in readiness for setting next year’s precept.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Finance Working Group to consider the content of this training session in more detail in readiness for receiving Mr Darby’s letter**

detailing projected figures for 2016/17.

9.3 “Attendance Management – 25th June 2015” Report by Town Clerk

In the same vein as 9.1 the Clerk had circulated to all prior to the meeting a report summarizing the “Attendance Management” training which she had attended on 25th June 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

Cllr 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).

10. Consideration of Reports Exempt from Public:

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the **Council** held following the Environment committee meeting in the **Council Offices**, Advice & Information Centre, Sedgefield, on
Monday 20th July 2015.

Present **Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. Mark Cant, Mel Carr, Chris Lines, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton, Dudley Waters

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. David Brown, Rebecca Hagan, Tim Jeanes, John Robinson and Gloria Wills

2. Declaration of interest

None.

3. Matters of Information

3.1 Foodbank:

Emergency Food Boxes have now been supplied to the Town Council along with the necessary paperwork for processing any requested. The first session commenced on Wednesday 24th June 2015. To date there have been no requests for Emergency Food Boxes. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed regarding progress and to ensure a review of this service is placed on the September 2015 Community Development & Engagement Committee agenda.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.2 Draft Grant Funding Policy:

The Clerk, Cllr Allan Blakemore and Community Development Officer to meet in July/August to progress this matter. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed of progress.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 Apple Orchard:

The Community Development Officer and the Gardening Supervisor have been tasked to work together to agree on 6 additional trees for the Winterton Orchard and to apply for these through the Tree Grant Scheme later in the year.

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.

4. Public Participation

The Chairman, Cllr Allan Blakemore, 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 Grants Funding Update Report by Community Development Officer

Prior to the meeting a Grants Funding Update Report by Mrs Angela Simpson had been circulated to all. The Clerk reported that with regards to the Delivering Differently grant funding confirmation has now been received from DCC that 17 expressions of interest have been submitted which include those relating to grounds maintenance, play areas, allotments, horticulture and winter maintenance. All expressions of interest have been considered by the Local Councils Working Group and it was agreed that most submissions now require some further discussion and interpretation of costings. DCC Officers with relevant experience to each expression of interest will contact the appropriate Town/Parish Council in order to obtain this

additional information. CDALC will keep its members informed of the progression with this grant funding.

Cllr Dudley Waters requested that when the Council is ready to submit its Section 106 application in relation to the Thurlow Grange money that a copy also be given to Livin for their information.

RESOLVED: To receive this information.

5.2 Sedgefield Day Report by Community Development Officer

Prior to the meeting a report regarding Sedgefield Day written by the Community Development Officer had been circulated to all for information.

Cllr Chris Lines pointed out that under “Commitments” he had actually said that the various sports organisations would take responsibility for their own gazebos and not that they would provide volunteers for the day to assemble and dismantle gazebos for all. Cllr Lines also pointed out that in relation to the funding element of this report that Sedgefield Games had paid for the climbing wall. In addition, Sedgefield Games will now be exploring various options for future liability insurance cover.

Cllr Allan Blakemore informed Cllrs that a debrief of the Sedgefield Day will take place as part of the next Sedgefield 700+ meeting in October 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.3 31st October 2015 Fireworks Event Report by Cllr Alf Walton & Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting a report detailing options for the Town Council's annual fireworks event had been circulated to all. Cllrs agreed that they wish the event to continue to be held in the ground of Ceddesfeld Hall rather than move to an alternative site within the Town.

RESOLVED:

To hold this year's event on Saturday 31st October 2015 within the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall using G2 Fireworks who will launch fireworks from the grassed area to the right hand side of the Lake with no shells included in the display. The Fireworks Working Group to now start to plan for this year's event.

5.4 Replacement Gazebo Cases Update Report by Community Development Officer

Prior to the meeting a report by the Community Development Officer regarding the replacement gazebo cases had been circulated to all.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To receive this information.**
- ii) **The Town Council to purchase a further 10 replacement gazebo bags.**

5.5 Warm Up North Initiative Update Report by Community Development Officer

Prior to the meeting a report by the Community Development Officer updating Cllrs on the Warm Up North Initiative was circulated to all for information. The Clerk reported the Council is still awaiting British Gas to confirm an appointment in order to compile the Parish Hall Energy Efficiency Test Report.

Cllr Allan Blakemore suggested that this matter be taken off the Community Development & Engagement Committee and move to the remit of the Estates Working Group who have already identified the Parish Hall as being their priority activity for 2015/16. This was agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To receive this information.**
- ii) **The Estates Working Group to progress matters relating to the Warm Up North Initiative as part of their wider remit of reviewing all Parish Hall related matters.**

5.6 Request To Film At The War Memorial Update – Verbal Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore

Cllr Allan Blakemore reported that he, the Clerk, Rev. Michael Gobbett and Mr Brian Mutch had met with Mr Gary Looker of LA Productions on 14th July 2015 to consider Mr Looker's earlier request to be given permission to film at the War Memorial in Sedgefield. The proposed drama will be a 90 minute Jimmy McGovern written production focusing upon the story of Mr Reg Keys following the death of his son in the Iraq War. Sedgefield will only feature as a backdrop in this drama. Mr Looker had explained that depending upon filming time it may be possible that the decision is made to not even film at the actual War Memorial in Sedgefield but to instead use an alternative venue in the Merseyside area. Cllrs agreed they were happy for filming to take place at the War Memorial in Sedgefield should this be required by LA Productions.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Mr Looker that the Town Council are happy for filming to

take place around the Sedgefield War Memorial.

5.7. Council Coach Trip – 10th June 2015:

The Clerk reported that the Council's coach trip to Richmond and Northallerton on Wednesday 10th June 2015 had been very well attended with 33 tickets having been purchased. This particular trip had resulted in a surplus of £72 being made. Cllr Allan Blakemore commented that the Council's trips are popular event and should continue. Cllrs agreed with this.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Correspondence

6.1 Sedgefield 700+ (minutes of meeting held 10th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the minutes from the Sedgefield 700+ meeting held on 10th June 2015. The next meeting will take place on 14th October 2015 and include a debrief of the recent Sedgefield Day.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.2. Sedgefield Scarecrow Festival 2015/16 (Letter from Ms Sharon Davey received 6th July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter received on 6th July 2015 from Ms Sharon Davey in relation to the 2015/16 Sedgefield Scarecrow Festival which will take place over 30th and 31st August 2015. In this letter Ms Davey explained the purpose of the Festival and requested if the Town Council would permit the village green to be used as the focal point for this Festival. Ms Davey also requested permission to use the gazebos held by the Council for the purpose of selling maps etc. Cllrs agreed to Ms Davey's request stating there would be no charge for the village green and that gazebos would be charged at their usual hire costs.

RESOLVED:

i) The Clerk to inform Ms Davey of the Council's decision.

6.3. Sedgefield Squash Club – Request for Terrace Hill Money (Letter from Ms Jane Skilbeck dated 14th July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all a letter from Ms Jane Skilbeck on behalf of the Sedgefield Squash Club informing the Town Council that the Club now meets all the stipulations placed upon them to progress Phase 1 of their refurbishment of the existing Squash Club building. As such the Squash Club are now requesting their allocation of £22,500 of the Terrace Hill money be released. Cllrs agreed to this request and for the Clerk to work with the Council Chair and Vice Chair in order to progress this matter prior to the September 2015 P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to work with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council to progress this matter.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.04pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JULY ENVIRONMENT** of the
Council held at **7 pm** in the **Council Offices**, Advice & Information
Centre, Sedgefield, on **Monday 20th July 2015**.

Present **Cllr. Alf Walton (Chairman)**
 Cllr. Ian Sutherland (Vice Chairman) and
 Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, Mark Cant, Mel Carr, Chris Lines, Dudley Waters

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies**

Cllrs. David Brown, Rebecca Hagan, Tim Jeanes, John Robinson and Gloria Wills

Additional Items:

Cllr Alf Walton reported that several additional items will be considered at after Item 7 of the agenda as follows:

1. Application of new licence at the former Little Chef (circulated previously to all Cllrs)
2. Application for variation to existing licence at Sedgefield Racecourse (circulated previously to all Cllrs)
3. DCC Contaminated Land Strategy (circulated previously to all Cllrs)
4. Sedgefield Plan Update
5. Consideration of letter from Mr Tony Guest (circulated previously to all Cllrs)
6. Consideration of attendance at DCC Planning Committee on 23rd July 2015 (circulated previously to all Cllrs)
7. Consideration of email received from Mrs Janet Spalding (dated 17th July 2015)

RESOLVED:

To consider these additional items.

2. **Declaration of interest**

Cllr Mark Cant declared an interest in Additional Item 2 which will consider the application to vary the licence held by Sedgefield Racecourse.

There were no other declarations of interest.

3. Matters of Information

3.1 Cemetery Recycling Bays:

The recycling bays have now been emptied and the vandalism damage repaired. The Gardening Supervisor has also stencil marked each bay to stipulate the correct content for each. Mr Alex Walker of AW Treecare is due to attend the bays soon in order to chip the large branches which remain.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.2 North End Grass Verge:

Since the last Environment Committee meeting Cllr Alf Walton has continued to monitor the holes in this area. He confirmed there has been no change and no signs of any rat movement. He will continue to monitor the area.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 Sedgefield Cemetery:

No response has yet been received to the letter of enquiry submitted to Mr Gerard Darby regarding the gifting or asset transfer from DCC to the Town Council of land/footpath running between the cemetery and the allotments which was the former entrance to the College. This letter also requested the same in relation to Butterwick Allotments and the triangular piece of land between the allotments and Butterwick Lane. The Estates Working Group will consider Mr Darby's response when received and bring a report back to a future Environment Committee meeting.

The Clerk reported that she has now informed Dowens to proceed with a further 6 month let of Cemetery Lodge. The current tenants have requested to stay until the end of December 2015 and then action will be undertaken to seek new tenants for a further 6 months.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 Noise Complaints re: Parish Hall:

The Estates Working Group have now set the Parish Hall as its priority activity for 2015/16 and part of this work will include full consideration of audio and noise matters. Reports will be brought back to the P&R Committee as this work progresses.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter as it will now be reported through the P&R Committee.

3.5 Parking Outside Hope Inn and Betting Shop:

No further action, however, the Estates Working Group Chair and Clerk are due to meet to consider information received from DCC. Also please see agenda item 7.2.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Public Participation:

Work is on-going to determine the ownership of the lane/paths opposite the Dunn Cow. The Clerk to inform Cllrs of the findings from ownership investigations.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.7 4 South View, Sedgefield:

DCC permission is being sought. DCC have requested further information from the Town Council and this has been duly supplied. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.8 Allotments Update:

A further skip has been provided at Winterton allotments and an email sent to all allotment holders requesting they take this opportunity to use it. Letters have also been sent to all allotment holders informing them of new charging arrangements and fees from 1st April 2016. Cllr Alf Walton reported this last matter had been discussed

at the latest Sowers & Growers meeting and all members have been happy with the new fees.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.9 Delivering Differently:

No feedback has yet been received on the expression of interest submitted by the Council. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed regarding this matter.

Cllr Alf Walton requested progress on the Bloom's purchase of two self-watering tubs. Cllr Ian Sutherland requested the Town Council progress this with Mr Howard Smith.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Community Development Officer and Mr Howard Smith progress the matter of the Bloom purchasing two self-watering tubs.**
- iii) To close this matter and continue to provide updates on Delivering Differently via the Community Development & Engagement Committee agenda.**

3.10 Rat Boxes:

A meeting has been requested between Mr Shane Roxby of DCC and Cllr Alf Walton. As yet no response has been received from Mr Roxby following his return from annual leave.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to contact Mr Roxby to set up a meeting to progress this matter.

3.11 Grass Cutting Complaint at Sedgefield Cemetery:

The Clerk has written to Ms Jefferson. The Gardening Supervisor has spoken to the grass cutting contractor⁵. The Gardening Supervisor will monitor this situation and notify the Clerk if any such instance occurs again.

The Clerk read out an email received from Ms Jefferson dated 18th June 2015 in which she thanked the Town Council for the response to her complaint and was reassured that this matter was being discussed with the Council's grass cutting

contractor.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.12 DCC Consultation – Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan:

As agreed this matter had been considered at the P&R Committee meeting on 13th July 2015 in order to achieve DCC's consultation deadline.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.13 Planning Applications:

All comments have now been forward to DCC Planning Officers.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation

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

Mrs Julia Bowles commented that she understood the Town Council needed to have its own views and opinions on matters but she assumed that Town Councillors could still be seen to support residents when views coincided. She gave the example of recent activities at Middleton St George where Councillors have supported a campaign by local residents. Mrs Bowles requested clarification from the Town Council regarding this matter. Cllr Alf Walton replied that the Town Council may share some of the same views, however, it is also important to ensure the Council remains impartial and debates then acts in accordance with procedures. The Clerk reported that following receipt of Mr Tony Guest's recent letter (to be discussed later on the agenda) she has been asked to seek advice from CDALC regarding the matter of the Town Council being approached to provide financial assistance to an Action Group. The advice received indicated that Councils should not be financial supporting such causes due to potential conflicts of interest from either the requesting Group or a future Group. Mrs Bowles accepted this matter from a funding perspective but requested clarification on the matter of generally supporting Action Groups. Cllrs felt they required training in this area and also that of declarations of interest.

Mrs Janet Spalding stated she was pleased to hear that her recent email was on the agenda for discussion. She requested the Council considers how it supports Action Groups and asked why information from the Action Group had not been circulated to the public when the view of the Action Group appeared to mirror that of the Council. Finally she asked why no Cllrs had been present at the DCC site visit to Eden Drive. Cllr Alf Walton assured Mrs Spalding that her email was to be discussed later in the meeting.

The meeting was then re-opened.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to liaise with CDALC to schedule appropriate training for Cllrs.**

5. Sedgefield Conservation Area Character Appraisal – presentation by Ms Judith Miller, Durham County Council

The Chair welcomes Ms Judith Miller and Ms Val Robson of DCC to the meeting. Copies of a presentation were then circulated to all and explained in detail. Ms Mille explained:

- There are 92 Conservation Areas across County Durham and since LGR 38 of these have now got in place agreed Character Appraisal Conservation documents.
- Current for Sedgefield there is an old Character Appraisal which is dated 2003 but this was never formally adopted. For 2015/16 DCC have made the production of Conservation Area Appraisals a priority for Durham City, Lanchester and Sedgefield.
- The process to create a new Character Appraisal offers the chance to make changes to the Conservation Area boundary and the conditions to the current Article 4 Direction. Once such a document is 'made' it will be used as a key tool in planning application determination. Ms Miller explained that Sedgefield is only 10 Conservation Areas in County Durham have special controls in the form of Article 4 which reflects the perceived importance of the Town.
- DCC want to get as many members of the community involved in this process as possible. To make this workable the current Conservation Area has been divided into six sub-areas and a simple Character Assessment Toolkit form devised in which people can record their observations in relation to buildings, spaces, views, greenery & landscape features, use & activity before then going on to comment about positive aspects, negative aspects, neutral aspects, suggestions for improvement and general comments should they wish. Scoring for each are is then on a scale of -5 to 5+. The purpose is to get an overall impression of across the Conservation Area

which includes consideration of comparison between day and night. The toolkit is available on-line through the DCC website.

- The Civic Trust are already involved in this process and more volunteers would be well received. An article is due to appear in the August 2015 Sedgefield News. Contact has also been made with the Local History Society and the Sedgefield In Bloom Group. The intention is to get as wide a range of representation as possible for this work.
- The timetable for the production of a 'made' document is as follows: July-August 2015 to seek volunteers to use and complete the toolkit; September 2015 Ms Miller and Ms Robson to present the initial feedback received; September-October 2015 Ms Miller and Ms Robson to prepare the draft appraisal document; from 2nd week in November 2015 for a period of 6 weeks the draft appraisal document to be out for public consultation; 4th February 2016 is the anticipated date for the new appraisal document being officially made.
- Some of the findings from the toolkit may result in aspirational and longer-term issues being identified which could be further considered when money and resources are available.

Several Cllrs questioned decisions previously having been made with regards to the determination of planning applications within the Town's Conservation Area. Whilst it was not possible to discuss individual applications Ms Robson explained often such decisions have been made due to advances in technology, e.g. timber double glazing may have been allowed due to the reduced size of bars now used. In some instances there is already enforcement investigation work being undertaken by DCC Officers in relation to work which has already taken place in the Town's Conservation Area or work which is being proposed.

Cllr Chris Lines suggested Ms Miller and Ms Robson link into the work of the Community Survey which was part of the work of The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group. The Clerk also suggested they link into the work done by the Steering Group with young people from across the Town.

The Chair thanked Ms Miller and Ms Robson for their time and attendance.

Cllrs suggested the Clerk makes Ms Miller aware of the on-going situation with Pizza Castle and see if she can provide any assistance.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to forward to all Cllrs an electronic copy of Ms Miller's presentation.**
- iii) The Clerk to make Ms Miller aware of the current issues in relation to Pizza Castle to see if any help can be provided in progressing this matter.**

6. Reports

6.1 Roundabouts Report by Cllr Alf Walton

Cllr Alf Walton informed Cllrs that he is still working on a report and would like this matter to be deferred until the September 2015 Environment Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

Roundabouts Report by Cllr Alf Walton to be put onto the September 2015 Environment Committee agenda.

6.2 Eden Drive – Playground Safety Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Eden Drive Playground Safety Update report. This report included details of the weekly inspections undertaken by DCC from 4th February – 26th May 2015. In addition, the Town Council's annual RoSPA inspection has now been completed and the findings report has been passed to Mr Craig Fowler of DCC for consideration. The Clerk is due to meet with Mr Barrie Alderson of DCC on Monday 27th July 2015 at 1pm to find out the changes which DCC have recently made to its playground inspection service. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed regarding this matter.

Cllr Ian Sutherland queried the categorization of C with regard to Fixed Post Signs for 30th March – 15th May 2015. The Clerk reported this matter related to the recently installed Deep Water sign which when unpacked was found to be missing a sealing cap at the top of the pole. The supplier has subsequently re-issued the cap and this has now been fitted and the matter resolved.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.3 Pizza Castle – Environmental Health Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk has circulated an Environmental Health Update report in

relation to Pizza Castle. Since the production of this report Ms Janet Kelly of DCC Environmental Health has provided the Clerk with a further update as follows:

- The walls of the property have been painted and the bins have been cleaned;
- Grease has been removed from the wall and tidied up;
- The business owner has been extremely co-operative and has now introduced a thorough cleaning regime every Monday and commissioned the repair of the extractor fan;
- The business owner would like the area of concern to be made into one of hard standing and Ms Kelly suggested that if the Town Council could do anything to help progress this request it would be most useful. The Clerk had pointed out that the land in question belongs to DCC and referred Ms Kelly to Mr Carl Gooding of DCC Assets.
- There is no sign of any rat movement from the holes nearby the property and the business owner has put in place a rat box which is being checked monthly by a contractor.
- Ms Kelly will continue to monitor this property.

Cllr Alf Walton reported that on the evening of Thursday 16th July 2015 he had seen three large drums of oil adjacent to the property. Cllr Ian Sutherland commented that he had also seen an abandoned door in this area. The Clerk was asked to report this to Ms Kelly.

RESOLVED:

- To receive this information.**
- The Clerk to inform Ms Kelly of Cllr Walton's comments.**

6.4 Grass Cutting Mapping Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting a Grass Cutting Mapping Report by the Clerk had been circulated to all. This explained that current position with producing a detailed map for the Town showing which areas the Town Council has grass cutting responsibility and which areas are the County Council's responsibility. When finalized this map will be used for next year's grass cutting tendering process. The Clerk to keep informed regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7. Correspondence

7.1 County Durham Environment Awards 2015 (email from Ms Sandra Stephenson dated 18th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting information detailing the timings and categories for the County Durham Environment Awards for 2015 had been circulated to all.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Parking next to The Hope Inn and Betting Shop (letter from Mrs E Williams dated 18th June 2015)

Prior to the meeting a further letter from Mrs Williams of High Street, Sedgefield had been circulated to all. Mrs Williams letter referred to her previous correspondence regarding parking in the area next to The Hope Inn and the Betting Shop. Cllr Ian Sutherland reported there seems to be an increasing number of times when cars park right across this entire area blocking the entrance road.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to write to Mrs Williams and explain that discussions are underway with a DCC Officer regarding parking on village greens.**

7.3 Sedgefield In Bloom (minutes of meeting held 1st July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all for information copies of the minutes of the Sedgefield In Bloom meeting held on 1st July 2015.

Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that Mr Howard Smith had recently seen a group of children walking straight through the flowerbed beneath the Bloom's Beacon. Mr Smith wanted the Council to know and requested the Police be notified. Mr Smith had also expressed concerns regarding the level of noise from the Crosshills one night the week commencing 13th July 2015. Cllr Allan Blakemore suggested this latter matter also be passed to PC Todd with a request it be raised at the next Pub Watch meeting.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**

- ii) **The Clerk to make PC Keith Todd aware of Mr Smith's comments regarding the Beacon flowerbed.**
- iii) **The Clerk to make PC Keith Todd aware of Mr Smith's comments regarding the Crosshills and ask for this to be considered at the Pub Watch meeting.**
- iv) **The Clerk to request PC Todd consider whether either of these issues could also feature at the next PACT meeting.**

7.4 Sedgefield Sowers & Growers (minutes of meeting held 25th June 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all for information copies of the minutes of the Sedgefield Sowers and Growers meeting held on 25th June 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.5 Durham Flower Festival (29th – 30th August 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all for information an invitation to the Durham Flower Festival to be held at East Durham College, Houghall from 10.30am – 5pm on 29th and 30th August 2015.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.6 Potential Land Encroachment at rear of 16 Hawthorn Road, Sedgefield (letter from Town Clerk dated 7th July 2015 and response from Ms Susan Porter, DCC dated 7th July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter she had sent to Ms Susan Porter of DCC with accompanying photographs showing what appeared to be encroachment of land at the rear of 16 Hawthorn Road, Sedgefield. Ms Porter has thanked the Town Council for its letter and informed the Clerk DCC are already aware of this matter and have given the occupier of the property an initial period of 6 weeks to resolve this matter by removing the fence and re-instating his boundary. After this date DCC Officers will inspect the site and consider what, if any, further steps are necessary. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.7 Proposed Path Changes to Public Bridleway No 33 Sedgefield Parish (letter from Mr Owen Shaw dated 13th July 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter from Mr Owen Shaw of DCC dated 13th July 2015. This letter was accompanied by two maps. The purpose of the letter was to make the Council aware of a proposal under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 to make path changes to Public Bridleway 33 in Sedgefield Parish. These changes have been requested by the applicant on the grounds of providing a safer farmyard.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Mr Shaw that the Town Council has no objections to the proposed change to Bridleway 33.

7.8 Wild Cherry Trees (email from Butterwick Trees Nursery dated 8th July 2015):

The Clerk reported that an email had been received from Ms Kath Marshall-Ivens, Nursery Manager at Butterwick Trees, requesting the Council's permission to collect seeds from three wild cherries located adjacent to the Stockton Road/Beacon Lane junction. This request mirrors that made over several years.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Ms Marshall-Ivens that the Council is happy for Butterwick Trees to collect the seeds as per her request.

7.9 Headstones in St Edmund's Churchyard (letter from Ms Mary Pinchbeck-Iredale dated 20th June 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all a letter received from Ms Mary Pinchbeck-Iredale outlining her concerns regarding several historic headstones in St Edmund's Church Yard which have been laid face down for many years and requested these be either stood up or turned face up. Cllrs notes Ms Pinchbeck-Iredale's comments and agreed to refer this to the Estates Working Group for future consideration.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Ms Pinchbeck-Iredale of the Council's decision.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

As agreed at the start of the meeting several additional items were considered as follows:

A1. New Premises Licence Application – Former Little Chef A177, Sedgefield:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated copies to all of the above application which had been received via email from Mr Steve Ragg on 17th July 2015. No Cllrs had any objection to this application.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to inform Ms Carol Graham of DCC that the Town Council do not have any objections to this application.

A2. Request to Vary Existing Licence – Sedgefield Racecourse:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all information received via Mr Steve Ragg in which the Racecourse were requesting to make a variation to their existence licence. The Clerk reported that earlier that day (20th July 2015) a further update relating to this application had been forwarded via Mr Steve Ragg and copies were duly circulated to all for their information. Cllr Mark Cant explained that 2-3 years ago the Racecourse's current licence were subjected to several conditions which related to noise levels. The current variations being sought would allow the Racecourse to operate to the Code of Practice relevant to concerts which would allow up to 65 decibels of noise without any controls being necessary in relation to sound. Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that two residents had spoken to him to express their concerns regarding the proposed variation. Cllr Sutherland had advised both residents to write to DCC. These residents had also expressed concern regarding not only noise disruption but also potentially other types of disruption, e.g. traffic congestion, if concerts were performed. Cllr Mel Carr felt the current variations were very hard to understand. Cllr Allan Blakemore stated that as Cllr Mark Cant had declared an interest in this matter at the start of the meeting that he should not have any further part in discussions. Cllr Cant apologised and agreed not to speak further. Cllr Ian Sutherland proposed that the Town Council should submit objections to DCC regarding this proposed variation of licence on the grounds that noise levels will significantly increase. Cllr Allan Blakemore stated that the Licencing Authority would take cognisance of comments made by the Town Council and any residents objections regarding noise levels and late night activity. He also believed that wind direction would be an additional factor in this and reminded Cllrs that there has been a long history of residents making complaints with noise from the Racecourse. All Cllrs agreed the Town Council should submit a letter of objection to this proposed licence variation. Cllr Mel Carr also suggested that the Town Council produce an informative notice which can be put through the doors of nearby residents making them aware of this proposal and when/how to object if necessary. Cllr Carr's suggestion was also approved by Cllrs and Cllr Ian Sutherland kindly offered to deliver such leaflets.

RESOLVED:

- i) **The Clerk to submit to DCC a letter of objection to the Racecourse's request to vary its existing licence.**
- ii) **The Clerk to prepare an informative notice for nearby residents which will be delivered by Cllr Ian Sutherland.**

A3. Consideration of DCC Contaminated Land Strategy:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 6th July 2015 which explained DCC's current consultation exercise in relation to its revised Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy. Cllrs agreed that they did not have any comments to make on this strategy.

RESOLVED: To receive this information.

A4. Sedgefield Plan Update:

The Clerk circulated to all an update provided by Mr David Bowles. Cllr Allan Blakemore explained this note had been written following Mr Bowles, Mr Spalding, himself and Mr Stuart Carter and Mr Gavin Scott of DCC meeting on 14th July 2015. The purpose of the meeting had been to go through all of DCC's concerns regarding The Sedgefield Plan and to show the evidence base which underpinned the document. This meeting had been lengthy but had given the required forum for all parties to sit around the table and consider. The vast majority of the points raised by DCC in their recent letter had been overcome. There is some minor amendment work to be done to the Plan which will now be undertaken by Mr Bowles and Mr Spalding as a matter of urgency with an anticipated completion deadline of end of July/beginning of August 2015. DCC and the Steering Group have agreed to disagree on the issue of the number of houses and where, however, DCC accept the Town Council's disagreement and this does not affect the legal conformity of The Sedgefield Plan to the required legislation. Running alongside the work of Mr Bowles and Mr Spalding, Cllr Chris Lines has been asked to work with Mr Neil Edmundson on final design format. The only outstanding work that will then be required in the Plan is a foreword by the Chair of the Council. Cllr Allan Blakemore asked the Committee if it was happy for the finalized Plan to go to the Chair for his consideration, production of a Foreword and then sign off in order that it can be submitted to DCC formally for the next stage of the examination process? Cllr Mel Carr stated that providing all of the points raised by DCC had then be discussed with DCC and necessary amendments to the Plan were then made there was no reason why the Plan should not be put forward to the next stage of examination. Cllr Allan Blakemore reiterated that both DCC Officers said at the conclusion of their meeting with the Steering Group that they were now happy for The Sedgefield Plan to be submitted to DCC for examination. Cllr Ian Sutherland seconded Cllr Allan Blakemore's proposal and all Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED: To receive this information.

A5. Consideration of letter from Mr Tony Guest on behalf of Sedgefield Action Group (received 13th July 2015):

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that a copy of Mr Guest's letter had been circulated to all on 13th July 2015 and it had been agreed that Cllrs consider Mr Guest's request in order the matter could be discussed at this meeting. Cllr Allan Blakemore proposed the money donated from the Residents Forum when it disbanded (and given to the Town Council to assist with The Sedgefield Plan) be transferred as a one-off payment to the Sedgefield Action Group.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to forward to the Sedgefield Action Group a cheque for £99.

A6. South West Area Planning Committee Meeting 23rd July 2015:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all full documentation relating to the above Planning Committee meeting scheduled to commence at 2pm in the DCC Council Offices at Green Lane, Spennymoor. At this meeting planning applications DM/15/01280/FPA (relating to Sedgefield Out of School Hours Club) and DM/15/00233/FPA (relating to The Hope Inn, Sedgefield) would be considered.

RESOLVED: The Town Council have already submitted their objections to DCC regarding these planning applications and therefore there was no need for the Council to be represented at the actual Planning Committee meeting.

A7. Email from Mrs Janet Spalding regarding Eden Drive Development (dated 17th July 2015):

The Clerk read out an email from Mrs Janet Spalding in which she expressed her disappointment that the Town Council had not circulated recent information regarding the Eden Drive development to the Residents Database contacts. The Clerk explained that this request had been discussed between herself and the Council Chair and it was agreed that in order to circulate such information in this manner would require full Council involvement and approval, something which was not possible due to the timing of the receipt of the request. Cllr Dudley Waters supported the action that had been undertaken by the Clerk and the Council Chair.

RESOLVED: To receive this information.

8. Tenders:

8.1 Tree works at Butterwick Allotments and North End:

Cllr Alf Walton reported that two quotations had been received from AW Treecare as follows:

- Butterwick allotments – to crown lift 2 sycamore trees, to remove 1 rowan tree to ground level, to dismantle 2 beech trees to hedge height and remove brash and timber resulting from this work. Price: £280
- North End – to crown lift lime tree over public footpath and highway. Price: £140
- If both quotes are accepted then a discount of £70 will be given, i.e. total price for all work £350

RESOLVED:

- i) To accept both AW Treecare quotations.**
- ii) The Clerk to inform AW Treecare of their successful quotations and to arrange for this work to now proceed.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.34pm.