

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES

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

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Rebecca Hagan, Tim Jeanes and Dudley Waters

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:

Discussions regarding this matter are on-going with the Estates Working Group.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

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 SCA Lease:

A meeting is to be scheduled between Cllrs Wills, Dentith and the Clerk to consider Ms Hunter's feedback and then set up a meeting with the SCA to try and bring this matter to a swift conclusion to the satisfaction of both STC and the SCA.

The Clerk is meeting with Dr Wendy Gill on 21st April 2015 in relation to the current sharing cleaner arrangements between the Parish Hall and Ceddesfeld Hall. At this meeting dates will be identified for a potential joint STC and SCA meeting to progress the lease.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Public Participation:

The Clerk reported that an email had been received from Mr and Mrs Scott on 13th April 2015 confirming that they are continuing to gather the evidence file on behalf of the Station Road/Ivy Row Residents but at the moment they are still awaiting some additional information. They will present to the Council a copy of the evidence file as soon as they can.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to arrange an Open Spaces Working Group meeting once the evidence file has been received from Mr and Mrs Scott.

3.7 Community Right To Bid – Consideration of Methodist Church Building:

The Clerk had written to the Methodist Church Council explaining the Community Right to Bid Scheme and why the Town Council would be interested in expressing an interest. The Methodist Council have been asked to notify the Town Council of any objections. The Clerk to keep Cllrs informed of the Methodist Council's response when received.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.8 Terrace Hill Funding Report:

The Clerk has written to Sedgefield Bowling Club, Sedgefield Harriers, Sedgefield Out of School Fun Club and Sedgefield Squash Club informing them they have been granted a further 12 month extension to their Large Grants Pot funding allocation (deadline: 29th March 2016).

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.9 Station Road Playing Field:

The Clerk has written to DCC informing them the Town Council wishes to hand the lease for Station Road Playing Field back to DCC. A response is yet to be received. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated when a response is received from DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.10 Draft Council Debt Policy:

Following Council approval the footers on this document have been updated and entered onto the Council's Policies Log.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.11 Draft Corporate Risk Assessment:

Following Council approval the footers on this document have been updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.12 Town Council's Insurance Renewal:

Following Council approval the insurance policy with Zurich has been renewed.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.13 Town Council's Trade Waste Renewal:

Following Council approval the trade waste contract with DCC has been renewed.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.14 CAB Donation:

The Clerk has forwarded to the CAB the Council's £1250 donation and reiterated that the Council will continue to provide an office rent free for each fortnightly drop-in session.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.15 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. Cllr Alf Walton expressed his concern regarding trees having been felled in this area. Cllr John Robinson reminded Cllrs in early 2014 Mr Gary Thompson had submitted (and had subsequently received approval for) a 5 year management plan for this area and this plan had previously been discussed by the Town Council. The Clerk to investigate this matter. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.16 Parish Hall Staffing:

The Clerk is preparing a draft job description and person specification for a Parish Hall Caretaker position to be considered by the Personnel Committee prior to a recommendation being presented to a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.17 IT Support Contractor:

The IT work approved by Council to ensure legal compliance has now been completed by InnovTech and Evolve Data Solutions.

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. There were no members of the public. The meeting was then re-opened.

5. Reports

5.1 Proposed Project to Re-open Public Toilets in Sedgefield by Cllr Mark Cant

Prior to the meeting copies of a proposed project to re-open the public toilets in Sedgefield by Cllr Mark Cant had been circulated to all. Cllr Cant explained this was just his initial thoughts and Cllr Gloria Wills suggested that this now be considered by the Estates Working Group which would bring a recommendation back to a future P&R Committee meeting. It was agreed that this was the best way forward. Cllr Maxine Robinson reminded Cllrs that work had been previously undertaken in relation to this matter and suggested this work be re-considered as part of any future discussions. It was agreed that this was a good idea.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Zurich Lift Inspection Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting copies of a Zurich Lift Inspection Report by the Town Clerk had been circulated to all. This report was to make Cllrs aware that the lifts at both the Parish Hall and Ceddesfeld Hall were inspected on 17th March 2015 by an authenticated Engineer Surveyor from Zurich. These inspections found that both lifts

have no defects and do not require any corrective actions. These inspections are required to ensure the Council complies with the requirements of LOLER.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Sedgefield Sowers & Growers Recommendation Report by Community Development & Engagement Committee

Prior to the meeting copies of a Sedgefield Sowers and Growers Recommendations Report by the Community Development and Engagement Committee had been circulated to all Cllrs. This report contained the recommendation that that Town Council should hold a financial account on behalf of the newly formed Sedgefield Sowers and Growers Group. Cllr Alf Walton confirmed that this would be in exactly the same way as the Town Council holds a financial account on behalf of the Sedgefield In Bloom. Cllr Ian Sutherland reminded Cllrs that within the Bloom's constitution is a clear reference to the fact that in the event of the Group disbanding any remaining finances would be automatically transferred to the Town Council. Cllrs Alf Walton and Gloria Wills confirmed that the Constitution of the Sowers & Growers Group had a similar clause, i.e. in the event of disbanding any remaining finances would revert to the Town Council.

Cllr Chris Lines requested that more prior notification is given regarding Sedgefield Sowers & Growers Group meetings in order to give more people a better chance of attending. He suggested that the Group may wish to consider creating a calendar of future meeting dates which could be circulated to all allotment holders. Cllrs Alf Walton and Gloria Wills agreed to take on board Cllr Lines comments and feed this back to the Group.

RESOLVED:

- i) Cllrs Alf Walton and Gloria Wills to inform the Sedgefield Sowers & Growers Group of the Town Council's agreement to hold a financial account on behalf of the Group.**
- ii) Cllrs Alf Walton and Gloria Wills to feedback to the Sedgefield Sowers & Growers Group the request to give more prior notification regarding future Group meetings, including the suggestion regarding a calendar of future meeting dates.**

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

6. Financial Matters

6.1 Monthly Accounts: Income (as at 30th March 2015) / Expenditure (as at 30th March 2015 minus unapproved cheques after 4th February 2015)

RESOLVED:

The monthly accounts as had been circulated were approved for payment.

6.2 Cheques for approval after 16th February 2015

Details of cheques for approval after 16th February 2015 until 1st April 2015 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk circulated details of cheques for approval from 2nd – 13th April 2015.

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 Itemised Income Presented To Bank (period 4th February 2015 – 30th March 2015)

The itemized income presented to the bank as at 30th March 2015 had been circulated to all prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.4 Fairhurst Invoice Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting a Fairhurst Invoice Update Report by the Town Clerk had been circulated to all. This report detailed the information supplied by Fairhurst since the Special P&R Committee meeting held on 16th March 2015 when the decision was made by Cllrs to defer payment until further information was known about the actual work undertaken by Fairhurst. Cllr Gloria Wills expressed her concerns that the information supplied by Fairhurst was still not detailed enough and she questioned whether they had attended the Steering Group Meeting on 11th February 2015 as she believed that their apologies had been submitted. Cllr Wills also voiced her concern that Fairhurst are acting as advisers in relating to the on-going planning

application for the three corner field and felt as such they had a conflict of interest as they were also advising the Town Council on the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllrs Lynne Dentith and Chris Lines commented that Fairhurst had already previously declared this work and that Mr Dominic Waugh was not in any way involved with that application as they are a very large organisation. Cllrs Mark Cant and Alf Walton voiced their concerns as to the advice provided by Fairhurst throughout the production of the Sedgefield Plan when considering the subsequent findings produced as a result of the free Planning Aid Independent Health Check. Cllrs Chris Lines and Lynne Dentith commented that it was impossible to say what the findings of such a Health Check would have been if there had not been any specialist advisors involved in the production of the Sedgefield Plan. Cllr Alf Walton replied that he believed the Health Check findings could not have been much worse and Cllr Mark Cant agreed with this view.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and the pay the outstanding invoice.

6.5 Sedgefield Town Council Policies Review Report by Town Council

Prior to the meeting a "Sedgefield Town Council Policies Review Report" by the Town Clerk had been circulated to all. This report detailed the considerable work undertaken during the latter part of 2014 in relation to reviewing, refining or preparing some key policies for the Town Council. These policies, and the work undertaken in relation to each, was detailed in the report. As part of the Town Council's new Policies Log each policy has a clear date by which it must be reviewed. All policies should be reviewed as a minimum on a 12 monthly basis. The review date for all policies detailed in this report was 30th April 2015. All policies would then go to the May AGM for formal re-adoption. Cllr Maxine Robinson suggested that the review date should be the date of the April 2016 P&R Committee meeting rather than 30th April 2015. This was agreed by all.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To receive this information.**
- ii) **All policies to be updated to show they will have a review date of 11th April 2016 or when new guidance/instruction is issued through NALC/another source (whichever date is soonest).**

7. Training

7.1 “Your Region, Your Council, Your Future” Event by County Association of Local Councils from Cleveland, County Durham and Northumberland 28th March 2015 Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting copies of a “Your Region, Your Council, Your Future” Event by County Association of Local Councils from Cleveland, County Durham and Northumberland 28th March 2015 Report by the Town Clerk had been circulated to all. This report summarized the event attended by the Town Clerk and Cllrs Allan Blakemore, Maxine Robinson and Ian Sutherland. With regards to the issue of Combined Authorities Cllr John Robinson explained that currently the Authorities of Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield are furthest advanced and it would interesting to see how these develop over the coming months.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Sedgefield Twinning Association Thank You Letter (22nd March 2015)

Prior to the meeting copies of a letter from the Sedgefield Twinning Association to the Town Council dated 2nd March 2015 had been circulated to all. The Association thanked the Town Council for its recent donation towards the forthcoming exchange visit of German twinning guests.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.2 Notification of 8 week Public Consultation for the New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits SPD (dated 2nd March 2015 – circulated to all at Monthly Meeting on 9th February 2015)

Cllrs had now had time to consider this document produced by Hartlepool Borough Council. No Cllrs had any objections to this document. Cllr Gloria Wills felt this was an excellent document and covered some of the issues which would be particularly pertinent to the Sedgefield Plan and suggested that a copy of this document should be shared with the Steering Group.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to forward a copy of the New Dwellings Outside of Development Limits SPD document to Mr David Bowles for reference.

8.3 Police and Crime Plan 2015-17 (email from Mr Ron Hogg dated 25th March 2015)

Prior to the meeting an email from Mr Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner, dated 25th March 2015 had been circulated to all. In this email Mr Hogg was outlining his refreshed Police and Crime Plan for 2015-17.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.4 Citizens Advice Bureau Thank You and newsletter (23rd March 2015)

Prior to the meeting copies of a letter from the Citizens Advice Bureau to the Town Council dated 23rd March 2015 had been circulated to all. The CAB thanked the Town Council for its recent donation towards the costs of continuing to run the fortnightly drop-in sessions in Sedgefield. Accompanying this letter had been a copy of the "News from the Citizens Advice service in County Durham Issue 1 – Autumn 2014" which had also been circulated to all Cllrs for information. Cllr Allan Blakemore questioned how much money the Howley Hope Charities provide to the CAB on annual basis. The Clerk did not know, however, offered to investigate and report back.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to investigate the much money the Howle Hope Charities have given to the CAB.**

8.5 Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood and Crime Watch Panel (letter dated 9th April 2015 to Cllr Simon Henig, DCC):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter from Mr Joe McKenna (Secretary of the Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood & Crime Watch Panel) to Cllr Simon Henig (Leader of DCC) dated 9th April 2015. In this letter Mr McKenna expresses the Panel's concerns regarding pedestrians and road users safety concerns principally one of danger of an accident from vehicles to pedestrians in the area of Salters Lane roundabout adjacent to the entrance to the Bolams / Jewsons / Sainsbury / Industrial Estate. The Panel requested through Cllr Henig that DCC Highways assistance is required to investigate this matter. Mr McKenna had reported that as a direct

response to this letter Cllr Henig had informed him that this matter had been passed directly to the relevant Head of Service for consideration. Mr McKenna had said he would keep the Town Council informed regarding this matter and how it progresses. Cllr Allan Blakemore informed Cllrs that Mr McKenna is to be invited to a meeting with appropriate DCC representatives and has asked if a member of the Town Council could also attend. Cllr Blakemore is also a member of the Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood & Crime Watch Panel and offered to accompany Mr McKenna. Cllrs accepted and thanked Cllr Blakemore for his offer.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Cllr Allan Blakemore to accompany Mr Joe McKenna to a future meeting with DCC representatives and report back to the Town Council.**

8.6 Consultation On Introducing The Local Government Ombudsman's Jurisdiction To Our Sector (Email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 7th April 2015):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email from Mr Steve Ragg dated 7th April 2015 entitled "Consultation on Introducing the Local Government Ombudsman's Jurisdiction to Our Sector". Accompanying this email was a DCLG "Strengthening Parish and Town Council Accountability: Consultation on Extending The Remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to Larger Parish and Town Councils" document. The Clerk suggested that Cllrs consider this documentation and this item be put on to the May 2015 P&R Committee agenda for discussion. This was agreed. It was also agreed that due to the substantial size of this documentation that it would not be re-issued in the May 2015 monthly Committee pack.

RESOLVED:

- i) All Cllrs to consider this consultation document prior to the May 2015 P&R Committee.**
- ii) The Clerk to ensure this matter is put onto the May 2015 P&R Committee agenda.**

9. Consideration of Reports Exempt from Public:

Cllr Wills explained that due to the confidential nature of the following items these 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).

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