

Sedgefield Town Council

A **Special Meeting of the Town Council** was held on **Tuesday**
1st April, 2014 at 6.30 pm in the Council Offices.

MINUTES

Present

Cllr. Gloria Wills (Chairman)

Cllrs. Mel Carr, Mark Cant, Dudley Waters, Alf Walton, John Robinson, Allan Blakemore,
David Brown

Mr. David Bowles (Chairman - Sedgefield Plan, Steering Group)

Mr. Morton Spalding (Vice-Chairman - Sedgefield Plan, Steering Group)

Officer: Lesley Swinbank (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies**

Cllrs. Lynne Dentith, Chris Lines, Vanessa Carmichael, Maxine Robinson, Rebecca Hagan, Tim Jeanes

2. **Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan**

The Chairman, Cllr. Gloria Wills welcomed Mr. David Bowles and Mr. Morton Spalding and explained the Special Meeting had been called in order to accept tenders: -

- a) Planning Consultant re the Neighbourhood Plan work
- b) Planning Consultant re the Town Council and their response to the current planning applications in respect of Eden Drive

Mr. Bowles reported on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan and said the plan was now in the position of needing the policies to be written and as such there was a need to employ a special consultant. He and the Vice-Chairman had met with a number of planning consultants and he circulated a summary of each tender including costs which had been received from: -

- I. David Stovell & Millwater
- II. England and Lyle
- III. Tom Woof
- IV. Fairhurst

Mr. Bowles then gave details of each meeting with the consultants.

He said that one consultant in particular (Fairhurst) had impressed both him and the

Vice-Chairman. This company had broken their tender down into three strands: -

First Strand

To carry out the necessary research and consider the current applications which have now been submitted. This includes in-house works re highways and drainage.

Second Strand

To write the necessary policies in accordance with National Planning Framework and in general conformity with the DCC plan

Third Strand

Aiding the Steering Group to write the plan itself.

RESOLVED

To accept the quote from Fairhurst of: -

- a. £2500 to advise the Steering Group on policy and plan development**
- b. £7500 (negotiable) to support the Steering Group to write and submit the plan.**

3. Applications re Eden Drive

The Chairman pointed out that when the agenda for the Special meeting had been circulated there had only been one planning application from Story developments to build on land at Eden Drive. Since then an additional outline planning application from the Church Diocese has now been submitted to DCC. The Chairman suggested that it is now essential that the Planning Consultant to be agreed by the Town Council, should consider both applications and advise the Council accordingly.

The Clerk reported that she had received five responses from Planning Consultants invited to tender in respect of the planning response on behalf of the Town Council re Eden Drive, Sedgefield : -

David Stovell and Millwater

- I. Fairhurst
- II. Interger Consulting
- III. Prison Planning
- IV. Robert Halstead

The Clerk gave details of the tender prices which did not vary significantly.

Cllr. Allan Blakemore suggested that it would be prudent to appoint the same Planning Consultant as had previously been discussed for the Steering Group for the Sedgefield Plan. He said there would be savings in respect of scales of economy, a second consultant could repeat much of the work that the Neighbourhood Plan group are undertaking and that by selecting the same Planning Consultant it would avoid any conflict in the work.

In addition Cllr. Allan Blakemore suggested that an application could be made through the DCC Members Neighbourhood Budget for contribution towards the overall costs of employing the Consultant.

Cllr. John Robinson reminded Members that a resolution had been made at the Monthly meeting in March to draw up a specification and list of consultants in respect of tendering for work in respect of the Gradan proposal, and whilst this is not a planning application as such at the moment it was felt that it would be submitted in the future.

The Chairman, Cllr. Gloria Wills said it was important that the Town Council discuss the current applications at the Monthly meeting on 14th April and that the Planning Consultants who are contracted then respond fully on behalf of the Town Council.

The Clerk, Lesley Swinbank pointed out that the prices received from the five Planning Consultants include only a response for the Story application although it was agreed that it would be necessary to talk to the chosen contractor in regard of extending this work to the application from the Diocese and also the Gradan proposal – although this could be at a future time.

RESOLVED

- i. To accept the tender of £1200 from Fairhurst**
- ii. To meet with Fairhurst and negotiate with them in respect of the work to include a response in respect of the application from the Diocese.**
- iii. The Town Council to arrange a meeting to be attended by Cllr. Gloria Wills, Cllr. Chris Lines, Cllr. John Robinson and Mr. David Bowles to meet with Fairhurst at the earliest opportunity.**

4. To appoint the Internal Auditor 2013 / 2014

The Clerk informed Members that the external auditors BDO have for the first time requested confirmation that the Town Council has appointed the Internal Auditor for 2013 / 2014. The current Internal Auditor Mr. Peter Harker was appointed several years ago and the Clerk asked that confirmation be given to his re-appointment for 2013 / 2014. In addition the Clerk suggested that appointing the Internal Auditor become a standing item on the Annual General Meeting in May.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.20 pm.