

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the **MAY MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held
following the AGM in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield,
on
Monday 9th May 2016.

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

None

The Chair, Cllr Mel Carr, reported that County Cllr John Robinson had requested to give a DCC Report and this would now become item 9.1 of the agenda.

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Lynne Dentith declared an interest in Item 12 'Current Planning Applications' application number 2. No other Cllrs made any declarations of interest.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports

a. Minutes of Environment committee held Monday 21st March 2016

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

b. Minutes of Special Town Council Meeting to consider Eden Drive Planning Proposal held Monday 4th April 2016

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

c. Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 11th April 2016

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

d. Minutes of the P&R committee held Monday 11th April 2016

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

e. Minutes of Finance Working Group held Thursday 14th April 2016

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

f. Minutes of Environment Committee held Monday 18th April 2016

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

g. Minutes of the Community Development and Engagement committee meeting held Monday 18th April 2016

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

h. Minutes of Special Town Council Meeting to approve 2015/16 Accounts held Monday 25th April 2016

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

i. Minutes of Policy & Records Management Working Group held Tuesday 26th April 2016

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

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

4. Matters of Information

4.1 STC Minutes / Committee Reports:

Minutes from the Environment Committee meeting held on 21st March 2016 had been included on the May 2016 Monthly Meeting agenda.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.2 Planning Applications:

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

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.3 Spring Lane – Formal Complaint:

A letter had been sent to County Cllrs John Robinson and Rachel Lumsdon. A response is now awaited. Cllr John Robinson reported that he has got a meeting with DCC's Complaints Officer the week commencing 16th May 2016 and will then schedule a further meeting between himself, County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon, Cllr Mel Carr and the Clerk. Cllr David Brown proposed that such a meeting should take place on-site at Spring Lane. Cllr John Robinson agreed this was a good idea and would request this. Cllr Gloria Wills also suggested that Cllr Alf Walton as Chair of the

Environment Committee also be at this meeting. This was also agreed. Cllr Alf Walton asked whether the static caravan remained in situ at the field of concern and Cllr David Brown confirmed the static caravan is still in place. Finally, Cllr John Robinson said that he is soon to have a meeting with DCC Officers regarding Station Road Playing Field and will also recommend this meeting takes place on-site and he will then update the Town Council of the outcome.

The issue of communication with DCC was discussed at the CDALC Larger Councils Forum on 12th February 2016. Several other Councils also expressed their frustrations and it was agreed this would be fed back to DCC via Lorraine O'Donnell at the next Local Councils Working Group meeting. Cllr Lynne Dentith asked the outcome of this latter meeting. The Clerk replied that no feedback had been received as a result of CDALC's Chief Executive Officer's enforced period of absence due to the termination of his contract of employment with DCC and the start of his new contract of employment with CDALC. However, the Clerk would be at a meeting on 13th May 2016 with Mr Ragg and would seek an update. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.4 Sedgefield Plan:

An update on The Sedgefield Plan will be given under agenda item 11.1. The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted Mr Henry Jones of DCC and requested a copy of the County Planning Committee minutes for 5th April 2016 in order to check the wording in relation to the Sedgefield Plan. Mr Jones had confirmed receipt of this request. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter. County Cllr John Robinson reported that he had a copy of these minutes and the comments that had been made at the Planning Committee regarding The Sedgefield Plan have not been recorded. Cllr Robinson is seeking clarification on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.5 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk has submitted to DCC Planning Officers all comments made in relation to applications 1-4 and 6. Planning application 5 had been discussed at the

Environment Committee meeting held on 18th April 2016 and comments duly fed back to DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

5. Dates of Meetings

Dates of the meetings taking place in May 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting along with events scheduled from May – November 2016. The Clerk reported that the Larger Councils Forum meeting will be taking place at Shildon and she had forwarded to Cllrs Allan Blakemore, Dudley Waters and John Robinson the paperwork for this meeting. In addition, the Clerk also reported that an Estates Working Group meeting to discuss Station Road Playing Field has been scheduled for Thursday 19th May 2016. Finally, a Youth Working Group meeting will be scheduled when feedback from the recent Youth Event has been received from Ms Ellie Seed. It is possible that this will be into June 2016.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Police Report

Apologies had been received from Sgt Alex Clarke who had forwarded the Police Report which was read out by the Clerk. The Police Report covered the period 11th April 2016 – 9th May 2016 during which time there have been 7 reported crimes as follows:

Burglary (dwelling):

On 12th April 2016, a burglary took place at a farm premises in Brafferton when foodstuffs were taken. A 33 year old male was later charged with the offence. This was domestic related and will not present an issue to other rural properties.

Theft:

Between 8pm on 20th April 2016 and 5.30am on 21st April 2016, unknown person(s) have stolen 100 to 150 litres of diesel from a lorry on farm premises near Great Stainton.

There have been four shoplifting offences at the Co-operative Store in Sedgefield. Three involve the same pair of males taking alcohol. The Police believe they have identified the males who have travelled from the Cleveland area and arrests will be made later this week. The Police also have a male suspect for the remaining offence which will be dealt with by a restorative approach.

Other:

There has been one minor assault with a suspect and this is currently being investigated.

Crime in Sedgefield is up by 40% when comparing 14 crimes in April 2016 with 10 crimes in 2015. There is a 21% detection rate for the year to date. There have been 6 anti-social behavior incidents in April 2016 compared to 8 such incidents in April 2015 (a decrease of 25%). There has been 1 youth anti-social behavior incident in April 2016 compared to 4 such incidents in April 2015 (a decrease of 75%).

The next PACT meeting will take place on Tuesday 14th June 2016 at 7pm in the Fletcher Room of the Parish Hall. The priority will be parking issues on the access road to Bolams and damage to grass verge.

Finally, the Clerk reported that Sgt Clarke was happy to receive any questions from Cllrs or the public and would provide a response.

Cllr Alf Walton commented that on Sunday 8th May 2016 he had reported to the Police armed poachers who had been in the front wood near Hardwick Hall. These poachers had been accompanied by lurchers which had attacked nearby poultry. Despite reporting this to the Police no officers had attended. Cllr Walton noted that this incident did not appear in Sgt Clarke's report and asked the Clerk to query this.

Cllr John Robinson requested the Clerk to request a report from the Police regarding the laws around sulkies being ridden on the roads and parked on highways. Cllr John Robinson reported the centre of Sedgefield on Sunday 8th May 2016 had been taken over by sulky riders with carts being parked on yellow lines, zigzag lines and being raced along the bypass with one alleged incident of a sulky colliding with a car. Cllr Robinson concluded that there had been no Police presence in Sedgefield at the time of these events. Cllr Allan Blakemore said that a similar thing had happened last year and it now looked like this was becoming an annual event. Cllr Maxine Robinson suggested that contact be made with the DCC Gypsy and Roma Traveller Service to determine what they knew about this event prior to it taking place. Cllr Mel Carr asked if this had been a traveller event. Cllrs felt that attendees were probably a mixture of traveller and non-traveller.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive the information contained in Sgt Clarke's Police Report.**

- ii) **The Clerk to query the non-inclusion of the reported incident of armed poachers in the Police Report.**
- iii) **The Clerk to request a Police Report regarding the laws around sulkies being ridden on the roads and parked on highways.**
- iv) **The Clerk to liaise with DCC Gypsy and Roma Traveller Service to determine what they knew of the event on Sunday 8th May 2016 and any plans for future events.**

7. Public Participation

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, closed the meeting for public participation.

Mrs Julia Bowles said that she hoped an Examiner had been appointed for The Sedgefield Plan and a date set for the start of the examination process. Mrs Bowles informed Cllrs that she had been studying the Statement of Community Involvement recently issued by DCC in relation to the County Durham Plan and she hoped that the Town Council would be submitting their own comments on this Statement. Mrs Bowles agreed with the comments made earlier in the meeting regarding sulkies and expressed her concerns regarding the treatment of horses and gave an example of one which had collapsed at a previous such event. Finally, Mrs Bowles asked when the Town Council would be appointing a new Co-opted Cllr. Cllr Mell Carr replied that the issues of The Sedgefield Plan Examiner, DCC's Statement of Community Involvement and Councillor Co-option were all on the agenda for discussion later at this meeting.

Mrs Janet Spalding pointed out that the Town Wall which was next to the plot of land next to the Catholic Church is no longer there. She asked what is the situation as the wall has now gone. Cllr Mel Carr replied that the Town Council had objected to the planning application to build a house on that site and had asked for the wall to be protected. DCC approved the planning application and the wall has now gone but it is to be rebuilt to a certain height.

Mr Howard Smith expressed his concerns regarding the horses in the village on Sunday 8th May 2016. Mr Smith said he had raised similar concerns last year, notably parking on zigzagged lines near the crossing. Mr Smith reported that the village greens had been left in an appalling state on Sunday evening and members of the public took it upon themselves to tidy up the area. Mr Smith said he appreciated that consideration needed to be given to peoples way of life, however, at the same time consideration must be given to the way of life of residents of Sedgefield whom are here all year round.

Mrs Sarah Guest reported that a public consultation event in relation to Eden Drive will take place on 6th August 2016 at Sedgefield Racecourse and she asked if the Town Council would be there. Cllr Mel Carr and the Clerk confirmed that the Town Council had not been informed of any such event. The Clerk will investigate.

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

8. Internal Reports

8.1 Chairman's Report

The Chair reported that over the past month he had attended:

- 9 Town Council meetings;
- An independent mediation meeting regarding the Ceddesfeld Hall lease;
- An Estates Working Group meeting;
- The Annual Town meeting; and
- A joint Town Council and DCC meeting regarding The Sedgefield Plan.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.2 Mayor's Report

The outgoing Mayor, Cllr Gloria Wills, expressed her thanks to all the support she had received during 2015/16 which had been an amazing year for her and consort husband Brian. She recorded her thanks to her family for their support. In addition, Cllr Wills also thanked Cllr Allan Blakemore for taking photographs at the recent meeting at which Mayoral financial donations had been distributed and the Citizen of the Year Award had been presented. Cllr Wills reported that to date she had received letters and cards of thanks from Fishburn Dance and the Sedgefield Players for the financial donations they had received. Finally, Cllr Wills wished Cllr Chris Lines good luck in his role as Mayor for 2016/17 and offered her support in any way she could.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.3 Co-option of Councillor Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Co-option of Councillor Update

Report. The Clerk reported that to date three application forms have been received from people applying for the current Councillor vacancy. In addition, a further two people have indicated they will be returning completed forms before the closing deadline.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to present at the Environment Committee meeting on 16th May 2016 a further update along with proposal for making an appointment as quickly as possible.

8.4 Consideration of Sedgfield Extra – Request from Cllr John Robinson

Cllr John Robinson had requested this item be removed from the agenda prior to the meeting.

8.5 Ceddesfeld Hall Lease Update Report by Town Clerk and Cllr Mel Carr

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Ceddesfeld Hall Lease Update Report produced by herself and Cllr Mel Carr informing Cllrs that a meeting between the Town Council and Ms Yvonne Probert of Durham Community Action has now taken place. Cllr Dudley Waters confirmed that a meeting had been held between SCA representatives and Ms Probert on Thursday 5th May 2016. The Clerk and Cllr Carr to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9. External Reports

9.1 DCC Report : County Cllr John Robinson

County Cllr John Robinson reported that there were currently lots of matters being progressed by DCC and provided the following verbal report:

- Devolution / North East Mayor – a DCC Statement on this matter will be considered by Cabinet later this week. Gateshead Borough Council have reaffirmed that they will not be taking part in the devolution process and NECA.
- Dementia Strategy – DCC have been undertaking a review of dementia care. A report had been presented to DCC's Special Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 9th May 2016. The purpose of the report was to provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

with the results of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of proposals by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust and the three CCGs in County Durham and Darlington to reconfigure dementia wards serving County Durham and Darlington. As a result of this 3 options were presented – Option 1 (provide 30 beds in one 15 male ward and one 15 female ward at Auckland Park Hospital and close Bowes Lyon Unit), Option 2 (provide separate male and female wards on separate sites at Auckland Park Hospital and Bowes Lyon Unit) and Option 3 (provide a mixed sex ward at Bowes Lyon Unit and a mixed sex ward at Auckland Park Hospital). It was agreed that before a decision could be made the Mitigation Strategy must be seen as DCC want people to have the right of choice.

- The Better Health Programme Sign Up – copies of NHS “The Better Health Programme – What Can We Do Better” leaflet were circulated to all Cllrs for information and a supply was given to the Clerk to make available to the public via Reception. These detailed consultation events to be held across the County in order to improve patient experience and outcomes such as how to provide more care outside of hospital and how to ensure patients with life threatening needs receive specialist care to ensure the best opportunity to make a good recovery. Cllr Robinson reported that he is seeking clarification regarding the implications, if any, for Sedgfield Community Hospital.
- Urgent Care Review – Cllr Robinson urged Cllrs to register to attend local sessions which were being held in order to have your say on how residents can access urgent care in Sedgfield. The Clerk confirmed that she had circulated all Cllrs details of how to register for such events.
- Street Lighting – with regard to DCC’s proposal to remove the street lights from the stretch of road between Winterton and Fishburn County Cllrs John Robinson and Rachel Lumsdon have expressed their concerns regarding the safety of children. This proposal has now been halted by DCC and more meetings will take place regarding this matter. Cllr John Robinson will keep the Town Council informed.
- Planning – during the previous week a planning application for Sherburn which had previously been refused, despite DCC Planning Officers recommending that it was approved, was last week overturned and approved because no planning consultant would represent the case. Cllr Robinson expressed his concerns of the precedence set by such an action which could potentially be similar to the Eden Drive planning applications. Cllr Gloria Wills pointed out

that when the public were defending the village with regards to the caravan park DCC had brought in a planning consultant who had to defend this. Town Councillors expressed their disbelief at this as they did not believe DCC Officers had the powers to make such a decision and this could only be made by DCC Members. Cllr Allan Blakemore said that such action by a DCC Officer must constitute neglect and said that investigation and clarification was required. Cllr John Robinson said he would bring a report back to the Town Council on this matter as well as a copy of the relevant Planning Committee minutes.

(Cllr Vanessa Carmichael left the meeting at this point)

- Comments made at Sedgefield Town Council Annual Town Meeting – Cllr John Robinson reported that he has forwarded to DCC the comments made by Mr Walter Howell at the recent Annual Town Meeting regarding the possibility of extending the yellow lines around the Hardwick Arms. Cllr Robinson has also forwarded to DCC comments made by Mrs Julia Bowles regarding the possible future of the three corner field and asked DCC to consider options.

Cllr Gloria Wills asked how many planning applications have been turned down by DCC Planning Committee with no defence from DCC Officers. Cllr John Robinson said this [the Sherburn application] was the first such application, however, Cllr Wills disputed this. Cllr David Brown said that Sherburn had nothing to do with Sedgefield and requested urgent clarification regarding this matter feeling like the planning application process was going from bad to worse resulting in great confusion. Cllr Brown said this situation requires clarification as soon as possible from DCC Officers as planning applications are being submitted all the time. He expressed his frustration at the time it takes DCC to provide answers to questions. Cllr Gloria Wills asked if it was possible to find out what the planning application at Sherburn was for in order to find out if there were any similarities with the Sedgefield situation. Cllr John Robinson suggested he would circulate to all the relevant Planning Report and report back on his investigations at the Town Council's Environment Meeting on 16th May 2016. This suggestion was agreed by all. Cllr Maxine Robinson said it was important to fact find and to find out who would be going to represent our community when planning applications are reconsidered. Cllr Chris Lines pointed out that earlier in the meeting a member of the public had indicated that a date had been set for a public consultation therefore the Town Council should write to DCC to seek clarification for the date/time/venue of such an event and the process that is to be followed and how DCC intend to defend their decision. Cllr Mel Carr said it was very important to look

carefully at the detail of this. It was agreed to hear the feedback from County Cllr John Robinson.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) County Cllr John Robinson to investigate and to circulate to all the Planning Report relating to Sherburn as well as report back the findings from his discussions with DCC Officers at the Town Council's Environment meeting on 16th May 2016.**

10. Correspondence

10.1 County Durham Plan – Statement of Community Involvement (consideration of various correspondence issued to all Cllrs in April 2016)

Cllr Mel Carr reminded Cllrs that various items of correspondence had been circulated to all in April 2016 in relation to the County Durham Plan Statement of Community Involvement and it had been agreed to give all time to consider.

Cllr Gloria Wills said she felt aggrieved at the time given to an elected member to speak at a Planning Committee meeting. In such a role a person is representing the views of the community. By limiting the time as is currently done this is effectively not involving the community by association which Cllr Wills said was unacceptable. She gave the specific example of her attendance at the last County Planning Committee at which Eden Drive had been considered and felt like this had been a bullying tactic. She felt this was particularly pertinent to a large scale development. Cllr Wills said she felt it was important this view was known. Cllr Lynne Dentith supported this suggestion and other agreed. Cllr John Robinson confirmed that County Cllrs are also limited in the time that they are allowed to speak at such Committees. He also pointed out that this is not just the case for planning but also for licensing. Cllrs agreed the concerns regarding lack of allowed time should also be applied to all issues considered by formal Committee process and request such procedures are reviewed.

Cllr Maxine Robinson commented that when applications are being considered over the late July/August traditional holiday season period the deadlines for consideration should be extended in order to ensure full community inclusion. This comment was agreed by all Cllrs.

Cllr John Robinson commented that with regard to planning applications there is still confusion as to the date from which the 21 days to call-in a planning application is calculated. Cllr Robinson suggested that a specific deadline date should be stated and included on the relevant correspondence in order to avoid any confusion. This comment was agreed by all Cllrs.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write to DCC stating the Town Council's comments on the Statement of Community Involvement.

10.2 Appeal Decision, Caravan, Spring Lane (email and attachment from County Cllr John Robinson dated 21st April 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all notification from the Planning Inspectorate, via County Cllr John Robinson, of their decision to dismiss the planning appeal in relation to Spring Lane. Cllrs supported the decision made by the Planning Inspectorate.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

10.3 Appeal Decision, Land South of Beacon Lane/Beacon Avenue (letter from The Planning Inspectorate dated 27th April 2016):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of a letter from the Planning Inspectorate dated 27th April 2016 officially informing the Town Council that the planning appeal in relation to land South Of Beacon Lane/Beacon Avenue (i.e. three corner field) has been dismissed. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that on 3rd May 2016 she had shared information provided by County Cllr John Robinson making the Town Council aware of this matter. Cllr Maxine Robinson suggested that this information be cascaded through the Residents Database for information. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that the success of all Town Council work in any planning decision/appeal should be disseminated through the Residents Database. This was agreed by all. Cllr Alf Walton commented that the points made by the Planning Inspectorate in this particular report were also very relevant to other sites which had been identified for planning in the Town. Cllr Allan Blakemore reported that a copy of this planning appeal decision will be included in the evidence pack sent to the Examiner who will be looking at The Sedgefield Plan.

RESOLVED:

i) To receive this information.

ii) Planning Committee decisions/appeals decisions to be circulated for information through the Residents Database.

11. Sedgefield Plan

11.1 Sedgefield Plan Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Sedgefield Plan Update report informing all that a joint meeting would be taking place between the Town Council and DCC on Thursday 5th May 2016 in order to consider the feedback which DCC had received in response to their statutory consultation exercise and to agree upon the appointment of an Examiner.

The Clerk reported that a very successful meeting had taken place on 5th May 2016. The Clerk circulated to all an anonymised summary of the feedback received by DCC which was broken down into those supporting The Sedgefield Plan, those who were neutral to the Plan and those who had objections to the Plan. The Clerk reported that of the comments made about the Plan none raised any issues which were new or previously not considered. The Sedgefield Plan does not require any amending as a result of this process instead DCC will supply this feedback as part of the evidence pack which is then presented to an Examiner. The second part of the meeting was to consider the three candidates who had been proposed by NPIERS as potential Examiners. It had been agreed to appoint Mr Nigel McGurk to this role who has a very robust background in Neighbourhood Plan examinations including the first such one of Thame before then going on to oversee thirty others. Mr McGurk has confirmed that he could start The Sedgefield Plan examination process in June 2016 and work is now jointly required between the Town Council and DCC to prepare and send to him a comprehensive evidence pack. When this pack is submitted then timescales will be identified in order that a provisional referendum date can be set. The Clerk reported that assurance has been given from DCC that arrangements for the Referendum will run alongside the examination process and do not need to wait until the conclusion of the actual examination. Cllr Allan Blakemore confirmed that the community Referendum in Sedgefield will be a stand alone event and not form part of any other election process as was initially thought to be the case at one point. Cllr John Robinson confirmed that DCC would like this Referendum to be completed by no later than Christmas 2016 as after that date DCC will need to prepare for their own Council elections in May 2017.

Cllrs were pleased with the progress made. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

12. 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/16/00689/FPA – erection of replacement boundary wall to front (partially retrospective), Manor House Farm, Mordon:**
This application is within the Parish of Mordon. Cllrs did not have any objections.
- 2. DM/16/00948/FPA – change of use from Public House (Class A4) to self catering holiday accommodation, The Naggs Head, 8 West End, Sedgefield:**
Cllrs expressed their concerns regarding the lack of disabled access in relation to this application and noted that only outline plans had been submitted. In addition Cllrs requested that as this building falls within the Town’s Conservation Area that the historical features of this building should be retained and preserved. Cllrs also requested the Clerk seek clarification as to whether outline only plans were allowed within a Conservation Area.
- 3. DM/16/01065/FPA – erection of stables for domestic use, Firfree Farm, Bradbury:**
This application is within the Parish of Bradbury. Cllrs did not have any objections.
- 4. DM/16/01181/FPA – single storey rear extension with chimney. Single storey front extension and addition of bow window, Beechgrove, Thorpe Larches, Sedgefield:**
Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

The Clerk circulated to all details of planning application DM/16/01338/FPA relating to 1 Stockton Road, Sedgefield which had been published by DCC earlier that day. The Clerk requested Cllrs consider this application and discuss this further at the

Environment Meeting on 16th May 2016.

RESOLVED:

- i) The comments on planning applications 1-4 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.**
- ii) Planning application DM/16/01338/FPA to be considered at the Environment Committee meeting to be held on 16th May 2016.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.44pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



POLICY & RESOURCES

Minutes of the proceedings of the **MAY POLICY & RESOURCES**
of the **Council** held following the Monthly meeting
in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 9th May 2016.

Present

Cllr. Gloria Wills (Chairman)

Cllr. Mel Carr (Vice-Chairman) and

Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Tim Jeanes, Chris Lines, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton and Dudley Waters

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Lynne Dentith, John Robinson and Maxine Robinson

2. Declaration of interest

None

3. Matters of Information

3.1 Epitaph Training:

Training for the Clerk and the Gardening Supervisor is on-hold until a Gardener can be appointed and time then be identified for such training to take place. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.2 Creating A Mayor's Charity:

The Charity Commission have now responded to the Town Council's application to create a Mayor's Charity. This response entails a number of questions. These are now to be considered by the Finance Working Group at its next meeting on 23rd June 2016. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 Title Deeds and Documentation at Meikles:

A proposal for alternative future storage of Title Deeds and Documentation was presented to the Estates Working Group on 14th January 2016. The Working Group suggested an alternative option and information is being sought in relation to this and will be presented to the next Working group meeting for a recommendation. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 New Town Council Website:

The draft Town Council website was discussed at the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting held on 18th April 2016. A new background design has been selected and the website is currently being updated by the designer. Following the AGM the Clerk will update content and then the hyperlink will be issued to all Cllrs prior to the site going live. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 Letter from Mr G Roper – Relocation of Post Office:

Cllr John Robinson to keep the Town Council updated as progress is made by DCC Highways in relation to time limiting the layby near Bells Store. The Town Council to monitor parking in this area following Post Office relocation.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Use of Residents Database:

Work has not yet started on preparing a protocol for usage of the Residents Database, however, the Clerk is considering requests upon receipt and actioning where deemed appropriate. The Clerk and Policy & Records Management Working

Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.7 CAB Funding:

The Clerk has written twice to Mr Neil Bradbury of CAB requesting a meeting in order to discuss the future provision of CAB fortnightly drop-in sessions within Sedgefield. No response has been received to date. Cllrs agreed that the Clerk should not spend any further time progressing this matter as it is now up to CAB to contact the Town Council.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.8 Station Road Playing Field:

An Estates Working Group meeting to solely consider Station Road Playing Field matters following the latest meeting with Mr John Reed and Mr Gerard Darby of DCC. This meeting will take place on Thursday 19th May 2016 at 9.00am.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.9 Training:

The Clerk has added the review of the Council's media handling protocols to the 2016/17 Policy & Records Management Working Group programme of work. The Clerk and Policy & Records Management Working Group to bring a recommendation to a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.10 Gardener Vacancy:

The recruitment process for the Gardener vacancy is now live and the closing date for completed applications is Friday 3rd June 2016. A Personnel Committee meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 7th June 2016 to undertake shortlisting. The

Gardening Supervisor will be involved in this process. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4. Public Participation

The Chairman, Cllr Gloria Wills, closed the meeting for the public to give views and comments. No members of the public had any comments they wished to make. The Chair re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports

5.1 Six Monthly Lift Inspection Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Six Monthly Lift Inspection Report which confirmed inspections on lifts at both the Parish Hall and Ceddesfeld Hall had taken place on 31st March 2016 and no defects had been found requiring any corrective action.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Cemetery Lodge Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Cemetery Lodge Update Report informing Cllrs that the Lodge has now been let on a 6 month fixed-term lease.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Financial Matters

6.1 Monthly Accounts: Income (as at 27th April 2016) / Expenditure (as at 3rd May 2016 minus unapproved cheques after 11th April 2016 (to be circulated prior to meeting))

RESOLVED:

The monthly accounts as had been circulated were approved.

6.2 Cheques for approval after 11th April 2016 (to be circulated prior to the meeting)

Details of cheques for approval after 11th April 2016 to 5th May 2016 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk circulated copies of cheques for approval for 9th May 2016. Cllr Alf Walton requested clarification as to what work had been performed by Ripon Farm Services in relation to cheque number 108641. The Clerk explained the work undertaken in relation to the hedgecutter and Kubota tractor. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that it had previously been agreed the Finance Working Group work with the Gardening Supervisor over the coming financial year to explore options for trading in existing tractors and purchasing something more suitable to the Council's needs.

RESOLVED:

- i) All cheques were approved for payment.**
- ii) Cllrs Carr and Wills plus the Town Clerk to duly sign the cheques.**

6.3 Debtors list as at 3rd May 2016 (to be circulated prior to the meeting)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all Debtors list which showed the money which was owed to the Town Council at 3rd May 2016. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that such a list was being produced on the recommendation of the Council's Internal Auditor as a tool for Cllrs in identifying bad debts and therefore a link to the Council's Debt Policy. This will become a standing agenda item.

Cllr Mark Cant commented that quite some time ago he had suggested that unclaimed Members Allowances be transferred to the Community Chest fund and used to support good causes. Cllr Cant said that he had not received any feedback from this suggestion. The Clerk apologised and said this matter had been discussed by the Finance Working Group in conjunction with the Council's Internal Auditor (see minutes from Finance Working Group meeting held on 27th January 2016 and approved at Monthly Meeting on 8th February 2016) at which Cllrs felt that it was not appropriate to enforce a condition that Cllrs must claim their allowance and say how this money should be used. They felt the purpose of the very small allowance available was for equality purposes to enable everyone to have the opportunity to fulfil their role. Cllrs also pointed out that when money is unclaimed it is then put back into the Council's budget and used to deliver services. It was also noted that Cllrs claiming an allowance first before then transferring elsewhere could potentially incur a tax liability. It was ultimately resolved that the Council cannot enforce a

condition that a Cllr must claim their allowance and how this money should be used.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.4 Bank Reconciliation Report by Town Clerk and Financial Assistant/Receptionist

Prior to the meeting the Clerk and Financial Assistant/Receptionist had circulated to all a Bank Reconciliation Report.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Bank/Cash Reconciliation Reports to become a standing agenda item at future P&R Committee meetings and paperwork to be issued in advance in monthly Committee packs.**

6.5 Internal Auditor's Findings Reports February 2016 by Finance Working Group

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all for information the Internal Auditor's Findings Reports from work undertaken in February 2016 all of which had been considered and was being overseen by the Finance Working Group. Note: minutes of Finance Working Group meetings are shared with all Cllrs and recommendation reports where necessary brought back to P&R Committee.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.6 Events and Community Chest Budget Carry Forwards Report by Finance Working Group

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an "Events and Community Chest Budget Carry Forwards Report" by the Finance Working Group. Cllrs agreed that any unallocated Community Chest money at the end of the financial year should be carried forward to the Chest's subsequent budget in addition to their annual allocation. Cllr Gloria Wills suggested that further thought is required by the Finance Working Group regarding the issue of events.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Community Chest be allowed to carry forward any surplus funds from one financial year to the next as from 31st March 2017.**

- ii) **The Finance Working Group to consider the issue of events funds from one financial year to the next and to bring back a further report to a future P&R Committee.**

6.7 Outstanding Fairhurst Invoice Update Report by Finance Working Group

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a report detailing the current situation regarding the outstanding Fairhurst invoice and the letter which had subsequently been prepared by the Finance Working Group and sent to Fairhurst. The Clerk circulated to all copies of letters from Mr Dominic Waugh of Fairhurst dated 29th April 2016 and 9th May 2016 in response to the Town Council's letter. The Clerk recommended that Cllrs now take the time to consider the information in these letters and to discuss this matter at the Environment Committee meeting on 16th May 2016. This was agreed by all.

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider the letters from Mr Dominic Waugh and to discuss this matter at the Environment Committee meeting on 16th May 2016.

6.8 Review of Internal Control 2015/16 Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Internal Control 2015/16 Report which contained within it Appendix A the Council's Internal Auditor's 2015/16 Internal Audit Annual Report. Cllr Mel Carr expressed the view that Mr Gordon Fletcher, the Internal Auditor, had performed very well during 2015/16. All Cllrs and the Clerk agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To receive the information in this report.**
- ii) **To receive the Internal Auditor's Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/16 attached in Appendix A giving the Town Council Substantial Assurance.**
- iii) **The Finance Working Group and Policy & Records Management Working Group to develop the policies identified in this report and present them to a future P&R Committee meeting for adoption.**

7. Correspondence

7.1 Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings – 15th April 2016 (email from

Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 15th April 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the NALC Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings dated 15th April 2016 for their information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Government Response To Petition (email Petitions: UK Government & Parliament dated 19th April 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the Government's response to the "Give Parish Councils the right to appeal planning decisions" petition email dated 19th April 2016 for their information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.3 Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings – 22nd April 2016 (email from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 22nd April 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the NALC Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings dated 22nd April 2016 for their information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.4 Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings – 29th April 2016 (email from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 29th April 2016)

The Clerk circulated to all for information an email from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 29th April 2016 providing the latest Bulletin on National Developments and Meetings.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.09pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **MAY ENVIRONMENT** committee of the **Council** held at **7 p.m.** in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 16th May 2016.**

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies**

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Mel Carr, Time Jeanes, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and
Dudley Waters

Cllr Alf Walton, Chair, reported that as agreed at the Monthly Meeting held on Monday 9th May
2016 several additional items had been added to this agenda as follows:

- A1 – Consideration of Fairhurst’s Outstanding Invoice
- A2 – Consideration of Planning Application for 1 Stockton Road
- A3 – Consideration of Spring Lane Update
- A4 – Consideration of Councillor Co-option Update
- A5 – Consideration of Planning Application for three corner field
- A6 – Consideration of SVAG letter regarding The Sedgefield Plan
- A7 – Consideration of SVAG letter regarding Eden Drive

RESOLVED:

These items would be considered after the ‘Correspondence’ element of the meeting.

2. **Declaration of interest**

None.

3. Matters of Information

3.1 Tractor Maintenance Report:

The Gardening Supervisor to commence preparing a maintenance schedule for all other gardening equipment upon the appointment of a new Gardener. The Finance Working Group and Gardening Supervisor to commence discussions in 2016/17 in relation to potentially trading in existing tractors and purchasing a new medium sized machine. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.2 A177 Junction:

Cllrs have continued to monitor this location and since the last meeting there have been no further incidents brought to the Town Council's attention.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.3 Memorial Benches:

The Clerk reported that the Council is currently awaiting the cost of refurbishment for the existing Thompson family bench. The cost of a new plaque has already been obtained. When all costings are known the Clerk will liaise with the family.

With regards to the Quinn family bench, the Council is currently awaiting details of the proposed wording of the plaque as well as the precise installation costs.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 Grass Along 28-36 North End:

No further complaints or incidents have been reported to the Town Council.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.5 Footpath Outside Hope Inn:

The Clerk has written to Mr John Adamson requesting a timetable for refurbishment of The Hope Inn. No response has yet been received. The Clerk also reported that following comments made at the recent Annual Town Meeting a further letter has been sent to Mr Adamson pointing out public comments made regarding the current state of The Hope Inn and making him aware of Sedgefield's inclusion in the Champion of Champions category in the Northumbria In Bloom 2016 competition. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Trees at Winterton Cottages:

AW Treecare have now completed this work to a high standard.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.7 Trees on Front Street:

AW Treecare have now completed this work to a high standard.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.8 Sedgefield In Bloom – Ceddesfeld Hall Project:

Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that the first phase of this project has now been completed. Currently the Bloom Group are waiting for DCC to apply the second application of spraying. Cllr Ian Sutherland as Bloom Champion to keep Cllrs updated on this project.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.9 Annual Headstone Safety Testing:

The Gardening Supervisor, with assistance from Darnton & Young, has laid flat 13 of the unsafe headstone identified during the 2015/16 Annual Headstone Safety Testing. The 8 headstones remaining are too heavy and large to be laid flat by hand. The Gardening Supervisor is to liaise with the Council's grave digging contractor to obtain a quotation for these to be laid flat as quickly as possible. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.10 Quotations to Temporarily Fill Various Potholes:

Darnton & Young have now temporarily filled all potholes around the Town and expect to temporarily fill the uneven surface of the footpath outside The Hope Inn later this week. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.11 Trees on Village Green:

AW Treecare have now completed this work to a high standard.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.12 Correspondence – Public Bridleway 33 and Public Footpath 34, Sedgefield Parish:

The Clerk has written to DCC saying the Town Council supports these changes and has no objections.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.13 Sedgefield Community College:

The Clerk has informed Sedgefield Community College that the Town Council recycles all wood chippings and polyanthes. The Clerk also reported that she had put the Community College in touch with the Bloom Group regarding this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.14 Youth Shelter:

The Clerk has liaised with Investing In Children and requested the state of the Youth Shelter factor into the Youth Event on 30th April 2016. Investing in Children had agreed to this request and will give feedback in due course.

The Clerk has written to Mrs Norma Neal thanking her for bringing this matter to the Council's attention, reassured her the Council is continuing to monitor this issue and is working with Investing in Children to identify possible solutions.

Cllr Alf Walton expressed his concern regarding the amount of combustible material which is now gathering in the nearby disabled toilets posing a fire risk. In addition, he also made the recommendation that the obsolete Christmas decorations stored in the toilet block are now removed and discarded. Cllrs agreed with this recommendation.

Cllr Gloria Wills expressed her dismay at the on-going situation regarding the rubbish and state of the Youth Shelter and asked if this was on the meeting agenda as an item in its own right. The Clerk confirmed that this matter as to be considered under agenda item 5.2 of the Community Development & Engagement Committee.

RESOLVED:

i) To receive this information.

ii) The Christmas decorations in the disabled toilets to be discarded.

3.15 Lambs Hill Turbines:

No Cllrs had requested this matter be put onto the agenda for this evening's meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.16 Planning Application – 31 St Luke's Crescent, Sedgfield:

The Clerk has informed DCC Planning that the Town Council has no objection to this

planning application.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation

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

Mrs Julia Bowles reported that in the absence of Mr Tony Guest and Mrs Sarah Guest the Sedgefield Village Action Group had recently shared information with the Town Council regarding The Sedgefield Plan and the Eden Drive Planning Application. The Clerk confirmed that such information had been received and would be shared with all Cllrs later in this meeting. Mrs Bowles thanked the Clerk for this confirmation and explained the need to share this information as quickly as possible in order to keep up to date with fast moving planning matters in relation to the Town. Mrs Bowles then said that at the recent DCC Planning Committee relating to Eden Drive Cllr Chris Lines had spoken, as was his right, as an individual rather than as a Council representative. During his speech he had referred to an anonymous leaflet which had been distributed through the Town. Mrs Bowles gave assurance that the Village Action Group do not issue anything anonymously but instead are very proud of being open. Mrs Bowles requested clarification as to which parts of the leaflet's content Mr Lines had issue with. Cllr Lines said he would need to refer back to the leaflet and would do so and answer Mrs Bowles question at a later date. Finally, Mrs Bowles asked for an update on the Town Council's website. The Clerk confirmed that following the Council's AGM and Town Meeting information on the website was being updated with a view to the site being launched later this week.

Mrs Janet Spalding requested clarification regarding the closure of a footpath which had been supported by the Town Council. Cllr David Brown explained this had been an ongoing matter for a number of years and no footpath and bridleway has been closed but instead diversions have been put in place to avoid going through an operational farm yard. Mrs Spalding thanked Cllr Brown for this clarification.

Mr Joe McKenna requested clarification as to events at Hardwick Hall Hotel on 22nd April 2016 for the Lobster Festival. Considerable noise disturbance had been caused by this

event to local residents. Mr McKenna explained his involvement in the processes undertaken when the Hardwick Hall was granted its current licence in March 2008. He confirmed that no changes had been made to that licence in the intervening time period and therefore all live music in any outdoor areas should finish at 22:30. Mr McKenna expressed his concerns that the conditions of this licence were being muddled. Similarly, Mr Michael Wilson also spoke about the noise from the Hardwick Hall's Lobster Festival on 22nd April 2016. He reported the live band played outdoors in the marquee until beyond midnight. When complaints were made to the Hardwick Hall Hotel the response given was that they were operating within the limits set for them. Mr Wilson asked what actions are being taken to ensure that the Hotel adheres to the licence conditions that are in place. Mr Wilson said that he understood if a licence was breached then actions could be taken and such a licence revoked. Mr McKenna said he believed the Hotel regularly operate outside of their licensing hours but this goes unnoticed as residents are not disturbed and therefore do not complain. Cllr Alf Walton reported that this matter was to be discussed later in the meeting.

Cllr Walton thanked the public for their comments and the meeting was then re-opened.

5. Reports

5.1 Planted Bed At Top Of Spring Lane Update Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Planted Bed At Top Of Spring Lane Update report which included in it a copy of the letter from the Sedgfield In Bloom Group to nearby residents. Cllr Alf Walton reported that he had recently spoken to Mrs Norma Neal of the Bloom Group who had informed him that local residents felt the bed in question was now much better albeit sparse in some areas due to vigorous pruning, however, these shrubs will all re-grow. Cllr David Brown recommended that this location in future be referred to as "West End" rather than Spring Lane. Cllrs agreed with Cllr Brown. Cllr Gloria Wills sought clarification as to whether the recent work undertaken at this bed had been done by DCC. Cllrs Walton and Sutherland confirmed the work had been undertaken (and funded) by DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Eden Drive Playground Safety Update Report by Town Clerk

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an Eden Drive Playground Safety Update Report which she had produced in conjunction with Mr Barrie Alderson of DCC. This report

presented the style of signage which should be displayed at Eden Drive and the issue for Cllrs to now consider what whether to display on this the Town Council's office hours number or to display DCC's 24 hour number for which there would be rechargeable costs if the public reported an incident. Details of the costings were explained in the report. Cllrs agreed that it was most appropriate to use the Town Council's office number.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive the information contained in this report.**
- ii) The Clerk to now seek a quote for a sign incorporating the Town Council's office hours number.**

5.3 Village Green Footpaths Report by Community Development Officer

Prior to the meeting a Village Green Footpaths Report by the Community Development Officer had been circulated to all for information. The Clerk reported in Cllr Mel Carr's absence that some prices and details have been received from the contractor who had performed the recent Church Turning refurbishment work in relation to the paths and car parks in and around The Hope Inn and Hardwick Arms, however, more information was needed including specific breakdowns in order to prepare a detailed report for a future Environment Committee to consider. It could be that contributions could be sought from the owners of these premises.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.4 Ceddesfeld Trees Report by Cllr Ian Sutherland:

Prior to the meeting a report regarding Ceddesfeld Trees by Cllr Ian Sutherland had been circulated to all for consideration. Cllr Sutherland explained that he had been contacted by a member of the public and asked to look at the state of certain trees in the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. As a result of this he had produced the report being considered and highlighted the six trees which he felt were of most concern. Especially as children play in this area. Cllr Sutherland circulated to all copies of a map showing the specific location of these trees, the majority of which are in the East of the grounds from the Hall to the Lake. In conclusion, Cllr Sutherland was proposing the Town Council ask AW Treecare to undertake an assessment on each of these trees and report back to the Council giving their professional advice. Cllr Gloria Wills

commented that trees do shed branches in Winter and asked if this was the case or if there was something actually wrong with the trees that have been highlighted. Cllr Alf Walton reported that he had been to view each of the trees as well as look at all others in the vicinity. He found that approximately 90% had dead branches on but did not appear to pose any risk to the public. Cllr Walton commented that in relation to the Laburnum identified in Cllr Sutherland's report this tree had now started to leaf up. It was agreed that professional advice be sought from AW Treecare in relation to the trees identified by Cllr Sutherland. In addition, Cllr Walton informed Cllrs that public concerns had been made over recent weeks regarding the Cherry tree outside Cherry Tree Nursery and the Swedish White Beam overhanging the church wall to the village green footpath leading from the Turning Circle to Rectory Row. It was agreed that AW Treecare's advice would also be sought regarding these additional trees.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk and Cllr Alf Walton to liaise with AW Treecare and bring a recommendation report back to a future Environment Committee meeting for consideration.

6. Correspondence

6.1 Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project (SLERP 47) – Proposal to Remove Street Lights – Sedgefield (email from Ms Yvonne Edwards, DCC dated 26th April 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Yvonne Edwards of DCC dated 26th April 2016 which was sent in response to the Town Council expressing its concerns regarding DCC's proposal to remove street lights from Salters Lane in Sedgefield towards Fishburn. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that during the Monthly Meeting on Monday 9th May 2016 County Cllr John Robinson had reported that this proposal had been halted while further investigation was undertaken, however, the Town Council have not been formally told of this by DCC. The Clerk reported that Cllr Mel Carr had submitted his comments regarding this issue and proceeded to read this out. The issues were as follows – this route is a major link between Sedgefield and Fishburn and is busy with traffic and pedestrians using it at all hours; this is a school route; it will be very dark if there are no street lights as there are no other buildings on this route; there is no transport bus or taxi service in the late evenings. Cllr Carr also suggested DCC be asked the following questions – has a survey been carried out to monitor the pedestrian usage; has a survey been carried out to monitor vehicles; what has been the cost to date of the audit; what will the cost of the proposed work be to remove the

street lights; will there be any financial savings; and why not replace lamps with low energy ones? All Cllrs agreed that these issues and questions should be sent to Ms Edwards. Cllr Ian Sutherland said it was essential that assurance was sought surveys were being undertaken at appropriate times i.e. at night and in the late afternoon in the winter months when children are walking back to Fishburn. Cllr Gloria Wills also pointed out that a Nursing Home is located on this route as well as a cycle route and route used by many runners. Cllr Wills said this proposal from DCC was just wrong and that a far better option was to use better bulbs instead. Cllr Chris Lines pointed out that the footpath is also very narrow raising safety issues even higher. Cllr David Brown said it was unbelievable that whilst DCC are saying the purpose of this proposal is to save money they could achieve efficiency savings by acting upon information from the public regarding faulty street lights and gave the example of street light number 404 on Rectory Row which has been burning continuously 24 hours per day despite Cllr Brown reporting this to DCC 10 days ago. Cllr Allan Blakemore said that under the Crime and Disorder Act (Section 6) a local authority has to do everything possible to reduce crime. This requirement must feature in any response to DCC as the personal safety of walkers, runners, cyclist etc will be compromised by the removal of street lights.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to submit a letter of response to Ms Yvonne Roberts based upon the comments made by Cllrs.

6.2 Hardwick Hall Hotel Noise Complaints – Friday 22nd April 2016 (chain of emails Cllr Gloria Wills (25th April 2016), Ms Helen Johnson of DCC (26th April 2016) and Mr Stephen Pollock of DCC (27th April 2016)

Prior to the meeting copies of emails from Cllr Gloria Wills, Ms Helen Johnson and Mr Stephen Pollock dated 25th April – 27th April 2016 regarding noise complaints in relation to the Hardwick Hall Hotel had been circulated to all for information. Cllr Wills explained that a very distressed resident had initially contacted her regarding noise from the Hall's Lobster Festival which went on until 1am. This resident had said that she had been upset to have been confronted by the attitude she received when contacting the Hall directly to complain. Cllr Wills said it had been essential to make Cllrs aware of this matter as no-one wanted to return to the old days of noise problems from the Hall. Cllr Wills reminded Cllrs of the actual stipulations of the times of the Hall's licence at the various locations across the venue and pointed out these were different to the information shared by Ms Helen Johnson of DCC in her email dated 26th April 2016. Cllr Wills also confirmed that the Lobster Festival had taken place in Marquee 1. Cllr Wills asked the question what licencing conditions are DCC working on and said this situation had for some reason become very confusing as to what

times/conditions had been granted for where when originally this had been very clearly stated in the original licence granted. With regard to Mr Pollock's email of 27th April 2016, Cllr Wills asked the Clerk if any further update had been received from Mr Pollock following his meeting with the Hardwick Hall's Hotel Manager. The Clerk confirmed that no further information had been received from Mr Pollock. The Clerk suggested that a joint meeting with all relevant parties would be the most appropriate way forward.

Cllr Allan Blakemore pointed out that the Hall currently has an application for a variation to its licence and the Town Council needs to ensure our concerns, and those of residents, regarding the existing licence not being followed are known as the rules must be applied consistently. Cllr Wills confirmed that there are currently lots of anomalies when the reality was no matter what the event the stipulated times should apply and noise is an issue. Cllr Blakemore said that historically when the Town Council had approached the Hall a commitment had been given that all music would be inside the Hall after 11.30pm.

Cllr David Brown pointed out that if anyone wanted a licence they had to follow the procedure of applying to DCC. If this request was straightforward then a licence would be issued, if there was a problem or concern then the request goes to DCC's Licensing Committee where it is discussed and a decision made which could include attaching certain conditions. When problems arise in relation to an already granted licence then local residents and the Town Council should make their objections known and request a review of the licence by the Licensing Committee. Such a Committee will be open to the public. Cllr Brown suggested that the Town Council contacts DCC and asks for a review of Hardwick Hall Hotel's current licence. Cllr Wills pointed out that at the last such Licensing Committee she and Cllr Mel Carr had attended in relation to the Racecourse it had been pointed out that such an approach could only be followed when there is an on-going problem and not a single problem. However, it was important that the Town Council do not let go of this situation. Cllrs agreed with the Clerk's earlier suggestion to have a joint meeting with DCC's Ms Helen Johnson and Mr Stephen Pollock in order to progress this matter.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) The Clerk to contact Mr Stephen Pollock and ask for an update following his**

meeting with the Hardwick Hall Hotel's Manager (as referenced in his email dated 27th April 2016).

iii) The Clerk to liaise with Ms Helen Johnson and Mr Stephen Pollock to set up a joint DCC/Town Council meeting to discuss the issue of noise from the Hardwick Hall's recent Lobster Festival.

6.3 Sedgefield In Bloom (minutes of meeting held 4th May 2016):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of the minutes of the Sedgefield In Bloom Group meeting held on 4th May 2016 for information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.4 Great Crested Newt Survey (email from Mr Mike Perkins, E3 Ecology Ltd dated 16th May 2016):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email received from Mr Mike Perkins of E3 Ecology Ltd dated 16th May 2016 in which he was requesting the Town Council's permission to perform a Great Crested Newt survey on the Ceddesfeld Hall pond. The email contained the details of how such a survey would be carried out but no details of who had commissioned this work or why. Mr Perkins was seeking the Town Council's permission in order that a survey could be conducted on 24th May 2016. Cllr Alf Walton asked if anyone knew whether such a survey had been undertaken when Eden Drive and Thurlow Grange had been developed as this area was within 500 metres. No-one knew if such a survey had been undertaken. Cllr Walton expressed his concerns regarding the implications of the potential findings of such a survey for future work within the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. Cllrs agreed the implications of such a Survey could be significant for the Town Council and that as not all necessary information had been supplied by Mr Perkins it was agreed that permission would not be granted on this occasion. Cllr David Brown expressed his opposition to this view and felt the survey should go ahead as it was important to preserve the environment as much as possible. The majority of Cllrs agreed not to give permission for this survey.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Mr Perkins that the Town Council does not give its permission for a Great Crested Newt Survey to take place on the pond at Ceddesfeld Hall.

6.5 Bloom Project in Ceddesfeld Gardens (email from Mrs Norma Neal, Bloom Publicity Officer dated 16th May 2016):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email from Mrs Norma Neal, Sedgefield In Bloom Group's Publicity Officer dated 16th May 2016 which she had also sent to the SCA Management/Executive Committee for similar consideration. In this email Mrs Neal reported the Bloom Group have removed a large amount of overgrown ivy from the archway wall adjacent to the welcome window looking into the Bar of Ceddesfeld. The Bloom Group would like, at their own expense, to skim and render the wall on both sides to match the Hall and form an attractive connection to the main building and enhance the flower beds planted over recent years by the Group. Over time the Group would also like to add some tasteful art work to the wall. The Bloom Group were requesting permission to proceed with this work in order to complete by 13th July 2016 the date of the Northumbria in Bloom judges' visit.

Cllr Ian Sutherland declared a non-pecuniary interest in this matter.

Cllr Lynne Dentith pointed out that Ceddesfeld Hall is a listed building and as such before any work can be undertaken appropriate permissions are required including consultation with the Conservation Officer who will stipulate the materials that must be used. Cllr Dentith said it was essential the proper procedures were followed. Cllr Gloria Wills agreed with Cllr Dentith and expressed her concerns that the Bloom Group may be unaware how potentially expensive this work will be. Cllr Wills also pointed out that the Hall belongs to the Town Council and therefore the Town Council must be a part of all future discussions regarding this proposal. Cllr Ian Sutherland said that before the Bloom Group progressed to seeking quotations it wanted to find out if there was a general principle of support from the Town Council and this was the reason for this initial approach. Cllr Chris Lines expressed his concerns regarding the tone of the email received and the deadline of completion by 13th June 2016, however, he supported the idea of improving this area. Cllr Dentith reiterated the importance of the Conservation Officer being brought into discussions before any further action was undertaken by anyone. Cllr Allan Blakemore expressed his dissatisfaction at the way in which this request had been made to the Town Council and asked why such a request had not been made by the Bloom Secretary to the Town Clerk with clear reference to the Bloom's minutes when such a decision had been made. He felt the tone of the email was inappropriate. In addition, Cllr Blakemore also asked why a

timescale was being imposed when such work cannot be done immediately to a Listed Building? Cllr Blakemore concluded by saying the issue for the Town Council was why this work is being underdone and how it should be undertaken as this is a Town Council owned building and there should be not dictation from another Group.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to liaise with Mr Howard Smith (Bloom), Ms Judith Miller (DCC Conservation Officer) to determine a suitable date for a joint meeting and then to invite all Cllrs in order to progress this matter. A follow-up report will be brought back to a future Environment Committee meeting.

At this point in the meeting those additional items agreed at the start of the meeting were considered as follows:

ADDITIONAL ITEM 1: Consideration of Fairhurst's Outstanding Invoice:

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that additional information supplied by Mr Dominic Waugh of Fairhurst had been issued to all Cllrs at last week's P&R Committee meeting and it was agreed to consider this in relation to the current outstanding Fairhurst invoice. The Clerk also reported that earlier that day she had received a Final Demand letter from Fairhurst informing the Town Council that if payment is not received within seven days they will instigate collection of this debt through outside agencies and seek costs and interest.

Cllr Gloria Wills said that she felt the responses received from Fairhurst were very poor and had not had time to consider them in detail, however, she felt the invoices to date had been tailored to fit what Fairhurst felt to be the amount of money available for the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Wills said that she objected to paying this outstanding invoice.

Cllr Allan Blakemore proposed the outstanding invoice be paid with a strongly worded accompanying letter stating that due to the lack of itemization of work undertaken and disagreement of meeting attendance this invoice will be paid but this is the full and final settlement of our account and no further invoices would be paid. Cllrs Lynne Dentith and Chris Lines supported this proposal. Cllr Chris Lines asked whether the Town Council really wanted to enter into a protracted legal process which would incur significant cost above the amount of the actual invoice and take up significant time when the Council has so many other issues to progress?

A vote was taken as to whether this invoice should be paid. The majority of Cllrs agreed not to pay this invoice.

Cllrs Lines and Blakemore reiterated their concerns that this matter will end up in litigation which will be a very expensive process. Cllr Lines was concerned that the evidence provided by Fairhurst would already weaken the Town Council's case. Cllr Ian Sutherland asked if this Committee had the delegated powers to decide whether or not to pay this invoice. The Clerk replied that it had been agreed by the P&R Committee on Monday 9th May 2016 for this matter to be delegated to the Environment Committee for this meeting to make a decision. Cllr Lynne Dentith reiterated her support for Cllr Blakemore's proposal, i.e. a letter clearly stipulating this is fully and final payment of the Town Council's entire account. Cllr Gloria Wills said that she did not feel that Fairhurst have made a good case for answering the Town Council's questions nor was the invoice comprehensive, however, she would go along with Cllr Blakemore's proposal so long as a strongly worded letter was sent stating this was full and final payment. All Cllrs agreed with Cllr Blakemore's proposal.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to raise a cheque for this outstanding invoice and to write to Fairhurst in accordance with Cllrs wishes.

ADDITIONAL ITEM 2: Consideration of Planning Application DM/16/01338/FPA – replacement of existing door and frame with new double glazed timber door and frame, 1 Stockton Road, Sedgfield:

Cllr did not have any objections to this application.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to notify DCC Planning Officers that the Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

ADDITIONAL ITEM 3: Consideration of Spring Lane Update:

The Clerk reported that Ms Susan Porter, Senior Planning Enforcement Officer (South West Area) for DCC had emailed on 13th May 2016 to inform the Town Council that following the Planning Inspectorate's recent Appeal decision relating to this site she had written to the owners of the site seeking works to clear the site of all debris, remains of the vehicle trailer and the vandalized caravan. If no works are undertaken then DCC will have to consider what enforcement tools are available to deal with the site as it currently stands, as there is no active use of the site. Ms Porter will keep the Town Council updated accordingly.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

ADDITIONAL ITEM 4: Consideration of Councillor Co-option Update:

The Clerk circulated to all a Councillor Co-option Update report informing Cllrs that 5 applications had been received for the position of Councillor Vacancy.

RESOLVED:

i) To hold a Special Town Council meeting at 6pm on Tuesday 7th June 2016 to which each candidate will be invited to attend for 5 minutes each.

ii) The Clerk to write to all applicants.

iii) The Clerk to issue to all Cllrs prior to the meeting copies of all application forms.

ADDITIONAL ITEM 5: Consideration of Planning Application for three corner field:

The Clerk circulated to all copies of Planning Application DM/16/01450/OUT which had been published on the DCC List of Planning Applications earlier that day. This application is from North Yorkshire & South Durham Properties c/o Young's RPS and is the resubmission of the refused application DM/14/021318/OUT proposed residential development with all matters reserved (indicative 34 dwellings) for land South of Beacon Avenue, Beacon Lane, Sedgefield. The Clerk reported that by the time this planning application is discussed at by the Town Council at its next Monthly Meeting on 13th June 2016 a period of 28 days will have lapsed meaning it will not be possible to request this application be called in. The Clerk recommended that the Town Council write to the Planning Officer and request this application be called in and to state that comments on this application will be submitted by no later than 15th June 2016. This was agreed. Cllr Gloria Wills said that she could not believe this application had been accepted by DCC and she recommended that in the letter to be sent to the Planning Officer clear reference is made to the need for DCC to comply with Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act. Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write to DCC Planning Officers in accordance with Cllrs wishes and this application to be fully discussed at the next Monthly Meeting.

ADDITIONAL ITEM 6 – Consideration of SVAG letter regarding The Sedgefield Plan:

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email and attachment from Mrs Sarah Guest of the Sedgefield Village Action Group dated 15th May 2016 for information. Attached to this email was a letter sent by the Group to Mr Stuart Timmiss of DCC expressing support for the emerging Sedgefield Plan. Due to on-going planning application related matters the Clerk believed it was important that Cllrs had this information now rather than waiting until the June 2016 Committee pack issue.

ADDITIONAL ITEM 7 – Consideration of SVAG letter regarding Eden Drive:

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email from Mrs Sarah Guest of the Sedgefield Village Action Group dated 11th May 2016 in which the Group were pledging their support for the application of Rule 6 Status. Again, due to on-going planning related matters the Clerk believed it was important Cllrs had this information now. Cllrs agreed with this decision and said they needed time to consider this matter. Cllr Gloria Wills reminded Cllrs that a group of local residents had got together and used the Rule 6 Status to defend the Town from the Caravan Park application several years ago. This Status had given the group formal status to then go and question the application and present an opposing case. There were options for this Status, e.g. the Town Council could seek such Status if it had the mandate of the people or alternatively a group of local residents could apply. A request for Rule 6 Status needs to be applied for and validated and this must take place one month before any need to present a case. The Town Council needs to consider if this approach is beneficial. Cllrs agreed that time is now needed to consider this matter before then discussing but agreed that the next Monthly Meeting on 13th June 2016 was too far away. It was proposed this be added to the agenda of the Special Town Council meeting on Tuesday 7th June 2016.

RESOLVED:

The potential use of Rule 6 Status to be added to the Special Town Council meeting agenda for Tuesday 7th June 2016 following the appointment of a new Co-opted Councillor.

Cllr Alf Walton explained that due to the confidential nature of the following item this would be discussed under Exempt Information and therefore members of the public were requested to leave the meeting (Section 1 Sub Section (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960).

7.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

the siting of the self-watering containers, however, the actual installing of these is on-hold until the new Gardener is appointed. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 Free Cycle Stands:

Work is on-going in this matter. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 Pride of Sedgefield Awards:

The Clerk has written to Mr John Robinson asking for prior notification of future Awards so as to ensure these coincide and compliment other events.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.5 Draft Sedgefield Grant Funding Policy:

Several Cllrs have given their feedback to the Community Development Officer as agreed by 22nd April 2016. The Community Development Officer is collating feedback and arranging meetings with those Cllrs who have requested this. The Community Development Officer and Cllr Allan Blakemore to bring a revised Policy to a future CD&E Meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 County Durham Plan – Statement of Community Involvement:

The correspondence shared with Cllrs had been considered by Cllrs as part of the Monthly Meeting held on Monday 9th May 2016.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.7 Latest Draft of Town Council Website:

Cllr Allan Blakemore has provided additional images for the website. InnovTech have made the design changes requested in relation to the Town Council's branding.

Following the AGM and Annual Town Meeting the existing content is being updated to reflect the latest information and once done the website will be launched.

The Clerk and Policy & Records Management Working Group will bring a recommended Website Media Policy to a future P&R Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation

The Chairman, Cllr Allan Blakemore closed the meeting for the public to give their views and comments. 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 the Community Development Officer had been circulated to all.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Youth Event 30th April 2016 Update – Verbal Report by Cllrs Chris Lines and Lynne Dentith (Note: to include feedback on Youth Shelter)

Cllr Chris Lines reported the Youth Event had taken place on Saturday 30th April 2016. The morning session had been for the 11 years and under age category. This session had been very successful and provided the opportunity to engage with lots of children and get their views to the questions the Town Council had devised. The afternoon session, aimed at the 12 – 17 year olds, had been less successful, however, it had been acknowledged by all parties that this is a much harder to reach age group. At

the close of the event Cllrs Lines had spoken to Ms Ellie Seed of Investing In Children and identified some potential options for interacting with the 12 – 17 year olds through links with Sedgefield Day, the Sedgefield Village Games and pre-planned events at Sedgefield Community College. Ms Seed is currently collating the feedback received from the Youth Event on 30th April 2016 and will provide the Town Council with a report along with thoughts about the options for engagement with older children. The date for this report is as yet unknown, however, Cllr Lines is in contact with Ms Seed so that momentum is maintained in this work.

With regards to the Youth Shelter, Cllr Lines confirmed the Town Council had requested this matter be incorporated into the Youth Event session albeit the feedback is likely to be poor due to lack of engagement with the older children. Cllr Gloria Wills expressed the view that the rubbish and issues being caused at the Youth Shelter is not being done by young people as categorized by this work. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that the Youth Shelter be moved and placed on the central village green. Cllrs felt this suggestion was not appropriate as this would spoil the village green and heritage site visuals in this location. Cllr Allan Blakemore said there was a clear need for an outreach youth worker which could be funded through the AAP. Cllr Blakemore said that the existing location for the youth shelter was well lit and safe and that the best way for a resolution was to work with young people to get a solution rather than displacing the problem and moving it elsewhere. Cllr Lines said it was important to look at the bigger picture of youth and have a sustainable strategy in place. Investing In Children have a number of options for developing links with the older children audience and we should use these. Cllrs agreed with this. Cllr Wills said that at the same time it was important not to lose sight of the Youth Shelter issues.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.3 Outdoor Fitness Update – Verbal Report by Cllrs Chris Lines and Dudley Waters

Cllr Chris Lines reported that articles seeking public opinion about the potential for siting outdoor fitness equipment at Eden Drive Play Area have now been placed in both the Sedgefield Extra and the Sedgefield News. The Clerk reported that Cllr Mel Carr had submitted comments stating some local residents had approached him to say such equipment would be better at Hardwick Park as they felt extra items at Eden Drive Play Area would cause more disturbances and this site is a very wet site

underfoot. Cllr Gloria Wills agreed with these comments and also felt that Hardwick Park would be a better location due to current footfall there. Cllr Lines confirmed that whilst no official request has been made to the Hardwick Park he knew from historical discussions that there would be a willingness for such equipment there. Cllr Allan Blakemore reminded Cllrs that support in the form of consultation evidence is needed in order to show support for this proposal otherwise the Council will need to think again about identifying other potential usages for this Section 106 money. Cllr Lines will keep Cllrs updated as/if more comments are made by the public.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Correspondence

None

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.57pm.