

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY
MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 9th January 2017



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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. Joanne Elliott, Tim Jeanes, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Dudley Waters.

2. Declaration of interest

None.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports

a. Minutes of Finance Working Group held Wednesday 23rd November 2016

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

b. Minutes of Personnel Committee held Thursday 1st December 2016

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

c. Minutes of Monthly Meeting held Monday 5th December 2016

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

d. Minutes of P&R Committee held Monday 5th December 2016

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

e. Minutes of the Environment committee meeting held Monday 5th December 2016

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

f. Minutes of the Community Development & Engagement committee meeting held Monday 5th December 2016

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

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

4. Matters of Information

4.1 Ceddesfeld Hall Lease Update:

Cllr Mel Carr and the Town Clerk are to meet with the Council's solicitor on 11th January 2017 to seek legal advice/clarification. A further lease mediation with the SCA and Durham Community Action is scheduled for 18th January 2017. Cllr Carr and the Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter. Cllr Gloria Wills asked for clarification as to who is the Council's solicitor. The Clerk confirmed this as BHP Law, the solicitor who had originally been appointed by the Council in 2013 to deal with this matter. Cllr Wills thanked the Clerk for this information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.2 Franziska Willer Ward, Sedgfield Community College:

County Cllr John Robinson to keep the Town Council updated following the County Cllrs meeting in Durham with Ms Jacques (Chief Executive – County Durham & Darlington HNS Foundation Trust).

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.3 Planning Inspectorate – Land to the South of Beacon Lane:

No information has yet been received regarding the Planning Inspectorate's public inquiry relating to the planning application for land to the South of Beacon Lane. It was noted that it had been previously agreed Cllr Mel Carr would represent the Town Council at this inquiry. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.4 Public Participation:

The Clerk has written to County Cllr John Robinson requesting his progress in sourcing funding to refurbish the Corner Shop and Premier Store fronts in the Conservation Area. A response is now awaited.

County Cllr John Robinson to keep the Town Council updated on proposals for a shallow wetland feature on Station Road Playing Field and DCC's progression of application to register this area as village green.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.5 DCC Updated by County Cllrs:

County Cllrs Lumsdon and Robinson to provide a written report to the Town Council detailing how their respective Members Neighbourhoods budgets have and are being spent. The Clerk reported that earlier that day County Cllr Robinson had sent an email to Ms Jane Young in which he stated "I was asked to provide a figure on how much neighbourhood money has been or is committed to be spent in regards to projects in or supporting Sedgefield. On the sheet provided for me which I had at the last meeting it is £38450. More than happy to supply the figures given to me that cover from 2010". Cllrs agreed that the information provided was not what had been requested and then promised by both County Cllrs, i.e. a full breakdown of Members Neighbourhoods budgets spent across the entire Electoral Ward. Cllr Chris Lines proposed that a follow-up letter be sent to both County Cllrs reiterating what information had been requested by the Town Council and promised by both. All Cllrs agreed with this proposal and the Clerk to write to the County Cllrs.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.6 Public Participation:

The Clerk has written to Mrs Julia Bowles explaining how Cllrs can comment on minutes.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.7 Mayor's Report:

Thank you letters have been issued to all those who helped with the Council's recent Snow Party and Mayor's Carol Service.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.8 Eden Drive Development Query:

The Clerk has written to the Planning Inspectorate, with a copy to DCLG and Mr Stuart Timmiss at DCC, requesting clarification regarding the highways issues in relation to this proposed development and enclosed a copy of the email from Mr Henry Jones of DCC. A response had now been received from the Planning Inspectorate dated 3rd January 2017 in which it said they would aim to provide a written response to the Council's enquiry within 20 days, however, in more complex

cases a response can take longer and they would keep the Council informed accordingly. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.9 Caravan Spring Lane:

The Clerk has now written to the Planning Inspectorate to express the Council's objections to this planning appeal. The Planning Inspectorate have confirmed receipt of this correspondence. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.10 The Sedgefield Plan:

The Clerk has written to Mr Nigel McGurk and provided a copy to Mr Tony Guest and Ms Julie Archer. An updated article has been produced and shared with SVAG and disseminated through the Residents Database as well as placed on the Council's website and Plan's website. Since the production of Committee packs a response has been received from Mr McGurk and will be considered under agenda item 10.3.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.11 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk has submitted to DCC Planning Officers all comments made by Cllrs in relation to planning applications 1-4.

No Cllrs submitted any objections to application 5.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

5. Dates of Meetings

Dates of meetings taking place in January 2017 had been circulated prior to the meeting along with events scheduled for January – March 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Police Report

PC John Seymour presented the Police Report for the period 5th December 2016 – 9th

January 2017 in which the following 16 reported crimes had taken place:

Burglary:

- On New Year's Eve, unknown persons have removed a section of the letterbox of a property in Kerr Crescent before reaching in and obtaining keys. The thieves have removed a safe containing a substantial amount of cash, jewellery and house keys.
- Overnight on 29th December 2016, an attempt was made to force entry to the rear double doors of a dwelling house in White House Drive. The would-be thieves made off empty handed.
- Overnight on 28th December 2016, the shutters were forced at the Hardwick Park Visitors Centre. The coffee machine was attacked and the cash box containing a small amount of money was stolen.
- On 23rd December 2016, unknown person(s) entered Sedgefield Cricket Club and removed the till from the bar area. The alarm activated at 4am, however, staff did not contact the police. The burglary was discovered by officers when the till was discovered by a member of the public.
- Overnight on 17th December 2016, unknown person(s) entered an insecure stable block at a farm location off the A689 and a quantity of tack was taken.

Criminal Damage:

Overnight on 27th December 2016, unknown person(s) have entered a paddock at Howe Hills Farm and cut the hair from the tail and mane of an expensive horse.

Other:

There have been 2 damages to windows, 2 fuel thefts from HGVs on the A689, 2 assaults, 2 thefts, 1 sexual assault and a kidnapping/false imprisonment – this relates to an incident where a man discovered that his ex-wife was working as an escort. The man arranged to meet her in a hotel as a client. It was alleged that during the domestic he would not let her leave.

Crime has increased from 163 crimes year to date (2015) to 172 crimes (2016) which equates to an increase of 6%. Detection rates stand at 33% (this was 31% for the same period last year).

In December 2016 there had been 75 incidents of anti-social behavior which compared to 102 such incidents in December 2015 which equates to a 26% decrease. In December 2016 there had been 30 incidents of youth anti-social behavior which compared to 40 such incidents in December 2015 which equates to a decrease of 25%.

The next PACT meeting will take place on Tuesday 9th March 2016 at 7pm in the Fletcher

Room of the Parish Hall. No priorities have yet been identified for this meeting.

PC Seymour concluded by introducing his colleague Inspector Sarah Honeyman. Inspector Honeyman introduced herself as the new Neighbourhood Inspector and whilst based in the Newton Aycliffe Office will regularly be visiting the Sedgefield area and will attend future Town Council meetings from time to time.

Cllr Carr thanked PC Seymour and Inspector Honeyman for their report and attendance.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7. Public Participation

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

Mrs Julia Bowles reminded Cllrs that at the last Monthly Meeting she had thanked Cllrs for all the information supplied to her regarding the Town Council's objections to DCC's proposal to remove street lighting between Sedgefield and Fishburn. Mrs Bowles commented that in the local press she had found out a similar proposal had been made by DCC in Consett but following a public campaign and the involvement of the local County Cllrs this decision had been over-turned and the lights would remain. Mrs Bowles said she would pass information to County Cllrs Robinson and Lumsdon for their consideration. She also commented that there are rumours within the Town that the Turners garage site may become an Aldi and if this was the case then yet more traffic could potentially travel along the road where lights are being removed by DCC. Finally, Mrs Bowles commented that she has written on a number of occasions to DCLG and found that responses are considerably delayed. As a result of this Mrs Bowles has sent requests to the PM's Office who in turn have contacted DCLG and also received no response. As a result of this it has been suggested Mrs Bowles contact the North East Government Cabinet Minister to request a meeting to discuss this matter. Mrs Bowles asked if the Town Council would be interested in attending such a meeting and if so to let her know. Cllr Carr thanked Mrs Bowles for her comments and assured her that the Town Council had done all it could to persuade DCC to retain the lighting between Sedgefield to Fishburn, however, the Town Council was not in a position to take on the costs for this lighting as had been suggested by DCC.

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

8. Internal Reports

8.1 Chairman's Report

A Chairman's Report was circulated to all in which he wished fellow Cllrs a Happy

New Year and reported that since the last Monthly Meeting he had attended:

- 6 Town Council meetings;
- The Mayor of Sedgefield's Carol Service in St Edmund's Church on 6th December 2016;
- The Celebration of Volunteers event at the Manor House in Sedgefield on 8th December 2016.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.2 Mayor's Report

A Mayor's Report was circulated to all in which he reported that since the last Monthly Meeting had had attended:

- The Civic Christmas Carol service at St Edmund's Church. It was great to see the church so full, and that the service included contributions from all of Sedgefield's churches. Michael King led the service extremely well and of course, the two primary school choirs – singing together – provided the highlight of the night, closely followed by the atmospheric use of the new lighting. Thanks to those Cllrs who were able to attend and to the Town Council staff for organizing everything so well.
- The Sedgefield Village Games' "Celebration of Sedgefield Volunteers".
- Various carol services around the North East.
- The Christmas country market in Sedgefield Parish Hall.
- The Polar Express film event – organized by Cllrs John Robinson and Maxine Robinson and the SCA to raise money for The Lullaby Trust.
- The Pop In Club Christmas Party at Ceddesfeld Hall.
- Carols on the village green.
- The Christingle service.
- The SCA Christmas party.

The Mayor also reported the following events which are taking place soon:

- A concert in the Parish Hall featuring Lirica and Sedgefield Lyrics Youth Choir on Saturday 28th January 2017.
- The Mayor's Charity Ball at Hardwick Hall Hotel on Friday 3rd March 2017. The Clerk informed Cllrs that letters containing precise details regarding the Ball are due to be issued imminently.

The Mayor concluded by thanking all fellow Cllrs who have supported his events to date and was pleased to say that charity fund raising is going well. He also expressed thanks to Town Council staff who have worked hard on his behalf with

particular thanks to Ms Jane Young.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9. External Reports

9.1 DCC Update by County Cllrs Rachel Lumsdon & John Robinson

No County Cllrs were present.

10. Correspondence

10.1 Minutes of the proceedings of the Joint Sedgefield Town Council/SVAG Meeting held on 17th October 2016 (email from Mr Kevin Gilmore, resident of Sedgefield)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Kevin Gilmore dated 13th December 2016 in which he had detailed his suggestions for the spending of Section 106 money relating to the large scale development at Eden Drive. Cllrs agreed that it was very encouraging to get such comments and suggestions from the public.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to consider further once Cllrs have discussed DCC's response to the Town Council's recent letters seeking clarification regarding Section 106 and its allocation (Note: These discussions will take place at the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 16th January 2017).

10.2 Sedgefield Community Hospital (email from Mr Peter Howarth, resident of Sedgefield)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email received from Mr Peter Howarth which he had recently sent to Mr Phil Wilson MP outlining his concerns for the future of services from Sedgefield Community Hospital and requesting clarification as to the future of this facility. The Clerk then circulated to all additional information which Mr Howarth had emailed (dated 7th January 2017) requesting this be shared with Town Councillors for their information. This information included a covering email of explanation from Mr Howarth accompanied by a letter from Ms Jacques, Chief Executive of County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust to Mr Phil Wilson MP in which Ms Jacques states there are currently no plans to close the community hospital beds in the Franzisca Willer Unit. Cllr Gloria Wills expressed her concerns regarding the use of the word "currently" as this by no means guarantees or

safeguards the future of this facility. Other Cllrs agreed. Cllr Ian Sutherland expressed his concerns that significant space within the Community Hospital is being used as office accommodation. He also asked if the local doctors surgery were aware of Ms Jacques comments. Cllr Wills confirmed the doctors surgery are aware.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

10.3 Response From Mr Nigel McGurk, Independent Examiner – The Sedgefield Plan (email dated 3rd January 2017):

As mentioned under item 4.10, the Clerk circulated to all an email received from Mr Nigel McGurk in response to the Town Council's recent letter to him questioning if the inclusion of the Eden Drive area within the Built Up Area Boundary would mean Policy 1 could remain within The Sedgefield Plan. Mr McGurk had replied stating that due to his position as an Independent Examiner it is not possible for him to provide any advice/follow-up to a published report. The quasi judicial nature of examination is to some extent not unlike that of an appeal. Cllrs accepted Mr McGurk's comments, however, agreed it had been appropriate to try to seek clarification. Cllr Gloria Wills proposed that now the Town Council proceed with amending the Plan as it feels right for the Town in order that progress is made as it will be some considerable time before the County Durham Plan comes to fruition. Cllrs agreed with this proposal.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to arrange a meeting as soon as possible with those who had attended that last Sedgefield Plan meeting, with an open invitation to all other Cllrs, in order to commence amending the Plan in-line with the Independent Examiner's Report.

11. Current Planning Applications

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

1 DM/16/03717/FPA – erection of part single storey and part two storey rear extension, 4 Stockton Road, Sedgefield:

Cllrs agreed to defer this planning application until the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 16th January 2017 in order to allow more time to consider.

2 DM/16/03959/FPA – replacement condenser and refrigeration equipment, roof access ladders, protective fencing to roof and replacement render to gables, The Co-operative Food Store, 10 Butterwick Road, Fishburn:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this planning application as it was outside the

Parish of Sedgefield.

3 DM/16/04035/FPA – erection of first floor extension, Trimdon House Farm, Fishburn:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this planning application as it was outside the Parish of Sedgefield.

4 DM/16/04042/FPA – hybrid application for NETPark Phase 3a, comprising full application for new spine road, new access to A177, drainage works including a pipe bridge, associated landscaping and infrastructure, and outline application for up to 14 two-storey buildings providing circa 1670 m2 B1 floorspace, land to the North of Discovery, William Armstrong Way, NETPark, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this planning application.

RESOLVED:

- i) The comments on planning applications 2-4 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.**
- ii) Planning application 1 above to be considered by Cllrs at the Environment Committee meeting to be held on Monday 16th January 2017.**

The Clerk circulated to all Cllrs details of additional planning applications which had been published earlier that day by DCC as follows:

DM/16/03903/FPA – demolition of two existing agricultural buildings and replacement with two modern agricultural buildings, Manor Farm Bungalow, Stockton Road, Sedgefield

DM/17/00025/FPA – single storey garden room extension to rear and new entrance porch to front of property, 92 The Meadows, Sedgefield

RESOLVED:

The additional two planning applications to be considered by Cllrs at the Environment Committee meeting to be held on Monday 16th January 2017.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.26pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY**
POLICY & RESOURCES of the **Council** held following the
Monthly meeting in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield,
on
Monday 9th January 2017

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies**

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Joanne Elliott, Tim Jeanes, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Dudley Waters.

2. **Declaration of interest**

Cllr Chris Lines declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6.6 "Allocation of Terrace Hill Funding" as he is a member of Sedgefield Harriers.
No other Cllrs made any declaration of interest.

3. **Matters of Information**

3.1 **Epitaph Training:**

Training for the Clerk and Gardening Supervisor is on-hold whilst the Council's Finance Working Group consider the potential use of RBS as a financial package.
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. Further work is now required on the constitution and a new

application form needs to be submitted. In the first instance an update report will be presented to the Finance Working Group with a subsequent recommendation being brought to a future P&R Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

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

County 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.

The Clerk has written to Mr Dave Wafer of DCC to outline the Town Council's concerns regarding parking in and around Bolams and has also requested an updated regarding this matter. A response is now awaited.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 Station Road Playing Field:

The Clerk has written to NWL requesting they proceed with the offer made to County Cllr John Robinson in September 2015, stating they would make and pay for boreholes in Station Road Playing field and then conduct a dye test to find out where the drains go and how they flow in order to determine if there are any other blockages exacerbating the problem in either the drains themselves or the culverts. A response is now awaited. A further reminder letter has been issued to NWL. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 Bank/Cash Reconciliation Report:

Work is ongoing by the Finance Working Group to recommend to a future P&R Committee the most appropriate financial software package for the Town Council to use. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Costings for Sale of Land Around Butterwick Road Cemetery:

The Estates Working Group are working on identifying potential solicitors to progress

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

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.7 Internal Auditor Update:

Mr Gordon Fletcher is to attend the Council's Finance Working Group meeting on Thursday 12th January 2017 to present his latest Internal Audit Findings Reports. After this these will then be presented to P&R with any accompanying update/recommendation report from the Finance Working Group.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.8 NALC Bulletin:

The Town Clerk has now written to Mr Phil Wilson MP in relation to the current council tax referendum principles campaign. Mr Wilson has in turn written to Parliamentary Under Secretary Marcus Jones MP and will respond again to the Town Council in due course. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.9 Treeworks in Ceddesfeld Hall Grounds:

The Clerk has written to AW Treecare seeking further clarification on the quotation provided. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.10 Treeworks between School and Grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall:

AW Treecare have been informed of their successful quotation, issued with a Purchase Order Number and asked to check necessary tree protections in order to undertake this work as quickly as possible. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.11 Treeworks at Butterwick Road Allotments:

AW Treecare have been informed of their successful quotation, issued with a

Purchase Order Number and asked to check necessary tree protections in order to undertake this work as quickly as possible. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.12 Emptying Recycling Bays at Butterwick Road Cemetery:

Darnton & Young have been informed of their successful quotation, issued with a Purchase Order Number and asked to undertake this work as quickly as possible. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.13 Corporate Risk Management Schedule:

This Schedule has now been uploaded to the Town Council's website.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.14 Foundation Level Quality Award:

An application form to seek this accreditation, along with accompanying evidence, has now been submitted to Mr Steve Ragg at CDALC. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.15 Medium Term Financial Plan:

A copy of this Plan has been uploaded to the Council's website. The Finance Working Group will review this Plan on an on-going basis and bring appropriate recommendation reports to future P&R Committee meetings.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.16 Royal Garden Parties 2017:

The Clerk has submitted the details of Cllrs Ian Sutherland and Dudley Waters to the CDALC ballot for this year's Royal Garden Parties. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.17 Buckinghamshire County Council:

The Clerk has confirmed with Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC that she and Cllrs Allan Blakemore and Gloria Wills would be happy to participate in any discussions with Officers from Buckinghamshire County Council.

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. No members of the public were present. The Chairman re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports

5.1 Future of CDALC Secretariat Role/Subscription Fees Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Future of CDALC Secretariat Role/Subscription Fees Report in which it outlined the discussions currently taking place within the CDALC Executive regarding the future setting of membership subscription fees. Once proposals have been developed, these will be put out to all CDALC members for consideration. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Communication Issues With Durham County Council Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Communication Issues With Durham County Council Report. This detailed a system which DCC have recently introduced (Do It Online) to make it easier for individuals and organisations to report issues and then track the progress of their enquiry on-line. Whilst members of the Larger Councils Forum hope this new system would overcome communications problems between DCC and the Town/Parish Council sector, CDALC continues to lobby for a form of DCC Internal Telephone Directory/Key Contacts list so that communications can directly take place with the appropriate DCC Officer. The Clerk confirmed that the Town Council is already using the Do It Online system. Cllr Chris Lines commented that such an electronic system would provide a clear audit trail. Cllr Alf Walton asked how priorities were then assigned in order to differentiate between enquiries. The Clerk replied that DCC Officers make this decision when

analyzing the enquiries submitted on-line.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

Note: Reports related to information exempt from the public are considered under agenda item 8.

6. Financial Matters

6.1 Monthly Accounts: Income (as at 20th December 2016) / Expenditure (as at 20th December 2016 minus unapproved cheques after 5th December 2016)

RESOLVED:

The monthly accounts as had been circulated were approved.

6.2 Cheques for approval after 5th December 2016

Details of cheques for approval from 19th December 2016 – 3rd January 2017 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk circulated copies of cheques for approval on 9th January 2017.

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 20th December 2016

RESOLVED:

i) To receive the Debtors List as at 3rd January 2017.

ii) Transaction 2935, an outstanding debt already resolved as being written-off to be removed from the system.

6.4 External Audit Appointments from 1st April 2017 (email and attachment from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 30th November 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachment from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 30th November 2016 which gave an update on the latest position regarding the appointment of External Auditors from 1st April 2017. The Clerk commented that additional information regarding the three firms who have been appointed are expected very soon. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.5 Local Government Pension Scheme – Employer Contribution Rate from 1st April 2017 (email and attachment from Mr Nick Orton, DCC dated 1st December 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachment from Mr Nick Orton of DCC dated 1st December 2016 detailing the required employer contribution rates from 1st April 2017 for those staff in the Local Government Pension Scheme. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's 2017/18 budget being developed would be based upon this increased contribution rate.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.6 Allocation of Terrace Hill Funding Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Allocation of Terrace Hill Funding Report which gave Cllrs the background to the allocations pledged for this money in March 2013 as well as information regarding those organisations which have already claimed their funding. At the Council's P&R Committee meeting on Monday 11th January 2016 it was resolved to extend unclaimed funding allocations until 31st March 2017 with the proviso that if money remained unclaimed by 1st January 2017 those Groups be requested to give a presentation to the P&R Committee detailing their latest business plan and final timescale for completion of their projects. A discussion took place between Cllrs and it was agreed that Sedgefield Bowling Club and Sedgefield Harriers should be requested to attend the February 2017 Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting to give a presentation lasting no more than 10 minutes each and that prior to this both Groups should submit to the Town Clerk a detailed progress report including where appropriate evidence of their work to date. This progress report to be submitted by each Group in time to be included in February Committee packs.

Cllr Mark Cant reminded Cllrs of information he had shared regarding potential funding opportunities through the Lambs Hill project. It was agreed this should be considered further by the Finance Working Group.

RESOLVED:

i) The Clerk to draft a letter to the Bowling Club and Harriers requesting a progress report on their respective projects and stipulating the deadline date for receipt and also to inform them of their time slot to give a presentation to the Community Development & Engagement Committee on Monday 20th

February 2017. This letter to be presented to the Finance Working Group meeting on 12th January 2017 for approval and issue.

ii) Delegated powers are given to the Community Development & Engagement Committee so that a decision can be made regarding the allocation of Terrace Hill funding after seeing presentations from both Groups on Monday 20th February 2017.

iii) The Community Development and Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 20th January 2017 commence at 7pm and the Environment Committee to follow afterwards so as to allow presenters from the Bowling Club and Harriers to be put onto the agenda first.

iv) The Finance Working Group to consider the potential funding opportunities available through the Lambs Hill project.

7. Correspondence

7.1 The Casey Review (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 6th December 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 6th December 2016 detailing the findings of Dame Louise Casey's recent report concerning Standards Board and its inability to implement effective sanctions against Councillors.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 No extension of Referendum Principles (emails from Mr Jonathan Owen, NALC dated 15th December 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all emails from Mr Jonathan Owen of NALC dated 15th December 2016 in which he reported the Council Tax referendum principles will not be extended to Parish and Town Councils in 2017/18.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.3 Durham Association News Newsletter 59 December 2016

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the December 2016 Durham Association News Newsletter. Cllrs agreed this was a very good document and contained much useful information including information on the County Durham Plan whereby the stance being taken by central government appears to be in-line with comments made by Mr Harold Stephens in relation to Sedgfield when

considering the now withdrawn version of the Local Plan.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

Cllr Wills explained that due to the confidential nature of the following items these would be discussed under Exempt Information and had any members of the public or press been present they would have been asked to leave the meeting at this point (Section 1 Sub Section (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960).

8. Consideration Of Reports Exempt From Public:

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.59pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the proceedings of the
**JANUARY SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL Meeting to
Approve Precept Request** held at **6.15 p.m.** in the
Council Offices, Sedgefield, on
Monday 16th January 2017

MINUTES

Present **Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)**
Cllr. Gloria Wills (Vice-Chairman) and
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Vanessa Carmichael, Ian
Sutherland and Alf Walton

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. Joanne Elliott, Chris Lines, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Dudley Waters,

2. Declaration of interest

None.

3. Presentation of Recommended Precept Request 2017/18 by Finance Working Group:

The Clerk circulated to all a Recommended Precept Request 2017/18 Report by the Finance Working Group. The Clerk talked through this Report which explained the work that had been undertaken by herself and the Finance Working Group in producing a balanced income and expenditure budget for 2017/18 which acknowledged a number of issues/projects previously identified by the Town Council for the coming financial year, i.e. on-going improvement works at the Parish Hall, the development of the new area of Sedgefield Cemetery, the development of a youth facility within the Town, the introduction of the National Pay Award for those staff on NJC Terms and Conditions and the increased hourly rate for those staff on the National Living Wage. This draft budget, which included a recommended precept request for 2017/18, had been presented to the Finance Working Group on Thursday 12th January 2016 and considered in detail. Also present at this meeting had been the Council's Internal Auditor, Mr Gordon Fletcher. As a result of this meeting the Report now being presented to Council contained a recommended precept request for 2017/18 and a recommended news article informing members of the public of this matter.

Cllr Gloria Wills confirmed the Finance Working Group had gone through the proposed

income and expenditure budget in great detail so as to raise the precept level by the least amount possible but to also be mindful of the pressures the Town Council faces, not least of all the diminishing LCTRS Grant. Indeed it was acknowledged by the Group that DCC to date have been very fair in distributing the LCTRS Grant to the Town and Parish Council sector, however, this could change at any time after the next Council elections. Cllr Wills reminded all that when the Finance Working Group originally commenced this work back in November 2016 the starting point had been to look at a range of precept increase options ranging from 3% - 7% and that as a result of much hard work the precept now being proposed was at the lower end of this range. Cllr Wills proposed that Recommendation 1 in the report is approved, i.e. the precept request for 2017/18. Cllr Mel Carr reiterated that consideration time was spent by the Finance Working Group in going through the Council's budget and determining the level of precept required in order to keep the Council on-track with delivering its projects and services. Cllr Ian Sutherland said he had full confidence in the Finance Working Group and its proposal. Cllr Allan Blakemore asked Cllrs to be mindful to the fact that whilst DCC do currently distribute LCTRS Grant to all Town and Parish Councils they are not legally required to do so and this could change at any point in the future. Cllr David Brown said that whilst not a member of the Finance Working Group he knew the Council would need to justify to the public why there was any increase in precept and he was pleased to see that the precept being proposed was of a minimal amount and that services would be maintained and additional projects undertaken. Cllr Alf Walton pointed out that many other local Councils are requesting far higher increases in their precept. Cllr Gloria Wills proposed that Recommendation 1 in the report, i.e. the proposed precept request for 2017/18 be adopted. All Cllrs agreed.

The Clerk referred Cllrs to the second recommendation in the report which related to a proposed news article informing members of the public about the Council's precept request for 2017/18. This article would appear in the next edition of the Sedgefield News (as the deadline date has now passed for the Sedgefield Extra) and be displayed on the Town Council's website. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that a closing sentence be added to the article in which assurance was given to the public that the Town Council would continue to monitor its finances vigilantly in order to identify efficiency savings. All Cllrs agreed with this suggestion. Cllr Allan Blakemore pointed out a grammatical error which required amendment. Cllr David Brown commented that every year the Town Council holds an Annual Parish Meeting at which he felt there was poor attendance from the public. He suggested that a future such meeting could include the opportunity for the public to say that facilities and services they want within the Town. Other Cllrs felt that such an event would raise the public's expectations in an unrealistic way as many facilities and services would be unachievable. Cllr Gloria Wills felt that recent Annual Parish Meetings had been very well attended by the public. All Cllrs agreed that with the minor amendments suggested the news article in Recommendation 2 be adopted.

RESOLVED:

- i) Sedgefield Town Council increases its precept for 2017/18 by 3.5% thereby requesting from DCC £251,676.50 (i.e. an increase of £8, 510.91). This would mean that in 2017/18 the Town Council would receive £262, 420.50 from DCC (i.e. precept of £251, 676.50 plus LCTRS Grant of £10, 744.00). Note: This increase in precept will be shown on Council Tax billing information as a 3% increase on a Band D tax.**
- ii) With the inclusion of minor amendments agreed at the meeting, the proposed article in Appendix 1 to be included in the next edition of the Sedgefield News and displayed on the Town Council's website.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 6.35pm.

SEDFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 16th January 2017.

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Joanne Elliott, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Dudley Waters

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Mel Carr declared an interest in item 6.1. No other Cllrs made any declaration of interest.

3. Matters of Information

3.1 Free Cycle Stands:

The Community Development Officer will continue to liaise with DCC regarding this matter upon her return to work. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.2 DRAFT Sedgefield Grant Funding Policy:

The Community Development Officer will continue to progress this Policy upon her return to work. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 Sedgefield Day:

The Parish Hall Project Worker and Cllr Allan Blakemore are liaising to identify a date for a Sedgefield Day 2016 debrief and consideration of any future event through the Sedgefield 700+. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 Outdoor Fitness Update:

The Clerk has written two letters to Mr Terry Collins of DCC. The first details the Town Council's experiences of Section 106 money in relation to Thurlow Grant and requested clarification as to who approved this request and a copy of the application form. The second seeks clarification regarding the Section 106 money that will be available from the Eden Drive development and assurance that Sedgefield will benefit directly from such money in the future when it bears the brunt of the impact of large scale development. A response has now been received and will be considered under agenda item 6.1.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 Its Up 2U Funding:

Potential funding sources and the way forward in relation to refurbishing the Fletcher Room to be considered at the next Estates Working Group meeting (19th January 2017). The Parish Hall Project Worker to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4. Public Participation

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

Mrs Julia Bowles said that she understood the Town Council were awaiting financial information from both County Cllrs but asked if the Town Council had received any further information from County Cllr John Robinson specifically in relation to funding for shop frontage alterations. The Clerk replied that whilst the Town Council had requested this

information no response had yet been received. Mrs Bowles asked if the Town Council could issue a further reminder letter to County Cllr Robinson. Mrs Bowles asked if there was anything that anyone could do about County Cllrs not supplying requested information? Finally, Mrs Bowles informed the Town Council that recently there have been two letters in The Telegraph relating to Neighbourhood Planning. One of these letters was from Morpeth in which it was explained that despite the neighbourhood going through the entire legal process to achieve a 'made' Plan the local authority had still gone against this plan and recently agreed a large scale planning development. Mrs Bowles said this made a mockery of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

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

5. Reports

5.1 2016 Snow Party Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a 2016 Snow Party Report which detailed the background to this event, the key facts, feedback received following the day, the income/expenditure and a series of recommendations.

Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that the Craft Fayre run at Ceddesfeld Hall had ran very well. The Bloom Group had provided refreshments in the form of teas and coffees as per previous years, however, they had made less money than other years due to other venues in the Town providing refreshments. If additional space is required in Ceddesfeld Hall to allow more stalls the Bloom would have no objections to refreshments being provided elsewhere by another Group. Cllr Sutherland said that people attending the Snow Party had enjoyed the event. Cllr Gloria Wills agreed the event had been very successful and commended the Town Council's staff for their hard work. These comments were reiterated by Cllr Chris Lines.

RESOLVED:

- i) The 2017 Snow Party to be held on Saturday 2nd December 2017 with events to be planned across the Town ideally including the Church, Ceddesfeld Hall and both primary schools.**
- ii) An initial planning meeting to be scheduled soon to start considering options for the day and if possible having this as a full day event.**

5.2 Youth Working Group Update Report by Cllrs Lynne Dentith and Chris Lines

The Clerk circulated to all a Youth Working Group Update Report produced by Cllrs Lynne Dentith and Chris Lines. Cllrs Dentith and Lines talked through the Report and updated Cllrs on the outcome of the recent Youth Working Group meeting held on Monday 9th January 2017 at which Mr Michael Parkin a Youth Worker from Fishburn had attended. Through Mr Parkin the Town Council could, via an SLA, access qualified youth workers who could deliver a service without the Town Council having

to directly employ such officers and incur additional expenditure. It was agreed that now is a perfect time for the Town Council to engage with this process and try to fill gaps identified by young people in Sedgefield. A SLA with youth workers involved in a not-for-profit organisation would provide a feasible and sustainable way of achieving a youth facility within the Town and would see Sedgefield and Fishburn working in partnership together reflecting the locations of friendship groups already in existence between many young people in our area. Cllr Lines reiterated the purpose of this project was to involve young people so that they have their say about what they want and the provision of a youth facility in the Town would be just one element of this work. Cllr Cant expressed his support for the proposed youth facility in the Parish Hall but pointed out that it would be constrained by the size of the Fletcher Room. Cllr Ian Sutherland asked for an idea of the provisional costings for such a SLA and Cllr Wills replied a provisional figure of £8,000 - £10,000 per annum was envisaged and as a result £8,000 had been allocated in the Town Council's 2017/18 budget. Cllr Lines concluded by saying that whilst it will take some further time to finalise arrangements for the provision of this youth facility this needed to be progressed as quickly as possible as the expectations of young people had been raised and it was important the Town Council asks for their patience as refurbishment work takes place and an SLA developed. Cllr Allan Blakemore said that he would like to see such a youth facility being operational prior to the Council elections in May 2017 and all Cllrs agreed with this.

RESOLVED:

- i) Develop a draft Service Level Agreement with Michael Parkin from Fishburn Youth Club for the provision of a youth club in Sedgefield.**
- ii) Locate the Sedgefield Youth Club in the Fletcher Room of the Parish Hall, most likely on Friday evenings.**
- iii) Sedgefield Town Council to commence the refurbishment of the Fletcher Room as soon as is reasonably possible and when practical involve young people in relevant decisions about fixtures, fittings and decoration.**
- iv) Sedgefield Town Council to communicate with young people (especially those who have been engaged in the research project during the last year), to update them on plans and timescales.**
- v) Sedgefield Town Council to make a provision for sustaining the youth club in its 2017/18 budget, as part of its wider commitment to youth provision.**

5.3 Citizen of the Year Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Citizen of the Year Report detailing the timetable for the selection of this year's winner. Cllr Allan Blakemore asked if a financial allocation had been made in the Council's budget for this event. The Clerk confirmed that an allocation had been made.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Correspondence

6.1 S106 Legal Agreement for Thurlow Grange land south of Eden Drive, Sedgefield (letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss, DCC dated 8th December 2016)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss of DCC dated 8th December 2016 regarding the S106 Agreement for Thurlow Grange land South of Eden Drive, Sedgefield.

Cllr Allan Blakemore asked how it was possible that DCC could spend S106 money from development in Sedgefield and spend it without any liaison with Sedgefield Town Council. He said that it was imperative that for any future S106 money there must be dialogue between DCC and the Town Council in order to agree how such funding is to be allocated and for what. Cllr Blakemore said the information that was being considered now was totally opposed to transparency in local government.

Cllr Mel Carr said that he was disappointed that £573,000 had been specified in the documentation detailing S106 relating to the recently approved Eden Drive development for “the provision of an additional classroom at Sedgefield Community College”. Cllr Carr said he believed the cost of an additional classroom would be in the region of £65,000-£75,000 and the allocation would therefore equate to 8 additional classrooms. He felt this provision had been added without any consideration for infant or primary care in the Ward, care which is currently oversubscribed and will be even more pressured following further housing. There are two primary schools in Sedgefield with approximately 400 pupils. The Community College has 980 pupils with approximately 10% (100) coming from Sedgefield and the rest travelling from a catchment area as far as Coxhoe and Ferryhill. Cllr Carr said that in all the proposals from the developer relating to Eden Drive and the Planning Committee Report there was never a specific school mentioned as beneficiary instead stated “towards necessary education accommodation” and in the developer’s submission it was stated “key facilities such as primary schools”. While the SVAG, with assistance from Cllr Gloria Wills, questioned some of the S106 wording at the recent Public Inquiry they possibly would not have been aware of this Community College allocation. Cllr Carr said there had been very little if any consultation between DCC and the Town Council regarding S106 funding appropriation. While Cllr Carr was unsure if anything could be done regarding this allocation of money he would welcome comments and suggestions from other Cllrs. Cllr Carr then went onto express his disappointment regarding the S106 money from Thurlow Grange which

was applied for in 2014 involving the two County Cllrs but yet Sedgefield Town Council was unaware of this and were working on putting together a bid for training equipment in 2016 when they were told that only a nominal amount of £160 remained. Cllr Carr said that neither County Cllr had presented to the Town Council the details of S106 funding being used to install additional play equipment at Winterton Play Area, a DCC facility. Cllr Carr said that in conclusion £10,500 had been spent in Fishburn and £5,000 had been spent in Sedgefield from different S106 pots. Cllr Carr proposed that working group be formed to ensure that all the Eden Drive S106 funding is applied for and allocated in a fair and appropriate manner, perhaps with the help and assistance of the two County Cllrs who represent Sedgefield. Through such discussions it would also be possible to find out at what stages S106 money would be released. Cllr Carr finally commented that he is aware that DCC have a S106 Working Group. The Clerk was asked to find out details of this Group.

The Clerk reminded all Cllrs that at the previous week's Monthly Meeting information had been circulated from Mr Kevin Gilmore in which he had suggested some ways in which S106 from Eden Drive could potentially be used.

Cllr Gloria Wills reported that at the Planning Inquiry relating to Eden Drive attempts had been made to advise the Inspector that whilst there was some form of provisional S106 agreement in place the Town Council have not seen sight of this. Cllr Wills felt the use of the term 'Ward' in the agreement was political and reiterated that at no time had terms of reference for this agreement been brought to Sedgefield Town Council detailing how S106 money could be applied for and the criteria for its allocation. Cllr Wills reminded Cllrs that there is legislation which stipulates the tests required for such allocation (i.e. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development) and these are reiterated in the NPPF. Cllr Wills agreed with Cllr Carr's proposal and said that if the Town Council did not challenge this could result in money not coming into Sedgefield. Cllr Wills noted that Fishburn Parish Council are already making plans for this S106 money. Cllr Ian Sutherland asked how Cllr Wills knew this and she replied this information have been found from Fishburn Parish Council's website.

Cllr Allan Blakemore asked how money obtained through development of Thurlow Grange in Sedgefield could be used for Fishburn? With regards to the S106 from Eden Drive, Cllr Blakemore asked how this money could be allocated to the expansion of the Community College when the Town Council has consistently been told the expansion will be funded by the sale of the land at the College's former farm site, land which will then be used to develop approximately 40 houses. Cllr Blakemore agreed with Cllr Carr's proposal and encouraged all Cllrs to be involved in such a Working

Group.

Cllr Chris Lines said it was hard to believe that the two County Cllrs representing Sedgefield were unaware of this allocation of S106 funding from the Eden Drive development yet neither had informed the Town Council. Cllr Lines asked if DCC were aware that the two County Cllrs for this area are not sharing information. Cllr Lines expressed his dissatisfaction with this level of representation and said that both County Cllrs should be fighting for their community. Cllr Blakemore agreed and said that he would have expected the County Cllrs to share information as a courtesy and a fundamental part of their role. To have not shared this information was rude and disrespectful. Cllr Mark Cant suggested that a letter be sent to Mr Stuart Timmiss requesting full details of the S106 allocations for Sedgefield and the conditions associated along with the ways in which such money could be obtained. Cllrs agreed that such information was required but the best way to achieve this was via a Working Group. Cllr Alf Walton asked if any S106 money from Fishburn had been spent in Sedgefield. Cllr Carr reiterated that £5,000 of £106 money from Fishburn had been spent on play area equipment at the DCC owned site at Winterton. Cllr David Brown expressed his view that the County Cllrs are going off on their own and not sharing information with the Town Council and as a result of those County Cllrs being in the political inner sanctum at County Hall the Town Council is being left on the fringe.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to investigate the role and membership of DCC's S106 Working Group.**
- ii) The Clerk to organize a Town Council S106 Working Group meeting and issue an invitation to all Cllrs in order that terms of reference for the Group can be agreed in order that other representatives can then be asked to join and progress this matter.**

6.2 Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute & WWI Beacons of Light 11th November 2018 (emails from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 3rd January 2017)

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 3rd January 2017 regarding the WWI Beacons of Light event on 11th November 2018.

RESOLVED:

To defer this matter until after the Council elections in May 2017.

6.3 Christmas Tree Festival (letter from St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival Team dated 21st December 2016):

The Clerk circulated to all a letter received from St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival

Team thanking the Town Council for participating in the recent Festival which had welcomed hundreds of visitors over six days and raised £2,800 to be shared equally between Butterwick Hospice and Durham Family Welfare. Cllrs expressed their thanks to the Mayor who had decorated the Town Council's tree as part of this Festival.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.36pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY ENVIRONMENT** of the **Council** held following the Community Development and Engagement committee in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 16th January 2017**.

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

1. **Apologies**

Cllrs. Vanessa Carmichael, Joanne Elliott, John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Dudley Waters

2. **Declaration of interest**

None.

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that at the P&R Committee meeting held on Monday 9th January 2017 it had been agreed to defer consider of three planning applications to this evening's meeting. These planning applications would be considered after correspondence.

3. **Matters of Information**

3.1 **Tractor Maintenance Report:**

The Gardening Supervisor is preparing a maintenance schedule for all other gardening equipment. The Finance Working Group and Gardening Supervisor to commence discussions in relation to potentially trading in existing tractors and purchasing a new medium sized machine. The Gardening Supervisor and Cllr Alf Walton have started to investigate potential options. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.2 Footpath Outside Hope Inn:

No information has been received regarding revised plans relating to The Hope Inn.

A meeting will be scheduled with Mr John Adamson and others when required regarding the village green area at the front of The Hope Inn.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 Village Green Footpaths:

The Community Development Officer, upon her return to work, will continue liaising with Cllrs Walton and Carr to prepare a grant funding application. The Community Development Officer to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.4 Mediaeval Fayre 2016:

The Clerk has written to Mr John Robinson and requested that for 2017's event and beyond clear clarification is given as to the exact start and finish times for the event along with a request that there is no setting up by fairground rides taking place before 9am so as to allow children easy access to school. No response has been received as yet. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 Trees – North End and White Beam:

AW Treecare completed this work on 16th December 2016.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.6 Trees – Overhanging Sedgefield Squash Club:

AW Treecare completed this work on 16th December 2016.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.7 Installation of Self-Watering Tubs:

30 self-watering tubs have now been installed on hard standing areas across the Town. A prototype base has been designed for those self-watering tubs which will be placed on grass in 2017. Costings are now being obtained to bring a proposal to a future Environment Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.8 Sedgefield In Bloom:

The Clerk has written to DCC congratulating them on their wildflower verges in Sedgefield and to ask if this could be extended to other roadside verges in the Town. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.9 Hardwick Hall Hotel:

The Town Council to continue to respond to noise complaints from the public in relation to Hardwick Hall Hotel. Cllrs to monitor this situation.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.10 Mediaeval Fayre 2017:

The Clerk has written to Mr John Robinson giving the Town Council's agreement for the 2017 Fayre to use the village greens and to reiterate those earlier mentioned issued in Matters of Information (3.4), i.e. request that for 2017's event and beyond clear clarification is given as to the exact start and finish times for the event along with a request that there is no setting up by fairground rides taking place before 9am so as to allow children easy access to school. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.11 Public Participation:

The Clerk has now written to County Cllr John Robinson asking for a progress report regarding sourcing funding for shop frontage alterations. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.12 Northumbria In Bloom:

The Clerk has written to Mrs Eileen Burns, Chair of Northumbria In Bloom. A response is now still awaited. When a response is received the Town Council to consider whether to enter the 2017 competition (Note: deadline for applications was 14th December 2016). Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that Mrs Burns had been very ill and that the Town Council now needed to urgently make a decision regarding the Northumbria In Bloom 2017 entry as he felt sure there would be some leeway regarding the entry deadline date. Cllr Sutherland said he felt it would be a shame if the Town Council did not continue its entry in this competition as it gave the volunteers an incentive to keep the Town looking nice. Cllr Sutherland said that at the last Council meeting when this matter had been discussed the Council's Gardening Supervisor had said that extra work was generated as a result of participating in this competition, however, an extra Gardener has now been employed and therefore this was not a reason for pulling out of the competition. Cllr Lynne Dentith said that for this matter to be debated it must be on the meeting's agenda and that it should be debated as there were workload implications associated with such a decision and she was concerned about the Gardening staffs workloads. Cllr Gloria Wills responded to Cllr Sutherland and said this was not an issue about the Town Council not making a decision because there had been no information received from Northumbria in Bloom upon which to make a decision.

The Clerk volunteered to provide a recap of the history to this matter and Cllrs agreed this would be very useful. At the last joint Bloom and Town Council meeting held on 20th October 2016 (minutes previously shared with all Cllrs and the Bloom Chairman) one agenda item had been consideration of the Northumbria In Bloom Judge's Report and it was felt that some issues within this report needed to be brought to the attention of the Council's Environment Committee with the suggestion that a subsequent letter be sent to Northumbria In Bloom requesting clarification. A report was duly prepared by the Clerk and Gardening Supervisor and discussed at the Environment Committee on Monday 21st November 2016. The Gardening Supervisor had also attended this Environment Committee meeting in order to answer any questions which Cllrs may have had. At this meeting the wording of a letter to Mrs Eileen Burns, Chair of Northumbria In Bloom had been agreed and in essence the Town Council had requested clarification in two areas – Spring Judging

and Summer Judging – in order to then consider whether to enter the Northumbria In Bloom competition for 2017. No response has been received to the Town Council's letter. This is the current position. Cllr Alf Walton reiterated that it had been felt at the original meeting on 20th October 2016 that criticism had been levelled without taking in account the circumstances of the village.

Cllr Sutherland said that if the Town Council did not enter the 2017 competition then it was letting the village down. He also said that if this situation continued for much longer then it would not be possible to enter. Cllr Chris Lines said that the Town Council had asked for a response from Northumbria In Bloom but not received anything. Cllr Sutherland expressed his concern that the attitude of the Town Council was that it did not want to enter the Bloom competition in 2017. Cllrs Lines and Wills disagreed strongly with this and said the issue was lack of response to the Town Council's questions. Cllr Wills said that she had sympathy for the Town's Bloom volunteers because how would they feel if following all their hard work they didn't get the recognition they deserved and it was for this reason that clarification was required from Northumbria In Bloom. She asked how the Council can get a response from Northumbria In Bloom if not from the Chair? Cllr Sutherland suggested Mr Andrew Jackson from DCC as an alternative source of help.

Cllr Allan Blakemore commented that an outcome from the Joint Bloom and Town Council meeting had been to recommend to the Environment Committee that a letter be sent to Northumbria In Bloom. The Council was now discussing this matter because Northumbria In Bloom had not answered the Council's letter and the questions. Cllr Blakemore asked if an organisation could just not responding on the basis of one person being ill? The Town Council should have received the answers to its questions and there was no need for Cllrs to fall with each other or the Town's Bloom Group as a result of another organisation not doing something.

Cllr Gloria Wills proposed the Clerk liaise with Mr Andrew Jackson and seek answers to the questions as well as definitive date for deadline to enter the competition. When answers had been received then the decision to enter or not enter the Northumbria In Bloom 2017 competition be delegated to the Chair of Environment and the Clerk. All Cllrs agreed to this proposal.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to contact Mr Andrew Jackson from DCC to see if he can obtain the clarification requested from Northumbria In Bloom and the definitive deadline date for entry.**
- ii) Upon receipt of answers to the Town Council's questions the Chair of Environment and the Clerk to determine if the Council should enter the 2017**

competition (this will be dependent upon receiving information prior to the definitive deadline).

iii) The Clerk to keep the Chair of the Sedgefield In Bloom Group updated on 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 said that with regards to the matter of S106 money as discussed at the earlier Committee meeting she had received agreement from DCC that they would meet with the SVAG to consider how such money could be accessed. The SVAG have requested to DCC that the Town Council also be present at this meeting because their understanding is the Town Council has to be the body to collate community views as to how such money is spent. In addition to S106 this meeting will also include the road and type of housing to be included in the development at Eden Drive. Mrs Bowles said it would be best if the Town Council and SVAG could work together on this matter to show a united front.

Mr Howard Smith reported that he had wanted to speak with the County Cllrs representing this area and went to one of their scheduled surgeries at Sedgefield Library before Christmas. He reported his frustration that neither County Cllr attended and did not think to notify staff at Sedgefield Library. Mr Smith felt this was disgraceful behaviour and whilst not a Town Council issue he felt it was important to let Town Cllrs know. Mr Smith then commented about a planning application which has been submitted to DCC in relation to 4 Stockton Road which was for a sizable extension to the existing property. Ms Smith said that whilst he had no objection to anyone improving their property he did note that the angle of the proposed extension would be viewed from the Town's Conservation Area and as such hoped that all the necessary requirements from the Conservation Officer would be applied to this. Finally, Mr Smith spoke about the Northumbria In Bloom competition and noted that the Gardening Supervisor had previously commented that entry in this competition does cause extra work pressure. Mr Smith reiterated that the Bloom Group are there to support the Town Council in its entry to Northumbria In Bloom. Mr Smith had spoken to Mr Andrew Jackson who had confirmed that Sedgefield is regarded as a "jewel in the crown" of the competition, something reflected in the Town achieving Gold in the Champion of Champions category last year. Mr Smith said high results had been achieved despite some negative comments in the Judge's Report. Mr Smith also commented that every year the opportunity is given to the Council's Gardening Supervisor to meet with the Judges, however, this has not been accepted over recent years. Mr Smith concluded by saying that whatever the Council's decision regarding the 2017 competition the Bloom Group would continue to work at making the village look spectacular.

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

5. Reports

5.1 Maintenance of Willows on Station Road Playing Field Report by Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Maintenance of Willows on Station Road Playing Field Report. This report had been produced in response to comments made during public participation at recent Council meetings by Mrs Carol Scott of Station Road when she had requested the Town Council review its policy for maintaining the willows on Station Road Playing Field in order to undertake annual coppicing. The Report detailed the advice received from a qualified arboriculturalist who recommended such trees only be coppiced every 3-4 years in order to grow to a manageable size and build a good strong root network with a demand for water. If the willows are coppiced every year they will put out less of a root structure and have less of a demand for water uptake. Cllrs agreed that coppicing should continue to take place every 3-4 years in order that maximum water uptake can be achieved from the willows and help to reduce water levels in this area. Cllr Mark Cant asked if this length of time would pose any problems for any land drains in this area. Cllr Alf Walton replied that as a result of the length of time the willows went without coppicing prior their last coppice any damage to such drains (if they existed) would already have occurred.

RESOLVED:

- i) Coppicing should continue to take place every 3-4 years in order that maximum water uptake can be achieved from the willows and help to reduce water levels in this area.**
- ii) The Clerk to write to Mrs Scott informing her of the Council's decision.**

5.2 Fallen Leaves Within St Edmund's Churchyard Report by Cllr Alf Walton

Prior to the meeting a Report by Cllr Alf Walton relating to fallen leaves within St Edmund's Churchyard had been circulated to all for consideration. In his report Cllr Walton was proposing that with the exception of leaves that fall on the footpaths within the grounds of the Churchyard all other leaves remain undisturbed as to provide a natural habitat for wildlife. Cllr Ian Sutherland said that he agreed with this approach for the majority of the churchyard but requested the Bloom Group be allowed permission to continue gathering leaves from the church bank which when left end up on the street causing a slip hazard. Cllrs agreed. Cllr Allan Blakemore pointed out that the Town Council spent a lot of money maintaining the upkeep of the grounds of St Edmund's Church while no such similar contribution is made towards the Catholic Church or Methodist Church.

RESOLVED:

Town Council gardening staff to continue to remove fallen leaves from the footpath in St Edmund's Churchyard and the Bloom Group to continue to remove fallen leaves from the church bank. All other leaves to remain in situ to provide a natural habitat for wildlife.

6. Correspondence

The Clerk reported there were no items of correspondence to consider.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

Cllr Gloria Wills asked for the opportunity to update Cllrs on more details information which she had ascertained regarding planning application DM/16/04042/FPA that had been considered at the Council's previously Monthly Meeting. This planning application related to a hybrid application for NETPark Phase 3a, comprising full application for new spine road, new access to A177, drainage works including a pipe bridge, associated landscaping and infrastructure, and outline application for up to 14 two-storey buildings providing circa 1670 m² B1 floorspace, land to the North of Discovery, William Armstrong Way, NETPark, Sedgefield in which a new spine road and access to the A177 was being proposed. While Cllrs had not had any objections to this application further analysis of the plans had shown that there will be very close proximity between the existing entrance and the proposed new access onto the A177. Cllr Alf Walton expressed his concern about the extra road entrance/exit that would be created meaning there would be three such roads leading onto the busy A177 within half a mile of each other. DCC have commissioned extensive reports into this planning proposal including a Transport Assessment by Atkins which is over 200 pages in length. Cllr Wills had studied this document and was concerned to note that on page 20 (Item 3.13) reference is made to "Committed Developments" which states the transport assessment will consider the cumulative impacts of identified committed developments in the vicinity of the proposed development and that DCC have identified three such developments that may directly affect the highway network surrounding the proposed development, i.e. 300 dwellings on land south of Eden Drive; hybrid mixed development on land to the east of Sedgefield Community College, North and South of Butterwick Road; and Plot 10 R&D Unites on land to the east of John Walker Road, NETPark. Cllr Wills asked if this was a mistake and urged the Town Council to seek clarification as a matter of urgency as the implications for this upon the Town were considerable. All Cllrs agreed that a letter be sent to Mr Stuart Timmiss and the Planning Officer asking for clarification on these committed developments.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write to Mr Stuart Timmiss and the Planning Officer asking for clarification on these committed developments.

rear extension, 4 Stockton Road Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application provided that it was in keeping with the requirements of the Conservation Officer.

DM/16/03903/FPA – demolition of two existing agricultural buildings and replacement with two modern agricultural buildings, Manor Farm Bungalow, Stockton Road, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

DM/17/00025/FPA – single storey garden room extension to rear and new entrance porch to front of property, 92 The Meadows, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform DCC Planning Officers on the Council's comments to the above planning applications.

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