

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **MARCH MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at
7 p.m. in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 13th March 2017



Present

Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)

Cllr. Gloria Wills (Vice-Chairman) and

Cllrs Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Vanessa Carmichael, Lynne Dentith, Joanne Elliott, Tim Jeanes, Chris Lines, Ian Sutherland and Alf Walton.

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllrs John Robinson, Maxine Robinson and Dudley Waters.

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Mel Carr declared an interest as a member of the EDRC AAP Board in relation to item 4.5. No other Cllrs made a declaration of interest.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports

a. Minutes of Community Chest held Monday 13th February 2017

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

b. Minutes of Monthly Meeting held Monday 13th February 2017

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

c. Minutes of P&R Committee held Monday 13th February 2017

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

d. Minutes of the Personnel Committee held Wednesday 15th February 2017

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

e. Minutes of the Community Development & Engagement Committee held Monday 20th February 2017

Cllr Lynne Dentith requested the following amendment be made to page 31 Item 3 5th paragraph:

To remove "Cllr Lynne Dentith proposed that the Bowling Club's deadline be extended for six

months instead at which point the Club could present evidence clearly showing the progress made. This proposal was not seconded as Cllrs felt this was an unrealistic timescale” and replace with “Cllr Lynne Dentith proposed that the Bowling Club’s deadline be extended for six months and then reviewed”.

With the inclusion of the above amendment these were confirmed as a correct record. (AB / AW)

f. Minutes of Environment Committee held on Monday 20th February 2017:

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

g. Minutes of Finance Working Group held on Monday 27th February 2017:

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

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 attended a lease mediation meeting with SCA and Durham Community Action on 14th February 2017. A presentation is to be given at the P&R Committee meeting on 13th March 2017 providing a more detailed explanation to Cllrs.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.2 Franziska Willer Ward, Sedgefield 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 NHS 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 follow-up reminder letter has been sent. A response is still awaited. The Clerk has spoken to Mr Jason Turnough of the AAP who has confirmed that there is no specific money available for this and that individual business owners need to submit business cases.

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:

The Clerk has written again to County Cllrs Lumsdon and Robinson reiterating to them again the information that has been requested by the Town Council and promised by both Cllrs, i.e. a full breakdown of Members Neighbourhoods budgets spent across the entire Electoral Ward. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that County Cllr Robinson had prior to the last meeting forwarded a list of some of his schemes which been supported with funding but no figures had been included. No response had been received from County Cllr Lumsdon.

Cllr Gloria Wills expressed her concerns that this matter has been outstanding for some time. To try and clarify some of the recent reports Cllr Mel Carr reported that he had noted in County Cllr Robinson's previous list of schemes the suggestion that AAP members could access further information regarding such financial spent. Following that suggestion Cllr Carr reported he had analysed such information and found the following:

- Sedgefield is represented by 2 County Cllrs. These County Cllrs represent approximately 5000 Sedgefield residents, 2000 Fishburn residents and 200 Bradbury and the Isles residents.

- Each County Cllr gets an annual £2000 Members allowance to support community and voluntary projects in their area. This equates to a total of £16000 over the last 4 years. To date County Cllr Lumsdon has spent £900 in Sedgefield and £6670 in Fishburn. County Cllr Robinson has spent £600 in Bradbury and £7142 in Sedgefield (of which £2300 went to and through the Sedgefield Community Association). These details are on the DCC website.
- Each County Cllr also received an annual £20000 Neighbourhood Budget. This equates to a total of £160000 over the last 4 years. Cllr Carr said it was difficult to access all the necessary detail but from the period 13th July 2016 – 25th November 2016 found that projects in Fishburn have been awarded £46,764 and Sedgefield has been awarded £29,398 (of which £13,398 has been directed to and through the Sedgefield Community Association).

Cllr Carr concluded by saying that he would leave copies of these details with the Clerk if other Cllrs wished to view them.

Cllrs Gloria Wills and Alf Walton thanked Cllr Carr for his work in finding and analyzing this information. Cllr Lines reminded Cllrs that what had originally been asked of County Cllrs Robinson and Lumsdon was a detailed breakdown of their collective spend over the last 4 years, however, it was acknowledged by all that it should not be up to AAP representatives to try to access this but for the County Cllrs to supply this directly. Cllr Tim Jeanes also conveyed his thanks to Cllr Carr.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.7 Eden Drive Large Scale S106 Monies:

The Clerk has now amended the letter to Mr Stephen Reed as agreed by Cllrs and this has been issued. A response is now awaited from Mr Reed. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.8 Planning Inspectorate letter re: Eden Drive:

The Clerk has forwarded a copy of this letter to Ms Julie Archer, Chair of the SVAG.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

4.9 Planning Application – NETPark:

The Clerk has written to Mr Colin Harding of DCC making him aware of the Town Council's disappointment at his recent correspondence and requesting evidence of when "worst case scenarios" have been used in other planning applications. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.10 Planning Appeal – Former Sedgefield Community Hospital Site:

No further information has yet been received regarding a date, time or venue for the forthcoming public inquiry by the Planning Inspectorate. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

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 1-2.

In relation to applications 7, 8 and 9 Ms Hilary Sperring has requested this matter be investigated by the Tree Officer as per the Town Council's request. The Clerk reported that DCC's Tree Officer has considered this application and commented that the trees have been previously reduced in such a way that repeated work becomes inevitable. The work proposed to them should not be too severe and he would consider it part of normal maintenance for a tree in a residential garden. He advises that he would imagine that initially, they may look a bit harsh, but this will remedy fairly soon.

In relation to application 11 Mr Mark Sandford has confirmed that building materials will be in accordance with the wishes of the Conservation Officer.

Planning applications DM/16/04070/FPA and DM/17/00360/FPA were discussed at

the Environment Committee meeting on 20th February 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

5. Dates of Meetings

Dates of the meetings taking place in March 2017 had been circulated prior to the meeting along with events scheduled for March – December 2017. Also included in Committee packs had been a schedule for Council meetings in 2017/18 which factored in the requirements of forthcoming election as well as making provision for public holidays. The Clerk reported that once agreed the latter calendar would be placed on the Council's website and public noticeboards.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Police Report

Sgt Alex Clarke presented the Police Report for the period 13th February – 13th March 2017 in which the following 24 reported crimes had taken place:

Burglary:

Overnight on 15th February 2017, unknown persons have entered the Black Lion Public House through an insecure door. Those responsible removed cash from the pool table and gaming machines.

Criminal Damage:

Between 8.30pm and 9.20pm on 24th February 2017, unknown person(s) have forced entry to the rear of an unoccupied dwelling house in Kerr Crescent. Following a search of the house, those responsible have set two fires in the upstairs of the property causing significant fire and smoke damage. Nothing was stolen.

Overnight on 25th February 2017, damage was caused to the fencing/hedgerow/crops and concrete drainage system on land belonging to Shotton Farm. Two vehicles were seen at the time and enquiries are continuing with registered keepers/insured drivers.

Theft:

Overnight on 10th March 2017, an 8 week old lamb was taken from a secure field at Howe

Hills Plantation.

Other:

In addition there have been 5 x further thefts, 3 x public order incidents, 5 x harassment offences, 2 x assaults, 1 x damage and 1 x historical sex offence and 2 x other miscellaneous offences.

Crime has increased by 7% based on the same period as last year. The detection rate stands at 27% compared to 28% for the same period last year.

In February 2017 there were 87 instances of anti-social behavior compared to 119 instances in February 2016, a decrease of 27%. In February 2017 there were 39 instances of youth anti-social behavior compared to 50 instances in February 2016, a decrease of 22%.

The next PACT meeting will take place on Tuesday 11th April 2017 at 7pm in the Fletcher Room of the Parish Hall. No priorities have yet been identified for this meeting.

Sgt Clarke finally reported that as a result of concerns regarding groups of youths gathering on Friday evenings in Sedgefield, he has directed officers to increase patrols of the area and engagement with the youths involved. As a result alcohol was seized from 5 individuals at the youth shelter. Alcohol was also seized from 5 individuals at Hardwick Park. The names and addresses of all have been forwarded to the alcohol reduction team and the Neighbourhood Police Team will make contact with parents. Officers have also engaged with staff at the Co-op following concerns about youths gathering at the front of the store and causing general nuisance. Staff have been pleased with police attention.

Cllr Alf Walton reported that he had been approached by 2 male youths in the village and asked to buy items on their behalf from the Co-op.

Cllr Ian Sutherland congratulated Sgt Clarke and Durham Constabulary on their recent "Outstanding" status from HMIC.

Cllr Carr thanked Sgt Clarke for his report and attendance.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7. Public Participation

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

Ms Julie Archer spoke on behalf of the SVAG to inform Cllrs that she and 3 other SVAG members had met on 1st March 2017 with Mr Dave Wafer, Mr Ian Thompson and Mr Stuart Timmiss of DCC at a meeting facilitated by County Cllr John Robinson. At this meeting various issues had been discussed relating to the large-scale development of Eden Drive. Assurance had been given that Stockton Road would remain as it is, however, the bus routes will be moved so as to go through the new Eden Drive road and development. To allow this to happen a 4th spur will be put in place from the A177. The SVAG had argued that a roundabout to be installed at the Stockton Road exit would be the safest option. DCC Highways representative said that such a decision could not be made by the authority and Mr Dave Wafer said that he would look to identify figures for installing such a feature. It has since been estimated that such a roundabout would cost approximately £2millions and this is not feasible in the current financial climate. At this meeting DCC Officers had confirmed that the decision has already been made to agree to the diversion of the bridleway and footpath at Eden Drive. The SVAG had raised their safety concerns in relation to the road through the Eden Drive development in that it could become a rat run. DCC have said they are working on designing signage to improve safety. The SVAG now intend to write to the Planning Inspectorate to express their view that a 4th spur off the A177 is not required.

Mr Alan Pattison commented that only 3 Town Councillors had attended the Public Inquiry into the Eden Drive development and that no-one from the Town Council had attended the meeting on 1st March 2017 as detailed by Ms Archer. Mr Pattison said that this gave the impression to people that the Town Council do not care and have become a box ticking authority. Cllr Carr and the Clerk explained the Town Council had received no official invitation to attend the meeting on 1st March 2017. Several Cllrs took exception to Mr Pattison's comments.

Mrs Julia Bowles said that the SVAG would not give up their fight regarding the road through the Eden Drive development. Mrs Bowles had asked County Cllr Robinson what it would cost DCC when this route is being used as a rat run and DCC are faced with insurance/compensation claims. Mrs Bowles also commented that she had seen in the

Northern Echo that County Cllr John Robinson had given £5000 to Fishburn Youth and Community Centre's childrens' activities over Easter. She questioned if this money could have been spent better directly in Sedgefield as she knew from previous Council meetings that young people have been asking for activities within the Town. Mrs Bowles asked if there was any provision within the £5000 for travel costs for young people going from Sedgefield to Fishburn? Cllr Carr replied that the Town Council had not been informed of this financial donation and could therefore not provide an answer.

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

8. Internal Reports

8.1 Chairman's Report

The Clerk circulated to all a Chairman's Report which detailed his activities since the Town Council's last Monthly Meeting in February 2017. Cllr Lynne Dentith suggested that if such reports were to be issued at future meetings rather than to be included in Committee packs it be considered that they be displayed on the screen in the meeting room.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8.2 Mayor's Report

Prior to the meeting a Mayor's Report was circulated to all detailing his activities since the Town Council's last Monthly Meeting in February 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

9. External Reports

9.1 Report from DCC Members (JR / RL) :

The Clerk reported that earlier that day, due to his absence at this meeting, County Cllr Robinson had forwarded a report updating Cllrs on numerous aspects of his work. The Clerk circulated copies of this report to all. It was agreed that Cllrs consider this report and forward to the Clerk any questions which they had.

In addition to this report, County Cllr Rachel Lumsdon reported the following:

- School buses operated by Garnetts Coaches have been diverting away from the agreed bus route to Sedgefield Community College. This matter has now been dealt with.
- Advice is being sought from DCC as to whether or not County Cllr Lumsdon's April 2017 surgery can go ahead.
- The Northern Echo recently reported about the conviction of a man from Sedgefield and within this article was reference to a female Sedgefield Cllr. County Cllr Lumsdon had asked for the Northern Echo to print a statement clearly detailing that this individual was not herself and wanted as a courtesy to make the Town Council aware of her action. Cllr Carr, as Chairman, reminded County Cllr Lumsdon that only matters relevant to the agenda were for discussion and therefore no further discussion took place.
- With regards to County Cllr Robinson's £5000 financial contribution towards activities at Fishburn Youth and Community Centre, Cllr Lumsdon was unsure if this included transport costs, however, she would investigate and report back to the Town Council. Cllr Lumsdon said that she would welcome any feedback from Sedgefield residents as to what transport requirements are needed. Cllr Chris Lines commented that residents need to know what facilities are being provided for young people as it was only through the Northern Echo that people had become aware of this funding being awarded. Cllr Lines asked what communication was taking place directly with young people. Cllr Lumsdon was asked to take this matter back to County Cllr Robinson.

Cllr Gloria Wills commented that within County Cllr Robinson's report issued this evening she noted reference was made in point 3 to a meeting with he had attended with representatives from Wimpey. Cllr Wills requested more specific information as to where this exact location is for development and expressed concerns regarding a County Cllr meeting individually with such representatives. In relation to this matter Cllr Lynne Dentith pointed out that County Cllr Robinson was facilitating a meeting with the Civic Trust and SVAG regarding this matter but there was no reference to the Town Council also being included or invited.

Cllr Lines commented that in relation to County Cllr Robinson's report item 7 pertaining to the Youth Awards he had still not seen any publicity regarding these despite having young children himself who were involved in lots of different groups around the Town. He questioned how people could be expected to make nominations.

Cllr Dentith questioned item 8 the purpose of the visit of Mark Gatiss to the Town and how this linked into the work with young people.

It was agreed that Cllrs needed to consider County Cllr Robinson's report and then forward questions to the Clerk for collation and issue to Cllr Robinson in order that he can answer those at the April 2017 Monthly Meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

10. Correspondence

10.1 Appeal Decision APP/X1355/W/16/3162913 The Caravan, Spring Lane, Sedgefield (Report by The Planning Inspectorate dated 14th February 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all the Planning Inspectorate's Appeal Decision relating to The Caravan, Spring Lane, Sedgefield dated 14th February 2017.

Cllr Gloria Wills said she was very disappointed with the Inspectorate's decision and felt that the very poor supporting evidence, and in some instances lack of evidence, supplied by DCC as Local Planning Authority had actually assisted the decision that was reached. Cllr Wills cited many examples including DCC's lack of deliverable 5 year housing supply, lack of objections from DCC's highways officers with no mention whatsoever of potential highway safety issues and DCC's officers not question or dispute the Condition Report for this application in which it was stated that the existing building was in a satisfactory condition and could be retained and redeveloped. Cllr Wills stated DCC have officers who are experts in areas of highways and planning, all of whom should have been able to provide evidence as to why this conversion should not have been allowed to proceed. Cllr Wills concluded that she was very concerned that the same approach would be used by DCC in relation to the forthcoming planning appeals for the three cornered field.

Cllr Mel Carr agreed and said that DCC officers had not provided appropriate evidence at appeal to back-up their original refusal of this application. Cllr Alf Walton reminded Cllrs that the Council had recently been given assurance by a Senior DCC officer that no development would take place at this locality. Cllr Carr felt that DCC were not putting enough effort into fighting planning appeals and proposed that an

appropriate letter was sent to DCC detailing the Town Council's disappointment. Cllrs agreed with this proposal and Cllr Wills suggested that if the subsequent response received does not instill confidence then the Town Council should consider an approach to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Cllr David Brown said that DCC are short of funds and it appears that they have no intention of spending money on issues such as defending planning appeals which means that they cannot defend communities. Cllr Ian Sutherland agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to draft a letter to DCC and to circulate this to all Cllrs at the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 20th March 2017 prior to sending.**
- ii) Cllrs to consider the subsequent response received from DCC and then determine whether an approach to the Local Government Ombudsman is required.**

10.2 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 257 Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath No 16 Sedgefield Parish (letter from Mr Owen Shaw, DCC dated 15th February 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a proposed diversion of public footpath no 16 in Sedgefield Parish as detailed in a letter from Mr Owen Shaw of DCC dated 15th February 2017. The Clerk reported that Mr Owen had stated the Town Council had until Friday 17th March 2017 to submit any objections to this proposal. Cllrs noted the comments made by Ms Julie Archer of the SVAG under the earlier public participation element of the agenda at which she had reported from her recent meeting with Senior DCC Officers that this diversion has already been approved. As a result of this Cllrs did not have any comments to make.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

10.3 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – 18 Hadleigh Close, Sedgefield (letter from Mr Stuart Timmiss, DCC dated 7th March 2017):

The Clerk circulated to all a letter received from Mr Stuart Timmiss of DCC dated 7th March 2017 seeking the Town Council's views on the revised plans for the proposed erection of a single storey front/side/rear extension at 18 Hadleigh Close, Sedgefield.

RESOLVED:

To be considered by Cllrs at the Environment Committee meeting to be held on Monday 20th March 2017.

11. The Sedgefield Plan:

11.1 The Sedgefield Plan Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Plan report. Since the production of this report the Clerk confirmed that The Sedgefield Plan has now been updated and formally submitted to Mr Stuart Carter of DCC. Accompanying the Plan was a letter from the Town Council detailing why, based upon research, it was not considered necessary for the Council to have to undertake further statutory consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 but instead to request DCC progress directly to Regulation 16 statutory consultation as quickly as possible. The Clerk confirmed The Sedgefield Plan website has been updated accordingly. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter. Cllr Mel Carr formally thanked all those who had been involved in this work.

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/17/00232/FPA – erection of single storey front extension and single/two storey extension to rear, 7 Cragside, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

2 DM/17/00446/VOC – variation of condition 2 pursuant to planning approval 7/2010/0092/DM to allow removal of Norway maple tree, land at the east of the junction, Winterton, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

3 DM/17/00719/VOC – removal of condition to aid construction of dwelling, Aingarh, Thorpe Larches:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1-3 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.

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

DM/17/00730/FPA - erection of single storey rear extension, 12 East End, Sedgefield

RESOLVED:

This additional planning application to be considered by Cllrs at the Environment Committee meeting to be held on Monday 20th March 2017.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.51pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **MARCH POLICY & RESOURCES** of the **Council** held following the Monthly meeting in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 13th March 2017**

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. **Apologies**

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

2. **Declaration of interest**

None.

3. **Matters of Information**

3.1 **DCC Planning Enforcement Services:**

The Clerk has circulated to all a copy of Mr Stephen Reed's presentation for information.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.2 **Epitaph Training:**

An order has now been issued to Edge seeking to obtain the Epitaph module for a 5 year period. Within this training is to be scheduled as quickly as possible for Town Council Staff. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.3 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.

3.4 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 still awaited.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 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 also 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. A response is still awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.6 Bank/Cash Reconciliation Report:

This matter to be resolved once the new Edge system is installed and staff have received appropriate training. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.7 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.

3.8 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. A response has now been received and will be considered under agenda item 7.5.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

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 it is hoped that this work will take place on Thursday 16th March 2017. 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 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.

3.14 Debtors List:

Following discussions between the Internal Auditor and the Finance Working Group it was agreed that transaction 2935 should remain on the financial system until 31st March 2017 and then be removed. This transaction to be removed on 31st March 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.15 Eden Drive Play Area:

RTC Safety Surfaces Ltd have now successfully completed this work, however, following an inspection by DCC Playground Inspectors there are reports that the area underneath the junior swings is breaking up. RTC Safety Surfaces Ltd have been

asked to investigate this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.16 Public Participation:

The Clerk has liaised with Mr Jason Turnough of EDRC AAP who has confirmed that no specific funding is available for shop frontage alteration works in Sedgefield and that he has not organized any walk around in the Town.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.17 Cheques for Approval:

The Estates Working Group are to consider the Town's festive lighting requirements for December 2017 and bring an appropriate report back to a future P&R Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.18 Gardener's End of Probationary Period:

The Clerk has written to Mr Ben Gray informing him of his permanent appointment to the position of Town Council Gardener.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.19 Town Council Alarms (Fire and Security):

Work is now underway to terminate the existing ADT contract so that maintenance contracts for all alarms in the Council Offices and Parish Hall can be set up with AEL from 1st April 2017. In association the Parish Hall fire panel will be replaced by AEL and relocated to the Parish Hall's front entrance. DCC's Care Connect service is in the process of being cancelled. When new contracts are in place training will be arranged for all key holders and out of hours emergency contacts for the new alarm systems. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.20 SCA Payroll Services:

The Clerk has written to Dr Wendy Gill of the SCA informing her that the current method of payroll service can continue until 31st March 2017 and from 1st April 2017 the SCA are to process their own payroll service and to directly pay their own staff. Dr Gill has confirmed receipt of this and said that no handover meeting is required as the SCA have spoken directly to Thirsk Payroll.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.21 Financial Software Package:

The Clerk has written to Edge to purchase the financial and cemetery modules as well as training and set up costs for a 5 year contract. Training dates to be set up as quickly as possible. 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 present had any comments which they wanted to make. The Chair re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports

5.1 Parish Hall User Forum Update Report by Parish Hall Project Worker:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Parish Hall User Forum Update Report by the Parish Hall Project Worker which included minutes from both Forum meetings held on 7th February 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Council Elections 2017 Timetable Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Council Elections 2017 Timetable Report. This report had been produced following the Clerk's attendance at DCC Election training on 1st March 2017.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Individuals to collect Councillor Nomination Packs from the Town Clerk and to take responsibility for completing correctly and delivering to County Hall.**
- iii) The Clerk to put information regarding the forthcoming election onto the Council's website, noticeboards and Sedgefield News as well disseminate through the residents database.**

5.3 DRAFT Gifts and Hospitality Policy Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a DRAFT Gifts and Hospitality Policy Report by the Finance Working Group which contained as an attachment an actual draft policy for consideration.

RESOLVED:

To receive the draft Gifts and Hospitality Policy with immediate effect.

5.4 Sedgefield Extra Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Sedgefield Extra Report to all. Within this report was a proposal to slightly amend the timings of the next two editions of the Sedgefield Extra from beginning of May and July to beginning of June and September and then resume as previous years, i.e. beginning of November and February. The Clerk explained this suggestions was to allow the new Council to introduce itself to the local community as quickly after the elections as possible. Cllrs felt this was a very good idea.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to liaise with the Sedgefield News and printers to organized revised printing and distribution dates for the next two editions of the Sedgefield Extra.

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 2nd March 2017) / Expenditure (as at 2nd March 2017 minus unapproved cheques after 13th February 2017)

RESOLVED:

The monthly accounts as had been circulated were approved.

6.2 Cheques for approval after 13th February 2017:

Details of cheques for approval from 16th February 2017 – 2nd March 2017 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk circulated copies of cheques for approval from 13th March 2017. The Clerk informed Cllrs that cheque number 108851 to RTC Safety Surfaces Ltd was still on-hold as whilst the wetpour had been installed at Eden Drive play area there were some concerns regarding some break-up of material.

With regards to 108885, Cllr Alf Walton requested clarification for the timescale for this invoice which related to water charges at Winteron allotments. The Clerk confirmed this invoice covered the period 28th November 2016 – 6th March 2017 as an estimated bill for 21 cubic metres of water plus fix charges. Cllr Carr reminded Cllrs that the Estate Working Group, on the advice of the Internal Auditor, is reviewing arrangements for recording all meter readings.

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 2nd March 2017:

Cllr Ian Sutherland requested the Clerk investigate transaction 3938 to ensure this did not relate to the Bloom's coffee morning booking which had to be cancelled due to no electricity in the Parish Hall.

RESOLVED:

To receive the Debtors List as at 6th February 2017.

6.4 Internal Auditor's Latest Reports by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Internal Auditor's Latest Reports document produced by the Finance Working Group. This documentation detailed the Internal Auditor's latest findings following his visit to the Council Offices on 20th February 2017 when he audited payroll, VAT, main accounting, budgetary control and cemetery income. All Cllrs expressed their satisfaction with the outcome of these latest audits.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.5 Internal Auditor's 2017/18 Work Plan by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Internal Auditor's 2017/18 Work Plan Report by the Finance Working Group. Within this report was a recommended Internal Auditor work programme for 2017/18.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Internal Auditor's work programme for 2017/18.

7. Correspondence

7.1 The Durham Ask – An Opportunity To Provide Services Locally (email by Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 23rd February 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 23rd February 2017 entitled "The Durham Ask – An Opportunity to Provide Services Locally". The content of this email was noted, however, the Town Council is not in a position at this time to take on any DCC services or assets.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 DCC – Outcome of the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles Consultation (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 14th February 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 14th February 2017 entitled "DCC – Outcome of the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles Consultation".

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.3 Sedgefield Twinning Association (letter from Mrs Nancy Wells, Hon Treasurer dated 22nd February 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter from Mrs Nancy Wells, Hon Treasurer of the Sedgefield Twinning Association dated 22nd February 2017 in which she was requesting £200 from the Council's budget towards expenses for the forthcoming visit of Twinning guests from Hamminkeln. Cllrs considered this request and whilst there is no specific budgetary allocation for this event it was agreed that the Town Council maintains its commitment to look favourably upon the Twinning Association and its work. Cllr Allan Blakemore suggested that £200 be paid by the Town Council to the Twinning Association after 1st April 2017, i.e. to be funded from the Council's 2017/18 budget. All Cllrs agreed with this suggestion.

RESOLVED:

i) The Clerk to write to Mrs Nancy Wells and inform her that the Town Council will make a £200 donation after 1st April 2017.

ii) The Clerk to raise a cheque for £200 after 1st April 2017.

7.4 North East Neighbourhood Planning Networking Event (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 8th March 2017):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 8th March 2017 detailing a North East Neighbourhood Planning Networking Event on 18th April 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.5 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation (letters from Mr Phil Wilson MP and Mr Marcus Jones MP dated 2nd March 2017 and 6th February 2017 respectively):

As reported under agenda item 3.8, the Clerk circulated to all copies of letters received from Mr Phil Wilson MP and Mr Marcus Jones MP dated 2nd March 2017 and 6th February 2017 respectively in relation to Council Tax referendum principles.

RESOLVED:

Cllrs to consider this correspondence and to inform the Clerk by no later than 31st March 2017 if they wish this matter to be placed onto the March 2017 P&R Committee agenda.

Cllr Wills explained that due to the confidential nature of the following items these would be discussed under Exempt Information and requested that members of the public or press present must 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:

8.1 Ceddesfeld Hall Lease – Independent Mediation Update – Report and Presentation by Ms Yvonne Probert, Durham Community Action:

Ms Yvonne Probert and Ms Isla Ballard from Durham Community Action gave a presentation detailing the work undertaken to date by all parties involved in the independent mediation process relating to the lease for Ceddesfeld Hall.

(Cllr Lynne Dentith left the meeting at this point)

8.2 Head Gardener and Cemetery Superintendent Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Cllrs considered a Head Gardener and Cemetery Superintendent Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee.

8.3 Projects and Media Co-ordinator Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Cllrs considered a Projects and Media Co-ordinator Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee and agreed upon a subsequent recruitment process.

8.4 Annual Increment Award to Town Clerk Report by Personnel Committee:

Cllrs considered an Annual Increment Award to Town Clerk Report by the Personnel Committee.

8.5 Zurich Insurance Renewal 2017/18 Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Cllrs considered a Zurich Insurance Renewal 2017/18 Recommendation Report by

the Finance Working Group.

8.6 Internal Auditor 2018/19 – 2020/21 Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Cllrs considered an Internal Auditor 2018/19 – 2020/21 Recommendation Report by the Finance Working Group.

8.7 Grass Cutting 2017/18 Proposal Report by Town Clerk:

Cllrs considered a Grass Cutting 2017/18 Proposal Report by the Town Clerk.

8.8 Quotes for Drainage Maintenance and Repairs at Sedgefield Parish Hall:

Cllrs agreed to defer consideration of drainage quotations for maintenance and repair work at Sedgefield Parish Hall to the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 20th March 2017.

8.9 Quotes for Fletcher Room Refurbishment:

Cllrs agreed to defer quotations for refurbishment of the Fletcher Room at Sedgefield Parish Hall to the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 20th March 2017.

8.10 Quotes for Parish Hall Main Floor Maintenance:

Quotations for Parish Hall main floor maintenance were considered and a contractor approved for this work.

8.11 Quotes for Foyer and Toilet Flooring at Sedgefield Parish Hall:

Cllrs agreed to defer quotations for foyer and toilet flooring at Sedgefield Parish Hall to the Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting on Monday 20th March 2017.

8.12 Parish Hall Cleaning Recommendation Report by Personnel Committee:

Cllrs considered a Parish Hall Cleaning Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.29pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **MARCH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the **Council** held at **7 p.m.** in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 20th March 2017.**

Present **Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman) and**
Cllrs David Brown, Mark Cant, Mel Carr, Joanne Elliott, Tim Jeanes, Chris Lines, Ian Sutherland, Alf Walton, Dudley Waters and Gloria Wills.

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

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

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Chris Lines declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 3. No other Cllrs made any declarations of interest.

3. Terrace Hill Funding Allocation: Project Presentation by Sedgefield Harriers:

Cllr Allan Blakemore welcomed Mr Ean Parson, representative of Sedgefield Harriers and The Friends of Sedgefield Harriers, to the meeting and explained that he would be presenting a progress update regarding the Harriers project to develop a running track within the Town. Mr Parsons explained that his presentation would update the information he had submitted earlier in the year in letter format to the Town Council. The Clerk confirmed that this letter had been circulated to all Cllrs. Mr Parsons distributed a handout to all Cllrs which gave a summary of the letter he had sent to the Town Council on 27th January 2017, the location options preferred and considered for the siting of the new track, the current status of fund raising, the consequences of failure of creating a track and concluded with the Harrier's request to for the Town Council to allow them to continue to explore options by carrying forward their allocation of Terrace Hill funding for a further

twelve months. Mr Parsons explained that the options for the siting of the new track were identified as Sedgefield Community College, NETPark, Hardwick Park and East Park. He confirmed the Club's preferred option has always been the Community College and the second choice would be NETPark but these have been ruled out. The only supported option is East Park and at an EGM club members voted to explore this option further. With regards to funding Mr Parsons commented that at this point in time, including the Terrace Hill funding allocation, the Harriers have £100,000 towards this project. The Harriers want to submit an application for S106 funding as part of the ring fenced money for sport. In addition, the Harriers could explore funding from Sport England, something which they have not been able to do previously due to lack of title of land. Mr Parsons concluded that he is confident the Harriers can raise further funding.

Cllr Allan Blakemore noted Mr Parsons comments regarding the recent discussions with DCC and the identification of an alternative site at East Park, he asked if Mr Pasons had considered the sustainability of this site in terms of rent and overheads. Mr Parsons said that he was very confident that due to the caliber of people involved in the Harriers that they could achieve this project and ensure this was sustainable for 25 years going forward. Mr Parsons said that he did not expect Sedgefield Harriers to run the track but that a Management Board would be established for this role and oversee future fund raising activities.

Cllr Gloria Wills said that she fully supported Sedgefield Harriers and their aspirations, however, she was concerned that until reading Mr Parsons recent letter the Town Council were completely unaware of discussions taking place regarding alternative sites. Cllr Wills said that whilst this was not the fault of Sedgefield Harriers she requested more information as to how this change came about as no information had been shared by the local County Cllrs. Mr Parsons explained that over the last 2-3 years the progress made had been very frustrating and partly due to the length of time taken in order to schedule meetings at a time which all the relevant parties could be present. In 2015 Mr Parsons had met with Mr Steve Howells of DCC who wanted to help push this project forward. The latest meeting had been called by County Cllr John Robinson at the Community College and in attendance were Cllr Robinson, Mr Parsons, Mr Davies and Mr Howells with the purpose of identifying what was achievable for the Harriers, i.e. a track at Sedgefield Community College or at another locality. Cllrs Wills and Elliott asked why the Community College was not a suitable site. Cllr Blakemore replied that it had always been unlikely that such a project would have been allowed to take place on a PFI site.

Cllr Alf Walton asked how the site at East Park compared to that at the Community College. Mr Parsons replied that the site at East Park would still allow for a 4 lane track with 6 spring lanes with 400m inside lane.

Cllr Dudley Waters commented that Sport England have previously had a policy whereby they will not provide funding if there is a similar facility within a certain mileage. He noted that there is a running track at Shildon and asked if this was still Sport England's policy. Mr Parsons confirmed that when Shildon's track was built in 2010 this was classified as a new facility and did pose a problem, however, this is no longer the issue that it was. It is possible that if a number of clubs submitted a joint application there would be a higher chance of success. Cllr Wills said that the Town Council does not know anything about the 'Scheme' being proposed at East Park which may involve other sporting clubs. Mr Parsons replied that proposals are currently being looked at by a range of clubs including the Bowling Club, Cricket Club and Rugby Club in order to explore options and that at this stage there is no formal Scheme.

Cllr Mel Carr urged the Harriers to submit an application for S106 money as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

Sedgefield Harrier's Terrace Hill funding allocation of £40,000 be extended until 31st March 2018. If this money remains unclaimed by 30th September 2017 the Clerk to arrange for the Harriers to give a further progress presentation to the Town Council.

4. Matters of Information

4.1 Terrace Hill Funding: Sedgefield Bowling Club:

The Clerk has written to Sedgefield Bowling Club confirming their Terrace Hill Funding allocation of £22,500 be extended until 31st March 2018 and that if this money remains unclaimed by 30th September 2017 the Clerk will arrange for the Bowling Club to give a further progress presentation to the Town Council. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

The Clerk reported that Mr David Hillerby had visited the Town Council Offices to notify the Council that additional grant funding is now available for war memorial repairs. Several years ago the Town Council had applied for such funding but been unsuccessful. The Clerk said this matter would be investigated following the forthcoming elections and this work would include a review of the stone mason's report regarding the state of the current war memorial. Cllr Allan Blakemore requested clarification on the ownership of the war memorial. Cllr Dudley Waters reported that the war memorial next to the Turning Circle belongs to the Town Council whilst the Crimean war memorial within the church grounds does not belong to the Town Council. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

4.4 Youth Working Group Update:

The Clerk has requested Mr Michael Parkin commence drafting an SLA for the provision of a youth club one evening per week in Sedgefield. A draft SLA has now been received and circulated to all members of the Youth Working Group for consideration. The Clerk was asked to set up a meeting of the Working Group in order to progress this matter.

The Estates Working Group are continuing to progress the project of refurbishing the Fletcher Room in the Parish Hall. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that it had been agreed at the P&R Committee meeting held on 13th March 2017 that several items would be deferred until this Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting for

determination. The Clerk suggested that as these items would need to be considered under exempt information they be added to the end of the agenda for the following Environment Committee meeting so as not to have to exclude the public twice. Cllrs agreed to this suggestion.

A provision of £8,000 has been set within the 2017/18 Council budget for sustaining a youth club as part of the Council's wider commitment to youth provision.

The Estates Working Group have recommended the most appropriate way for the Youth Shelter to be refurbished in accordance with the wishes of young people is via a grant funding bid which those young people can help to produce. The Parish Hall Project Worker is currently seeking potential funding sources.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

5. Public Participation

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

Mrs Julia Bowles expressed her support and that of residents towards Sedgefield Harriers and their intention to create a running track within the Town. She commented that people are concerned about how much of East Park is going to be taken up by any potential track and hoped that residents living around this area would be consulted regarding this matter. Cllr Blakemore replied that whilst the Town Council do not know the exact details of discussions that have taken place a letter has been sent seeking clarification. Cllr Blakemore said that when the Bowling Club's planning application was recently considered by DCC there had been full consultation with local residents and an opportunity for them to submit any issues/concerns such as car parking etc. Mrs Bowles reminded Cllrs at the previous week's Committee meeting Ms Julie Archer of the SVAG had given an overview of the discussions between the SVAG and DCC at their recent meeting regarding the road through the Eden Drive development. The SVAG would like a meeting with the Town Council in order to consider what joint working can be done in relation to this matter and associated concerns. It was agreed that Cllrs would inform the Clerk if they wanted to be

involved in such a meeting and that the Clerk would then liaise with Ms Archer in order to set up a mutually convenient date/time. Mrs Bowles informed Cllrs that the SVAG had been a legal third party at the Eden Drive public inquiry and at this inquiry the SVAG had asked specific questions relation to the association S106 monies and how they would be allocated and requested to be involved in that process. Assurance had been given to the SVAG that they would have a role in this process and Mrs Bowles has sent a further email to DCC requesting that a meeting be set up to progress this matter and specifically requested that the Town Council be invited. Cllr Blakemore and the Clerk informed Mrs Bowles that the Town Council had met, as previously reported, with Mr Stephen Reed of DCC at the end of January 2017 and as a result submitted to him a detailed letter regarding the allocation of this S106 monies and requested to be part of DCC's public consultation activities. A response is now awaited and the Town Council will keep the SVAG updated on this matter. Mrs Bowles concluded by asking when the minutes of Council meetings in January and February 2017 would be placed on the Council's website. The Clerk reported that due to long-term staff absences there had been a delay in updating the website, but confirmed the minutes for January and February 2017 had been uploaded earlier that day.

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

6. Reports

6.1 Sedgefield Day 2017 Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore and Parish Hall Project Worker:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Day 2017 Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore and the Parish Hall Project Worker. Cllr Blakemore reported that due to the current staffing circumstances the Town Council needed to be realistic about what it could and could not deliver. It is possible that Sedgefield Day 2017 could still go ahead but without the involvement of the Town Council. Cllr Chris Lines said that whilst this was disappointing it was the right decision in the circumstances and hoped that this event could be picked up in subsequent years. Cllr Ian Sutherland confirmed that the SCA want to hold some events on that day, i.e. Saturday 10th June 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.2 Snow Party 2017 Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore and Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting a Snow Party 2017 Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore and the Town Clerk had been circulated to all. Cllr Blakemore reported that earlier that day a meeting had taken place with the Head Teacher of Sedgefield Primary School to see if it was possible that they could become involved in this year's Snow Party. Mrs Cox is going to liaise with her PTA and report back to the Council. The Clerk and Cllr Allan Blakemore to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7. Correspondence

None.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.43pm.

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT



Minutes of the proceedings of the **MARCH ENVIRONMENT** of the **Council** held following the Community Development and Engagement committee in the **Council Offices**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 20th March 2017**.

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

Officer Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

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

2. Declaration of interest

None.

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that at the P&R Committee meeting held on Monday 13th March 2017 it had been agreed to add the following items to this Environment Committee meeting's agenda after correspondence as well as those items agreed to be deferred from that evening's earlier Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting:

A1. Planning Application DM/17/00730/FPA – erection of single storey rear extension, 12 East End, Sedgefield:

A2. Planning Application - revised plans for erection of single storey front/side/rear extension, 18 Hadleigh Close, Sedgefield:

A3. Draft Letter to DCC regarding Appeal Decision APP/X1355/W/16/3162913 The Caravan, Spring Lane, Sedgefield (Report by The Planning Inspectorate dated 14th February 2017):

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. A follow-up response has been sent. A response is still awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this

matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.5 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. Cllr Alf Walton reported that costings had now been obtained for 75 18" hexagon plinths, which would provide the ideal base for those tubs to be located on grassed areas. These plinths would cost £187.50 plus VAT and the Clerk confirmed that these costs would be off-set in part by the money raised from selling the decommissioned wooden tubs.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to now order the hexagon plinths in order that work can commence mid-May with installing these tubs.

3.6 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. Whilst a response is now awaited it was clear from the recent Joint Town Council and Sedgefield In Bloom Group meeting that DCC are already in discussions with the Bloom Group regarding this matter and work is underway to spray and prepare verges and land at various locations around the Town.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.7 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.

3.8 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 follow-up request has been sent. A response is still awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

Cllr Gloria Wills commented that this year's Mediaeval Fayre is fast approaching and the Town Council has still not received any response to its numerous letters to Mr John Robinson. Cllr Dudley Waters informed the Council that Mrs Sarah Guest is now Chair of the Fayre.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write to Mrs Sarah Guest detailing the Town Council's concerns and questions.

3.9 Public Participation:

The Clerk has now written to Mr Stephen Reed of DCC asking him to investigate the boarded up windows at the Premier Store which is located within the Town's Conservation Area. DCC have now confirmed receipt of this complaint and allocated Ms Sally McDyer as investigating Enforcement Officer. A response is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated regarding this matter.

The Clerk informed Cllrs that Ms Susan Porter of DCC had shared with the Town Council a complaint form template for any further reports. Cllr Gloria Wills suggested that this template be shared with other Cllrs.

Cllr Gloria Wills pointed out that new owners have recently taken over the Indian Takeaway within the Town's Conservation Area and noted the new signage which they had on display. She asked if the Clerk could find out whether DCC's Conservation Area Officer also became involved in investigating any complaints and requested clarification as to what is acceptable signage and at what point a breach occurs. The Clerk to investigate this matter.

RESOLVED:

i) To receive this information.

ii) The Clerk to circulate DCC's complaint form template around Cllrs.

iii) The Clerk to liaise with DCC's Conservation Officer regarding appropriate signage within a Conservation Area.

3.10 Annual Headstone Safety Testing:

Next of kins have until 20th March 2017 to repair any Category 1 headstone. The Clerk and Gardening Supervisor to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.11 Safe Pedestrian Access to Hardwick Park:

The Clerk has written to Mr Dave Wafer of DCC asking for details of any work being planned by the County Council in relation to this matter. The Clerk has also written an update letter to Chris McElvaney. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

3.12 Public Bridleway No 31:

The Clerk has informed Mr Owen Shaw of DCC that the Town Council has no objection to the proposed change.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.13 Public Footpath No 16:

This matter is to be discussed at the Monthly Meeting on Monday 13th March 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.14 Planning Applications:

The Clerk has forwarded to DCC Planning Officers the Town Council's comments on planning applications DM/16/04070/FPA and DM/17/00360/FPA.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information and to close this matter.

3.15 Sedgefield In Bloom – Stepping In Time Project at Ceddesfeld Hall:

The Clerk reported that Sedgefield In Bloom Group will take delivery this Wednesday of willow sculptures of a squirrel, a woodpecker and an owl to be attached to trees in the car park area of Ceddesfeld Hall as part of their on-going Stepping In Time project.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

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 she was delighted to hear that there will be more wildflower areas in the Town this year and last year's display had been wonderful. Mrs Bowles expressed her concerns regarding items being displayed on the pavement outside the new recycling shop, formerly the Bakers. This could be a health and safety hazard as it restricts the width of the footpath which could be problematic for mobility scooters and pushchairs.

Mr Howard Smith noted that the Council were due to discuss the issue of rats on the Church Bank later in the meeting. Mr Smith wanted to record his concern regarding this matter and had witnessed rats in this locality. Mr Smith commented that on a Sedgefield, Mordon and Fishburn Facebook page there had recently been lots of discussion regarding the removal of lighting columns on the road between Sedgefield and Fishburn. Mr Smith had taken part in this discussion and reported that the Town Council were aware of this matter and had on several occasions submitted objections to this proposal. Through subsequent discussions the names of the two County Cllrs for the area had come to the fore and it was stated that they were arranging a meeting at Fishburn to address this matter. Mr Smith had shared on this Facebook page DCC's Lighting Policy and pointed out that County Cllrs had to be aware of its existence. Mr Smith asked in whose boundary this road falls as if it was between Sedgefield Town Council and Fishburn Parish Council that it would have been courtesy of the meeting organisers to have informed the Town Council and invited them to

attend. Mrs Julia Bowles reminded Cllrs of comments she had made at a previous Town Council meeting whereby local residents had actively sought the involvement of their County Cllrs when similar proposals had been made to remove lighting columns and this had resulted in DCC's proposal being reversed. Mrs Bowles urged a similar approach in Sedgefield and Fishburn. Mr Smith concluded by expressing his concerns at recent vandalism, incidents of anti-social behaviour and litter dropping across the Town and felt that this behaviour was getting out of hand in Sedgefield with some areas of the Town becoming no-go zones in the evening.

Mrs Liz Mitchell reported that she had been informed that Mr Kevin Robson of DCC was not involved in DCC's latest proposals to remove lighting columns from Station Road. It was noted that this matter was to be discussed later in the agenda.

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

5. Reports

5.1 Northumbria In Bloom 2017 Spring Meeting Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Northumbria In Bloom 2017 Spring Meeting report for information. Cllr Ian Sutherland reported that due to illness he had been unable to attend this event.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6. Correspondence

6.1 Rat Infestation (email from Ms Rachel Stephenson, Parish Administrator dated 22nd February 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Rachel Stephenson, Parish Administrator, dated 22nd February 2017 making the Town Council aware of a recent complaint to DCC regarding rats on land adjacent to the Pizza Castle takeaway.

Cllr Alf Walton reported that he had spoken to Mr Martin Scott of DCC's Environmental Health regarding this matter. Mr Scott has confirmed that the land in question does belong to DCC and that he has witnessed several rats in this area. Cllr Walton has made Mr Scott aware that the bins outside Pizza Castle and open

and remnants of oil and fat can be found on the ground nearby, all of which are enticing rats to this area. Cllr Walton also confirmed that when viewing the numerous rat holes in this area it is clear to see that these are well established in the Alms Houses foundations which remain in this locality. Mr Scott has confirmed that DCC will directly liaise with Pizza Castle.

Cllr Allan Blakemore asked if Mr Scott is making all his colleagues across Environmental Health aware of this matter, i.e. we need to ensure that not only are the rats removed from this locality but that the cause of the infestation is also removed. Cllr Blakemore proposed the Town Council writes to DCC requesting statutory enforcement in this area. Cllr Gloria Wills seconded this proposal.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write to DCC's Environmental Health requesting statutory enforcement in this locality in order to not only remove the rats but also remove the cause of the infestation.

6.2 Benches on the Green (email from Ms Maxine Crallan dated 2nd March 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Maxine Crallan dated 2nd March 2017 in which she had requested the Town Council reconsider its policy on installing benches positioned facing the Turning Circle and instead face such benches away from the Circle to allow people to benefit from the views of the greens rather than parked vehicles.

Cllr Walton commented that he had viewed the benches around the Turning Circle and the issue of the direction which they faced was a matter of opinion. When activities are taking place on the Turning Circle or at the Church then people wanted to face in that direction. He proposed that benches remain as they are. Other Cllrs agreed. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the Council now has a policy of not allowing any further benches to be installed, any new benches being installed would only in replace of a bench requiring refurbishment and in such instances a like for like replacement would be sought.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to reply to Ms Crallan with the Council's decision.

6.3 Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project – SLERP 87 To Consultation (email and attachments from Mr Kevin Robson, Senior Project Manager, DCC dated 6th March 2017):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project SLERP 87 to Consultation email and attachments from Mr Kevin Robson, Senior Project Manager, DCC dated 6th march 2017.

Cllr Alf Walton reported that he had spoken directly to Mr Robson on 16th March 2017 and expressed his views regarding the cost of taking this lighting out in contrast to the safety of those people who regularly use this route. Cllr Walton said this was a ridiculous proposal and Cllrs Joanne Elliott and Ian Sutherland agreed. Cllr Sutherland said this proposal was even more ridiculous when considering that a new road opposite the three cornered field will soon be in situ, i.e. where the lights are currently located and proposed to be removed soon there could be a housing estate. Cllr Walton said that he had directly asked Mr Robson at what time of day had the associated survey work been undertaken and he had confirmed DCC had undertaken all survey work during daytime hours.

Cllr Mel Carr commented that no reference was made in any of the documentation to the 300 new houses approved near to this locality, nor the number of residents who already walk into and out of the Town to the restaurant off the roundabout. Cllr Carr reminded Cllrs that the Town Council has strongly objected on several occasions to the 29 lights which have been removed from Sedgefield to Fishburn. Of these 29 lights only 10 are in Fishburn and, referring to Mr Smith's comments during public participation, any meeting to discuss this matter would be better held in Sedgefield. Cllr Carr said that one evening the previous week while travelling in darkness on this road he had witnessed 10-12 people walking along this route, many of whom were very difficult to see due to lack of hi-vis clothing. Cllr Carr said that a number of parents have already complained to Sedgefield Community College as this route is classed as safe walking route for children.

Cllr Allan Blakemore said that under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the local authority must take into account all aspects of crime and disorder as a result of their decisions and in particular any potential increase in violent disorder and other forms of robbery. Cllr Blakemore expressed his concerns for the personal safety of anyone using these routes where lighting has or is being proposed to be removed.

Cllr Gloria Wills referred all Cllrs to DCC's Rights of Way Improvement Plan and in particular Policy 15 which relates to walking. This Policy states the pedestrian network across the County will be improved in order to encourage people to walk. Cllr Wills said this was ironic at a time when encouraging people to walk, lighting was being removed along such routes. Cllr Wills expressed her belief that DCC Officers were working in silos. Cllr Wills proposed that the Town Council request DCC take photographs of before and after the latest lights are removed. She concluded by saying that she would not let her grandchildren walk the route from Sedgefield to Fishburn now due to safety concerns.

Cllr Ian Sutherland noted that on pages 2-3 of the letter from Mr Robson it stated there was no intention to consult on the project or policy again which he felt was arrogant. Cllr Sutherland said that he understood that money was tight but suggested it would be better for street lighting to remain in place and to instead be switched off between certain hours each evening.

Cllr Joanne Elliott said that in view of the significant development about to take place within Sedgefield there was a strong argument that street lighting needed to be increased rather than decreased.

Cllr Blakemore reminded Cllrs of the recent situation at Great Aycliffe Town Council whereby this Council has paid to have lighting columns replaced with solar lighting rather than allow DCC to remove these. Cllr Wills said that there was a significant difference between replacing and removing lighting columns.

Cllr Chris Lines suggested that the Town Council needs to request the meeting relating to the removal of street lights should take place in Sedgefield and reference be made to the Consett example where DCC overturned their decision.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Clerk to submit the Town Council's concerns regarding the latest proposals to remove 4 lighting columns along Station Road, Sedgefield.**
- ii) The Clerk to write to County Cllrs John Robinson and Rachel Lumsdon seeking clarification regarding their meeting in Fishburn to discuss the removal of street lighting columns between Sedgefield and Fishburn as well as request this meeting take place in Sedgefield or an additional meeting take place in the Town.**

6.4 Sedgefield In Bloom (minutes of meeting held 8th March 2017):

The Clerk circulated to all minutes of the Sedgefield In Bloom group meeting held on 8th March 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.5 Premises Licence Variation Application – Hardwick Live Event, Land South West of Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgefield (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 14th March 2017):

The Clerk circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 14th march 2017 which forwarded information from Ms Yvonne Raine, Senior Licensing Officer regarding a Premises Licence Variation Application for Hardwick Live event at land South West of Hardwick Hall Hotel in Sedgefield. Cllrs expressed their annoyance that Ms Raine's email stated "Please can you forward notification of the application below to your contacts for any relevant town or parish councils (if there is one), for their information ..." when the Town Council has been in direct discussions for some time with DCC Licensing Officers regarding Hardwick Hall Hotel. Cllr Gloria Wills said that more detail was needed about the variation in licence before this matter could be considered.

Cllr Mark Cant expressed concerns regarding the size of the Hardwick Live event's promotional sign which has appeared on the fencing near to the roundabout towards Sedgefield Racecourse.

RESOLVED:

i) The Clerk to contact Ms Yvonne Raine and request clarification regarding the variation being requested and also to copy in Ms Helen Johnson of Licencing to request an update on the work she had been asked to undertake on behalf of the Town Council, i.e. to state what are the current conditions of the Hardwick Hall Hotel's licence.

ii) The Clerk to liaise with Ms Susan Porter regarding the promotional Hardwick Live banner on the roundabout next to Sedgefield Racecourse.

6.6 Letter to Towns and Parishes re Dog PSPO (email from Mr Steve Ragg, CDALC dated 15th March 2017):

The Clerk circulated to all an email from Mr Steve Ragg of CDALC dated 15th March 2017 sent on behalf of Mr Ian Houlton of DCC regarding the work now underway to implement the new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) arrangements on 1st June 2017.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

A1. Planning Application DM/17/00730/FPA – erection of single storey rear extension, 12 East End, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform DCC Planning Officer.

A2. Planning Application - revised plans for erection of single storey front/side/rear extension, 18 Hadleigh Close, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objections to this application.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform DCC Planning Officer.

A3. Draft Letter to DCC regarding Appeal Decision APP/X1355/W/16/3162913 The Caravan, Spring Lane, Sedgefield (Report by The Planning Inspectorate dated 14th February 2017):

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that it had been agreed at the Monthly Meeting held on 13th March 2017 that she would draft a response to DCC expressing the Town Council's disappointment at the recent Planning Inspectorate's decision to allow development at The Caravan, Spring Lane and also outline the concerns regarding DCC's evidence as part of this process. The Clerk circulated to all a draft letter which had been prepared. Cllrs suggested minor amendments to this working.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to revise this letter and then send to Mr Stuart Timmiss of DCC with copies to Mr Ian Thompson and Cllr Neil Foster.

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

A4. Options For Trialling A Youth Club In The Parish Hall:

Cllr Chris Lines said that in light of the progress being made with the Fletcher Room refurbishment it was not practical to start trialling a youth club session that would then need to stop to allow work in the room to take place.

RESOLVED:

A meeting be set up between the Youth Working Group and pupils from Sedgefield Community College to show them the plans for the Fletcher Room refurbishment and seek their input in relation to matters such as décor and furniture.

A5. Consideration of Parish Hall Drainage Quotes:

Cllrs considered quotations received for Parish Hall drainage work and a contractor was approved.

A6. Consideration of Parish Hall Fletcher Room Refurbishment Quotes:

Cllrs considered quotations received in relation to refurbishment of the Fletcher Room in Sedgefield Parish Hall and a contractor was approved.

A7. Quotes for Foyer and Toilet Flooring at Sedgefield Parish Hall:

Cllrs considered quotations received in relation to refurbishment of the Fletcher Room in Sedgefield Parish Hall and a contractor was approved.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.46pm.

