

SEDFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY
MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held at **7pm**

on

Monday 17th January 2022

in

Sedgefield Parish Hall

Present

Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)

Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Vice Chairman) and

Cllrs. David Brown, Ann Carr, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Paul Heasman, David Jasper, Allan Nicholson, Jim Seymour, Julie Towler, Mavis Wayman and Stephen Winter

Officers

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllr Mark Cant.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports:

a. Minutes of Finance Working Group meeting held Thursday 9th December 2021:

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

b. Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 13th December 2021:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (AC / SW)

c. Minutes of the P&R committee held Monday 13th December 2021:

These were confirmed as a correct record. (PH / MW)

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

4. Matters of Information:

4.1 Town Councillor Casual Vacancy:

The Notice of Vacancy was displayed with effect from 14th December 2021. The closing date for applications is 25th February 2022. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

4.2 Current Planning Applications:

The Clerk submitted to DCC Planners comments agreed in relation to planning applications 1 – 7.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

(Cllr Catherine Hart joined the meeting).

5. Dates of Meetings:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of all meetings January 2022 plus civic events until October 2022.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

6. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Mel Carr, closed the meeting for the public gave their views and comments.

Ms Jill Savage thanked the Clerk for sharing information provided by her and partner Lee Maddison to Cllrs prior to the meeting which provided background information to their planning application to be considered later at this meeting. Ms Savage explained the purpose of their attendance at this meeting was to introduce themselves and explain the reasons for their planning application. Ms Savage outlined her family's current living conditions and how their planning application, if approved, would significantly improve conditions for all family members. She explained the proposals were not intrusive for neighbours and plans had been well designed. Mr Maddison said this would provide the

opportunity to improve his physical ability for the benefit of his family.

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

7. Internal Reports:

7.1 Chairman's Report:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a copy of the Chairman's report which detailed the actions he had undertaken since the Council's last Monthly Meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

7.2 Mayor's Report:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a copy of the Mayor of Sedgefield's report which detailed the actions undertaken by Cllr Ann Carr since the Council's last Monthly Meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

8. External Reports:

8.1 Report From Durham County Councilor Chris Lines, Sedgefield Division:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a report from Durham County Cllr Chris Lines who represents the Sedgefield Division.

Cllr David Brown, in his County Cllr role, requested to make some verbal comments in addition to the report submitted by County Cllr Lines. Cllr Brown reported that DCC are in their budget and precept setting period. Cllr Brown highlighted that this week was also the last week for participating in the Police & Crime Commissioner precept consultation exercise regarding their proposed 4% precept increase. Cllr Brown said that prior to Ms Joy Allen's appointment as Police & Crime Commissioner she had canvassed against the new Police custody suite at Spennymoor costing £21 million but has now subsequently sanctioned this facility. Cllr Brown also highlighted that the Police & Crime Commissioner has appointed for the first time a Deputy on a salary of

£38,000 and three champion roles with salaries of £37,000 plus. The Commissioner's staffing establishment had increased from 18 to 22 with a wage bill of £150,000. Cllr Brown then highlighted the work that is taking place to create a new unit at the Childrens Home at Newton Aycliffe which will rehabilitate released children back into society. The facility formerly housed 38 inmates but the new unit would cater for only 8 children. Cllr Brown referenced the £210,000 given to each AAP to link into the County Council's Building Brighter Future Of County Durham Partnership work, the allocation of such funding being in its infancy. Cllr Brown continued to detail the road improvement works costings £30 million undertaken in the last 12 months by DCC which was an increase of £10 million on the previous year. He reported the County Council has responsibility for 3973 km of roads, 487 bridges and 82,423 street lights. Cllr Brown concluded by saying that a summary of all this information will feature in the next edition of DCC's County Durham News.

Cllr Mel Carr thanked Cllr Brown for his additional comments. With regards to lighting and highways, Cllr Mel Carr reported that he has made DCC aware on several occasions the urgent need for repair to the light in the road island at the junction at High Street/North End as this area is very dark and potentially dangerous. Despite several reports there hadn't been any progress made. Cllr Mel Carr asked Cllr Brown in his County Cllr role to take this matter forward. Cllr Brown agreed.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive the report provided by County Cllr Lines and note the comments made by County Cllr Brown.**
- ii) County Cllr Brown to progress the matter of the light in the road island at the junction of High Street/North End and to keep the Town Council updated.**

8.2 Crime Statistics Sedgefield 13th December 2021 – 14th January 2022 (provided by PC John Seymour, Durham Constabulary):

The Clerk circulated to all copies of crime statistics for Sedgefield covering the period 13th December 2021 to 14th January 2022 which had been provided by PC John Seymour. It is hoped that these will now be received on a monthly basis and become a standing agenda item.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive this information.**
- ii) Cllrs to forward any questions on these statistics to the Clerk by Monday 24th**

January 2022 so that she can duly liaise with PC Seymour.

9. Correspondence:

None.

10. 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):

(Cllr Allan Nicholson joined the meeting).

10.1 DM/21/04105/FPA – change of use from bakery to tattoo studio and retail shop (Class Sui Generis), 4 North End, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

10.2 DM/21/04176/FPA – single storey extension to the front, single and two storey extensions to the rear and loft conversion and extension, including raising the roof height to provide second floor accommodation (including roof lights and solar panels). Associated internal and external changes and windows openings, to provide accessible accommodation, and alterations to parking arrangements, 5 Meadow Hill, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

RESOLVED:

The comments on planning applications 1 – 2 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.

ADDITIONAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The Clerk reported the following planning applications had been published earlier that day by DCC within the Parish of Sedgefield:

DM/21/03925/TPO – 30% crown and height reduction to 1 no. Cherry tree, 30 North End, Sedgefield

DM/21/04082/FPA – single storey rear extension, loft conversion including 2nd floor rear extension, 2 no dormer windows to rear and 2 no rooflights to front and canopy to front door, 29 Rectory Row, Sedgefield:

RESOLVED:

To delegate the consideration of the planning application matters to the Environment Committee meeting on Monday 24th January 2022.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.18pm.

APPROVED

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY**
POLICY & RESOURCES of the Council
held following the **Monthly meeting**
on
Monday 17th January 2022
in
Sedgefield Parish Hall.

Present **Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. David Brown, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Paul
Heasman, Dave Jasper, Allan Nicholson, Jim Seymour, Julie Towler, Mavis
Wayman and Stephen Winter.

Officers Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllr Mark Cant.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Cowley House Community Benefit Offer:

The Clerk has written to Mr Turner accepting the Cowley House Community Benefit Offer and request that he now prepares and submits to the Town Council, when possible, a formal Community Benefit Deed of Offer and associated documents for counter signing. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Treeworks in Grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall:

AW Treecare will inform the Clerk when they are able to schedule the agreed

treeworks in the grounds of Ceddesfeld Hall. The Clerk to keep the P&R Committee updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Footpath – Malton Terrace:

Members of the Estates Working Group have now reviewed the state of all footpaths on village greens and identified five areas where quotations are being sought for potential resurfacing/patching work in order that a recommendation can be brought to a future P&R Committee for consideration. One of the areas includes Malton Terrace. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.4 Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion:

No pre-planning advice/feedback has been received from the Environment Agency. The Clerk has now submitted to Ms Hilary Sperring of DCC all additional information required by the Local Planning Authority in order for them to consider the Town Council's planning application to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery. A determination is now awaited and the Clerk has received an assurance that an update will be issued by DCC by the end of the week. It is hoped that work to remove the existing recycling bays will begin soon. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.5 Tree Inspections:

Tree inspection reports relating to trees on Town Council owned land have now been completed. An on-site meeting between the Estates Working Group and the Tree Inspector took place on 6th October 2021 to discuss priority findings. The tree inspection reports were considered at the Estates Working Group meeting held on 22nd November 2021 and quotations are now being sought so that a recommendation report can be prepared for a future P&R Committee meeting and link into future budgeting work. The Estates Working Group to keep the P&R Committee updated. The Finance Working Group to factor into the Town Council's future budget planning

process the future programme of treeworks.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.6 Draft Village Green Policy:

The Estates Working Group to review this draft Policy in early 2022 to bring an updated draft back to the P&R Committee for further consideration. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.7 Section 106 Funding:

No further information has been received regarding this matter.

The Clerk has requested a meeting between the Estates Working Group and County Cllr Chris Lines to commence discussions regarding possible review of play provision across the Town.

Upon determination of the Town Council's planning application to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery the Clerk to organize a joint Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group and Finance Working Group meeting in order that funding and options can be considered with a recommendation report brought to a future P&R Committee meeting for consideration.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on any developments relating to Section 106 monies.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.8 Strategic Priorities:

Time is now needed to allow the Clerk to commence drafting action plans for each strategic priority plus scheduling meetings with both local County Cllrs and Police. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.9 Refurbishment of Cemetery Compound:

The Clerk has instructed Town Council staff to remove the Bloom Group's polytunnel from its location in the cemetery compound. The Clerk has informed the successful contractor and been informed that the work to create new bays should start very soon. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.10 Parish Hall CCTV:

The work authorized by the Town Council on the CCTV system in the Parish Hall has now been completed.

In early 2022 work is to commence on producing a CCTV Policy relating to the Parish Hall and review of signage in the Hall as well as appropriate reference in the Parish Hall's User Guide.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.11 Eden Drive Play Area:

As reported at the October 2021 meeting, the work to replace wetpour shrinkage areas at the play area has now been expedited with a request that this be carried out as soon as possible. No confirmation date has been received as yet. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information.

3.12 St Edmund's Churchyard:

The Clerk has provided clarification to the PCC of the Upper Skerne regarding the title deeds of the areas of village green owned by the Town Council which surround the

churchyard at St Edmund's Church. The PCC have confirmed receipt and are now progress the matter of the churchyard's ongoing maintenance with DCC.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.13 Rural Services Network:

The Clerk has written to the Rural Services Network to thank them for their trial period and to cancel its membership.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.14 Cemetery Lodge:

A new tenant moved into the Lodge before Christmas.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.15 Sedgefield 700+ Monies:

A cheque for £400 has been given to the SCA as the Sedgefield 700+'s match funding to support the SCA funding application for the purchase of a marquee.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.16 East Durham Community Athletics Track:

The Clerk has written to Mr Woods thanking him for his recent update and asked that he keeps the Town Council updated on the track's progress. Mr Woods has confirmed.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.17 County Council of Durham Sedgefield Prohibition & Restriction of Waiting and Stopping Parking Places & Disabled Parking Places Amendment Order 2021:

The Clerk has informed Ms Sharon Renwick of DCC of the Town Council's support for

these proposals and requested that once put in place that enforcement measures are used to ensure compliance.

RESOLVED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

The Chairman, Cllr Allan Blakemore, closed the meeting for the public gave their views and comments. The members of the public present did not have any comments to make. The Chairman re-opened the meeting.

5. Reports:

5.1 Annual Headstone Safety Testing 2021/22 Findings Report by Town Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Annual Headstone Safety Testing 2021/22 Findings Report by Town Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent.

RESOLVED:

- i) To receive the information contained in this report.**
- ii) Following confirmation by the PCC of the Upper Skerne that St Edmund's Churchyard is not the responsibility of Sedgefield Town Council, a letter be sent reporting the findings of the recent headstone safety testing and confirm the Town Council will not undertake any further such testing in this area as such responsibility now rests with the PCC or whoever they transfer the maintenance responsibility of the churchyard too.**

6. Financial Matters:

6.1 Invoices for payment by cheques for approval after 13th December 2021:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of cheques for approval after 13th December 2021 numbered 110121 to 110138. The Clerk circulated to all an updated list which includes cheques numbered 110139 and 110140. Cllrs confirmed their support for the authorization of all cheques.

RESOLVED:

- i) All cheques and invoices were approved for payment.**

ii) Cllrs Mel Carr and Cllr Allan Blakemore plus the Town Clerk to duly sign the cheques.

6.2 Financial Budget Comparison as at 6th January 2022:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Financial Budget Comparison as at 6th January 2022.

6.3 Debtors List as at 6th January 2022:

RESOLVED:

To receive the Debtors List as at 6th January 2022.

6.4 Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st December 2021:

RESOLVED:

To receive Direct Debits and BACS List for 1st – 31st December 2021.

6.5 December 2021 Bank Reconciliations plus November 2021 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations and Imprest Account Reconciliation Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a December 2021 Bank Reconciliations plus November 2021 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations and Imprest Account Reconciliation Report. The Clerk then circulated to all copies of the bank reconciliations relating to this report.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

6.6 Discretionary Grant Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Discretionary Grant Update Report.

RESOLVED:

i) To receive the information in the report.

ii) The rule to charge for full hire fees for a booking cancelled within 24 hours of hire will be reinstated, as per the Parish Hall User Guide, from 1st April 2022

onwards.

iii) The Clerk to issue a letter regarding ii) above to all regular Parish Hall users.

6.7 2022/23 Budget and Precept Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a 2022/23 Budget and Precept Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group. This report and its accompanying appendices were duly considered.

RESOLVED:

- i) Sedgefield Town Council increases its precept for 2022/23 by 8% thereby requesting from DCC £378,070.63 (i.e. an increase of £27,183.76 plus the yield of £11,089.88 totalling £38,273.64). Note: This increase in precept will be shown on Council Tax billing information as a 7.4% increase on a Band D tax.
- ii) The proposed article in Appendix 1 be included in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra and displayed on the Town Council's website.
- iii) The Income and Expenditure budget for 2022/23 in Appendix 2 be accepted.
- iv) Cllr Mel Carr and the Town Clerk to complete and submit to DCC the Town Council's completed precept paperwork.

6.8 Review of Fees and Charges For 2022/23 Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Fees and Charges for 2022/23 Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group. This report was duly considered.

RESOLVED:

- i) The price of a pack of dog bags will increase to 70p as from 1st April 2022. An information sign to be displayed in the Town Council Offices.
- ii) From 1st April 2022 allotment hire charges will increase by 2% to £45 for a full plot and £35 for a half plot. Letters will be issued to all allotment holders making them aware of this forthcoming increase.
- iii) From 1st April 2022 the Town Council's photocopying charges will increase as follows:
For regular groups – 20p per page black and white copying and 25p per page colour copying

For private individuals – 30p per page black and white copying and 35p per page colour copying

(Note: These charges are for single sided copies. Double sided copies would be charged at double the price). An information sign to be displayed in the Town Council Offices.

iv) From 1st April 2022 Parish Hall hire fees to increase by 2% rounded up to the nearest £. Letters will be issued to all regular Parish Hall users making them aware of this forthcoming increase as well as information being shared on the Town Council's website.

v) From 1st cemetery fees increase by 2%. Information to be displayed in the cemetery noticeboards and on the Town Council's website.

6.9 Medium Term Financial Plan Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Medium Term Financial Plan Recommendation Report by Finance Working Group. This was accompanied by a Medium Term Financial Plan now recommended for adoption by the Finance Working Group. This was duly considered.

RESOLVED:

To adopted the Medium Term Financial Plan with immediate effect.

7. Correspondence:

7.1 Squash Club Update (email from Mr Chris Rowsby, Sedgefield Squash Club dated 20th December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr Chris Rowsby of Sedgefield Squash Club dated 20th December 2021. Sedgefield Squash Club have now received a formal invitation from DCC to submit a formal application to access their in-principle allocation of £45,000 of Section 106 monies. The Squash Club Committee have sought the view of current members via a survey and the findings of their "Project 22 Survey" were considered recently. The vision of a third court will no longer be progressed but instead a lower height extension would be progressed with improvements within that potentially being coaching space, warm up/cool down space, viewing space, social space, improved toilet facilities, improving the two existing courts and modernizing the entry/booking/lighting system. The Squash Club requested the Town Council now consider submitting a letter of support for the Squash Club's Project 22.

Cllr Allan Blakemore proposed the Town Council writes a letter of support for the Squash Club's project, a project which reflects the views and vision of the current membership. Cllr David Brown seconded this proposal and all Cllrs agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to write on behalf of the Town Council a letter of support for Sedgefield Squash Club's Project 22.

7.2 Illegal Quad Bike Activity (email from Mr Andrew Magee dated 31st December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and accompanying images received from Mr Andrew Magee on 31st December 2021 regarding his concern about illegal quad bike activity on land at NETPark. The Clerk confirmed that Mr Magee had reported this matter directly to the Police and was now also in touch with both local County Cllrs. Cllr David Brown confirmed that in his County Cllr role he was progressing this matter with DCC Officers. Cllrs Brown and Blakemore noted that this is not a problem unique to Sedgefield but a County wide problem.

RESOLVED:

To receive this information.

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

8. Consideration of Reports Exempt from the Public:

8.1 Village Greens Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Village Greens Update Report which was duly considered and a way forward agreed.

8.2 Potential Recognition Award Update Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Potential Recognition Award Update Report which was duly considered and it was agreed the Clerk would keep the P&R Committee updated.

8.3 Adaptations To Town Council Tractor and Winter Gritting Equipment Recommendation by Town Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Adaptations To Town Council Tractor and Winter Gritting Equipment Recommendation Report produced by her and the Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent. This was duly considered and adopted.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.08pm.

APPROVED

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **JANUARY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the Council held at **7p.m.** in the **Parish Hall**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 24th January 2022.**

Present

Cllr. Ann Carr (Chairman)

Cllr Mavis Wayman (Vice Chairman) and

Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Mel Carr, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Paul Heasman, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler and Stephen Winter

Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs Allan Blakemore and Allan Nicholson.

2. Declaration of interest:

None.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Annual Fireworks Display:

The date of the 2022 fireworks display will be promoted in the next edition of the Sedgefield News. Letters appointing contractors for the 2022 event have been issued. Community groups will be contacted as part of the planning for the 2022 event to seek their support and offer opportunity to fund raise. Replies have been sent to Ms Pippa Anderson and Mr Tim Dredge in response to their correspondence regarding the 2021 fireworks display. See agenda item 6.1 for further correspondence from Ms Anderson. The Fireworks Working Group to keep Cllrs updated about the 2022 event.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and close this matter.

3.2 Christmas Tree Festival:

The Clerk has informed Mrs Rowsby that the Town Council gives permission for the

Church's Christmas Tree Festival banner to be displayed around the war memorial fencing.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and close this matter.

3.3 Mediaeval Fayre:

The Clerk has informed Mr John Robinson that the Town Council gives permission to the SCA to use the village greens on 21st May 2022 for the Town's Mediaeval Fayre.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

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

Mr Chris Lines, speaking in his role as County Cllr, said he was delighted to see the Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year Awards was on the agenda and hoped these would progress. He also said that he would be happy to support these Awards in his capacity as County Cllr.

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

5. Reports:

5.1 Community Event/Platinum Jubilee Celebrations Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore and Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Community Event/Platinum Jubilee Celebrations Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore and herself. The Clerk reported that the date of the next planning has now been rescheduled to Monday 14th February 2022 to allow Elizabeth Bland of the Churches Together Group to attend. With the forthcoming removal of covid restrictions it is hoped that the ecumenical service can take place inside St Edmund's Church. A save the date article regarding this event will appear in the imminent next edition of the Sedgefield Extra. The Clerk and Cllr Allan Blakemore to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

5.2 Snow Party Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Snow Party Report which gave the background to this event held on Saturday 27th November 2021, the changes which had to be made as a result of Storm Arwen, the event's key facts, feedback following the event as well as detailing the event's financial summary. Cllr Julie Towler expressed her thanks to Cllr David Jasper for his role as Santa, a view echoed by all fellow Cllrs.

RECOMMENDED:

The next Snow Party to take place on Saturday 26th November 2022.

5.3 Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year 2000 Awards Report by Town Clerk:

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year 2000 Awards Report. The Clerk confirmed that she is now in communications with Ms Melissa Hinton of the Sedgefield Development Trust with regards to the nomination form to be issued in the March edition of the Sedgefield News, a role previously undertaken by Mr John Fitzpatrick.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

6. Correspondence:

6.1 Re: Formal Complaint (email from Ms Pippa Anderson dated 29th November 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a follow-up email received from Ms Pippa Anderson dated 29th November 2021 which she had sent to the Town Council in response to the reply she had received to her earlier email regarding the Town's annual fireworks display in November 2021. Cllrs agreed to note this correspondence but provide no further response regarding this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive Ms Anderson's email dated 29th November 2021.

6.2 Thank You From St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival Committee (email from Ms Rachel Stephenson dated 22nd December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a thank you email from Ms Rachel Stephenson on behalf of the St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival Committee dated

22nd December 2021. Ms Stephenson confirmed the event had raised approximately £2600 which was to be split equally between St Edmund's Church and the Scout/Guiding groups of Sedgefield. The Clerk reminded all that the Mayor of Sedgefield had decorated a tree as part of the Festival.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.11pm.

APPROVED

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 **Parish Hall**, Sedgefield, on
Monday 24th January 2022.

- Present** **Cllr. Stephen Winter (Chairman) and**
Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Paul
Heasman, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler and Mavis Wayman.
- Officer** Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllrs Allan Blakemore and Allan Nicholson.

The Clerk reminded all that powers to consider planning matters had been delegated from the previous week's Monthly Meeting to this Committee meeting and such would be considered at the end of the meeting's agenda.

2. Declaration of interest:

Cllr Paul Heasman declared a non-pecuniary interest in the amended EDCAT planning application to be considered at the end of this meeting. No other Cllrs made any declaration of interest.

3. Matters of Information:

3.1 Request for consideration of Environment Committee:

The Estates Working Group are considering the current usage and potential future usage of Station Road Playing field and when ready will bring a recommendation back to Council. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on these matters.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.2 Garden of Remembrance:

The Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent have investigated this area of the cemetery and confirm that a footpath could be permitted without encroaching upon burial land (such a path would connect the existing main burial area to the Garden of Remembrance). This matter to now be included into the work of the Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group when designing groundworks for the new area of the cemetery.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.3 Composting:

The Clerk has informed Mr Howard Smith and the Town Council's gardening staff that it would be appreciated if efforts could be made by all to reduce adding any further material to the existing recycling bays. This issue will be on the agenda for the rescheduled Joint Town Council/Bloom meeting which has been scheduled for 17th March 2022. The Clerk has asked all to prepare details of the types of green waste collected over the year so that it can be determined what can be easily recycled and for which matter further discussions are needed to come up with alternative suggestions in order to produce guidance for all and new procedures/arrangements. In the meantime, the Clerk has been made aware that the Bloom's compound at Ceddesfeld Hall has reached its capacity for storing green waste. Following discussions with the Chair of the Council, Chair of P&R Committee and Chair of Environment Committee it has been agreed that such waste will be brought by the Bloom Group to the Town Council's existing recycling bays as a matter of urgency so that such material can be disposed of at the same time as the Town Council's waste prior to the bays being dismantled. It has also been agreed that once new recycling bays in the Council's compound area have been created and marked that an on-site meeting will take place to determine what green waste can and cannot be accepted to ensure that recycling opportunities are maximized. For any materials which are found to be problematic then alternative solutions for their storage/disposal can be considered at that time. The Clerk and Cllr Stephen Winter to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

See agenda item 6.2.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.4 Village Green at front of Impeccable Pig:

As requested, the Clerk has spoken with the Town Council's solicitor regarding the proposals presented by DCC for making bays at this location to try to overcome the parking difficulties in this area. Our solicitor has in turn considered this proposal from the view of the Town Council as landowner. He sees no reasons why the Town Council could not consent to the County Council proposals in its capacity as the registered proprietor of the Village Green. We are aware there are no legal rights to park or drive on the Village Green unless it is with the consent of the Town Council, however, this has clearly been used for many years notwithstanding the fact that a prescriptive right is not capable of arising. The Clerk has confirmed to our solicitor that the parking bays would not be specifically for The Impeccable Pig and as such there is no need for any specific licence, however, the consent of the Town Council will need to be given to the County Council by way of a simple letter. The Clerk has asked our solicitor to prepare such a letter and send to Mr Daniel Morgan at DCC as quickly as possible. On 6th October 2021 Mr Daniel Morgan of DCC confirmed receipt of the Town Council's solicitor's correspondence granting DCC permission to install the proposed works in front of the Impeccable Pig. Mr Morgan will keep the Town Council updated on progress.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.5 Grass Cutting Tendering:

Work is underway to seek quotations for the Council's grass cutting work in 2022/23 and 2023/24. This matter to be considered at a future P&R Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and close this matter.

3.6 Allotment Champion Vacancy:

Letters have been issued to all allotment holders making them aware of Cllr Allan Nicholson's appointment as the Council's Allotment Champion. The Sedgfield

Sowers & Growers Group have also been informed. Allotments documentation and information regarding allotments training has been sent to Cllr Nicholson for consideration. Cllr Nicholson had been requested to submit a short article for the next edition of the Sedgefield News. Cllr Nicholson to consider whether or not the annual Allotment Challenge competition is to be pursued in future years and bring a recommendation to the Environment Committee.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information.

3.7 Annual Headstone Safety Testing:

A report regarding the 2021/22 Annual Headstone Safety Testing findings had been taken to the earlier January 2022 P&R Committee for consideration.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.8 Green Waste:

The Clerk has written to Mr Gary Hetherington explaining the situation regarding green waste.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.9 Cemetery:

The Clerk has made the Council's appointed grass cutting contractor aware of the complaint received and asked him to investigate and provide feedback. A telephone conversation has taken place. The Clerk has written to Ms Stockhill to make her aware of the actions taken by the Council. This matter to be discussed at the next Estates Working Group meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.10 Northumbria in Bloom 2022:

The Clerk has liaised with Sedgefield In Bloom who have confirmed that they are happy to continue to support the Town Council in its 2022 Bloom entry. Therefore the Clerk has submitted the Town Council's entry to the 2022 competition in accordance

with the Town Council's wishes.

The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated as the competition progresses.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

3.11 Planning Matters:

The Clerk has forwarded to DCC Planning Officers the Town Council's comments in relation to planning application DM/21/03756/FPA.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive the information and to close this matter.

4. Public Participation:

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

Mr Chris Lines wished to speak not in his capacity as a County Cllr but as a member of the public on behalf of the East Durham Community Athletics Track (EDCAT) group. Mr Lines understood that Mr Ean Parsons had written to the Town Council on behalf of the EDCAT group to outline the key changes to the group's planning application to build a running track in the Town. Mr Lines said this was a complex planning application and since its submission in July 2021 the EDCAT group have continued to work constructively with DCC's Planning Officers. Mr Lines believed the amendments made to the planning application enhanced the application and mitigated some of the objections which had been made. Mr Lines said that any comments made on the original planning application – either for or against – still stood and that people could make further comments on the amendments now submitted. Mr Lines said that he supported the Town Council's decision to request this application be determined by DCC's Full Planning Committee so there was the opportunity for people to speak and all views to be considered before determination would be made upon material planning grounds. Mr Lines said a public consultation exercise had been undertaken in Sedgfield in 2021 and from the 350 responses received 87% supported the EDCAT project on the land now being proposed and that was before the enhancements to the application now submitted. Mr Lines said that EDCAT were happy to have further discussions with any Cllrs or residents should they wish and welcomed active dialogue. Mr Lines said the younger generation had struggled through the pandemic and pointed out that other sports clubs with their own facilities had been able to continue to deliver their activities operating in accordance with

covid restrictions unlike the Harriers who had not been able to do so highlighting the need for such. Mr Lines then said that in his role as County Cllr he had declared an interest to DCC regarding EDCAT and would not be part of the planning determination process. Mr Lines concluded by saying it was encouraging to see other sports clubs in the ward were in the process of finalising their applications for Section 106 monies relating to their various sporting projects.

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

5. Reports:

None.

6. Correspondence:

6.1 Sedgefield In Bloom Group (minutes of meeting held 17th November 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated the Sedgefield in Bloom minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2021 for information. The Clerk confirmed that she is in discussions with the new Chair of the Bloom Group and the Group will continue to share the minutes of their meetings for the Town Council's information. The Bloom Group will warmly welcome any Cllr who wishes to attend their meetings.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

6.2 Green Waste (email from Mr Howard Smith, Sedgefield In Bloom Group dated 18th November 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email regarding green waste from Mr Howard Smith of the Sedgefield In Bloom Group dated 18th November 2021. The Clerk confirmed that as reported under agenda item 3.3 an interim resolution to this matter had been made and plans for a longer-term solution also put in place.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

6.3 Climate Change (email from CDALC dated 2nd November 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from CDALC dated 2nd November 2021 on Climate Change. Cllr Stephen Winter reminded all that the Town Council has previously signed up to DCC's Single Use Plastics Pledge. The Clerk

confirmed that any specific advice and initiatives promoted via NALC and CDALC in the future would be brought to the Council's attention for progression.

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive this information.

6.4 Cherry Tree and Sycamore Tree (email and attachments from Mr Ian Hartshorn dated 19th November 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and accompanying attachments from Mr Ian Hartshorn regarding a cherry tree and sycamore tree in the town which had been felled in 2021. It was agreed that the Clerk should reply to Mr Hartshorn explaining these trees had been felled on the advice of an independent tree inspector due to the unsafe nature of both and the Town Council's plans to replant trees in their place in the future. The Clerk confirmed that the imminent edition of the Sedgefield Extra does include an article explaining recent treeworks undertaken in the Town and the process which was followed.

RECOMMENDED:

The Clerk to reply to Mr Hartshorn.

6.5 Parking Outside Julia and Sofia's (email from Mr Neil and Ms Lesley Edmenson dated 24th November 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr and Ms Edmenson dated 24th November 2021 in which they expressed concerns about the state of parking on the tarmaced area of land below 6 Church View which in some instances leads to vehicles driving over the grass.

Cllr Stephen Winter felt that the issues highlighted in this correspondence reflected that none of the businesses in this area of the Town had any dedicated car parking space so users and staff of those businesses, as well as nearby residents, were competing for limited spaces. Cllr Winter expressed the importance of vehicle owners parking responsibly and if necessary parking somewhere safely and walking to the facility they required. Cllr David Brown confirmed he had viewed the grassed area and not seen any signs of tracks across the area. Cllr Brown reminded Cllrs that the Town Council does not have any enforcement powers for parking. Cllr Paul Heasman asked if boulders, similar to those around the edges of grassed village green at The Square could be obtained and placed around the tarmaced area at Church View to protect the

grass and force drivers to park their vehicles considerately. Cllr Mark Cant had observed vehicles blocking in other vehicles at this location but reminded all the Town Council had no parking enforcement powers and placing boulders in this location would be expensive as well as make the grass cutting work much harder and could result in vehicles being entirely blocked in by inconsiderate drivers. Cllr Heasman said that it was important the customers complained to the businesses which they were visiting to highlight this problem where it was suspected that staff working at such were contributing to the problem. Cllr Julie Towler reminded Cllrs that some time ago similar problems in other areas of the village were highlighted and as a result letters were sent to those in that locality making them aware of the problem and asking for consideration. Cllr Towler agreed that businesses in the area now being considered do not have designated parking. Cllr Catherine Hart said that parking in the village was a problem. Cllr Wayman believed that most parking problems were being caused by people driving into the village to attend work. Cllr Mel Carr gave the recent history to several properties in Church View which had been converted from residential dwellings into business, to all of which the Town Council had expressed concerns that such would have upon the already problematic situation of parking in the Town. DCC had refuted those objections and stated there was not a problem with parking in the Town. Cllr Mel Carr said that he was concerned if the current situation continued or was exacerbated further than visitors to the Town's centre would stop and go elsewhere. Cllr Mel Carr gave the examples of the current states of Bishop Auckland and Stockton's town centres. Cllr Mel Carr said it was therefore important the Town Council objects to any other such applications to change residential properties to business use. Cllr Mel Carr noted that after 11pm the Town does not have any parking problem as all drivers return to their homes thereby confirming that this problem is linked to business usage. Cllr Mel Carr proposed the Town Council writes to businesses in this area of the Town to ask them to request their staff and clients park considerately. The Town Council does not have any parking enforcement powers. Cllr Paul Heasman said it was important the Town Council did do something. He suggested the car park linked to the running track could be used as a day car park with "Boris" bikes available for those to cycle into the Town. Cllr David Brown detailed his observations regarding where staff from various businesses in the Town park and how this has a knock-on effect during the working day. Cllr Ann Carr said that she did not believe DCC helped the Town in any way by allowing all the additional businesses to be created without any designated and additional parking spaces nor any consideration for the significant problem the Town has with parking.

The Clerk reminded all of the work which has taken place to date for the Town Council to work with both local County Cllrs and AAP representatives in order to scope out a potential project utilizing DCC's additional Towns and Villages Funding to try to mitigate some of the problems now being considered, e.g. better provision for cyclists, safer travelling options etc. Cllr Mel Carr said that it was important to work with partners to obtain funding and also ensure those organisations with enforcement powers were encouraged to use them.

RECOMMENDED:

- i) The Clerk to write to businesses in the Church View area of the Town to ask them to request their staff and clients park considerately.**
- ii) The Clerk to seek, via County Cllr Lines, an update on the Towns and Villages project which is being scoped by EDRC AAP Officers.**

6.6 Tree Cut Back (email from Mr B Lamb dated 2nd December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mr B Lamb dated 2nd December 2021 in which he sought the Town Council's permission to cut back trees which overhang his property from Town Council land. Cllrs agreed to this request providing it was undertaken in the way Mr Lamb detailed in his email.

RECOMMENDED:

The Town Council to grant permission to Mr Lamb to cut back trees as stated in his email dated 2nd December 2021.

6.7 The County Council of Durham (Public Bridleway No 56 Sedgefield Parish) Public Path Extinguishment and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2021 (letter and attachments from Ms Sharon Renwick, DCC dated 16th December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter and attachments from Ms Sharon Renwick of DCC dated 16th December 2021 relating to the confirmation for the Public Path Extinguishment and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2021 regarding public bridleway No 56 in Sedgefield Parish.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

6.8 The County Council of Durham (Public Bridleway No 57 Sedgefield Parish) Public Path Extinguishment and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2021 (letter and attachments from Ms Sharon Renwick, DCC dated 16th December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter and attachments from Ms Sharon Renwick of DCC dated 16th December 2021 relating to the confirmation for the Public Path Extinguishment and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2021 regarding public bridleway No 57 in Sedgefield Parish.

RECOMMENDED:

To receive this information.

6.9 Parking East End (email and attachment from Ms K Hindmarch dated 7th December 2021):

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachment from Ms K Hindmarch dated 7th December 2021 in which she asked if resident parking permits had been considered for East End in Sedgefield in light of the number displaced vehicles from the Dun Cow as a result of the marquee in the establishment's car park. Cllrs did not know how long the marquee in the car park would remain but acknowledged that it may be removed as covid restrictions cease. The Town Council does not have any powers for implementing such a permit scheme and it was noted in the attached email which Ms Hindmarch had received from DCC that such a scheme in that locality would not meet the criteria within DCC's Parking Policy for residential permit parking. Ms Hindmarch had also commented in her email that she had asked DCC for their plans on electric charging points in East End and she hoped to get a response on that soon.

RECOMMENDED:

i) The Clerk to reply to Ms Hindmarch to inform her that the Town Council does not have any further information regarding the marquee in the Dun Cow car park and that the Town Council will also ask local County Cllrs for an update on the matter regarding electric charging points in the Town.

ii) The Clerk to liaise with local DCC County Cllrs to find out plans for future electric charging points in the Town (this may well tie in with the Towns and Villages work discussed in item 6.5).

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

As reported at the start of this meeting, powers were delegated to this meeting to consider planning matters.

Current Planning Applications:

Planning Application DM/21/03925/TPO – 30% crown and height reduction of 1 no Cherry tree, 30 North End, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

Planning Application DM/21/04082/FPA – single storey rear extension, loft conversion including 2nd floor rear extension, 2 no dormer windows to rear and 2 no rooflights to front and canopy to front door, 29 Rectory Row, Sedgefield:

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

RESOLVED:

The comments on above planning applications to be submitted to DCC Planners

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (letter received from Mr Henry Jones, DCC dated 18th January 2022):

The Clerk reported that prior to the meeting she had shared with all Cllrs a letter entitled as above from Mr Henry Jones of DCC dated 18th January 2022 giving the Town Council until 1st February 2022 to consider and submit to DCC any comments regarding amendments to the East Durham Community Athletics Track (EDCAT) group's planning application on land South West of Burdon Place, Sedgefield to create a community athletics facility with associated floodlighting, access, car parking, drainage and landscaping. At the same time the Clerk had also issued to all Cllrs as a reminder the Town Council's response to DCC dated 14th July 2021 when this application was originally considered, i.e. the Town Council is supportive of the creation of an athletics track but does have concerns regarding the impact this planning application will have upon nearby residents in terms of light pollution, noise disturbance and implications for highways safety and car parking as a result of additional traffic generated by the site hence therefore requesting this planning application be determined by Full Planning Committee to ensure the views and concerns of all parties, for and against, are heard and considered as part of the determination process. Subsequently the Clerk had received from Mr Ean Parsons of EDCAT a letter dated 20th January 2022 which provided a short summary of the main changes being made to their planning application and was accompanied by an updated landscape strategy drawing. All information from EDCAT had been shared with Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Cllr Catherine Hart reported that she had been contacted by resident Ms Kay Aitkens who had submitted to DCC several objections relating to this planning application and would like to invite Town Cllrs to visit her property to put her objections into context. Cllr Hart had made Ms Aitkens aware of the opportunity for public participation at this meeting. Cllrs noted Ms Aitkens invitation and confirmed that such an invitation had been offered in 2021, however, Cllrs had been able to consider this application without such a visit.

Cllr Paul Heasman said that he had visited the proposed site of the track and felt that such a facility would have a good impact upon the Town and believed that EDCAT had put together a very good application. Cllr Heasman expressed concern at some false information which is currently circulating on social media regarding this matter. Cllr Heasman noted the amended information enhanced the application and highlighted the additional biodiversity elements being presented now. With regards to road safety concerns, Cllr Heasman likened this

location and its usage to that of Racecourse Road which is an area that is typically quiet unless events are taking place. Cllr Heasman felt that when comparing the two locations, in his opinion, the road safety risk with this planning application within a 40mph zone were far less than those relating to Racecourse Road in a 60mph zone. Cllr Heasman felt the Town Council should continue to support this project and did not wish to see Sector 106 monies available to the Town being lost.

Cllr Mark Cant said that the Town Council had previously asked for this planning application to be called in for determination by DCC's Full Planning Committee with the opportunity for the public to have their say and said that this was still the correct approach regardless of any amended information being presented.

Cllr John Finlayson agreed that this application needed to be determined by Full Planning Committee. Cllr Finlayson said that he had sympathy for the resident who had invited Town Cllrs to view her property but said that it was essential residents fed into, and participated with, DCC's planning process to ensure their voice was heard as part of the determination process.

Cllr Mel Carr felt that the Town Council's position had not changed as a result of the amended information provided and that the Town Council's letter to DCC dated 14th July 2021 still stood. Cllrs agreed.

RESOLVED:

The Clerk to inform Mr Henry Jones of DCC that the amendments to planning application DM/21/01984/FPA have been considered but do not change the Town Council's comments made in a letter to him dated 14th July 2021, i.e. the Town Council is supportive of the creation of an athletics track but does have concerns regarding the impact this planning application will have upon nearby residents in terms of light pollution, noise disturbance and implications for highways safety and car parking as a result of additional traffic generated by the site hence therefore requesting this planning application be determined by Full Planning Committee to ensure the views and concerns of all parties, for and against, are heard and considered as part of the determination process.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.05pm.