

## SEDFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the **SEPTEMBER**  
**MONTHLY MEETING** of the **Council** held

at 7pm

on

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

in

**Sedgefield Parish Hall**

**Present**

**Cllr. Mel Carr (Chairman)**

**Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Vice Chairman) and**

Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Elizabeth Flanagan, Dave Jasper,  
Julie Towler and Mavis Wayman

**Officer**

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies:**

Cllrs Kelly Dickerson, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Jenny Haworth and Stephen Winter.

**2. Declaration of interest:**

None.

**3. STC Minutes / Committee Reports:**

**a. Minutes of the Monthly meeting held Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

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

**b. Minutes of the P&R Committee held Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

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

**c. Minutes of the Environment Committee held Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

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

**d. Minutes of the Community Development Committee held Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

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

**e. Minutes of the Finance Working Group held Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

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

**f. Minutes of the Estates Working Group held Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

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

**g. Minutes of Personnel Committee held Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023:**

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

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

**4. Matters of Information:**

**4.1 Supplementary Planning Documentation:**

County Cllr David Brown had previously been asked to provide the Clerk, for onward sharing with STC Cllrs, details as to on what grounds objections are submitted to DCC for solar energy and solar farm applications to enable a better understanding of the pros and cons of such. County Cllr David Brown reported that DCC are seeing an increasing number of applications despite their not being any guidance in relation to this matter in The County Durham Plan. Domestic applications can be delegated, however, larger applications go to Planning Committee for determination. Many larger applications tend to be cross boundary. Cllr Brown confirmed all such applications have a consultation period that is advertised and it is during that consultation period that comments should be submitted.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**4.2 Mayor's Report – Defibrillators:**

Cllr Dave Jasper confirmed that he had met, as requested, with County Cllr Lines and Mr Mel Carr of Sedgefield Rotary to answer questions they had raised regarding the siting of defibrillators in the Town as part of his Mayor's charity work. Cllr Jasper reported that his chosen charity the Red Sky Foundation has generated significant funds following their involvement in the Oyster Ball at Hardwick Hall Hotel, funds which Mr John Adamson had requested benefit Sedgefield. As a result of this five defibrillators have been allocated and will be located at The Impeccable Pig (fitted and already working), Sedgefield Primary School (to be fitted soon by the school's appointed contractors) and the remaining defibrillators to be fitted by the Red Sky Foundation at Sedgefield Methodist Church, St Edmund's Church and Sedgefield Rugby Club. Cllr Jasper concluded by reported a sixth defibrillator had now also

been installed recently outside Sedgefield Police Station.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**4.3 Councillor Vacancy:**

A new casual vacancy notice has now been published with a deadline date for submission of applications by no later than noon on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023. This will also feature in the next edition of the Sedgefield Extra. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**A Special Town Council Meeting to be held at 6pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to consider applications received.**

**4.4 Current Planning Applications:**

The Clerk submitted to DCC Planners comments agreed in relation to planning applications 1-6.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**4.5 Additional Planning Application:**

No objections or comments were submitted by Cllrs to the Clerk regarding planning application DM/23/01961/FPA.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**5. Dates of Meetings:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of all meetings in September 2023 plus events until March 2024. The Clerk highlighted two additional Mayoral events – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 a Mayor's Afternoon Extravaganza and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 a Mayor's New Year's Eve Dance both of which are taking place in Sedgefield Parish Hall and tickets are on sale to the public now.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**6. Public Participation:**

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

Dr Tammy Joyce said that she wished to speak on behalf of herself and three fellow neighbours to express concerns regarding the planning application published recently by Durham County Council proposing to convert the Old Smithy in Sedgfield into four self-contained holiday homes. Dr Joyce said she was concerned regarding the intensity of the holiday lets being proposed on a relatively small site, i.e. five double bedrooms between four properties, the inadequacy of the parking for this proposal and the problems that additional vehicles will cause in terms of loading and turning. As the properties will be holiday lets there is the potential for visitors to arrive at any time of day or night causing disturbance to neighbouring properties. She was particularly concerned about the number of additional vehicles that would be parking in the local area and she highlighted that some residents have retained firefighter responsibilities and need to respond to call-outs very quickly and needed their vehicles close to their homes. She then cited several highway safety concerns including potential obstructions on the pavement meaning that pedestrians would have to walk on the highway at risk to their personal safety as well as to drivers. The proposals within the planning application to remove existing frosted glass and use of plain glass, with additional windows being installed, would mean a loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

Mrs Alison Manning expressed her concern at the short notice given by Durham County Council regarding the planning application to convert The Old Smithy. Mrs Manning explained the strength of negative feelings from the local community, and not just those in the immediate vicinity, in relation to this planning application which was reflected in a petition she had started. Mrs Manning confirmed a copy of this petition had been sent to Durham County Council. The Clerk confirmed that a redacted copy of such had been shared with Town Councillors for their information.

Mrs Julia Bowles endorsed the comments made by the two residents and said that no-one she had spoken to in the Town had made any positive comments about the planning application. Mrs Bowles then asked why the three proposals recently presented during the S106 public consultation were to be funded from the community contributions "pot" and not the open space "pot"?

Cllr Mel Carr stated the planning application referenced during public participation relating to The Old Smithy was to be considered under agenda item 10. Cllr Carr said he could not answer the question asked by Mrs Bowles as the administering of S106 monies was a Durham County Council matter. Cllr Carr said he had comments which he wished to raise during the next P&R Committee meeting regarding S106. The Chairman thanked 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 Chair's Report which provided details of the Chair's actions since the last Monthly Meeting,

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7.2 Mayor's Report:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Mayor's Report which provided details of the Mayor's actions since the last Monthly Meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information in the Mayor's Report.**

**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. The Clerk reported that County Cllr Lines had sent his apologies for not being able to attend this meeting but had asked for it to be noted that the recent S106 public consultation ran by the County Council had received a good response and Ms Jane Bellis of the EDRC AAP was making good progress in analysing the responses received. County Cllr Lines said further information should follow soon.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**9. Correspondence:**

**9.1 DM/23/02390/FPA – Conversion of The Old Smithy to 4 Self-Contained Holiday Homes (letter from Mr and Mrs Bick dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to Cllrs a letter from Mr and Mrs Bick dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023 regarding planning application DM/23/02390/FPA for the conversion of The Old Smithy to 4 self-contained holiday homes in which they detailed their objections.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**9.2 Planning application DM/23/02390/FPA – Conversion of Old Smithy to 4 Self-Contained Holiday Homes (email and letter from Dr and Mrs Manning dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to Cllrs an email and letter from Dr and Mrs Manning dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 regarding planning application DM/23/02390/FPA for the conversion of The Old Smithy to 4 self-contained holiday homes in which they detailed their objections.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**9.3 Objection Planning Application The Old Smithy (email and attached letter from Dr Tammy Joyce dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to Cllrs an email and letter from Dr Joyce dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 regarding her objections to the planning application relating to the conversion of The Old Smithy.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**9.4 Petition Objecting To Planning Application Old Smithy and Objection Dr Jones (email and attachments from Dr Tammy Joyce dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to Cllrs an email and attached redacted petition from Dr Joyce dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 plus email from Dr and Mrs Jones in relation to objections to planning application for the conversion of The Old Smithy.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**9.5 DM/23/02390/FPA – Conversion of Old Smith to 4 Self-contained Holiday Cottages, Cross Street (email from County Cllr Chris Lines dated 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from County Councillor Chris Lines dated 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in which he had formally requested planning application DM/23/02390/FPA was called in for consideration by Planning Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**10. Current Planning Applications:**

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

**10.1 DM/23/01538/FPA – removal of hedgerow to facilitate the creation of a new vehicular access and formation of new track, Preston Lodge, Stillington:**

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

**10.2 DM/23/02390/FPA – conversion of the Old Smith to 4 self-contained holiday homes:**

Cllrs object to this planning application on several grounds. There is no space for parking within the curtilage of this application. There is no dedicated parking provision with this application in the surrounding area, an area that already has a significant parking problem. This proposed planning application will generate significant additional traffic with each of the four lets having at least one car each. Additional traffic will also be generated by those who make deliveries to the proposed properties as well as undertaking cleaning duties. The application brings with it road access concerns as the road on which this property is located is effectively a single carriage way which will be blocked by vehicles making deliveries and unloading at the property thereby restricting other road users and potentially causing blockages along Front Street and Rectory Row. The additional vehicles which this planning application will bring with it increased highway safety concerns to both drivers and pedestrians. The building fronts directly onto the highway where there is no pedestrian pavement. The proposal to convert this modest, former commercial property into four holiday lets is considered to be over-development of a site in terms of both density and layout. The viability of these properties being able to comply with disabled persons' access is questionable. There are concerns that these additional properties will place even further strain upon the Town's existing sewerage system.

Cllrs also agreed that it was important DCC considered the issues in past planning applications relating to this unique site in the Town's Conservation Area and sought the views of their Conservation Officer. An additional concern is the close proximity between The Old Smithy and the church yard of St Edmund's Church where any building work could cause disturbance to buried remain as well as tree roots. It was agreed that Cllrs would also request that this planning application be called in for determination by Full Planning Committee and not by delegated Planning Officer. It was also agreed that the Town Council would attend and speak at Full Planning Committee with Cllr Mel Carr representing the Town Council and in his absence Cllr John Finlayson.

**10.3 DM/23/02557/FPAa – demolition of existing unsuitable stables and store outbuildings and replacement with prefabricated purpose-made stable block with 3 no stables, hay store, wash down bay and tack room (personal use only), Moor House Farm, Stillington:**

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

**10.4 DM/23/02589/TPO – sycamore (T1-T3) reduce canopies by 1/3 thin by 20% to tidy up, control growth and allow light through the tree canopies; Alder (T4) reduce upper leader by 1/2 to reduce/control height. Prune back lower branches towards house by 1/4, 21 Glebe Close, Fishburn:**

Cllrs did not have any objection to this application.

**RESOLVED:**

**The comments on planning applications 1 – 4 above to be submitted to DCC Planners.**

**ADDITIONAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

The Clerk reported that earlier that day the latest list of planning applications published by DCC had been circulated to all Cllrs. This list included the following planning application which need to be considered by Cllrs:

**DM/23/02586/TPO – partial crown reduction of monkey tree, 34 St Luke's Crescent, Sedgefield**

**DM/23/02598/FPA – removal of existing timber frame and corrugated sheeting outbuilding and replace with single storey annex, Brackendale, Thorpe Larches**

**DM/23/02629/FPA – demolition of existing car port and utility extension and erection of single storey side and rear extension (amendment application to include pitched roof to rear extension), 61 The Meadows, Sedgefield**

**RESOLVED:**

**Cllrs to consider the above application and to forward any comments to the Clerk by no**



**later than 9am on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.34pm.

APPROVED

# SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## POLICY & RESOURCES



Minutes of the proceedings of the **SEPTEMBER**  
**POLICY & RESOURCES** of the Council  
held following the **Monthly Meeting**  
on  
**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**  
in  
**Sedgefield Parish Hall.**

**Present**

**Cllr. Allan Blakemore (Chairman) and**

Cllrs. David Brown, Mark Cant, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, Elizabeth Flanagan, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler and Mavis Wayman.

**Officer**

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies:**

Cllrs Kelly Dickerson, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Jenny Haworth and Stephen Winter.

**2. Declaration of interest:**

Cllr Elizabeth Flanagan declared an interest in all matters relating to the Parish Hall. No other Cllrs made any declarations of interest.

**3. Matters of Information:**

**3.1 Section 106 Funding / Section 106 Funding Application – Play Provision in Sedgefield:**

DCC's public consultation relating to S106 monies from the large scale development at Eden Drive ceased on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Feedback is now awaited. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on any developments relating to Section 106 monies.

Cllr Mel Carr said he was concerned that the Town Council had submitted its Section 106 application to Durham County Council in February 2021 and was still awaiting a determination. He noted that the County Council had received a total of £2386639 in Section 106 funding for Sedgefield with the last information circulated by CDALC in

July 2023 showing there was £693906 of that being held by the County Council. Cllr Mel Carr reminded all that the County Council have the power to seek, collect and distribute S106 monies with the idea being that such is distributed in a way that seeks to mitigate the impact on the local community of large scale development. Cllr Mel Carr said he wanted to know what has happened so far with this money and why are local projects which have been identified not been funded? Cllr David Brown suggested inviting Mr Stephen Reed of the County Council to attend a meeting with the Town Council. Cllr Mark Cant proposed a Freedom Of Information request be submitted to the County Council asking what has happened to the £2386639 which it has collected in Section 106 funding relating to Sedgefield. Cllr Allan Blakemore said the EDRC AAP are currently analysing the feedback from the recent S106 public consultation and said he believed the Town Council should wait until those findings are ready before making any such submissions to the County Council. Cllrs Mavis Wayman and Ann Carr said there was a lack of transparency from the County Council regarding Section 106.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **To receive the information.**
- ii) **The Clerk to invite Mr Stephen Reed of Durham County Council to a meeting with Town Councillors to find out the latest position regarding Section 106 monies relating to Sedgefield.**
- iii) **A Freedom Of Information request be submitted to Durham County Council asking what has happened to the £2,386,639 collected in Section 106 funding relating to Sedgefield.**

**3.2 Active Travel Project:**

This public consultation exercise has now closed and DCC are analysing results. A copy of the Active Trave meeting notes from 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were circulated with County Cllr Chris Lines latest Monthly Report. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.3 Hedge Cutting:**

To obtain a quote for all hedge cutting work prior to the 2023/24 hedge cutting season for consideration by a future P&R Committee meeting. The Clerk to keep Cllrs

updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.4 The Queen's Tree:**

A Black Walnut tree has now been planted in the old cemetery at Beacon Lane as the Queen's Tree. Work is underway to obtain a boulder to which a commemorative plaque can be displayed. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.5 Transfer of Civic Regalia:**

The ceremonial sword, ceremonial mace and boxed geisha girl were transferred to DCC on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and close this matter.**

**3.6 Specialist Lighting In Parish Hall:**

The Clerk has instructed the Town Council's appointed contractor to undertake the necessary work to the specialist lighting in the Parish Hall as a matter of urgency and present to the Town Council a findings report should any further repair work be required. A response is now awaited and another further reminder has been issued. The assistance of Cllrs Finlayson and Jasper in trying to convey this message to the contractor has also been sought. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.7 Annual Headstone Safety Testing 2022/23:**

Those Category 1 headstones at Butterwick Road Cemetery which can be laid down safely without the use of specialist equipment have been done by the Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent with assistance from the Receptionist & Parish Hall Support Officer. The Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent is now liaising with the Town Council's grave digging contractor to make arrangements for staked

headstones to be laid flat as well as the remaining Category 1 headstones. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.8 Digitised Burial Map:**

This work is now being actioned by The CDS Group in accordance with the Town Council's instructions.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**3.9 Replacement Bench:**

This bench has now been installed in the enclosed play area at Eden Drive.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**3.10 Terrace Hill Discussion:**

The Clerk and Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent met on-site in Ceddesfeld Grounds with Mr Martin Lowe of Historic England on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023. A follow-up meeting has now taken place with DCC's Conservation Officer and Tree Officer(s) who recommend the Clerk now liaises with DCC's Head of Ecology in order that appropriate specifications and costings can be sought so a further Discussion Meeting can be scheduled with Town Cllrs. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.11 Public Participation:**

The Clerk has contacted Ms Jane Bellis of the EDRC AAP requesting an update regarding comments made by a member of the public regarding the AAP having found 30% of the funding required to improve the two takeaway properties on Front Street but the owner of the property being unknown. A response is now awaited from Ms Bellis. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.12 Parish Hall Windows:**

This work has now been completed.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**3.13 Licensing – Minor Variation – Sainsbury’s Supermarket and Petrol Forecourt:**

No comments were made by any Town Cllrs.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**3.14 Ceddesfeld Hall Rent Review:**

The Clerk has issued the necessary documentation to the SCA regarding the rent increase for the period 2023/24 – 2025/26. The SCA have confirmed receipt of this correspondence and accepted the rent increase. An invoice for the rent will be issued in December 2023. The issue of building inspections was considered at the Estates Working Group meeting. See agenda item 8.2.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**4. Public Participation:**

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

Mrs Julia Bowles said that previously she had found Mr Stephen Reed of Durham County Council to be very good at sharing information regarding Section 106 monies. Mrs Bowles said that the County Council collects such monies and then keeps it within interest bearing accounts. Mrs Bowles said the County Council have not answered her questions as to what they are then doing with the interest such investment generated. She concluded by saying the community have a right to have a say on how such monies to mitigate the impacts of development in this Town should be spent.

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

**5. Reports:**

**5.1 Parish Hall User Forum Update Report by Cllr John Finlayson:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Parish Hall User Forum Update Report by Cllr John Finlayson which was accompanied by the minutes from the Forum's last meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To receive the information contained in this report and in the attached minutes.**
- ii) The Parish Hall User Forum minutes to be shared with the Hall's regular users.**

**5.2 Review of Attendance Management Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Attendance Management Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Attendance Management Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.3 Review of Leave of Absence Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Leave of Absence Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Leave of Absence Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.4 Review of Change Management Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Change Management Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Change Management Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.5 Review of Adverse Weather Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Adverse Weather Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Adverse Weather Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.6 Review of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.7 Review of Staff Working Time Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Staff Working Time Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that



report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Staff Working Time Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.8 Review of Staff Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy Recommendation by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Review of Staff Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy Recommendation Report by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk had also issued electronically to all prior to the meeting a copy of the Policy to which that report referred.

**RESOLVED:**

**The reviewed Staff Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave Policy to be adopted with immediate effect and reviewed in a further 24 months time.**

**5.9 Youth Shelter Recommendation Report by Estates Working Group:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all Youth Shelter Recommendation Report by the Estates Working Group meeting. Cllrs were in agreement with the content of this report, however, Cllr Mel Carr said that he had additional information related to agenda item 7.2. which superceded the report and its recommendation.

**RESOLVED:**

**To consider the matter of the Youth Shelter under agenda item 7.2 and discard the Recommendation Report by the Estates Working Group.**

**5.10 Sedgefield Masjid Recommendation by Estates Working Group:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Masjid Recommendation Report by the Estates Working Group which confirmed the recent request for a Sedgefield Masjid had been considered but the Town Council had no legal powers to support any form of religion including the provision of places of worship.

**RESOLVED:**

**The recommended response be issued to Mr Muhammad Rashiddin.**

**5.11 Sedgefield Parish Hall Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Sedgefield Parish Hall Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore. Cllr Blakemore said he had written this report having received a letter, along with the Town Clerk and Cllrs Mel Carr and John Finlayson, from Mrs Barron in relation to the Parish Hall. The Clerk had shared this correspondence with all Cllrs and it was to be considered under agenda item 7.1. Cllr Blakemore's report outlines the extensive work undertaken at the Hall over recent years and said that matters such as air conditioning and other ventilation options have been explored but are unfeasible and not suitable for the premise. He also did not believe the Town Council should be stopping people having larger entertainment type events in the Hall as these were enjoyed by the local community. Cllr Blakemore concluded by saying that community groups who use the Hall regularly do have the opportunity to apply for external grant funding and if they came to the Town Council with such ideas these could be considered and supported. All Cllrs agreed with Cllr Blakemore's report and that this should form the basis of the response to Mrs Barron.

**RESOLVED:**

**The content of this report be used as the basis of the response the Town Council will send to Mrs Barron's letter to be considered under agenda item 7.1.**

**5.12 Ceddesfeld Hall Signage Proposal Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Ceddesfeld Hall Signage Proposal Report by Cllr Allan Blakemore.

**RESOLVED:**

**i) Cllrs confirmed they were happy with the proposed signage for the Hall providing the views of the DCC's Conservation Officer were sought by the SCA.**

**ii) Cllr Allan Blakemore to inform Mr Tony Guest of the SCA of the Council's decision.**

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

## **6. Financial Matters:**

### **6.1 Invoices for payment by cheques for approval after 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all details of cheques for approval after 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023 numbered 110619 to 110641, cheques numbered 110603 to 110618 had been approved with all Cllrs via email during the summer recess period and subsequently issued. The Clerk circulated to all an updated list which includes cheques numbered 110642 to 110470. Cllrs confirmed their support for the authorization of all other cheques.

#### **RESOLVED:**

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

### **6.2 Financial Budget Comparison as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Financial Budget Comparison as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023. The Clerk highlighted that the money due from the EDRC AAP's Towns and Villages Fund had now been received, confirmed the Council's next precept instalment will be due in October 2023 and also reported the Council's next VAT reclaim will be submitted in October 2023.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**To receive the financial budget comparison as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.**

### **6.3 Debtors List as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023:**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**To receive the Debtors List as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.**

### **6.4 Direct Debits and BACS List for 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023:**

The Clerk circulated to all the Direct Debits and BACS list for 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**To receive Direct Debits and BACS List for 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.**

**6.5 July and August 2023 Bank Reconciliations Plus July and August 2023 Imprest Account and May, June and July 2023 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconciliations Report by Town Clerk:**

The Clerk circulated to all a July and August 2023 Bank Reconciliations Plus July and August 2023 Imprest Account and May, June and July 2023 Public Sector Deposit Fund Reconcilliations Report.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.6 Exercise of Public Rights – Year End Accounts 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Exercise of Public Rights – Year End Accounts 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 Update Report which confirmed the Council's dates have now ceased and no enquiries had been received from the public.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.7 DCC Tax Base and LCTRS Grant Proposals – Recommended Consultation Comments by Finance Working Group:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a DCC Tax Base and LCTRS Grant Proposals – Recommended Consultation Comments by Finance Working Group. All Cllrs agreed with the recommended response to DCC's current consultation.

**RESOLVED:**

**i) To receive this information.**

**ii) The Clerk to submit the agreed response from Sedgfield Town Council to DCC.**

**6.8 Internal Audit 2023/24 Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an Internal Audit 2023/24 Report which confirmed the first internal audit inspections for the current financial year have now been scheduled commencing with Sedgfield Youth Club's on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 followed by a further six audits during 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Terms of

Reference for each audit accompanied the report. The Clerk and Finance Working Group will keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.9 Conclusion of 2022/23 Year End Accounts Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Conclusion of 2022/23 Year End Accounts Report which confirmed the Town Council had successfully completed all audit work relating to its 2022/23 year end accounts. A copy of the updated AGAR, which includes Section 3 completed by the External Auditor, will be uploaded to the Town Council's new website when ready. A Conclusion Of Audit Notice will be published and promoted from 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive this information.**

**7. Correspondence:**

**7.1 Letter from Angela Barron (hand delivered 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023) :**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copy of a letter from Mrs Angela Barron which had been hand delivered on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023 in which she expressed her belief that Sedgefield Parish Hall is not suitable for large groups of people. Cllrs agreed that as discussed under agenda item 5.11. a reply would be sent based upon comments in Cllr Blakemore's report. It was also noted that Mrs Barron's letter contained comments regarding the allocation of Section 106 monies and it was agreed that the reply to Mrs Barron should explain that such a responsibility rests with the County Council and not the Town Council with recommendation that she contacts them directly. Cllr Mark Cant asked if the windows at the front of the Parish Hall opened.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Clerk to reply to Mrs Barron in accordance with the Town Council's wishes.**
- ii) The Estates Working Group to investigate the status of the windows at the front of the Parish Hall.**

**7.2 ASB Action Plan Co Durham Darlington PCC (email and attachments from CDALC dated 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email and attachments from CDALC dated 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 regarding the ASB Action Plan For County Durham and Darlington as promoted by the Police & Crime Commissioner. Within the accompanying attachments it was noted that Sedgefield was one of the 30 hotspot areas identified in this Plan. Cllr Mel Carr reported that he has recently been asked to attend a meeting with Ms Kate Ward of DCC, County Cllr Chris Lines and the local PC to discuss how funding available through this work could be used on improving the area around the Youth Shelter, i.e. a CCTV camera, new block paving, installation of bollards and a heavy duty bin. Cllr Mel Carr said the meeting had been left whereby Ms Kate Ward was to prepare a project specification and provide a further update. Cllr Mel Carr recommended that in-light of this new development the recommendation made by the Estates Working Group considered under agenda item 5.9. be left. Cllrs agreed.

**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 had any members of the public and/or press been in attendance would have asked them 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 Ceddesfeld Hall Lease Update Recommendation by Estates Working Group:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Ceddesfeld Hall Lease Update Recommendation by the Estates Working Group. This was duly considered.

**8.3 Gardener Vacancy Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Gardener Vacancy Update Report confirming this Officer is now in post.

**8.4 Job Evaluation Update Report by Personnel Committee:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Job Evaluation Update Report by the Personnel Committee which was duly considered.

**8.5 Parish Hall Stage Curtains Recommendation Report by Estates Working Group:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Parish Hall Stage Curtains Recommendation Report by the Estates Working Group which was duly considered and a way forward agreed.

**8.6 Spennymoor Youth and Community Association Draft Service Level Agreement For Academic Year 2023/24 Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Spennymoor Youth and Community Association Draft Service Level Agreement For Academic Year 2023/24 Report which was duly considered and a way forward agreed.

**8.7 Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Costings Update Report by Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Butterwick Road Cemetery Expansion Costings Update Report by Butterwick Road Cemetery Working Group. This matter was duly considered, several elements were agreed and further discussion requested at the next meeting following further investigation.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.18pm.

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# SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **SEPTEMBER ENVIRONMENT** of the **Council** held following the **P&R** in the **Parish Hall**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**.

- Present**            **Cllr. Mark Cant (Chairman) and**  
Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, Elizabeth Flanagan, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler and Mavis Wayman.
- Officer**            Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

**1. Apologies:**

Cllrs Kelly Dickerson, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Jenny Haworth and Stephen Winter.

**2. Declaration of interest:**

None.

**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 bring a recommendation back to a future Council meeting when time permits.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**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 and to close this matter.**

**3.3 Winterton Cemetery:**

The Estates Working Group will research the precise responsibilities which the Town Council has in relation to Winterton Cemetery. The Estates Working Group to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.4 Pest Control Issues Near Ceddesfeld Pond:**

A "Do Not Feed The Wildlife" sign has now been purchased and installed next to the pond. No further information has been heard yet regarding confirmation of water voles. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**3.5 Proposed Heritage 100 Walk in Sedgefield:**

No further information has been received from the Walk and Talk Trust who are now continuing to seek funding for the story element of their Heritage 100 walk in Sedgefield. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated as more information is received regarding this matter.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information and to close this matter.**

**4. Public Participation:**

The Chairman, Cllr Mark Cant, closed the meeting for the public to give their views. No members of the public were in attendance. The Chairman re-opened the meeting.

**5. Reports:**

**5.1 Potential Parson Sculpture Report by Cllr Mel Carr and Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Potential Parson Sculpture Report which detailed the outcome of brainstorming discussions with members of the Sedgefield In Bloom Group in July 2023. The Clerk confirmed that since the production of this report an on-site meeting has now been scheduled for Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The Clerk and Cllr Mel Carr to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.2 Trees Near South View, Sedgefield Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Trees Near South View, Sedgefield Update Report which updated Cllrs about the on-site meeting which had taken place on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2023 which had been attended by Mr and Mrs Stubbings, DCC's Conservation Officer, DCC's Tree Officer, STC Cllrs Mel Carr and Mavis Wayman plus the Town Clerk. Attached to the report were a series of images provided by Mrs Stubbings highlighting her issues regarding the impact of nearby trees. The Town Council is now awaiting feedback from DCC's Tree Officer in relation to this matter. Once receive this information will be shared with the Town Council for consideration. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this matter.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.3 Butterwick and Winterton Allotments Inspections Update Report by Projects & Media Co-ordinator:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Butterwick and Winterton Allotments Inspections Update Report by the Projects & Media Co-ordinator. Cllrs were pleased with the way the allotment sites were operating.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6. Correspondence:**

**6.1. Village Green (letter and accompanying images from Mr Jon Lee dated 28<sup>th</sup>**

**July 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a letter with accompanying images from Mr Jon Lee dated 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023 in which he expressed his concerns regarding the tarmacked area of village green at around 40 North End. Cllr Mel Carr reminded Cllrs of sections 11 and 9 of the Town Council's Village Green Policy. Cllrs agreed that all areas of village green should be reviewed by the Estates Working Group and in the interim weed killing should be undertaken in the area identified by Mr Lee.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- i) The Town Council's gardening staff be requested to weed kill around the tarmacked area of village green identified.**
- ii) The Estates Working Group to note the comments made by Mr Lee and to undertake a further annual review of all village green areas to identify any concerns and bring a recommendation with any costing to a future P&R Committee meeting.**
- iii) The Clerk to write to Mr Lee making him aware of the Town Council's agreed actions.**

**6.2 Query About Paths And Grounds (email from Ms Sheila Peden, Sedgefield Squash Club dated 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Ms Sheila Peden of Sedgefield Squash Club dated 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 in which the Club asked if they could have the Town Council's permission to undertake some maintenance work around their building to prevent dirt and mud constantly coming onto the path and then being trodden into the club. Cllrs confirmed they were happy for the Squash Club to undertake such work.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**The Clerk to inform Ms Peden of the Town Council's decision.**

**6.3 Sedgefield In Bloom (minutes of meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all the minutes from the Sedgefield In Bloom Group meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.28pm.

APPROVED

# SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **SEPTEMBER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** of the **Council** held following the **Environment Committee** in the **Parish Hall**, Sedgefield, on **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**.

### Present

**Cllr. Mavis Wayman (Chairman) and**

**Cllr. Ann Carr (Vice-Chairman)**

Cllrs. Allan Blakemore, David Brown, Mark Cant, Mel Carr, Elizabeth Flanagan, Dave Jasper and Julie Towler.

### Officer

Dr Jane Ayre (Town Clerk)

#### 1. **Apologies:**

Cllrs Kelly Dickerson, John Finlayson, Catherine Hart, Jenny Haworth and Stephen Winter.

#### 2. **Declaration of interest:**

Cllr Julie Towler declared an interest in items 6.1 and 6.3. No other Cllrs made any declarations of interest.

#### 3. **Matters of Information:**

##### 3.1 **Sedgefield Youth Club:**

All Cllrs expressed their support for Sedgefield Youth Club but agreed that further work is required by the Youth Club's Management Committee to provide more information to the Town Council in accordance with the Club's Constitution to ensure that any external funding is obtained in a collaborative way. The Clerk is to discuss this further with Cllrs Towler and Dickerson, Chair and Vice Chair of the Management Committee, over the summer recess period and in particular areas of uncertainty regarding the funding being sought by Spennymoor Youth and Community Association. The Clerk had requested a meeting but none had taken place. The Youth Club is to undergo an internal audit on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 for which Terms of Reference have been shared under the earlier P&R Committee meeting.

The Youth Club has delivered a programme of activities over the school summer

holidays using the recent AAP Funding received.

See agenda item 6.3.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive the information.**

**3.2 Keswick Coach Trip:**

Cllr Wayman's comments regarding the condition of one of the coaches has been feedback to the coach provider and noted.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive the information and to close this matter.**

**4. Public Participation:**

The Chairman, Cllr Mavis Wayman, closed the meeting for the public to give their views. No members of the public were in attendance. The Chairman re-opened the meeting.

**5. Reports:**

**5.1 Town Council Skipton Coach Trip Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Town Council Skipton Coach Trip Update Report which confirmed this had been another successful Town Council ran event. The Clerk confirmed that tickets are now selling fast for the Town Council's final coach trip of the year to York on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 and it is likely that a second coach will be hired.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.2 Town Council Annual Fireworks Display Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Town Council Annual Fireworks Display Update Report to all Cllrs. Since the production of this report the Clerk confirmed the Scouts will be participating in this event selling their popular refreshments. Tickets will go on sale from 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The Clerk highlighted that more volunteer Cllrs are needed for this event and urged all Cllrs to consider participating. The Clerk to keep Cllrs updated on this event.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**i) To receive this information.**

**ii) Cllrs to notify the Clerk as soon as possible if they are able to help on the evening of the fireworks display.**

**5.3 Remembrance Sunday Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a Remembrance Sunday Update Report to all Cllrs. Since the production of that report the Clerk confirmed that a meeting had taken place earlier that day with Mr Michael King of St Edmund's Church. This event will follow its traditional format and timings. For this year the civic procession in the Church will comprise of only, and in the order of, the Lord Lieutenant's representative, Durham County Council representative and Mayor of Sedgefield. To date it has not been possible to find a bugler as the Town's regular bugler is now no longer available. If necessary the Last Post will be played by recording. Finally, there will not be any refreshments provided in Ceddesfeld Hall following the commemorations as in previous years as the SCA now have a regular Sunday morning Hall booking. The Clerk will keep Cllrs updated on this event.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**5.4 Snow Party Update Report by Town Clerk:**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all a Snow Party Update Report. Since the production of this report the Clerk confirmed that discussions have taken place with Mr Michael King of St Edmund's Church and the carol service as part of this event has been organized. The Clerk confirmed that preparations for other aspects of this event are progressing and a further update will be given at the next Community Development & Engagement Committee meeting.

**RECOMMENDED:**

To receive this information.

**6. Correspondence:**

**6.1 Guide Bench (email from Mrs Julie Towler dated 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mrs Julie Towler dated 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 in which the Guides were seeking the Town Council's permission to decorate their bench on the village green with poppies the week before

Remembrance Day. All Cllrs agreed to this requested and said these decorations had become a much loved part of the Town's commemorations.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**The Town Council give the Guides permission to decorate their bench on the village green with poppies the week before Remembrance Day.**

**6.2 Sedgefield Neighbourhood Watch (minutes of meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all the minutes of the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Watch meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Clerk reported that PCSO Amy Jorgeson has now left Durham Constabulary. Sgt Daniel Lake has confirmed Durham Constabulary have new recruitment starting in November 2023 which means that by the time they are trained the new PCSO will be operational by January 2024. Sgt Lake will keep the Clerk updated.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.3 Sedgefield Youth Club Management Committee (minutes of meeting held 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all copies of the minutes of the Sedgefield Youth Club Management Committee meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**To receive this information.**

**6.4 Banner (email from Mrs Julia Rowsby, St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023):**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated to all an email from Mrs Julia Rowsby of St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 in which she was seeking the Town Council's permission for a Christmas Tree Festival banner to be displayed on the railings of the war memorial commencing Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023. All Cllrs agreed to this request and looked forward to this year's Festival.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**The Town Council give St Edmund's Christmas Tree Festival permission to display their promotional banner around the railings of the war memorial from**



**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023.**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.37pm.

APPROVED